

**Gender Representation in Party Politics: A Case Study of Vhembe District in
Limpopo, South Africa**

By

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DECLARATION

I Manuella Nyasha Gaspare hereby declare that this research project submitted to the Institute for Gender and Youth Studies, University of Venda, has not been previously submitted for a degree at this or any other higher institution of learning and that it is my own work in design and execution and that all reference materials contained therein have been fully acknowledged.

Student:

Signature.....

Date.....

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my son, Samasimba Bellington Chakuzira, I believe you will grow up to be a man who fights against patriarchy and fight for gender equality.

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I wish to extend my gratitude to all those who assisted me in the preparation of this research report.

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ABSTRACT

Political participation has more to do with various procedures than voting only. The United Nations (2015) argues that politics has to do with freedom of speech, working together without gender biasness, capacity to take part in the public sphere, ability to be registered as a political contender and campaign, be voted and be able to hold office at all stages of government leadership. Therefore, world-over men and women should be equal in order to participate in all areas of decision making in party-politics. Unfortunately, this has not been easy for women as there have been several barriers to their participation. This is because gender equality has been implemented on paper than in practice. This is due to the fact that many people have been socialised to believe that men are more powerful than women. This practice is deeply engraved into the social systems extending to the economic and political spheres leading to women being regarded powerless and unable to take up decision making or influential political positions in many nations. The gender biasness becomes even more apparent in political parties, women are often appointed to positions relating to administration and nurturing roles as compared to the strategic positions. Women continue to be marginalized as men still continue to be regarded as the custodians of leadership positions this study aims to examine the political disparities between men and women as they determine who should be nominated and elected leading to many women being disregarded. Qualitative approach was used for data collection using semi-structured interviews. Data was then analysed using the thematic analysis to draw themes from the research as well as participants' responses. Non-probability sampling was used to choose participants of the study using the purposive or judgmental sampling. Moreover, a gender audit was made with regards to gender representation in the Vhembe District political arena. Information for the audit was acquired through the help of key informants. Findings of the research observed that in the Vhembe District, besides the existing barriers against women's ascendancy to positions of political power, women have been finding a way up to influential political positions, even though many are still concentrated at the very low positions as councillors. Hence, besides the unprecedented number of women politicians, equal gender relations have not been achieved in the district. Furthermore, the findings indicated that, political people in the district are less aware of gender policies as well as government efforts aimed at doing away with gender inequalities in the sector. In this regard, this research is a significant instrument in highlighting the disparities that exist between men and women which disadvantage mainly women by holding them back from accessing equal influential political positions.

Key Words: Gender equality, Socialised, Influential political positions, gender representation

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

- **NP-** National Party
- **UN-** United Nations
- **GA-** General Assembly
- **BPA-** Beijing Platform for Action
- **ANC-** African National Congress
- **NCC-** National Council of Churches
- **NGM-** National Gender Machinery
- **OSW-** Office on the Status of Women
- **SCP-** Suppression of Communism Act
- **MRM-** Moral Regeneration Movement
- **MDGs-** Millennium Development Goals
- **ILC-** Industrial Legislation Commission
- **CBOs-** Community Based Organizations
- **NGOs-** Non-Governmental Organizations
- **UNGA-** United Nations General Assembly
- **CGE-** The Commission on Gender Equality
- **CSW-** Commission on the Status of Women
- **FSAW-** Federation of South African Women
- **COSATU-** Congress of South African Trade Union
- **GETNET-** Gender, Education and Training Network
- **WEGE-** Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
- **ANCBWL-** African National Congress Bantu Women's League

- **CEDAW**-Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1. Introduction

Evidence reported in various studies investigated around the political participation of women in leadership positions showed that when women run for office, they perform just as well as their male counterparts (Mcperson, 2011). Nevertheless, there are still various barriers and limitations that hinder women's political participation, especially in leadership positions. Men are considered custodians of politics, economies and social structures while women are constrained in political and socio-economic participation by their reproductive roles Matuba (2016). This gives advantage to men who also dominate decision making within the family and societies. Subsequently, women continue to be marginalized both in the private and the public sphere as they face discrepancy between the freedom created in the public sector and the patriarchal regimes at home.

1.1. Background

This section outlines the background to the study starting from a global perspective. This will be followed by regional and then national background.

1.2. Women in politics worldwide

Table 1 introduces this study by discussing women's representation in the world. Thus, following the statistics tabulated, it can be seen that women face numerous obstacles in articulating and shaping their own interests as the political, public, cultural and social environment are often unfriendly or even hostile towards them.

Patriarchy is the only institution which is non-racial as it sees that every woman is subjugated and marginalized under the man (Rich, 1963). Literature illustrates that, women continue to be under-represented and discriminated against especially in politics and the workplace worldwide (Mcperson, 2011). Matuba (2016) notes that the patriarchal barricades in the high ranks of politics and the economy are prevalent throughout the world. The main reason for women's exclusion in politics is their ascribed reproductive role in the 'private sphere' (Magagula, 2009). As liberal feminist theorists argue, there has been acceptance of a separation between the public and the private or domestic sphere in relation to gender ascriptions. Furthermore, women perceived attributes as emotional and passionate are the reasons laid out for their political exclusion. On the other hand, the perceived attribution of men as rational and instrumental makes

them fit to participate in the public sphere which include the political sphere. Confining women to the private sphere curtails their ability to enter the political arena. Women are seen as inferior inhabitants of the private sphere while men are associated with the public sphere. Frader (1996) insightfully notes that this is the sexual difference that has been translated into political difference.

Table 1: Women’s representation worldwide

	Single House/ lower House	Upper House/ Senate	Both Houses combined
Nordic countries	41.3%	---	---
Americas	26.8%	25.8%	26.6%
Europe - OSCE member countries including Nordic countries	25.3%	24.2%	25.1%
Europe - OSCE member countries excluding Nordic countries	23.7%	24.2%	23.9%
Sub-Saharan Africa	22.5%	20.1%	22.2%
Asia	19.0%	13.4%	18.5%
Arab States	17.3%	7.3%	15.2%
Pacific	13.1%	36.0%	15.7%

(Inter-Parliamentary Union & United Nations Women, 2015)

As seen in Table 1, even though African states are mentioned as among the best countries with women’s representation in politics some hindrances in their emancipation have been a great challenge. The Inter-Parliamentary Union & United Nations Women (2015) notes that, as at August 2015, Rwanda had the highest number of women parliamentarians worldwide. Women there won sixty-four percent of seats in the lower house. It could then be argued that some countries have progressed in addressing underrepresentation of women in high political structures, other countries are steadfast in advancing their patriarchal agenda. Sub Saharan Africa on the other hand seems to be at par with the developed countries such as America and Europe with regards to women representation in political participation.

It should be mentioned though that African women’s representation in politics had some hindrances that should be overcome as great challenges. Thus, besides international efforts to

emancipate women, figures still remain low in representation and this pulls the overall figure down to twenty-two percent when all states are combined than when they stand alone as indicated in Table 1 and Figure 1 (Inter-Parliamentary Union & United Nations Women, 2015). Matuba (2016) further notes that, according to a 2016 report from the World Economic Forum, there are fifty-nine countries worldwide that had female heads of states in the past fifty years.

It has been observed that when women take political offices, they hold lesser valued cabinet ministries which are described as 'soft industries' as indicated by Table 1 (Inter-Parliamentary Union & United Nations Women, 2015). These include health, education and welfare (Steinhauer, 2012). Mala & Weldon (2010) further argue that women rarely hold executive decision making positions in the more powerful domains or those that are associated with traditional notions of masculinity (such as finance and the military).

Moreover, there are one hundred and ninety-five countries in the world today and only thirty percent of these countries have accepted to have a woman ascending to the highest political office (Matuba, 2016). According to the United Nations, 2015, as of August 2015, eleven women served as Heads of State and fourteen served as Heads of Government. Furthermore, Newman & White (2012) observe that many women attain political standing due to kinship ties, as they have male family members who are involved in politics. These disadvantages women from acquiring the same positions as men in politics.

The United States of America as the leading country worldwide has also seen itself being a victim of the patriarchal system. While many nations around the world make progress in increasing women's presence in positions of political power, the United States has not kept pace, ninety nations now surpass the country in the percentage of women in the national legislature (Inter-Parliamentary Union & United Nations Women, 2015). It is unfortunate that in recent elections in the US, an opportunity was missed by the Americans to dismantle the patriarchal barricades of politics in their country and elect Hillary Clinton as the president (Matuba, 2016). This is because men have remained ahead in most critical decision making sectors including the political sector.

Lawless & Fox (2012) states that as of the 1970s, women occupied almost no major elective positions in the US political institutions. They further argue that in 2011, eighty-four percent of its members were men and the statistics were still stagnant by the year 2012. Thus, globally, there are thirty-seven states in which women account for less than ten percent of parliamentarians in single or lower houses, as of August 2015, including six chambers with no women at all (Inter-Parliamentary Union & United Nations Women, 2015). Matuba (2016) points out that all over the

world, the fanatics of patriarchy depict women as weak and lacking the capacity to make any strategic political decisions, as well as, being nothing but gossipers and lacking in intelligence.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union & United Nations Women (2015) postulates that in the year 2014, the US ranked eighty-fourth in worldwide female leadership. The United States (US) had eighty-four female representatives or nineteen percent in the lower house and twenty percent in the upper house (Inter-Parliamentary Union & United Nations Women, 2015). It is acceptable that the gender gap that exist between the two when it comes to politics is very wide. Men are seen as more ambitious to enter the political realm while women are tied down by patriarchy and socialization processes. Patriarchal makes it very difficult for women to freely run for political posts within their institutions.

The Participation in Policy Formation and Implementation held in Romania (2015) stated that more than twenty countries currently have a woman holding office as head of national government, and the global participation rate of women in national-level parliaments is nearly twenty percent (United Nations, 2015). The Inter-Parliamentary Union & United Nations Women (2015) states that only twenty-two percent of all national parliamentarians were female as of August 2015, a slow increase from eleven percent in 1995. Matuba (2016) also notes that the first woman to break the patriarchal barricades in politics was Sirimavo Bandaranaike who became a prime minister of Sri Lanka in 1960, followed by Indira Gandhi (India, 1966), Golda Meir (Israel, 1969) Isabel Peron (Argentina, 1974), Michell Bachelet (Chile, 2006) and Dilma Rousseff (Brazil, 2011). This however shows that indeed women are still being marginalized from acquiring influential political positions in their countries as only a handful have had access to the most influential political positions.

1.3. African women in politics compared to other continents

One of the most fascinating developments in African politics has been the increase in women's political participation since the mid-1990s. Women are becoming more engaged in a variety of institutions from local government, to legislatures, and even the executive (United Nations, 2015). Currently, Africa has the highest rate of representation of women globally (Inter-Parliamentary Union & United Nations Women, 2015). Tripp (2013) notes that Rwanda claimed the world's highest ratio of women in parliament in 2003. Currently Rwandan women hold sixty-four percent of the country's legislative seats (Tripp, 2013). Tripp (2013) further states that in Senegal, Seychelles and South Africa women hold more than forty percent of parliamentary seats, while

Mozambique, Angola, Tanzania and Uganda over thirty-five percent of seats are occupied by women.

By contrast, women in the US hold eighteen percent of the seats in the Lower House and twenty percent in the Senate (Tripp, 2013). Although women's numbers have increased in politics and the workplace, this has not translated into substantive equality. Abubaker & Ahmid (2014) note that women are still marginalized considering the disparity in the proportion of men to women in political and decision making positions as the narrow door of politics only allows a tiny minority of women to participate in the decision-making bodies. Matuba (2016) contributes to this argument by noting that, in Africa, trendsetters who broke the patriarchal barriers in politics are Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia in 2006 and Joyce Banda of Malawi in 2012.

However, efforts by various bodies such as courts, legislatures, and executive departments of government to curb inequalities between men and women have been in vain. Udodinma (2013) argues that to consolidate on the current gains, women's leadership organizations, government and relevant stakeholders should continue to advocate the revision of legislations to favor the protection of women from abuse, empower them economically, socially and politically, especially through the strengthening of affirmative action and allocation of quotas for women in politics and decision making positions. Mavindidze (2016) further notes that affirmative action means positive steps taken to increase the representation of women and minorities in areas of employment, education, and culture from which they have been historically excluded. On the other hand, the quota system also tries to bring up women from marginalization. However, law structures as well as gender tools have been facing various challenges as the need to increase the number of women political seats still lag behind.

Table 2 shows that women are not deemed fit for the more influential positions in politics. As a result, they occupy lower positions which are merely an extension of their societal nurturing roles. Rwanda should be given credit for a great shift since 2011 from fifty-six percent to sixty-four percent in 2013 as was noted by (Tripp, 2013). However, the United Nations (2015) postulates that even though Rwanda is ranked the highest when it comes to women in political leadership, out of the eighteen mayors countrywide, there is no woman.

The World Bank (2015) also observes that even in countries that have achieved greater representational equality, females are often underrepresented in top political leadership positions. This, shows that indeed there is still a long way in the realization of women's equal participation in politics. Moreover, Shvedova (2011) argues that women around the world at every socio-

political level find themselves under-represented in parliament and far removed from decision-making levels. Shvedova further notes that in 2005, women held barely one percent of parliamentary seats around the world.

Tabulated percentages of women’s involvement in politics according to International IDEA (2014), Stockholm University and Inter-parliamentary Union (2014). Figures reflect as of 1 April 2013, Available at <http://www.qoutaproject.org/qoutas.cfm>

Table 2: Women’s involvement in Politics.

Rank	Country	Lower or Single House	Upper House or Senate
1	Rwanda	63.8%	38.5%
2	Andorra	50%	–
3	Cuba	48.9%	–
4	Sweden	44.7%	–
5	Seychelles	43.8%	–
6	Senegal	42.7%	–
7	Finland	42.5%	–
8	South Africa	42.3%	32.1%
9	Nicaragua	40.2%	–
10	Iceland	39.7%	–

The Inter-Parliamentary Union & United Nations Women (2015) points that thirty percent is widely considered an important benchmark for women’s representation. As of January 2015, forty-one single or lower houses were composed of more than thirty percent women, including eleven in Africa and nine in Latin America. The World Bank (2015) observes that, although there is progress it is too slow, with just one woman for every five men in our national parliaments. Therefore, seeing that women only occupy the very least of the positions available, shows that men are trying as much as they can to protect their patriarchal powers from women.

1.4. South African women in politics

In the apartheid era in South Africa, women were actively involved in politics with an anticipation of bringing democracy to their mother land. The African National Congress (ANC) (2013) women

in South Africa have been the primary catalysts for protests against, and challengers of the apartheid regime. Church groups were transformed into liberation movements and trade unions were also a place for women to carry on their patriotic duties. Further studies show that trade union actions such as strikes also served to politicize women even though they were illegal (Albertyn, 2011). However, efforts to organize Africans were crippled by the National Party's labor legislation.

The Federation of South African Women (FSAW) which was established in 1954 aimed to work for majority rule and end the policy of apartheid and build a multi-racial women's organization which worked for the rights of and freedoms of women. The ANC (2013) website states that the creation of the FSAW marked the start of a period of expansion of the political involvement of women. However, despite their massive efforts as Meer (2010) notes, like COSATU women, ANC women found resistance from men to their calls for increasing the numbers of women in leadership positions. Meer (2010) further argues that while the majority of men in the liberation organizations accepted the notion of gender equality along with worker rights and the rights of black people, they did not expect women to challenge male sexual behavior, or the prerogative to lead. Hassim (1991) further notes that the major objective of opposition politics during the 1980s in South Africa's has been to mobilize women for the national liberation struggle as opposed to mobilize them for women's liberation. However, this mobilization had the effect of reinforcing rather than challenging patriarchal relations of domination.

More so, the resistance that the apartheid government faced from women was also a clear sign that women are quite capable of handling politics. However, despite the massive efforts in politics in South Africa during the apartheid era, women never got a chance of attaining the same influential positions in politics as men. Albertyn (2011) observed that although there is no doubt that the overt leadership has been dominated by men, the seemingly unacknowledged and informal segment of society controlled by women has been the key to many of the most significant mass movements in South African history. Thus, as a result of the women's active role in the liberation struggle, the post-apartheid regime should engage in strong commitment to ensure gender equality.

Even though South Africa as a patriarchal society was keen to achieve gender parity in politics by the year 2015, its patriarchal sentiments could not go beyond its targets. The SADC Gender Protocol (2015) notes that South Africa did not attain the fifty percent quota of women representation in leadership positions following the national elections held in 2014. The main reason was that the ruling party, the ANC, is the only political party which currently has a quota.

The SADC Gender Protocol (2015) also stated that South Africa's main opposition the Democratic Alliance (DA) party, led by three women, remained firmly opposed to quotas.

Hassim (1991) argues that gender oppression is everywhere rooted in a material base and is expressed in socio-cultural traditions and attitudes all of which are supported and perpetuated by an ideology which subordinate women. This suggest that patriarchal sentiments are still strong in the South African society as women's positions as leaders are still being thwarted in a bid to maintain male supremacy. The SADC Gender Protocol (2015) notes that the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (WEGE) Bill has strong provisions for ensuring fifty percent representation of women in all areas of decision making, but policy makers have not yet passed it. Ironically the policy makers are male and are therefore, fighting a silent war against women leaders so that the patriarchal society may continue. Clearly, the need to maintain patriarchal privileges has led women to be marginalized in political leadership positions.

1.5. Problem statement

The background to the study, indicates that women are not yet accorded equal opportunities when it comes to occupying positions of power. This is despite the fact that the current SA constitution provides for equality and equity between men and women. In light of these facts, this study examines what is really impeding women from upward mobility when it comes to holding influential political positions. The main research question of the study is: What is really perpetuating unequal power relations in matters of occupying influential positions in SA's political cycles? This question also gives rise to a number of subsidiary questions. Firstly, to what extent are women occupying positions of power? Secondly, for those in positions of power, what challenges are they experiencing? What measures are in place to ensure equity in matters of positions of power and political representation?

Problems that can be seen in South Africa's political realm are patriarchal sentiments where women have been excluded from most decision-making positions due to their biological make up as well as cultural stereotypes that view them as unfit to take part in important decision making procedures. De La Rey (2012) postulates that women face numerous obstacles in achieving representation in governance. This has prevented them from acquiring influential positions in the political sphere. Even if they are given influential positions within their political arenas, it is just a smokescreen as there would be an active man behind the scenes resulting in most women becoming mouth pieces of men. Andela, Escandon & Garlo (2012) notes that men are seen as decision-makers and these patriarchal societies are still uncomfortable seeing women in political

decision-making positions. Even though women rise to executive level positions, decisions may still be made by men. Moreover, due to socialization, women have grown to believe that they are incapable of assuming some influential positions whether socially, economically or politically. This has caused ignorance, fear and sometimes laziness among most women to take up such demanding positions. The ANC's Vision of creating a country that is united, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic nation made it introduce the bill of rights. The bill of rights states that all South African citizens are born free and equal in dignity and rights. It further says that no individual, or group shall receive privileges or be subjected to discrimination, domination or abuse on the grounds of race, colour, language, gender or creed, political or other opinion (Advocacy Aid, 2015).

1.6. Research aims and objectives

1.6.1. Aim

The main aim of this research is to investigate if women are being given an equal chance as men to participate in influential political positions with specific reference to South Africa in Limpopo, Vhembe District.

1.6.2. Objectives:

- To determine gender representation in influential or decision making positions in politics in Vhembe District.
- To investigate obstacles that stand in the way of gender equality and representation in politics in Vhembe District.
- To determine the South African government awareness to policies and legislations mitigating the disparities that exist between men and women in the political sphere.

1.7. Research questions

- To what extent are women occupying positions of power in Vhembe District?
- What are the challenges faced by women occupying positions of power in Vhembe District?
- What policies and legislations are in place to accord women an equal standing with men in the political sphere?

1.8. Significance of the study

This research adds on the existing body of knowledge (both empirical and theoretical) on aspects which deny women an equal access to influential positions within their political institutions as men. There is scant literature that focuses on women in leadership. Inglehart & Norris (2013) notes that African politics is characterised by fragmented and ineffective opposition parties, which makes the likelihood of women getting official seats even more unlikely. Thus, it can be seen that indeed women have faced barriers in getting access to politics and political seats.

The research also investigated on how far men and women can achieve the same results if they are equally empowered in the Vhembe District of South Africa. This investigation was carried out with regards to the SADC Gender Protocol. On the other hand, the research is an important tool in encouraging women who suffer from inferiority complex to believe in themselves. Those who lack self-esteem, and are faced with fear are going to find the research helpful as it will help them gain confidence in themselves.

Moreover, despite the existence of various policies internationally, regionally and nationally women still face a great challenge in accessing influential political positions. So, this study is an important tool in exposing the unfair treatment women still experience. Thus, it will help governments to practically implement existing policies. Therefore, this research aims at making a contribution to this under-researched area from a South African perspective.

1.9. Definitions of operational terms

- **Patriarchy-** Rich, (1963) defines patriarchy as the power of the fathers: a familial-social, ideological, political system in which men by force, direct pressure or through ritual, tradition, law, language, customs, etiquette, education and division of labour, determine what part women shall not play and in which the female is everywhere subsumed under the male.
- **Influential positions-** This is a powerful job, important post, rank having authority (Zarri, 2015) . De La Rey (2012) further defines this as exerting or possessing influence or power; potent; efficacious; effective; strong; having authority or ascendancy; as, an influential man, station and argument.
- **Marginalize-** Silver (1994) defines it as social exclusion which is social disadvantage and relegation to the fringe of society. Silver further defined social exclusion as the process in which individuals or entire communities of people are systematically blocked from (or denied full access to) various rights, opportunities and resources that are normally available to

members of a different group, and which are fundamental to social integration within that particular group.

- **Under-representation-** United Nations General Assembly (2015) defines it as being insufficiently or inadequately represented, for instance, women being inadequately represented in government or politics.
- **Gender stereotypes-** The World Health Organization (2015) defines gender stereotyping as one-sided and exaggerated images of men and women which are deployed repeatedly in everyday life. Sociologists see stereotyping as part of the process by which children are socialized into sex roles and by which adults and children are denied opportunities for more individually varied development. Furthermore, Gandari, Chaminuka & Mafumbate (2012) define it as fixed ideas about men's and women's traits and capabilities and how people should behave, based on their gender.
- **Socialization-** Gandari, et al., (2012) defines it as a continuing process whereby an individual acquires a personal identity and learns the norms, values, behavior and social skills appropriate to his or her social position. The World Health Organization (2015) further defines it as a process by which individuals acquire the knowledge, language, social skills and the values to conform to the norms and roles required for integration into a group or community. It is a combination of both, self-imposed (because the individual wants to conform) and externally-imposed rules and expectations of the other. On the other hand, Ruiters (2008) argues that gender socialization is a process of learning the social expectations and attitudes associated with sex. It occurs through diverse means as parental attitudes, schools, how peers interact with each other and mass media. Sometimes gender roles lead to inequality, for example, women's social roles were once more restricted regarding politics.
- **Politics-** Zarri (2015) defines politics as the practice and theory of influencing other people through achieving and exercising positions of governance. The scholar further defines it as an articulation, or working out of relationships within an already given power. This contrasts the traditional view which defines it as an activity, a conscious, deliberate participation in the process by which resources are allocated among citizens. Bari (2005) further defines it as the art or science of government or governing, especially, the governing of a political entity, such as a nation, and the administration and control of its internal and external affairs.

1.10. Scope of the study

This research will be carried out in Vhembe District of Limpopo Province, South Africa.

1.11. Ethical considerations

The study was conducted after the research proposal had been submitted and approved by the Institute of Youth and Gender Studies in the School of Human and Social Sciences at the University of Venda. The researcher worked strictly in accordance with ethical research standards and legal obligations of the University of Venda. The researcher acknowledged all the sources of data used and quotations in the report. Thus, all possible ethics were put into consideration to ensure an ethically approved study.

1.12. Project Layout

The research is composed of five chapters as described below:

- **Chapter 1:** The chapter introduces the general background and conceptualization of women's participation in influential positions in their political institutions. It also contains the problem statement, research objectives and significance of the study. Some of the key words frequently used in the study are explained. The chapter ends by demarcating the area under study.
- **Chapter 2:** The Chapter focuses on the literature review and theoretical framework. This chapter further discusses causes, challenges and what the government is doing in order to attain equality between men and women in political institutions. It also highlights whether women are given an equal chance to obtain influential positions within political institutions.
- **Chapter 3:** Chapter three provides the research design and the data collection methods used by the researcher. The chapter ends by discussing ethical statement.
- **Chapter 4:** The chapter will provide a detailed account of data analysis from field findings and the discussion of the findings.
- **Chapter 5:** The last chapter of the study provides a summary, conclusions and recommendations for further studies.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2. Introduction

This chapter covers theoretical and empirical literature on whether there is gender equality among men and women in political institutions. It seeks to investigate whether women are being given an equal chance to take part in influential political positions as men considering that women have been viewed as an inferior species. The reason for such a stereotype is socialization. The main objective of the chapter is for the researcher to present and discuss information from authoritative sources about the research topic after reviewing relevant articles, journals, past studies and books. An analysis of the different authors' views on women's positions in political institutions will be given. The major aspects that will be reviewed include causes of marginalization of women and challenges that women face when it comes to acquiring such a position. Moreover, efforts by the government in order to ensure that women get an equal chance to take up influential positions in political institutions will also be reviewed.

Discriminatory and gender bias practices that work against promotion of women leadership in local governments will be discussed. These biases are perpetuated by the survival of stereotypes and cultural and religious practices and beliefs detrimental to women (Kauzya, 2014). Jackson (2011) notes that the subordination of women means that ordinary men commonly have a power advantage over women and that only men occupy the social positions controlling sources of collective power. Thus, research consistently shows that in many parts of the world, women still linger on the fringes of political realm and their participation in government structures and the democratic process remains low (Albertyn, 2011). This is supported by UN (2015) when it argues that unfavorable cultural practices add to lack of financial resources, lower levels of education, less access to information and that family responsibility and rights deprivation has left fewer opportunities for women to acquire political experience. Therefore, many barriers to women's interest in politics can be overcome only with major cultural and political changes.

2.1. Theoretical framework

This part of the study discusses the theoretical framework used.

2.1.1. The Cognitive Developmental theory and the Developmental theory of the gender gap

The cognitive developmental theory posits that gender identity is a basic organizer and regulator of children's gender learning (De La Rey, 2012). Therefore, bringing in an unconscious concept/knowledge which leads to children developing a stereotypic conception of gender from what they hear and see. Jung (1981) posits that all members of the human species share the same unconscious experiences and predispositions, regardless of their situation in history or geographical location. Bari (2005) cements this argument when he argues that the boundaries between public and private spheres are often blurred in the daily lives of women as the ideological differences are not reflective in reality.

This ensures that their beliefs of their own gender are irreversible and fixed. In turn, they start to embrace and behave only in ways that are consistent with their beliefs. The United Nations (2015) states that, children begin to believe that: "I am a boy; therefore, I want to do boy things, and boy things should be rewarding". Thus, restrictive psychology is experienced wherein, both girls and boys become certain that they have limitations when it comes to assuming certain tasks (Jung, 1981). With this in mind, children begin to confirm their gender identity and when this happens, the cognitive-developmental theory postulates that the child then achieves gender constancy. Kohlberg (1996) defines gender constancy as the realization that one's sex is a permanent attribute tied to underlying biological properties and does not depend on superficial characteristics such as hair length, style of clothing or choice of play activities.

Thus, when gender constancy is embraced, men for example, begin to consider themselves superior to women which will make them to consider themselves masculine and more powerful than women. When this happens, stereotypical actions begin to arise were women will be considered as people of the private sphere and men as people of the public sphere. This, however, compliments the developmental theory which argues that since the pre-industrial period, women's responsibility was to bear and raise children only (Albertyn, 2011). This can be supported by a psychoanalyst, Jung (1981), who brought forward the notion of archetypes. According to him, the notion of archetypes brings a theory of collective unconsciousness in which men are considered to be elders, law makers as well as kings.

Therefore, this means that men in most societies are considered to have an instrumental role acting as a bridge between family life and the life of societies at large while women have a more expressive and caring role concerned with the home and family. Richter & Morrel (2006) further point out that this brings the aspect of 'homosociality' where men model and foster the development of skills necessary for successful adaptation to the to the external, social and physical world to include social relationships, work, money, politics and power. Thus, they argue that, homosociality forms social and political organizations in society. This led to the developmental of the theory of the gender gap to argue that women are more conservative than men and less likely to participate in politics (Jackson, 2011). On this aspect, it suggests that the reasons for this are traditional societies which are characterized by different gender roles that discourage women from working outside the home.

However, even though the issue of strictly associating women with the public sphere has changed over time, men are still being rewarded more by most societies than women (United Nations, 2015). Jung (1981) therefore purports that even though the psychoanalytic theory claims that men should act to redeem younger generations from being permanently psychologically merged to gender ascriptions known as 'psychotic symbiosis'. This is an indication that traditional values are still present in the contemporary societies even though they are being questioned and challenged more. Inglehart & Norris (2013) observe that a female leader featuring feminine behavior is considered to be unacceptable in politics. On the other hand, the male authoritativeness inherent to the field of politics creates additional pressure for women. Therefore, this shows how there still exist a wide gender gap when it comes to representation of men and women in politics.

2.2. Challenges women face within political parties

Almost in all societies women are subject to inequalities in law as a result of the existence of discrimination in the family, community and the workplace. These discriminatory and gender bias practices work against promotion of women to leadership positions in local governments. Kauzya (2014) says that while causes and consequences may vary from country to country, discrimination against women is widespread. Magagula (2009) further notes women's marginalization that it is perpetuated by the survival of stereotypes and traditional, cultural and religious practices and beliefs detrimental to women. Low levels of education and training are predominant among women and this diminishes their opportunities as men are favored at family level when it comes to education (Inglehart and Norris, 2013). Thus, countries need to couple affirmative action policy with strategies that improve access to education for the girls.

Women have been facing various challenges in accessing influential positions in political parties due to a number of cases which range from stereotypes to cultural beliefs. This is mainly because the society thinks that in order for one to be in such positions they should be harsh and masculine. Shvedova (2011) notes that in Canada there is evidence that female politicians face gender stigma from male members of the political parties to which they belong which can undermine the ability of women to reach or maintain leadership roles. Hicks (2010) also argues that female candidates begin with a head start in voter's eyes of as much as ten percent, and that female candidates have more proficiency with traditional women's spheres such as education. This shows that gender stereotypes have a negative effect on a female's role in politics.

Hicks (2010) further points out that women in positions of authority have no problems in terms of the way they manage authority, but rather it is the men under them who resent taking direction from women. Representative democracy seems impaired, partial and unjust when women, as a majority of citizens, fail to see themselves reflected in the leadership of their polity (De La Rey, 2012). One can be justified to argue that the need for men to be in power as a result of patriarchy has seen women being seen as incapable to think and lead as well as man.

In as much as one would want to understand why it is so in most societies that women occupy inferior positions, it is mainly due to the interwoven social aspects that include socialization and stereotypical beliefs. According to Gandari, et al. (2012), socialization is the process where children from birth are molded to act according to their respective sex and as a result grow up to embrace that. Male children become superior and the female become inferior, posing gender imbalance between the two sexes. This gender imbalance however, gives more power to men than women ultimately men become peers and custodians of most societies leaving women as followers. Therefore, it can be seen that the social and economic status of women in society has a direct influence on their participation in political institutions and elected bodies.

Therefore, patriarchy in most societies is the main factor that has led women to be under represented in politics. Rich (1963) defines patriarchy as the power of the fathers: a familial-social, ideological, political system in which men by force, direct pressure or through ritual, tradition, law, language, customs, etiquette, education and division of labor, determine what part women shall not play and in which the female is everywhere subsumed under the male. Matuba (2016) notes that patriarchy hinders the agenda of building an equal society. Therefore, since South Africa is

still a patriarchal state, its politics has been greatly influenced by men despite the fact that women have had a very crucial role to play in that country.

Moreover, Shvedova (2011) argues that one of the most important characteristics of society that correlate with women's representation levels is a country's state of development. Development, however, comes as a result of gender balance between male and female counterparts. So, since women have been living under patriarchal societies, they have been under developed than men as they are regarded as inferior. This has impoverished the females to such an extent that their economic as well as their social lives have been a reflection even in their political lives. Ogbogu (2012) adds that development leads to a weakening of traditional values, decreased fertility rates, increased urbanization, greater education and labor force participation for women, and attitudinal changes in perceptions regarding the appropriate role for women. All these factors increase women's political resources and reduce existing barriers to political activity. Therefore, unless socialization is dealt with as the root cause of the gender imbalances that exist between men and women, women will see their way through in representation in all sectors of their life to include the social, economic as well as their political life.

2.3. Factors that create a huge gender gap in politics

Multiple factors contribute to the situation where women are underrepresented in political leadership positions. Women's political involvement, participation and access in formal political power structures are linked to many different structural and functional constraints which differ across countries. Several authors claim that women's absence in the political arena derives from political, socio-economic, ideological and psychological barriers (Shvedova, 2011). Therefore, this sub-section looks at how stereotypes act as a barrier against women's representation in politics.

2.3.1. Cultural stereotypes

The current political culture often exists along traditional attitudes regarding women in decision-making roles. These attitudes toward gender equality are often seen as an important factor in analyzing women's entry into politics (Van Donk & Maceba, 2010). Men are often regarded as 'born leaders' as if leadership comes to them 'naturally', while women's leadership is recognized differently. Women are also seen as responsive, consultative, sensitive and committed to working towards peaceful solutions (Harding, 2004). Shvedova (2011) notes that the responsibility of women as mothers and wives as well as their domestic duties complicate their involvement and participation in the public sphere. Kombo, Sow & Mahomed (2013) assert that the political arena

is organized according to male norms, values and lifestyles. This is otherwise known as the masculine model of politics. Thus, a female leader featuring feminine behavior is considered to be unacceptable in politics while the male authoritative nature inherent to the field of politics creates additional pressure for women (Bari, 2005).

As a result of these gender cultural stereotypes, women have been under represented when it comes to political institutions than men. Women are viewed as care givers within a family set up, and this has been taken up by many as the only duty that they are capable of. Thus, their private life duties have been stretched to match their public life as well. The UNICEF (2014) states that women as the primary caretakers of children, often have a more prominent role than men in advocating for children, resulting in a “double dividend” in terms of the benefits of women’s representation.

Van Donk & Maceba (2010) argue that all over the world women find themselves contesting and subverting the inherently patriarchal biases of state institutions, the media and the public. However, those who are not gender sensitive use different strategies to exclude or undermine women especially with the ‘PhD syndrome’, which stands for ‘Pull Her Down’ (UNICEF, 2014). With this in mind, women find it very difficult to actively participate in influential positions within their political institutions as it implies that the woman is put in a position where she is bound to fail. This is echoed by Govender (2013) who emphasizes that political parties do not take responsibility for creating an enabling environment and fail to take into account the multiple roles of women. Therefore, traditions still emphasize women’s primary roles as mothers and housewives. A strong, patriarchal value system keeps these sexually segregated roles in place.

2.3.2. Patriarchal power

Patriarchy as a system of male domination shapes women’s relationship in politics. It transforms male and females into men and women and construct the hierarchy of gender relations where men are privileged (Eisenstein, 1984). South Africa, like most countries globally, is patriarchal in nature and has seen women being outcasts in political institutions. This is because patriarchy suggests a need for a social system in which men have the ultimate power or authority over women and children. Moore (2012) states that patriarchy includes the traditional religious ideas of women being subordinate to men. Mavindidze (2016) further argues that one of the most dangerous tools used to marginalize, subjugate, silence, brutalize and control women on the African continent is through ‘culture’. Kadaga (2013) purports that the patriarchal thought limits opportunities for women, especially in the political sphere as patriarchy deems women

subordinate and unstable for positions of leadership. Bari (2005) also states that the gender role ideology is used as a moral tool by patriarchy to place women within the private arena of home as mothers and wives and men in the public sphere.

This is supported by Mcpherson (2011) who argue that the lack of suffrage and the rule of patriarchy in society, in turn consign women to minority status without the ability to voice their concerns or sentiments. Moreover, the Inter-Parliamentary Union & United Nations Women (2015) held in Belgium argues that the working environment for women is still unfriendly at both working and societal levels due to gender stereotypes and patriarchal structures. This, shows that women leaders and professionals are still faced with patriarchal traditional roles and have to meet work/professional expectations. As a result, they find it difficult to get involved in the political sector.

2.3.3. Case study: The 2016 US elections

Historically, while the world has witnessed strong national women leaders like Indira Gandhi, Margaret Thatcher and Angela Merkel, the United States now has a history of forty-five male presidents (Iyengar, 2016). This is besides the fact that Hillary Clinton has been campaigning for a presidential seat against Donald Trump for the elections held in October 2016. This however, pose some questions as to why female candidates are still faced with barriers in assuming influential decision making positions in politics. Among other factors, the United States is still greatly patriarchal in nature. This is evidenced by the tremendous win of Trump, yet he has been labeled a sexist considering various insulting words he has for women. The fact that Trump, who is the epitome of male entitlement and misogyny, is still standing strong, unscathed, speaks volumes, and defeated Clinton regardless of the tapes and derogatory remarks against women, attests that there is an alarming percentage of Americans who fiercely advocate his ideology, a majority of whom do not respect women (Iyengar, 2016).

The former US president, Barack Obama was quoted saying, "I just want to be honest, there is a reason why we have not had a woman president before, yet, Hillary Clinton is consistently treated differently than just about any other candidate I see out there" (Iyengar, 2016). This shows that indeed patriarchy is still at play. Tani (2016) who notes that fifty-one percent of male voters who were polled preferred Trump, while only thirty-five percent said they would back Clinton. Iyengar (2016) further notes that after bearing an African-American President run the country for eight years straight, the conservatives found the idea of having a woman take on that responsibility of their country discomfiting. It would mean a collapse in gender hierarchy and male privilege. In

their mind, Trump, the white affluent male with supposedly sharp business acumen seems to be the perfect choice. Thus, perpetuating both intersectionality and gender bias.

2.3.4. Inequalities within family

Family, as a social institution has inherited patriarchal values and norms. Thus, in every sphere of life, including the family realm there exist gender inequalities. The man is expected to inherit masculine norms and values while the woman is seen as feminine, thus, already creating a division of authority within a household. These social and cultural factors continue to be the most important barriers to women's access to decision making or leadership positions within their respective societies.

Hassim (1991) thus argues that patriarchy forms a barrier between the public and the private sphere in which women are defined primarily in relation to their location within the private sphere, roles defined in terms of the family. For men, it is the role outside the family which is emphasized. This however, marginalize women in terms of acquiring influential political positions. This is because if a woman is marginalized in the home, there is no way she can be at equal footing with the man in the public sector. This is evidenced by the words of Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, the chairperson of the African Union and a member of the Women in Parliaments Global Forum (WIP) Advisory Board who said that, "gender equality begins in our homes" (SADC Gender Protocol, 2015).

Ogbogu (2012) also argues that the political discourse that would arise out of an idea of people as some gendered political subjects would recognize that gender is an integral part of politics. In other words, it means that most political issues have a gender element and therefore have a differential impact on men and women. Mtintso (1999) adds that no matter how gender sensitive decision-making structures have become, many women still find a discrepancy between the freedom they have found or created in the work place, and the patriarchal regimes at home.

This is supported by Hassim (1991) who observe that capitalism introduced a notional separation of society into 'public' and 'private' spheres, women and women's interests being increasingly defined as outside the realm of politics. Thus, despite absence of the legal discrimination women are not constituted as equal subjects. Moreover, besides the fact that they are meant to believe that gender parity has been restored, it does not guarantee that they will have an equal access to opportunities. This is because when women are disempowered at family level because of lack of control of resources or even the proceeds from their hard labor, they tend to internalize that the men are the ones in charge even outside the families and so hesitate to seek leadership positions.

2.3.5. Women’s unwillingness to enter into politics

Women have been reluctant to enter politics because it is regarded as a men’s territory. The graph below shows differences in men’s and women’s zeal in participating in politics between the year 2001 and 2011. A study conducted by Lawless & Fox (2012) in the US found that women remain less likely to engage in politics than men. They argue that despite the changing political landscape and the emergence of several high-profile female candidates between 2001 and 2011, women remain sixteen percentage points less likely than men to have thought about running for office. The United Nations (2015) states that only twenty-two percent of all national parliamentarians were female as of January 2015, a slow increase from eleven percent in 1995 as shown in Figure 2.1.

Graphical information of women unwillingness to run for political office

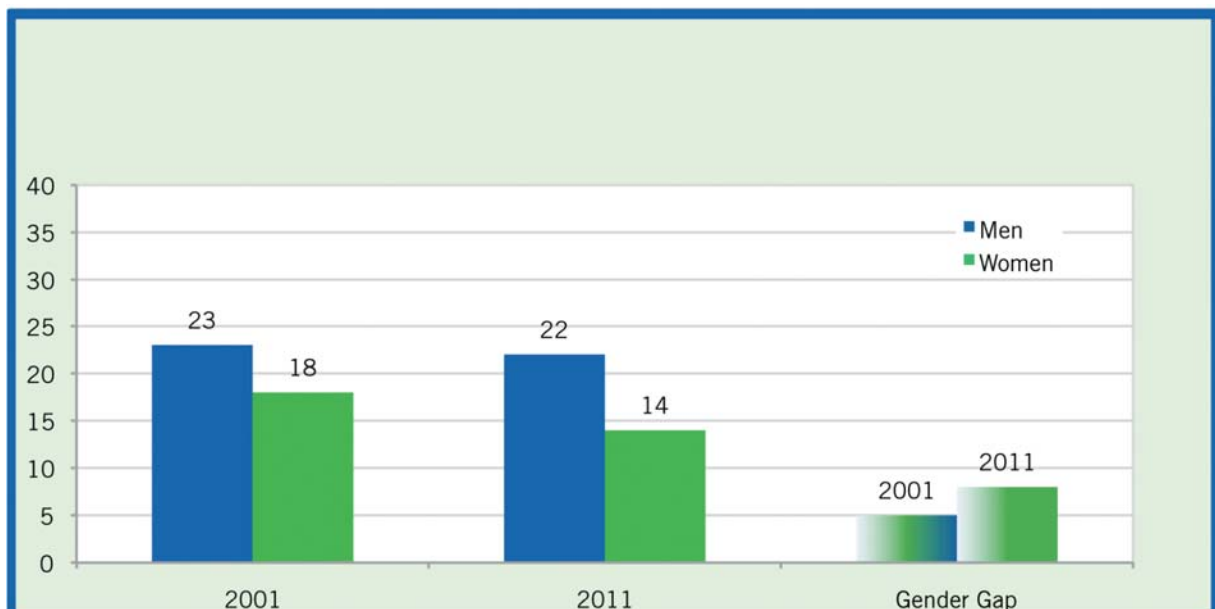


Figure 2:1: Graphical information of women unwillingness: Source: Adapted from (Lawless and Fox 2012:6)

Lawless and Fox (2012) also say that while men’s interest in a future candidacy remained virtually unchanged across the ten-year period, women’s interest dropped eighteen percent compared to fourteen percent in 2011 as shown in Figure 2.1. This was supported by Kombo, et al. (2013) who observes that at the same time, the possibility would open up for more than one form of feminism to emerge and women would discover through such action that not all women have identical political interests.

On the other hand, ANC women's league president, Angie Motsheka, made a statement in her 2012 speech before the ANC's National Conference. She said: "The country is not ready for a woman president" (SADC Gender Protocol, 2015). With such demotivating words from those in leadership positions, most women find themselves in fear and lack the esteem to take up such challenging positions. Moreover, her words were complimented by her actions when she urged a group under her to re-elect Jacob Zuma as ANC president. Therefore, such action shows that indeed women are still faced with a feeling of not believing in themselves and their capabilities.

Socialization and patriarchy thus play great roles in preventing more women from engaging in politics. Lawless & Fox (2012) argue that more than half of women do not believe that women who run for office fare well as their male counterparts. Thus, the socialization stereotype that women are weaker and less intelligent comes into play resulting in women being unable to stand their ground or be confident enough to acquire the same influential political positions as men. Moreover, the patriarchal thought also plays a greater role in discouraging women's participation in politics as men resist to take orders from female superiors. The Inter-Parliamentary Union & United Nations Women (2015) states that of January 2014, only seventeen percent of government ministers were women, with the majority overseeing social sectors, such as education and the family. Thus, women are still being given positions in politics in line with their reproductive duties.

2.3.6. Economic disadvantages

Women take on a disproportionate share of household tasks which makes a political career almost impossible (Bari, 2005). Their previous marginalization economic and social marginalization under-privileged them access to leadership positions in political institutions. Thus, women's unequal access to leadership positions, especially in politics, can be traced from the previous economic marginalization of women. Jackson (2011) notes that over the last one hundred and fifty years, power has largely remained in male hands and it has only slowly and sparingly been knowingly used in ways that directly counter sex inequality. Gandari, et al. (2012) further acknowledge that women have in the past stood outside the organization of power in society. Social power was linked to men, that is, from the financial magnet and the national politician to the humble bootblack and the factory machine operator.

Due to the fact that men attained economic power by inheriting or opportunities open to them, women have no chance in achieving as men despite the family they come from, how hard she works or how smart she is. Men thus monopolize the economic power and added to cultural expectations women are kept of careers and responsibilities which are only pressed on men.

Society discourages any political ambitions women show, and does not approve and reward 'male' positions of influence. Political status follows the family line and reposes in the family's male hand (Jackson, 2011).

Significantly, in modern times men could no longer inherit political power from their fathers but through election or appointment. Thus, politics became a masculine realm keeping women out of the office. Women's meager economic power generally pushed them from the race of political power (Jackson, 2011). The marginalization of women in politics can only be addressed if both men and women get an equal chance to access the viable economic services. The World Bank (2015) notes that expanding women's participation, their ability to make decisions, access to assets and services, being able to seize opportunities on an equal footing is vital to improving their lives as well as the world we all share. This, however, shows that having women holding influential political positions has also some advantages to societies unlike when they still live subservient to men.

Therefore, gender shapes the roles, relationships, responsibilities, expectations and access to resources that are vital to the engendering and maintaining a comfortable social system. Weerakkody (2014) notes that the intrusion of gender inequality throughout the political, economic and social interactions lays the foundation for structural inequalities that ultimately hinder the consolidation of social upbringing throughout societies. Moreover, Weerakkody (2014) notes that men with economic or political power assumed and accepted ordinary men's dominance over women. Thus it can be seen that until recently, most people and most policies assumed women's stereotypic roles and status. In the end, women, are vulnerable as structural inequalities of authority and power create conditions for women to be subjugated and marginalized.

2.3.7. Domestic chains

The extent to which traditional family dynamics continue to prevail in many societies is extremely striking. Despite women's significant improvement in education and professionalism, women and men continue to follow traditional gender roles at home. As Mala & Weldon's (2010) survey revealed, women are much more likely than men to be responsible for the majority of household work and childcare. Family duties can limit men's political careers too, but this is an occasional obstacle, while women's domestic responsibilities are regular and long-lasting (Jackson, 2011). Thus, issues of child bearing have been some of the most crucial factors that lead women to be disregarded in issues of politics. Abubaker & Ahmid (2014) argue that child bearing deprived women control over their time as they could not avoid their mothering duties without facing social

criticism. With these constant stereotypical notions that women are incapable in every aspect of life except when bearing children, it becomes hard to break through the patriarchal barriers without being labelled, chastised and even alienated by some members of society (Matuba, 2016).

Largely excluded from strategic social positions, women cannot climb the same ladders of influence that men have ascended in the rise to political prominence (Jackson, 2011). This is further supported by Lawless & Fox (2012) who argue that women's reproductive responsibilities continue to define a permanent set of social and economic concerns. As mothers, they continued to bear the loads of child care, as managers of the household, they continue to be shock absorbers of economic crises. Therefore, women's continuing effects of family roles leads to the gender gap that is still living in today's politics. The World Bank (2015) notes that one factor which leads to the gender gap is that female politicians tend to start their careers late as they spend more time caring for their families.

Thus, without support of thinking outside the culturally defined gender roles, women find themselves out of the public sphere. Jackson (2011) notes that cultural circumstances of gender inequality make even ordinary men's support for women to enter politics unlikely. Therefore, while these concerns are persistent, their public expression differ historically as well as politically with their male counterparts. The argument goes on to state that the most effective way women have for getting around the recruitment obstacles is to marry a politician. As noted by Jackson (2011), political power depends, even more than economic power, on networks of influence and obligations. Therefore, one cannot totally blame the woman for the extensive gender gap that exists even in modern times in the political realm.

Thus, domestic chains together with girls' socialization instills less interest in politics than in boys. The World Bank (2015) notes that gendered social roles and expectations reduce women's participation in politics even before an election begins. Thus, even if women hold office, these biased social norms continue to cap their aspirations and opportunities. Therefore, the struggle to balance family roles with professional responsibilities is one of the challenges women face and prevent them from taking up influential political positions. Ogbogu (2012), also observe that women with family responsibilities find that their ascending movement is often disadvantaged as they fight for time to devote to career and family.

2.3.8. Religious barriers

Discrimination against women in the political realm has also been perpetuated by religious practices that are unfavorable to them. Jackson (2011) notes that, religious barriers were for a very long time one of the obstacles to women's entrance into politics. This is because various religions emphasize the fact that women are under men while men are the heads. This is evidenced in the Bible at Ephesians chapter 5 verses 22 and 23: Verse 22 clearly states: "Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord," Verse 23 further states: "For the husband is the head of the wife as the Christ is the head of the church." With such motivation from religion, women accepted their role as being under the men. This has encouraged a wide gender gap in the political realm. Similarly, from the Quran, in Surat An- Nisa chapter 4 verse 34 states that men are in charge of women by (right of) what Allah has given one over the other and what they spend (for maintenance) from their wealth.

Therefore, taking note of religious beliefs that women are inferior to men, more women never got a chance to equally express themselves in the political arena. Jackson (2011) notes that without inspiration from the society's religion as children and support as adults from the elders of religion, women are not likely to stalk power. However, even though with time some religions began to accept women as equal in making decisions, they have a long way to capture the eyes of many religious elders in convincing them that they can do as much as men.

Ogbogu (2012) notes that, over time the differences between men and women statuses according to religion eroded, yet the breakdown of these religious barriers was not enough as women still lacked the liberty to pursue more, especially political careers. This is supported by Jackson (2011) who postulates that religion totally excluded women from active participation in decision making in their societies because it reflected women's social marginality. Thus, marginalization of women in the religious sector means marginalization of women in every sector of their lives including the political realm.

2.3.9. Political factors

Politics is considered by many societies as a dirty game. Therefore, dirty games are not socially approved to be associated with women. Ogbogu (2012) notes that in Nigeria, politics is seen as a 'dirty game' which exposes women to close interactions with men. This however, is culturally unacceptable and is viewed as a sign of filthiness. Therefore, this is one of the many reasons why most women have seen been outside of this domain. The conscious decision to prevent women

from advancing in politics is the same agenda used by fanatics of patriarchy to prevent economic and social emancipation of women (Matuba, 2016).

Thus, since Nigeria is among countries which conform to the Beijing Platform, for action it is failing dismally to come to terms with the requirements of the platform as women are still marginalized in that country. Ogbogu (2012) notes that Nigerian women have not reached yet the commended thirty percent seats in government as recommended by the Beijing Platform for Action. Therefore, due to stereotypical beliefs, women do not want to be regarded as socially immoral thus they take a step back when it comes to being actively associated with politics.

Moreover, men themselves do not need feminine characteristics in politics as they regard it as a competing and aggressive ground. Thus, politics in the past became a male only zone where women were not allowed to participate. Jackson (2011) observes that before women's admission to the body of politics, they were merely the political and legal dependents of their husbands, fathers or guardians. This has led to the massive gender gap when it comes to representation of women in politics. Tripp (2013) points out that, the public-private dichotomy in traditional definition of politics is used to exclude women from the public political sphere and even when they are brought to politics they enter as mothers and wives. Mavindidze (2016) argues that male domination of politics and culture of is another factor that hinders women's political participation. This is mainly because there will be a male perspective especially on issues of national importance that discourages women as their perspective is often ignored and not reflected in the politics of their parties.

2.4. The Masculine model of politics and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

Political life has largely been organized according to male norms and values. This is because men largely dominate the political arena and even define evaluation standards. Lawless & Fox (2012) argue that politics is often based on the notions of 'winners' and 'losers', competition and confrontation, rather than on systematic collaboration and consensus. Thus, for one to acquire such a position, they mostly need support from men at each step. Thus, women's attempts to get to such positions are being thwarted as men only accept other men's dominance.

Thus, under this system of patriarchy where women are regarded as "lesser", the idea of having them holding senior political positions threaten men. This leads to men's unwillingness to share power with women. Knight (2011) argues that within such a structure, women may carve out some areas of their own, but attempts to live independently of men, or even in equal partnership with men will be contested, resisted and contained. Shepherd (2004) similarly argues that in this case,

the male hegemonic model is defined as “the culturally dominant form of masculinity that is constructed in relation to femininity”. This is illustrated in Figure 2.2 in which Jackson (2011) tries to bring out the nature of the 21st century politics wherein men seem to be occupying most of the influential political positions around the world. Thus, marginalization of women in areas of influence especially in the political realm continue to work against them besides the fact that 21st century is a century whereby many gender tools have been implemented in order to mitigate issues of gender inequality than any other century before.

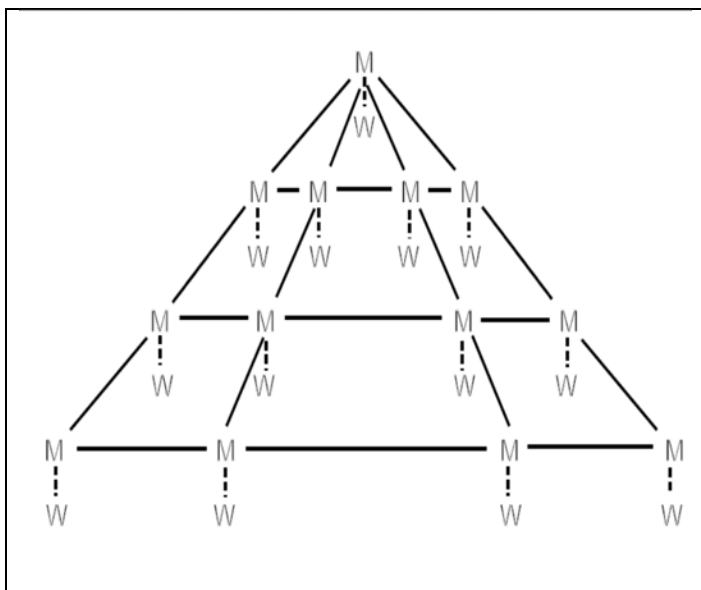


Figure 2.2 The masculine model of politics: Adapted from Jackson 2011

Furthermore, as male dominance has been a challenging factor especially with regards to women’s entry in politics, Bari (2005) argues that, often, male dominated political parties have a male perspective on issues of national importance that dissolutions women as their perspective is often ignored and not reflected in the politics of their parties. This has, resulted in women not being elected to positions of power within party structures because of gender biases of male leadership. Thus, even most policies fortify men’s domination as they assume women’s stereotypic roles and statuses. This shows that gender equality has its own challenges which encourages the reproduction of men’s advantages.

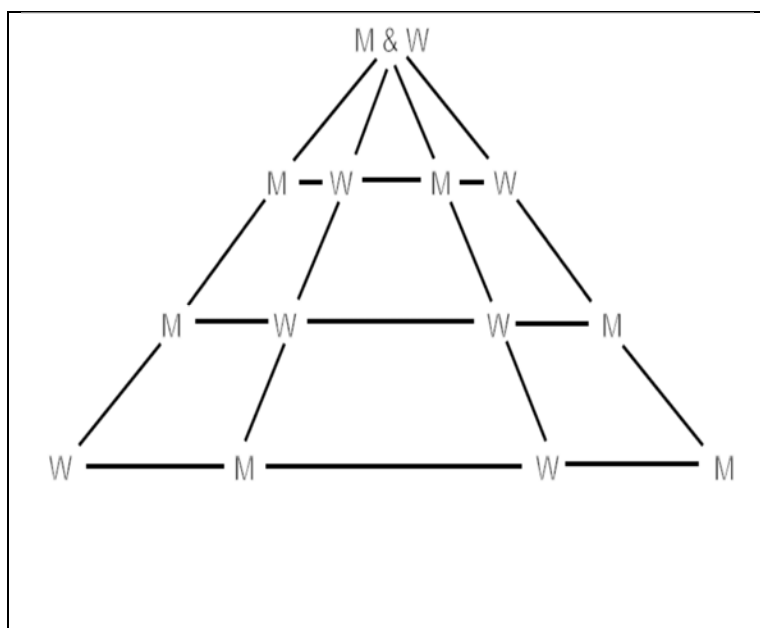


Figure 2.3 The masculine model of politics: Adapted from Jackson 2011

However, this disregards Millennium Development Goals the MDGs' vision which seeks to ensure that women get an equal participation with men in power and decision making as shown in Figure 2.3. In Figure 2.3, women are perceived as equally capable of effectively participating in the political influential positions rather than being under men as shown in Figure 2.2. Looking at this figure, men and women with ability are being given an equal chance to perform as well as they can without considering one's gender or the socially constructed roles men and women are expected to acquire.

To this effect, the human rights approach of 2008 to the MDGs called states and development actors to incorporate the human rights by being transformational and not technocratic and adopt a human right based approach to empowerment and participation. Thus, one of its objectives was to promote gender equality and women empowerment. This is because the MDGs see participation in political life as women's fundamental right. They see this as a core to gender equality and women's empowerment as women play a crucial role in national economic growth and development. Thus, the Millennium Development Goals report (2014) posits that in January 2014, forty-six countries boasted having more than thirty percent female members of parliament in at least one chamber (Inter-Parliamentary Union & United Nations Women, 2015). It further goes on to state that more women are holding some of the so-called "hard" ministerial portfolios such as defense, foreign affairs and environment.

However, even though the MDGs have tried to mitigate the gender gap that exist between men and women in the political realm, it cannot be fully applauded for the full emancipation of women. This is because as it targeted to ensure full equality by the year 2015, various challenges stood in its way. One can argue that issues of patriarchy were at play as only a handful of women got access to political positions. This is evidenced by the MDGs 2014 report which showed that at least thirty percent of women were now in political positions which does not inform gender parity in the political realm (United Nations, 2015). Contemporary politics is still following a masculine model wherein men constitute a greater percentage in decision making positions.

2.5. Reasons for women's participation in politics

Inglehart & Norris (2013) have put forward various arguments as to why women should actively participate in the political arena. According to them these are some of the reasons:

2.5.1. The justice argument:

According to some scholars, in order to create just societies, women should also be able to participate in the political arena as much as men do. The argument goes on to suggest that women should have a right to half of the seats as a virtue of them constituting half of the human race population. This is supported by Bari (2005) who states that the intrinsic argument postulates that women constitute half of the world's population and therefore, it is only fair that they should have equal participation and representation in world democracies.

Thus, this argument is based mainly on the human rights perspective. This is further supported by the SADC Gender Protocol (2015) which notes that Ms. Michelle Bachelet, former President of Chile, stressed that gender equality is an essential expression of human rights and that women's rights are human rights. She called upon the international community to turn the principles established in the Beijing Declaration into visible results on the ground and also noted that while progress has been made in this area, it remains unbalanced and uneven.

2.5.2. The experiment argument:

Inglehart & Norris (2013) posit that the experiment argument emphasizes that women should actively participate in the political arena because of the different experiences they hold. These experiences are believed to be either biologically or socially constructed and that because of this they need to be represented as well. This therefore in turn serves to posit that if women are not represented, their concerns and experiences will not be considered. Therefore, for such experiences to be heard and mitigated they need to be represented in the political realm. Also,

the various experiences they have acquired can be used for the benefit of the political sphere as they hold a different understanding and knowledge of different aspects.

This is also supported by Bari (2005) who notes that the instrumentalist argument pushed for women's greater participation on the essentialist ground that men and women are different. As women have different vision and concepts of politics owing to their sex and their gender roles as mothers. Therefore, it is assumed that women in politics will bring a special caring focus and female values to politics.

2.5.3. The interest argument:

According to Inglehart & Norris (2013) the interest argument is premised on the belief that men and women have conflicting interests. Therefore, these interests cannot be represented by men. Thus, the need to have women in the decision making or influential political positions. Therefore, it is assumed that women in politics will bring a special caring focus and female values to politics (Bari, 2005).

2.5.4. The symbolic argument:

The symbolic argument according to Inglehart & Norris (2013) posit that every female politician acts as a role model for all women. This is considered regardless of political views or party membership. Patel & Buiting (2013) posit that an influential review of one hundred and sixty-two studies revealed that women showed more democratic/participative leadership styles and less directive/autocratic styles than did their male counterparts. Jackson (2011) notes that there are other types of leadership such as transformational (being a role model), transactional (reward and punishment) and laissez-faire (neglect of responsibility).

Matuba (2016) acknowledges that women are more likely to show transformational leadership and to give rewards while men are more likely to exhibit the punishment element of transactional leadership, as well as the laissez-faire style. Thus, women are less hierarchical, more cooperative and collaborative, and more willing to enhance the self-esteem of others. Therefore, it is important to have such role models as they would act as an attraction to other women to work hard and not look down upon themselves so that they would also be part of the political arena. Thus, women's style can be defined as people-based, role modelling, collaborative and more enhancing to increase others' self-worth (Patel & Buiting, 2013).

2.5.5. The critical mass argument:

On the critical mass argument, Inglehart & Norris (2013) claim that women are able to achieve solidarity of purpose so that they can represent women's interest when they achieve a certain level of representation. This is in line with Iyengar (2016) who notes that Hillary Clinton in the United States is motivating and encouraging women to contest for the vice presidency seat. This is however, against the statement which was uttered by Angie Motsheka, previously an ANC women's league president in 2012 who said that South Africa was not ready for a woman president. Instead of representing and encouraging women to go for the presidential office she was actually demotivating them.

2.5.6. The democracy argument:

Inglehart & Norris (2013) on democracy argument assert that in order to have democratic states worldwide, there should be an equal representation of men and women. They further argue that this enhances the democratization of governance in both transitional and consolidated democracies. However, Mavindidze (2016) has a different view on the issue of democracy as the author posits that democracy has historically served men better than women, as the political system from the ancient Greece to the modern times of the 21st century, it has built on the public-private dichotomy and excluded women from citizenship. Bari (2005) further notes that women have been kept outside the public domain of politics by most of the political thinkers and philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, Rousseau, John Lock, Thomas Hobbes and Hegel. They considered them fit only for domestic roles in the private sphere and maintained that there was no place for women in politics because of their suitability in caring roles as mothers and wives.

2.6. Women being outside the pyramid of political power and the impacts

Tripp (2013) acknowledges that women have in the past stood outside the organization of power in society and are still experiencing the same in the contemporary time. Tripp further argues that women were not at the bottom of the organization of power so much as they were outside it altogether. This however, shows that most economic and political activities in most societies are culturally gained by men. Mavindidze (2016) points out that men stand somewhere in the male hierarchy of status and influence. Jackson (2011) also notes that in many African countries, even though governments are putting across legislations and laws to counter inequalities, gender disparities still exist especially in terms of education more specifically in the rural areas and areas that are still under extreme underdevelopment and poverty.

Low levels of education and training are predominant among women and this diminishes their opportunities for access to leadership positions in politics leaving more opportunities for men who are still favored at family levels in terms of education (Tripp, 2013). This was supported by Kauzya (2014) who points out that, the discriminatory and gender biases have seen most women in domestic work, thus they do not develop the necessary confidence to participate in political leadership positions. This translates to the fact that only those who live in well developed areas have more access to positions of power in politics, that is if they are being given those privileges.

On another note, it will be very crucial to point that mainly in African countries only those who have had the privilege of being close to male politicians are the only ones who access influential positions in politics. For instance, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, likely because of having being once married to the current President of South Africa Jacob Zuma she got the chance of getting involved into politics. As a result, she ended up being the chairperson of the African Union. Hillary Clinton who was a candidate for the presidential seat in USA in 2016, was formerly married to a former US president, Bill Clinton. Most women who get to positions of leadership in politics are the ones who are either biologically related, married or closely related to men in positions of power (Advocacy Aid, 2015).

Similarly, the former vice President of Zimbabwe, Joyce Mujuru, due to the fact that she knew the President from times of the liberation struggle she ended up being appointed Vice President as a token of appreciation. However, a second male vice president was also given a chair undermining her capabilities as a woman. This shows that only a handful of women have the opportunity to get into positions of power in the political realm. Therefore, from these examples, it is clear that women are still marginalized when it comes to assuming influential political positions as most get a chance through being close to a male politician. Thus, one can argue that women do not get to such positions as a result of their capabilities but as a result of whom they know.

However, women's being outside the pyramid of power has great and various consequences as societies lose more out of judging by gender. Mavindidze (2016) notes that women constitute slightly more than half of the world's population, thus their contribution to social and economic development of societies is more than half as compared to that of men by virtue of their dual roles in the productive and the reproductive spheres.

Therefore, taking advantage of such knowledge and experiences and putting women to greater use in societies will ensure greater advancement. Tenthani (2012) points out that during the presidency of Joyce Banda in Malawi, economic change was experienced in a positive way.

However, by the mere fact that women still face marginalization in politics, most African countries are getting poorer by the day. Women's participation in formal political structures and processes where decisions regarding the use of societal resources generated by both men and women are made remains insignificant (Bari, 2005).

The critical mass concept emphasizes on political representation mainly the issue of women being the minority group in most parliaments. Therefore, it emphasizes that women's representation in politics will enhance visibility of women's view points in the political decision making procedures. This however, acted as a driving factor for the gender and politics scholars to argue that women will most probably not have a major impact on legislative outcomes if they do not evolve from a few token individuals to a considerable minority. They further argue that only when the number of women in decision making increases will they be able to promote women-friendly policy change.

2.7. International recommendations

A committee of ministers of the council of Europe adopted the Recommendation Rec (2003)3 on balanced participation of women and men in the political and public decision making in March of 2003 (United Nations, 2015). It managed to define balanced representation as a minimum representation of forty percent of both sexes in all decision-making bodies in the political or public life (United Nations, 2015). The congress also adopted in March of 2010 the recommendation 288 on achieving sustainable gender equality in local and regional political life. It emphasized that governments at all governance levels should be responsible for promoting equality between men and women. It encouraged local and regional authorities to be involved in "the process of social and cultural change that equality demands" (Advocacy Aid, 2015:15).

The congress further recommended that those in authority should also implement gender equality policies through enforcing legislations which allow gender perspectives to be taken into account in all activities (SADC Gender Protocol, 2015). The congress also encouraged governments to provide assistance to municipalities and regions in order to introduce mainstreaming in all of their departments and incentives for women involved in politics. Mavindidze (2016) states that governments need to mainstream gender in decentralization policies and ensure that women are not only represented in leadership positions that emerge because of decentralization, but also that they effectively participate and influence decisions. Therefore, society needs to be sensitized and constrained to change the discriminatory cultural practices, traditions and biases which consciously or unconsciously work against women's access to leadership positions.

2.8. Gender Policies and Instruments for equality adopted by South Africa

A global commitment has been made to redress gender imbalance in politics due to the continuous recognition of women's historic exclusion from this sector. The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing platform of Action and the Quota system are international instruments on gender equality. They seek to recognize that the status of women has advanced in some important respects in the past decade but that progress has been uneven. As inequalities between women and men have persisted and major obstacles remain with serious consequences for the well-being of all people, these tools are determined to advance the goals of equality, development and peace for all women everywhere in the interest of all humanity. Thus, these instruments are regarded as landmarks that affirm principles of fundamental human rights and equality for women around the world.

2.8.1. The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

CEDAW was adopted in 1979 on December 18 by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and entered into force in 1981 (United Nations General Assembly, 2015). It is a practical blueprint for each country to achieve progress for women and girls. The Convention was only ratified or signed by one hundred and eighty-seven countries against one hundred and ninety-four to date. Countries which have not ratified it as yet are, the United States, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Iran and two small Pacific Island nations, Palau and Tonga (Abubaker & Ahmid, 2014). Countries that have ratified the Convention are obliged to submit national reports at least every four years on measures they have taken to comply with their treaty obligations (SADC Gender Protocol, 2015).

CEDAW is seen as a landmark agreement that affirms principles of fundamental human rights and equality for women around the world. The Convention defines discrimination against women as any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise of opportunities and rights by women (SADC Gender Protocol, 2015). This is considered irrespective of their marital status. Therefore, CEDAW defines discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination.

By accepting the Convention, states commit to incorporate the principle of equality of men and women in their legal system and the abolishment of all discriminatory laws (SADC Gender Protocol, 2015). This is done to ensure protection of women against discrimination through tribunals and public institutions. It also ensures elimination of all acts of discrimination against women by persons, organizations or enterprises (United Nations General Assembly, 2015). Thus, the Convention provides the basis for realizing equality between men and women through ensuring women's equal access to, and equal opportunities in political and public life. The Convention is therefore a human rights treaty which affirms the reproductive rights of women. It targets culture and tradition as influential forces shaping gender roles and family relations.

South African government ratified the Convention in the year 1995. Advocacy Aid (2015) notes that the South African state submitted a report covering the period 1998 to 2008 in 2010. Civil society organizations then developed a shadow report (prepared by Advocacy Aid) which was submitted in response to the State Report to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against women in January 2011 (SADC Gender Protocol, 2015). This shadow report observed that despite the state's commitment to modify social and cultural behavior patterns, it was challenging as they were based on stereotyped notions about the roles of men and women (United Nations, 2015). Abubaker & Ahmid (2014) note that CEDAW plays an important role in improving women's political participation worldwide. To CEDAW, women's participation and equal representation for both sexes in the political process are an integral part of the modern political system. Therefore, it is recommended that all available measures should be taken to improve women's political participation.

2.8.2. Beijing Platform for Action

Platform for Action became an agenda for women's empowerment. It tried to achieve this by upholding other gender instruments like the CEDAW and the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of women (Advocacy Aid, 2015). It aims to remove all obstacles to women's active participation in all spheres of public and private life through a full and equal share in the economic, social, cultural and political decision making. Therefore, it acknowledges the voices of all women everywhere and takes note of the diversity of women and their roles and circumstances, honoring women who paved the way inspired by the hope present in the world's youth (UNICEF, 2014). It further emphasizes that local, national, regional and global peace is attainable and is inextricably linked with the advancement of women, who are a fundamental force for leadership, conflict resolution and the promotion of lasting peace at all levels.

Furthermore, the Platform for Action emphasizes that women share common concerns that can only be addressed by working together and in partnership with men towards a common goal of gender equality around the world (United Nations General Assembly, 2015). It also respects and values the full diversity of women's situations and conditions and recognizes that some women face particular barriers to their empowerment (De La Rey, 2012). Therefore, to promote women's economic independence, including employment, and eradication of the persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women, it addresses the structural causes of poverty through changes in economic structures, ensuring equal access for all women, including those in rural areas, as vital development agents, to productive resources, opportunities and public services (United Nations General Assembly, 2015).

However, in as much as the Beijing Platform of Action tries to come up with strategies to reduce gender inequalities between men and women, it is failing dismally. The United Nations (2015) notes that the analysis of the national reports on the implementation of the Platform for Action revealed that there had been no major breakthrough with regard to equal sharing of decision making in political structures at national and international levels. The (World Health Organization (2015) also notes that in most countries of the world, representation of women remains low, even in countries where a "critical mass" in decision-making positions within the public sector has been achieved, there are few women on boards of directors of major business corporations. Therefore, this shows that there is need for more careful monitoring of progress in ensuring women's equal participation in these positions of economic and political power.

On the other hand, Abubaker & Ahmid (2014) argue that the Beijing conference in 1995 discussed thoroughly about the discriminatory attitude, practices and unequal power relations that lead to the underrepresentation and marginalization of women in the political process. The United Nations (2015) also states that the conference focused on cultural and institutional bottlenecks to women's political participation, such as socioeconomic status of women, political violence, and unwillingness of women to take part in the political process and so on. Therefore, to ensure success of the Platform for Action, it requires strong commitment from the governments, international organizations and institutions at all levels. Adequate mobilization of resources at both national and international levels is also a necessary need. This will enhance the advancement and empowerment of women.

2.8.3. Quota system

Bari (2005) argues that gender quotas emerged as global fast track strategy to redress the historic exclusion of women from the formal arena of politics. However, even though many countries agreed to gender quotas either voluntarily or through legislations, South Africa has been facing quite a disturbing setback as only the ANC, the ruling party, adhered to these quotas while the DA its main opposition party with three female leaders refused to take these into consideration. Kauzya (2014) observes that controversy starts around the vital question as to what extent women's presence in political structures has led to an effective mainstreaming of gender concerns in politics. Thus, many issues came up regarding the nature and modalities of gender quotas and its limitation to empower women in politics.

However, in as much as these quotas were implemented, they only act as cosmetic solutions if structural challenges behind women's marginalization and disempowerment in politics are not addressed. Such include the issues of feminization of poverty where women have been underprivileged when it comes to the economy. The World Bank (2015) highlights that while quotas are important in addressing the exclusion of women from the public and political sphere, they can only form one part of a multi-faceted strategy for empowering women, which must together with increased political participation also involve a redistribution of socio-economic resources within societies. This is because women who lack economic rights are unable to get to the social and economic redistributive justice in society (Bari, 2005).

On the other hand, gender quotas have also been a challenge as they were universalized. The SADC Gender Protocol (2015) argues that gender quotas are riddled with essentialist assumptions of women as a distinct group with a distinct perspective and the universalization of women as a category. Kauzya (2014) further asserts that women are not a homogeneous group as they are divided along lines of class, ethnicity, religion and rural/urban background. Thus, in order for the quotas to effectively work, there is greater need for the South African government to mitigate some of the structural challenges that are present. As Andela, et al. (2012) put forward the idea that without the transformation of the wider politics, gender quotas cannot lead to women's empowerment. This is supported by the World Bank (2015) which states that although some countries employ quotas to hasten representational equality, on average internationally, women still occupy only twenty percent of lower-level parliamentary seats.

2.9. Regional instruments

This part of the study discusses the SADC region instruments that fight against gender inequalities.

2.9.1. Review of the SADC Gender Protocol

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) has a vision and mission of durable peace, freedom and social justice, equitable development and sustained economic prosperity for the people of Southern Africa. The SADC Gender Protocol (2015) member states undertook in the SADC treaty Article 6(2) not to discriminate against any person on the grounds of gender or sex. The Protocol was signed in August 2008 by heads of states with the exception of Botswana and Mauritius.

The SADC Gender Protocol mandate has been to encompass commitments made by the regional, global and continental instruments to achieve gender equality. These include the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Beijing Declaration and its Platform of Action among others. The protocol addresses gaps and it tries to set targets where gender equality does not exist. The SADC Gender Protocol (2015) notes that the SADC Protocol provides a relatively comprehensive framework for promoting gender responsive governance in the SADC region, covering representation, participation and service delivery. Thus, the Protocol assumes this by advancing gender equality by ensuring that the region has equality between men and women in both the public and the private sector. To achieve this, the Protocol has to coordinate work done by the Southern African Gender Protocol Alliance.

However, looking at the SADC Gender Protocol in the SADC region including South Africa, women who are striving to take up leadership positions are seriously being harassed by their governments. Let us take Malawi and Zimbabwe as examples. In Malawi, Joyce Banda took over as President after the sudden death of the then president Bingu Wa Mutarika in 2012. Before taking over from President Mutarika when she was appointed as Vice President, she faced opposition from all corners. Tenthani (2012) notes that President Mutarika's decision to appoint her as his running mate for the 2009 elections surprised many in Malawi's mainly conservative, male dominated society.

Furthermore, a senior ruling party official openly said Malawi was not ready for a female president (Tenthani, 2012). This was after the succession of President Mutarika. Sentiments like these clearly bring to light that indeed patriarchal traits are deeply embedded within the norms of these states that are heavily equipped with gender tools. Similarly, the Zimbabwean Vice President

Joyce Mujuru had a second Vice President who was male. As a result, therefore, her capabilities were undermined. This also shows that for equality to be reached, SADC states should stop undermining women in leadership positions and start embracing their capabilities. In addition, although being a former ally of the Zimbabwean president Mrs. Mujuru is currently being harassed and called all sorts of names. This shows that patriarchy is at its peak in these states that are trying to fight gender inequalities. Thus, achieving equality at national, regional and global levels seem to be failing dismally.

Taking note of the above gender instruments they all preach of gender equality between men and women in their respective societies. States and governments are the ones that implement those policies and instruments. However, even though such instruments are brought to the fore, most states just have them on paper rather than in practice. This can be evidenced by inequalities that still exist even in this 21st century which is an era of fighting gender inequalities. Mavindidze (2016) argues that even though these tools are meant to ensure women's active participation in leadership positions, there are however, chances that these tools are being used to keep women in their traditional roles near the home and the kitchen. Therefore, it may be that governments, international bodies and institutions are engaged in lip service in order to be recognized as democratic states rather than enforcing genuine gender equality.

2.9.2. Nairobi forward looking strategies

The founding of the United Nations (UN) after the 2nd World War and the decolonization of other states were crucial events in the political, economic and social liberation of women (United Nations, 2015). The UN thus gave birth to the General Assembly (GA) which became the brainchild of the Nairobi Protocol which came up with the forward-looking strategies in 1989 (Advocacy Aid, 2015). This was meant to achieve the advancement of women for the period up to the year 2000. Through the Nairobi forward looking strategies, the UN Decade for Women goals and objectives of equality, development and peace were stressed. Therefore, elimination of women's status nationally, regionally and internationally was improved.

The United Nations General Assembly (2015) notes that the protocol reaffirmed its determination to encourage full participation of women in economic, social, cultural, civil and political affairs. These efforts were inspired by the awareness that women's reproductive and productive roles were closely linked to their political, economic, social, cultural, legal, religious and educational conditions (Albertyn, 2011). This however, constrained women's advancement. Factors that intensified the economic exploitation, marginalization and oppression of women stemmed from

chronic inequalities, injustices and exploitative conditions at family, community, national, sub-regional and international levels (Advocacy Aid, 2015). Thus, the Secretary General of the UN was requested that when presenting candidatures at decision making level, priority should be given to women and women from under-represented and unrepresented developing countries.

However, in as much as these tools are trying to curb inequalities, challenges in achieving equality have been enormous as states are not really applying these in practice. Therefore, achieving equality at national, regional and global levels seem to be failing dismally.

2.9.3. The Maputo Protocol

The Maputo protocol is also known as the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa. It was adopted by the 2nd Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union in Maputo, Mozambique on 11 July 2003 (Family Watch International, 2009). The Protocol has been ratified by thirty-six countries and forty-one have submitted reports under article 9 of the Solemn Declaration for Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA) (United Nations General Assembly, 2015). It is a human rights instrument that is legally binding for all African Union member states that ratify it. Elimination of discrimination against women, right to participation in the political and decision making process and the right to education and training are some of the protocol's mandate.

Family Watch International (2009) outlines that the Protocol sets out legislative and policy measures that signatory countries should be taking in order to combat discrimination against women and contains a commitment from signatories to modify their citizens' conduct through educational information to eliminate discrimination. Thus, the protocol seeks to forbid governments to recognize any distinction based on sex. This is because it will destroy the ability of women to enjoy their human rights and fundamental freedoms in all spheres of life. However, not much progress has been effected as most of the countries that agreed to this protocol are still faced with huge inequalities between men and women when it comes to representation in politics.

2.10. National instruments

This section discusses national gender instruments used by South Africa against gender inequalities.

2.10.1. South Africa's constitution

Seidman (1993) points out that the ANC league officials encouraged women's participation in national anti-apartheid campaigns and campaigns to draw "Women's Charter" to be included in

constitutional arrangements for the future government. SAInfor Reporter (2014) notes that South Africa's constitution is the result of remarkably detailed and inclusive negotiations that were carried out with an acute awareness of the injustices of the country's non-democratic past. Myakayaka-Manzini (2002) notes that the constitution contains clauses that enable the Women's Charter and other Charters so that they could be adopted as government policies.

As Seidman (1993) notes, this Charter was to be created through consultation of local women's groups across the political spectrum encouraging them to debate about their needs. This is because in the apartheid era, women were marginalized in access to political participation. Myakayaka-Manzini (2002) states that in 1994 the apartheid government had one woman cabinet minister for health and one for Justice whilst by 1999 women constituted thirty-one percent Cabinet Ministers. This shows that although marginalization of women was at play during the apartheid era, the situation has been improving.

The 1996 Constitution was approved by the Constitutional Court (CC) on 4 December 1996 and took effect on 4 February 1997 (UNICEF, 2014). Gender Protocol (2015) observes that the constitution is the highest law of the land and no other supersedes it. Chapter two of the constitution clearly talks about the Bill of Rights which is known as the cornerstone of democracy in South Africa. This Bill enshrines the rights of all people in South Africa and it affirms the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom (SADC Gender Protocol, 2015). Therefore, in terms of equality, everyone is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection and benefit of the law. It is important to note that equality includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms.

Therefore, this has given rise to discussing the role that South African women played since apartheid through policy changes and organizations set up to enable women's rights. Pitamber (2015) notes that women have made strides in all sections of society, the economy, engineering, science, technology, academia, and media and in politics. While Seidman (1993) states that during the past decade, South African women have increasingly engaged in political activity where they inserted gender issues into debates around transition to majority rule. This is further supported by the United Nations (2015) which argues that women played a vibrant role in drafting the South African constitution influencing clauses that affected their rights.

However, the United Nations (2015) argues that women's entrance in politics is progressing slowly and the snail's pace of improvement on gender equality and women's participation in public and political life will need to be tackled head on for the overall success of the new goals. The

Inter-Parliamentary Union & United Nations Women (2015) notes that in Africa, there are only three countries; South Africa, Cape Verde and Rwanda where women account for more than thirty percent of ministers in the cabinet. Therefore, the United Nations (2015) concludes that we are a long way from where the world needs to be on gender equality and women's political participation. It further states that this should be a wake-up call to mobilize political will to change mindsets and take action that will spur progress on this issue.

2.10.2. The equity act

The equity act is one of the strategies that was adopted by the South African government in order to form living conditions where men and women are treated equally (SADC Gender Protocol, 2015). Section six of the act forbids any form of discrimination on the basis of gender. It stipulates:

- Traditional, customary or religious practices that impair females' dignity or in any form challenges equality between the man and the woman should not be allowed.
- There should be no policy or conduct that unfairly exclude access of women to land rights, finance and other resources.
- Restriction in accessing opportunities that include, access to services or contracts meant to render services, or failing to take steps to practically accommodate the needs of such persons should not be tolerated.
- It also goes against the unequal access to opportunities by women as a result of the sexual division of labor.

Thus, the equity act on the promotion of equality and the prevention of unfair discrimination act four of 2000 agrees that in order to consolidate democracy in the country, abolition of both social and economic inequalities should be improved (SADC Gender Protocol, 2015). This is regardless of these having being fostered by colonialism, apartheid and patriarchy. However, despite efforts by the government, South Africa has been facing challenges in trying to achieve the 50-50 mandate by the year 2015 as more men than women have a greater access to the more influential positions within the political realm (SADC Gender Protocol, 2015). This is because South Africa is more patriarchal in nature thus the huge gender gap is being maintained. Therefore, the equity act is not being implemented and followed properly.

2.11. Mitigating efforts by the South African government against gender inequality

Various efforts by the South African government to work on gender equality were discussed in the study.

2.11.1. The government

During inauguration of President Thabo Mbeki in 2004, he stressed the importance of gender equality as well as the dire need to end discrimination against women (United Nations, 2015). In his speech, he urged South Africans to acknowledge women and their efforts. He said; “Our days and our nights will remain forever blemished as long as our people are torn apart and fractured by gender inequalities, which continue to characterize our society. Therefore, as we engaged in a struggle to end racist domination, we also said that we could not speak of genuine liberation without integrating within the emancipation of women.... No government in South Africa could ever claim to the present will of the people if it failed to address the vital mission of the emancipation of women in all its elements, and that includes the government we are honored to lead”. This was complimented by his actions when he appointed quite a number of women to his Cabinet as well as to four out of the nine provincial offices in South Africa (Ritcher & Morrell, 2006).

2.11.2. The Office on the Status of Women (OSW)

OSW is one of the various efforts of the South African Government to decrease gender inequalities (Ritcher & Morrell, 2006). This office plays a crucial role in promoting men’s active and constructive involvement in the fight against women’s oppression (United Nations, 2015). In the year 2004, the OSW gathered senior representatives from national departments and the civil society to deliberate on the formation and mandate of a National Gender Machinery (NGM) Coordinating Committee on Men and Gender Equality (Ritcher & Morrell, 2006).

2.11.3. The Commission on Gender Equality (CGE)

This is a constitutional body established by the Commission on Gender Equality Act 39 of 1996 as a support mechanism for the development and execution of gender equality in South Africa (Ritcher & Morrell, 2006). The body has an obligation to form a society free from gender discrimination and all other forms of oppression, a society where people will have the chances and means to realize their capacity regardless of gender, race, class, religion, disability or geographic location (SADC Gender Protocol, 2015). Part of its directive involves a countrywide men’s program to advance gender equality in all its nine provinces.

Therefore, together with the South African Men's Forum, the Moral Regeneration Movement (MRM) and the National Council of Churches (NCC), the CGE launched a series of dialogues entitled 'Unmasking Patriarchy' which explore men's roles and responsibilities in achieving gender equality (Albertyn, 2011).

2.11.4. The South African Men's Forum (SAMPF)

Dr. Bongani Khumalo put to test all men of South Africa to 'restore the soul of the nation' in 1997 which led to the birth of the SAMPF (Ritcher & Morrell, 2006). During the launch, he said: "the prevailing negative trends in our society, the status of men as the common denominator makes it imperative for all of us to get involved as men to be agents of change". Therefore, SAMPF has been mobilizing and stimulating men and boys to change their mindset about gender roles and to work to bring about gender equality (Ritcher & Morrell, 2006).

Thus, it has various programs focused on redefining men's roles in the family and the broader society. Such programs include, Men's Guilds project which was established in various churches and seeks to challenge religious stereotypes of men and women's roles by engaging with religious leaders (Pitamber, 2015). Also, the Fatherhood Project is a collaboration between the SAMPF and the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and it encourages men to play an active role in their children's lives by presenting positive images of men in nurturing roles (Meer, 2010).

2.11.5. The Civil Society

Civil society organizations in South Africa are meant to promote constructive male involvement through awareness programs. These awareness programs are usually done at organizational level, within houses of traditional leadership, Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (Ritcher & Morrell, 2006). On the other hand, organizations like the House of Traditional Leaders puts emphasis on men and gender equality as they are important in influencing many people, more especially, in rural areas (Govender, 2013).

2.11.6. Gender, Education and Training Network (GETNET)

It was among the first organizations to present workshops intended at engaging men in gender issues (Inter-Parliamentary Union & United Nations Women, 2015). Ritcher & Morrell (2006) note that it was created in 1995 in Cape Town and it established links with gender organizations in South Africa and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Being amongst the first gender organizations to be established, it ran its first men's workshop in November of 1996 and

aimed at changing men's consciousness about gender issues (SADC Gender Protocol, 2015). It was mainly aimed at men who worked within civil society organizations and the government. Its men's training program aim at enabling men to play a positive role in organizational and institutional change.

Ritcher & Morrell (2006) also note that activities of GETNET included providing training, research and education to women throughout South Africa to strengthen their presence in both government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

2.12. Summary of the Chapter

The chapter discussed the causes, effects, advantages, disadvantages of not giving a chance to women to lead politically. A theoretical framework was given to support the causes of gender inequalities in society. Furthermore, gender polities and tools adopted by South Africa and various efforts to gender equality were discussed.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3. Introduction

This chapter discusses the methods and procedures for collecting and analysing the required data. It also explains the research methods used which are qualitative and quantitative techniques. Identification of the population under study, and the process of data collection methods, processing, analysis and ethical consideration are also discussed in this chapter.

3.1. Nature of the study

A feminist method was used for this research using the standpoint theory as a qualitative approach which focuses on the experiences of both men and women in a normal environment. As an approach, it assumes that societies are made up of unbalanced power structures that create inequalities along the way leaving it with two groups, the dominant and the marginalized groups (Hartsock, 2004). The two groups however, are faced with a gender inequality, especially, with men being the dominant (possessors of utmost power) and women being the subjugated or marginalized group (Hartsock, 2004). Therefore, globally the feminist viewpoint urges researchers to consider the voice, that is, to see who is being included and who is not. However, in as much as the approach tries to do this, this feminist approach refrains from prolonging the view of 'women as victims' of their environments, but rather seeks to celebrate their diversity, various strengths and experiences (Hirsh & Olson, 2008).

Among the desires of the feminist standpoint theory is to make women visible, empowering them and raising their consciousness; Hirsh & Olson (2008) views it as an epistemological and ethical obligation on the part of dominant groups to theorize as rigorously as possible their own position as socially situated subjects of knowledge. Hartsock (2004) further notes that feminist standpoint makes three principal claims which are; that knowledge is socially situated; marginalized groups are socially situated in ways that make it more possible for the dominant group to be aware of things and ask questions than it is for the non-marginalized. Thus, the approach argues that a stand point theory arises when an individual or a group recognizes and challenge existing cultural values and power relations that contribute to any form of oppression and marginalization of women.

Therefore, the standpoint approach seeks to change women's past subjugated experiences by supporting their active involvement in the creation of new opportunities, using the knowledge that arises from their conditions and experiences. As Hirsh & Olson (2008) notes that, a woman-

centered approach is essential to the feminist research, as it aims to change the life background and experiences of women as a marginalized group as outlined by their experiences and language. This kind of mind, however, creates an understanding of the lived experiences, values, ideologies and goals, making it possible for women to change their lives.

Therefore, the standpoint approach is important to the research as it contributes a lot to the epistemology and methodological debates in the social and natural sciences as well as to the political activism. Moreover, the standpoint approach is descriptive and normative as it describes and analyzes casual effects of power structures especially on knowledge.

The mixed method of both qualitative and quantitative methods was employed. The quantitative approach which has the capability of quantifying data accessed was used on the biographical section. The qualitative research method was used as a viable tool of the research, as it is chosen for its various advantages which help in acquiring important viable information to enable accumulation of rich information for the purposes of bringing up a superb research. According to Creswell (1994), a qualitative process of inquiry has the goal of understanding a social or human problem from multiple perspectives. Thus, this method was used because of its many advantages of being able to penetrate into people to acquire valid information.

3.2. Population pertaining to research

Tustin, et al. (2005) defines a population as a complete group of entities sharing a common set of characteristics. In this study, the research population represents a well-defined collection of individuals or objects known to have similar characteristics. All individuals or objects within a certain population have a common, binding characteristic or trait in this research. The population under consideration in this study consisted of men and women who are 18 years of age and above. Ten subjects were used to assess whether men and women are being given an equal chance to participate in politics in South Africa.

3.3. Sampling technique

When doing research on a large population, it is often impractical to study every single member of the group. Instead, the researcher looks at a portion or sample of the population. A sample is a subgroup of a population (Khalifa & Shen, 2005). The sampling method used in this study involved taking a representative selection of the population and using the data collected as research information. This study, therefore, employed non-probability sampling. Non-probability sampling is when the chance of selecting the members from population under consideration in

the sample is unknown (Tustin, et al., 2005). It is commonly used in studies where the trait or behavior being investigated occurs so rarely in the general population that it becomes impractical to use a random selection process.

Purposive non-probability sampling was employed to select participants to take part in the survey. This allowed the researcher to screen judgementally whether they can provide the required information. A purposive sample, also commonly called a judgmental sample, is one that is selected based on the knowledge of a population and the purpose of the study (Strydom & Venter, 1963). The sample size of this survey most typically refers to the number of units that are chosen from which data is gathered. The sample size constituted twenty participants, due to limited time and finance.

3.4. Data collection method and techniques

Data Collection is an important aspect of any type of research study. Inaccurate data collection can impact the results of a study and ultimately lead to invalid results. **The** qualitative method was mainly used in this study. However, a descriptive quantitative method was used to analyse the biographical section in the semi-structured interview guide. The semi-structured interview which comprised of both open-ended and close-ended questions was used.

3.5. Data Instrument

Interviews and a gender audit were used for this research as a way to investigate gender representation in party politics. An audit is an examination of records for purposes of verification (Seidman, 1993). An interview is a conversation between two or more people where questions are asked by the interviewer to elicit facts or statements from the interviewee (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995). It is an interview process where the researcher is not only interested in the content of conversation but also in the process by which the content of the conversation come into being. Thus, interviewing is most effective when the goal of said research is to gain insight into the “subjective understanding” of those around us. According to Seidman (1993), an interview involves certain characteristics which are listening, being wary of leading questions, respecting of boundaries, just but to mention a few. For this study, face to face interviews were used to source information on issues of gender representation in party politics of South Africa.

The bulk of questions used in this survey’s interview were open-ended. An open-ended method is well suited for describing how the issue of equality between men and women is perceived. During the data collection procedure, the researcher maintained a balanced power relations with

the participants, as the researcher was not dominating the participants. Participants were also given a chance to ask questions as they were regarded as knowledgeable of their own situation. Face to face interviews were conducted and data was collected through semi-structured one to one interview. Semi-structured interviews provide a detailed picture of a participant's beliefs, perceptions and accounts of a particular topic (Tustin, et al., 2005). Moreover, the semi-structured interview allowed anonymity hence participants were free to give specific information pertaining to the research.

An interview schedule was drafted and used to control the interviews. An interview schedule is a set of predetermined questions that might be used as an appropriate instrument to engage the participant and designate the narrative terrain (Seidman, 1993). Field notes were accurately compiled during interviews and participants' full account of their knowledge on gender representation in party politics were recorded. During interviews, it is important to make full and accurate notes of what goes on and one must not trust one's memory any more than one has to (Tustin, et al., 2005). Field notes are a written account of the things the researcher hears, sees, experiences and thinks about during the course of the interview. Field editing was employed to rectify any errors and omissions, while the interview was in progress (Tustin, et al., 2005).

3.6. Data analysis

Tustin, et al. (2005) argues that data analysis serves the purpose of interpreting and drawing conclusions from the mass of collected data and fulfils the objective of relevance, comprehensiveness and avoidance of redundancy. In this study, the researcher employed thematic analysis. It is a qualitative method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data and interpreting various aspects of the research topic (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Themes were used to capture important aspects of the data in relation to the research questions. Thematic analysis was used for its advantage of breaking down the interviews into clear sections which make the researcher's work easier thus making the most out of collected data.

3.7. Research design

The researcher used both the descriptive and narrative research design. Descriptive design involves a set of scientific methods and procedures to collect data and create data structures that describe the existing characteristics of a defined target population (Tustin, et al., 2005). It addresses the, who, what, when, where and how questions. Descriptive research as the name implies, describes characteristics of objects, people, groups, organizations or environments. The

descriptive method as well as the narrative are preferred to complement the research process as they help clearly identify participants such as the men and women in politics. This research design was used to help explore or search through the problem and get a clear understanding of the problem at hand.

3.8. Area of study



Figure 3: Map of Area under study

The area of the study for this research is in Thohoyandou in the Vhembe District. Vhembe District Municipality is located in the northern part of the Limpopo province. It shares borders with Zimbabwe and Botswana in the north-west and Mozambique in the south-east through the Kruger National Park. It comprises four local municipalities which are Musina, Mutale, Thulamela and Makhado. The District Municipal offices, as well as the Thulamela Local Municipality offices are located in the town of Thohoyandou. It covers a geographical area that is predominantly rural. This area is mainly occupied by the Venda speaking people. Inhabitants of the Vhembe municipality amount to:

Table 3.1: Population of the area under study

Local municipality	Population	Percentage	Dominant language
Thulamela	584 568	48.72%	Venda and Tsonga
Makhado	497 093	41.43%	Venda and Tsonga
Mutale	78 917	6.58%	Venda
Musina	39 308	3.28%	Venda

Source: Adapted from ANC 2013

3.9. Data ethics

Ethics is a set of moral principles that are suggested by an individual or group and are subsequently widely accepted, and offer rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects and respondents, employers, sponsors, other researchers, assistants and students (Tustin, et al., 2005). Examples of such ethics that were considered by the researcher included violation of privacy, deception of subjects, informed consent, positionality, epistemic privileges and power relations among others.

Moreover, current documents were also used to complement past information by the researcher to ensure that bias is avoided. Questionnaires were also adequately administered. Moreover, accurate documents were used to avoid ambiguity. Where comparison was needed, such, was done without any bias. Every document used was acknowledged.

Harm to experimental subjects: When carrying out a research procedure, subjects can be harmed in a physical or in an emotional manner. So, to avoid such harm to participants, the researcher informed the subjects about the impact of the investigation which gave them the opportunity to withdraw from the investigation if they wished to do so. The researcher must protect participants from unnecessary anxiety or stress as noted by (Creswell, 1994). Therefore, the researcher ensured that harm befell participants during and after data collection by exercising utmost caution during the procedure.

Informed consent: Oppenheim (1992) notes that participants must be given accurate and complete information so that subjects will fully comprehend the investigation and make a voluntary, thoroughly reasoned decision about their possible participation. This shows that subjects should be aware of all the possible or adequate information on the goal of the

investigation, possible advantages and disadvantages, and the dangers to which respondents may be exposed to, as well as the credibility of the researcher. Thus, all participants of this study were informed of all the relevant information.

Deception of subjects: Deception involves withholding information, or offering incorrect information in order to ensure participation of subjects when they would otherwise possibly have refused (Creswell, 1994). Therefore, to avoid any danger to both the respondents and the researcher, the researcher is ethically obliged to ensure that the nature of her research is made known to her participants since no form of deception should ever be inflicted on respondents. Therefore, the researcher did not use deception of any kind to her participants during the data collection process.

Violation of privacy: The right to privacy is the individual's right to decide when, where, to whom and to what extent his or her attitudes, beliefs and behaviour will be revealed (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Therefore, for the purposes of maintaining anonymity of the participants this ethic principle was put into consideration as no names and positions were disclosed. Instead, pseudonyms were used to maintain anonymity. Pseudonyms are fictitious names used in the research to hide the true identity of the research participants.

Power relations: "Many feminist methodologies emphasize non-hierarchical interactions, understanding, and mutual learning where close attention is paid to how the research questions and methods of data collection may be embedded in unequal power relations between the researcher and the research participants" (Rubin & Rubin, 2005:64). Therefore, participants in this research were treated with utmost respect and were as equally important as the researcher.

Positionality: This is the reflexivity of the researcher in the research either as an insider, outsider or both. Positionality is a concept articulated by Alcof (1998:23) that "gender, race, class and other aspects of our identities are markers of relation positions rather than essential qualities". In carrying out this research, the researcher assumed an outsider positionality as she lacks the personal experience of being in position of holding any influential political position. Participant's knowledge was acknowledged as they were regarded as 'knowers' of their lived experiences as holders of decision-making power in the political sector.

Epistemic privilege: It is the ability to take participants of the research as equals with the researcher rather than as tools of knowledge extraction (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). This research took into consideration equal power relations between the two as participants were given time to ask questions to the researcher as well as being acknowledged.

Therefore, participants were informed about time and the purpose of the study. They were also assured that the information would be used for the purpose of the study only. Those who did not want to participate in the research were not deceived into participating. No form of coercion was used. The researcher behaved in respectful manner to all participants. Equal chances were also given to participants and they were treated equally and at par with the researcher.

3.10. Summary

This chapter has discussed and justified the research concept and viewpoint that conforms to the choice of the selected methods and techniques for data collection and analysis. The chapter also discussed the population pertaining to the research and how the data collection instrument was administered.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4. Introduction

This chapter comprises presentation, analysis, discussion and interpretation of research findings. Data was gathered through semi-structured interviews. Thematic analysis was used to analyze data. The findings are presented in line with the research aim, objectives and the research questions. Data was sourced from ten participants, men and women in the party-politics in South Africa.

4.1. Biographical Data

4.1.1. Crosstabulation for age groups and gender

Data was collected and information pertaining to gender, age group, marital status and educational level was recorded. The following cross-table shows gender distribution and age groups among the participants.

Table 4.1: Crosstabulation for age groups and gender

AGE GROUP	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
18-25		1	1
26-35	1	1	2
36-45	2	3	5
46 and above		2	2
Total Participants	3	7	10

Table 4.1 shows that a total of ten participants were interviewed, both men and women of different age groups. More women were interviewed than men because they are the ones who are facing discrimination more in political parties, hence the greater need of their own insight. Few men were meant to compliment as well as assessing their views as the advantaged. These participants served as representatives of men and women in party politics in South Africa.

4.1.2. Marital Status

Figure 4.1 indicates the marital statuses of the participants who took part in this study. The greater portion of the wheel indicates the total percentage of those who are single while the smaller wheel shows the remaining percentage of those who are married. As indicated, sixty percent are single while forty percent are married.

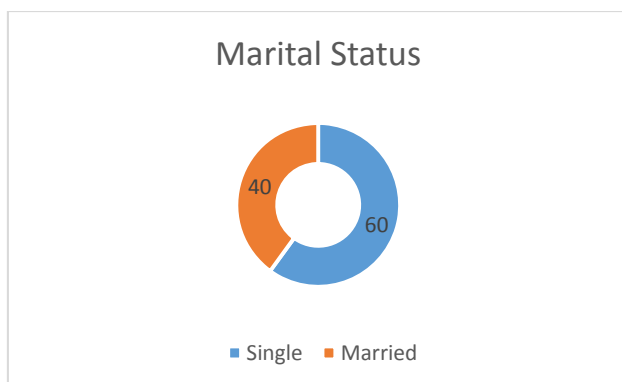


Figure 4.1: Marital Status

Among the single participants of our survey, women who are single constituted forty percent while single men were ten percent. On the other hand, we had thirty percent married women and twenty percent married men

4.1.3. Educational Level

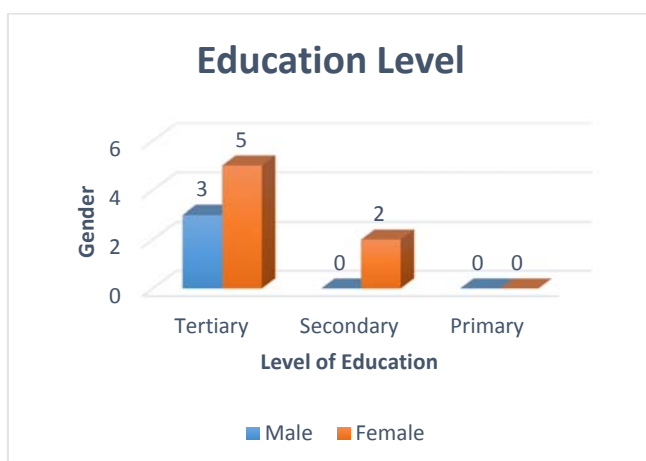


Figure 4.2: Level of Education

Figure 4.2 represents the educational level of the participants who took part in the study. As can be seen in the figure above, women constituted the greatest number (fifty percent) of the people who held at least a tertiary certificate, while men at the same educational level constituted thirty percent. Twenty percent of the participants, on the other hand, indicated that they had acquired at least a secondary education certificate and these were only women.

Table 4.2 summarizes information on the biography of participants who responded to the interviews during the data collection process. Since issues of gender inequalities within the private

and public spheres are perceived to be sensitive, true names and political positions of the respondents are withheld, instead names indicated in Table 4.2 are pseudonyms used to mask the identity of the respondents. Pseudonyms are also known as fake names.

Table 4.2: Summary of the Biographical Information

Respondent	Gender	Age Group	Marital Status	Education Level
1. Charity	<i>Female</i>	<i>46 and above</i>	<i>Married</i>	<i>Secondary</i>
2. Honest	<i>Female</i>	<i>46 and above</i>	<i>Single</i>	<i>Tertiary</i>
3. Microsoft	<i>Male</i>	<i>36-45</i>	<i>Married</i>	<i>Tertiary</i>
4. Flower	<i>Female</i>	<i>36-45</i>	<i>Married</i>	<i>Tertiary</i>
5. Cinnamon	<i>Female</i>	<i>36-45</i>	<i>Single</i>	<i>Tertiary</i>
6. Given	<i>Male</i>	<i>36-45</i>	<i>Married</i>	<i>Tertiary</i>
7. Lovely	<i>Female</i>	<i>36-45</i>	<i>Married</i>	<i>Tertiary</i>
8. Shift	<i>Female</i>	<i>26-35</i>	<i>Single</i>	<i>Tertiary</i>
9. Advocate	<i>Male</i>	<i>26-35</i>	<i>Single</i>	<i>Tertiary</i>
10. Society	<i>Female</i>	<i>18-25</i>	<i>Single</i>	<i>Secondary</i>

4.1.4. Gender Audit on Party Representation

As one of the study's objectives was to get an insight of gender representation in party politics, the researcher made a gender audit of the political structure of Vhembe District with the help of key informants. Key informants helped the researcher to access official documents as well as attendance registers of politicians. The key informants also helped to clarify questions. Currently, Vhembe district has four Municipalities that include: Lim 345 Local Municipality, newly established on 14 October 2016 (Vhembe District Secretariat, 2016)

The other three local Municipalities are Makhado, Musina and the Thulamela Local Municipality. The top four positions of the four local municipalities were among the inquired. These positions include that of the executive mayor, mayor, speaker and the chief whip. Below are the results according to the Vhembe District Secretariat (2016)

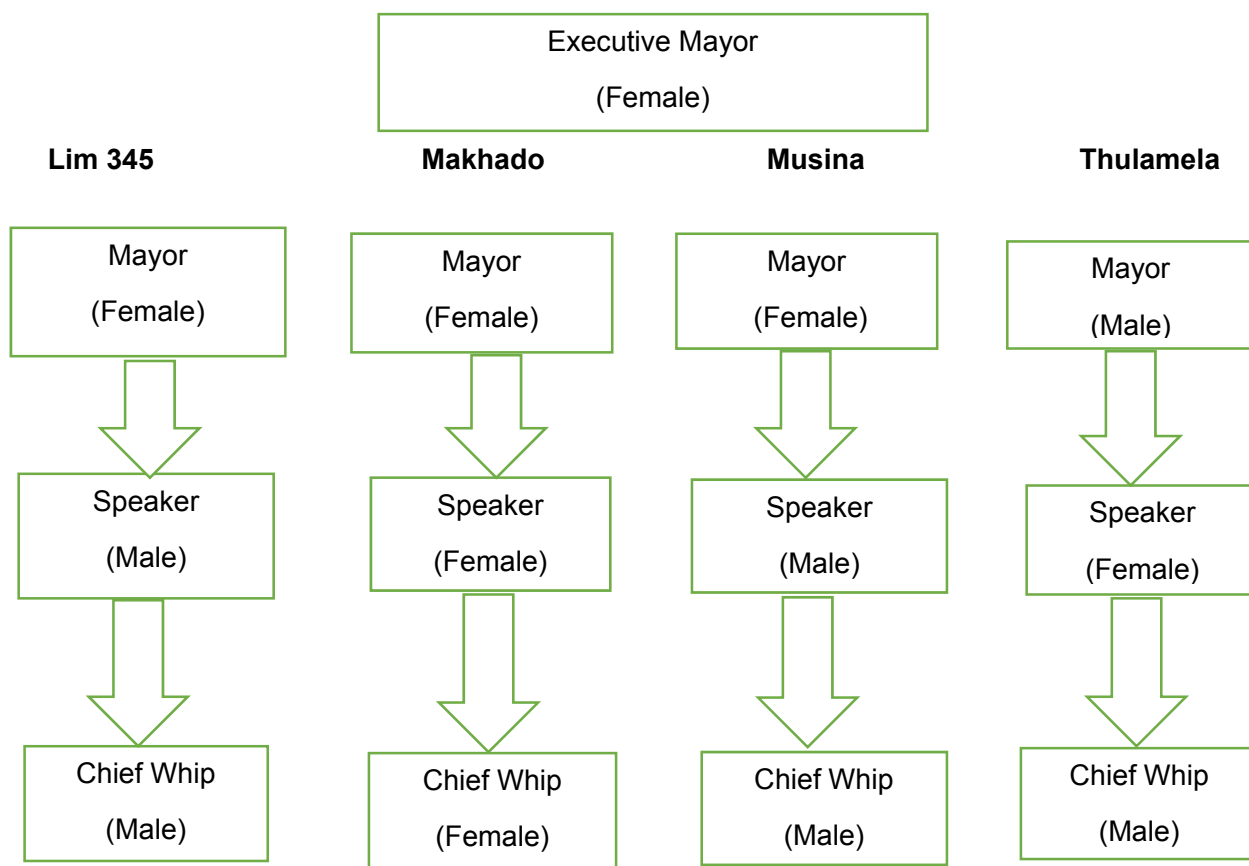


Figure 4.3: Top Political Positions in Vhembe District

Figure 4.3 shows information regarding the top positions of the Vhembe District political sphere. Information was gathered from the audit carried out by the researcher in the Vhembe District Municipality through the help of key informants. Since the District constitute four local Municipalities, the mayoral position in the district indicates that there are three female mayors against one male mayor. This indicates that Vhembe as an independent district is gradually drifting away from the patriarchal norms of regarding women as less capable leaders. It is supported by some of the participant's words. One participant said:

It is proper for women to take part in politics because they do possess all the mindset and character that men do have (Microsoft: m, 36-45).

Another participant said:

Women's needs and experiences that have been for a long time neglected will be represented. In addition, a woman knows the real needs of a family, so their participation would benefit the whole society (Advocate: m, 26 to 35).

This will bring a special attention to women's concerns in the District. It is evidenced by the speech which was given by the District's Executive Mayor, Florence Radzulani: "My council will make sure that water challenges in the district are addressed" (Vhembe District Municipal Official Newsletter, 2016). As a woman, familiar with gender roles, understands more intimately the impacts of water shortages on women in various households, thus her special concern became that of water shortages. This is in line with the SADC Gender Protocol (2015) which notes that once women enter political decision making, in significant strengths and participate effectively, they can start 'ringing up the changes'. In other words, this indicates an upward movement of the district, diverting from the traditional, cultural and patriarchal stereotypes and creating better standards.

Additional, Figure 4.3 shows that the speaker position constitute of two females and two males giving the district a 50/50 gender parity. On the other hand, the chief whip position is still largely male dominated as shown in the figure above. This shows that Vhembe District is making efforts in realizing gender equity in the influential decision making positions, although patriarchal traits may still be persisting. Thus, gender equity is still moving at a slow pace, even in areas where change is being enacted.

The researcher also made an audit of the political parties in the district. The political parties include the ANC, EFF, DA, COPE and PAC. The following are the results that came up after an audit of the councilors in the above mentioned political parties. Table 4.3 shows statistical data of councilors in political parties within the district. Data was sourced from political registers and documents in the Vhembe District through the help of key informants. As can be identified, while other political parties in the district are thriving to do away with gender gaps in the political sphere, some are still following patriarchal norms. The ANC has a greater number of women councilors but, the DA is still far from realizing gender parity. Interestingly, we can see an unprecedented increase of female politicians in the district, the ANC being the main contributor of female politicians.

Table 4.3: Percentages of Political Councillors by Party

Political Party	Female Councillors	Percentage female	Male Councillors	Percentage Male	Total Percentage
ANC	46	48%	29	30%	78%
EFF	6	6%	5	5%	11%
DA	2	2%	6	7%	9%
COPE	1	1%	-	-	1%
PAC	-	-	1	1%	1%
Total	55	57%	41	43%	100%

This resonates with the SADC Gender Protocol (2015) which notes that what is concerning is the country's dependency on the ANC for gender parity, as it is the only party with a 50/50 quota, while DA, the official opposition, is still well below the fifty percent mark. However, participants had this to say:

Lately, there are policies that favor women, but the traditional and cultural background of South Africa still regards women as inferior which is the reason why they are being given low level positions, for example, councillors (Honest: f, 46 and above).

Considering Table 4.3 and the above statement, it seems like women are concentrated in low levels of political leadership while men are put in lesser numbers as most of them are still dominating higher positions within the political realm.

4.2. Gender Representation and Equality

4.2.1. Understanding Gender Equality

This section discusses how the participants understand the term gender equality. The data demonstrates that ninety percent of the participants are familiar with the term gender equality. Meanings which were given suggest fair representation of men and women in every aspect of their life including both at work and within the family. Among those who indicated to understand the concept gender equality, the participants explained it as follows:

Both sexes should be considered as equal in all respects. In life, generally in work opportunities and bringing up of children (Honest: f, 46 and above).

Equal representation or treatment in all aspects (Lovely: f, 36 to 45)

Equal opportunities for both men and women (Advocate: m, 26 to 35)

Uniform distribution of resources for both sexes (Microsoft: m, 36 to 45)

No discrimination or gaps between men and women (society: f, 18 to 25)

The above statements show that participants fully understand the concept of gender equality. Hence, they fully acknowledged that women can represent them in party politics.

The next question sought views from the participants on the appropriateness of women to take part in party politics. All participants shared the view that men and women should be given an equal chance to fill up decision making positions in politics. The following are some of the examples from both men and women which represented almost what the other respondents said:

It is proper for women to take part in politics because they do possess all the mindset and character that men do have (Microsoft: m, 36-45).

Women constitute half of the population and they have their own issues that can best be represented and dealt with by fellow women (Honest: f, 46 and above).

Women also have the ability to lead and are able to participate as men do (Lovely: f, 36 to 45).

As suggested by the above statements, people are changing gradually from the blinkered mindset that women are weaker and do not match men's standards. The respondents' sentiments are in line with Inglehart & Norris (2013) who posit that women should actively participate in the political arena because of the different experiences they hold which make them better knowers and prepare them for greater challenges. This is advantageous due to their unlimited experiences as multi-taskers and carriers of the triple burden, that is, in families, communities and the society as a whole.

However, this contradicts the notion that was brought up by, Lawless & Fox (2012) earlier in the review who argue that politics is often based on the notions of 'winners' and 'losers', competition and confrontation, rather than on systematic collaboration and consensus, with men only upholding these standards. This implies that for women to acquire political decision making positions, they should be competitive, aggressive among other masculine stereotypes. However, women should be included in the political sector to neutralize the already existing patriarchal norms of masculinity, yet not too lenient.

4.2.2. Gender Representation

In this section, I sought to determine gender representation within the district municipality under study.

To determine this, a question was asked on whether there is gender equality or equal representation in decision making positions in party politics of Vhembe District. Sixty percent of the respondents indicated that such did not exist. Among the participants who said there is no equal gender representation in party politics of Vhembe District, the following responses were given by both men and women:

In all structures of politics in this district and even the ruling party in South Africa, women are included for the sake of compliance of democracy, for example commonly there is just one woman to five male decision makers (Honest: f, 46 and above).

Women tend to take the backseat or are inferior in top positions due to their gender (Microsoft: m, 36 to 45)

The majority of leadership positions in this district are still occupied by males, even though they boast of having a female mayor (Flower: f, 36 to 45)

The above statements show that women are still lagging behind when it comes to representation in their political parties at district levels as well as nationally. Political parties are still concerned with numbers rather than gender relations. This notion is supported by the SADC Gender Protocol (2015) & Matuba (2016) who gave statistics on representation of women at a provincial level in South Africa. According to the Protocol and Matuba, only two out of nine provinces in South Africa have women Provincial Premiers, giving women nationwide twenty-two percent representation at this level. This in turn serves to posit that since women are not equally represented in the political sphere, their concerns and experiences have not been put into consideration. Therefore, for such experiences to be heard and valued they need to be represented in the political realm.

The remaining forty percent disagreed with the perception that there is unequal representation in the political decision making positions. This is exemplified in the quotes below:

There is equality because nowadays we have women leaders in politics

(Society: f, 18 to 25).

Political decision making positions are now occupied by both men and women

(Lovely: f, 36 to 45).

The above statements totally contradict the statements which were given by the majority who argued that there was no equality in representation in Vhembe. However, these statements only seek to identify women in political decision making positions rather than substantial equality. This means that they are only seeing the glass ceiling which is a mere misrepresentation of what really is on the ground. This can be supported by the SADC Gender Protocol (2015) which notes that of all the existing political parties in South Africa, leadership of key political party structures is overwhelmingly male-dominated, with men occupying twenty-eight out of the thirty-eight top posts giving a total of seventy-eight percent men in these key positions.

At a local level, political structures across political parties have a majority of women deputizing as secretaries or branch treasurers, while very few of them are elected as chairpersons or branch secretaries (Matuba, 2016). Even though there has been an increasing number of women representatives in the decision-making bodies of political parties, women are mainly subjected to such positions as district officers, councilors just but to mention a few. Conclusively, it can be seen from the findings that gender inequality and representation has been the norm in Vhembe as well as nationally.

4.3. Gender gaps and barriers to women's representation

This section of the study seeks to address the barriers that women as a marginalized species come across in trying to get access to influential or decision making positions in politics. Various questions were asked in order to get their opinions.

4.3.1. Patriarchy, culture and the perceived gender roles

On whether patriarchy was really a stronghold on women's marginalization in politics, ninety percent of the respondents agreed that indeed this factor was a barrier to women's active participation in politics. This is what came out among the responses:

Men consider themselves dominant to women in the communities and politics because they were brought up to see women as liabilities in the family as they should always be submissive to them (Cinnamon: f, 36 to 45).

The soft duties known for women makes them to be marginalized on the hard and tough terrain of politics (Microsoft: m, 36 to 45).

Men think that they are superior to women (Lovely: f, 36 to 45).

Giving attention to the above responses, it is crystal clear that men will always believe that women are inferior to them. Thus, women taking up leadership positions especially in the political arena which is believed to be masculine, tough, competitive and rough will make men feel uncomfortable and demeaned. The patriarchal thought limits opportunities for women, especially in the political sphere as patriarchy deems them subordinate and unstable for positions of leadership (Kadaga, 2013). On the other hand, Matuba (2016) notes that despite the fact that the majority of members in South African political parties are women, the majority of men would prefer the status quo of them leading those structures to remain.

Thus, culture has been a major hindrance to women's participation in the decision-making positions for a long period of time. Seventy percent of the respondents showed strong sentiments towards culture as a major barrier to women's representation in the political arena. One of the respondents said:

Women culturally taking a submissive stance towards men has been an aspect that led to gender gaps and inequality in many societies (Shift: f, 26 to 35).

What this participant said is a true reflection of the day to day life of many societies. Women are urged to be submissive and live under the commands and leadership of men. This has however, led women to be marginalized everywhere, be it socially, economically, religiously and politically. This is noted by Bari (2005) who says that, a female leader featuring feminine behavior is considered unacceptable in politics while on the other hand the male authoritativeness inherent to the field of politics creates additional pressure for women. These attitudes toward gender equality however, are often an important factor in analyzing women's entry into politics.

Participants of this study also indicated that marriage has been one of the major cultural factors that continue to keep women marginalized and unable to freely take part in the public sphere, especially, the political realm. One of the participants had this to say:

Marriage is a leading factor as husbands did not allow their wives to take part in leadership positions as this undermined them (Flower: f, 36-45).

This suggests that marriage has been one of the factors that create a huge gender gap when it comes to representation in the political sphere. On this matter, Jackson (2011) argues that before women's admission to the body of politics, they were merely the political and legal dependents of their husbands, fathers or guardians. Therefore, it shows that indeed marriage was and is still a factor in the marginalization of women in the political sphere.

An overwhelming seventy percent of the participants indicated that women's multiple roles, that is, child care and household tasks were a barrier to women's active participation in the decision-making positions of the political arena. This shows that indeed cultural practices and perceived gender roles are a contributory factor to gender gaps in politics.

This supports what Lawless & Fox (2012) argue that women's reproductive responsibilities continue to define a permanent set of social, political and economic concerns. As mothers, women continue to bear the loads of child care and being managers of the household. Therefore, women's continuing effects of family roles lead to the gender gap that continues in today's politics.

4.3.2. Educational Constraints

Education constraints were overwhelmingly discounted as a contributing factor to women's marginalization in the political decision making sphere. Eighty percent of respondents vehemently dismissed the fact that there was gender inequality towards attainment of education as both men and women were being given an equal chance to attain education in the current era. This means the minds of people in today's societies are changing as they are now trying to fight against the previous disadvantages that women used to face in terms of education.

However, this contradicts Tripp's (2013) observation when she notes that low levels of education and training are predominant among women more specifically in the rural areas and areas that are still under extreme underdevelopment and poverty. This diminishes women's opportunities for access to leadership positions in politics leaving more opportunities for men who are still favored at family levels in terms of education.

Considering the aspect of extreme marginalized areas however, it will not be fair to completely argue that women are all getting the same chance as men in attainment of education. Therefore, the remaining twenty percent argument in agreeing to this fact as a barrier will need a thorough research on the poverty-stricken areas. As it is, it is not proper for one to conclusively argue that education is no longer a concern in women's marginalization in decision making areas.

4.3.3. Lack of Finance and Resources

On trying to see whether lack of adequate finances was a major factor in gender differences that existed in the decision-making positions within the political arena, fifty percent of the respondents acknowledged that indeed this is one barrier against women. This is supported by Jackson (2011) who notes that over the last one hundred and fifty years, economic power has largely remained in male hands and it has only slowly and sparingly been knowingly used in ways that directly

counter sex inequality. This supports the seventy percent of the participants who indicated that lack of resources both economically and socially was indeed a barrier factor to women's political ascendancy.

Thus, the monopolization of the economic power by men and cultural expectations led women to be pushed out of careers and decision making responsibilities which were only pressed on men. The other fifty percent of the respondents did not think lack of finance is a contributing barrier to the existence of the wide gender gap in influential political positions. They argued that women nowadays have easy access to available resources, either monetary or non-monetary resources.

4.3.4. Lack of confidence in women

Fifty percent of the participants believed that women were less likely than men to think they are qualified for political offices. Among those who agreed to this fact, these are some of the responses recorded:

The society and the environment women grow up in always dictate to them that men are more superior (Charity: f, 46 and above).

Due to cultural and traditional orientation, women develop poor confidence and become scared to take challenging positions in politics (Honest: f, 46 and above).

Low self-esteem and limited support from both men and women are actually some of the main drivers of gender inequality in politics. (Microsoft: m, 36 to 45).

Women have low experience to be able to run political offices (Given: m, 36 to 45).

Considering the statements above, it will be fair to note that indeed socialization has played a great role in the way of thinking of most if not all of the people globally. Both men and women still have the mentality that women are incapable of taking up challenging and influential positions in the political arena. This is perpetuated by traditional and cultural values that deem women uncompetitive. This has greatly influenced an unconscious mentality among the human race to regard men as more powerful and superior to women. Male children are considered superior and the female inferior, posing gender imbalance between the two sexes (Inter-Parliamentary Union & United Nations Women, 2015).

However, the other fifty percent of the respondents perceived that women did not think that they were incapable of taking political seats. This is seen in the responses below:

Women have the potential and required leadership skills, therefore, they have what it takes to take up political offices (Lovely: f, 36-45).

In South Africa, everyone who has the capability is given a chance because we are all equal irrespective of gender (Flower: f, 36 to 45).

Looking at the above responses, it is indeed true that women do possess the required characteristics to take up political offices. However, in as much as they qualify to take these positions, women today are still facing great challenges in assuming these positions. This view is espoused by De La Rey (2012) who purports that women in positions of authority have no problems in terms of the way they manage authority, but rather it is the men under them who resent taking direction from them. Therefore, one can be justified to argue that the need for men to be in power as a result of patriarchy has seen women being regarded as incapable of leading as well as man.

On the other hand, among follow up questions, lack of confidence among women emerged as a driving factor on the gender gap that exists in the political decision-making positions. Sixty percent of the participants agreed to this factor as a barrier. This resonates with the SADC Gender Protocol (2015) which quoted a statement given by Angie Motsheka, the ANC Women's League President, who said: "South Africa is not ready for a woman president" while addressing the women's league. Therefore, sentiments like these show that women are not yet confident to take up influential decision making positions in the political sector. Since Motsheka is a role model to the rest of women, her sentiments bring down confidence among those who might have interest in following their political ambitions. Thus, this is indeed a factor which contributes to the huge gender gap in the decision-making structures of the political sphere.

4.3.5. Biological make up as a barrier

In addition to barriers that women encounter when it comes to assuming decision making positions in the political sphere, eighty percent of the participants did not concur that women were biologically weak to take up these positions. One of the participants had this to say:

Politics is about the strength of the mind and nothing to do with the biological make up of human beings, what matters is the capability to use the mind (Shift: f, 26 to 35).

Women are equally capable of taking decision making positions in politics as they have the courage and mindset to successfully lead, for example, many households are female headed and they are successful and even better than some male headed households (Cinnamon: f, 36 to 45).

Besides biological make up, men and women can take up influential decision making positions yet women might do a better job (Advocate: m, 26 to 35).

Seeing these responses, it is accurate to assert that good leadership has nothing to do with the biological make up of an individual. What really matters is courage, determination and the skill to come up with good judgements. Bari (2005) notes that women have different visions and concepts of politics owing to their sex and their gender roles as mothers, therefore, they should actively participate in the political arena because of these multi experiences. This suggests that both men and women should be given equal chances to take up leadership positions in the political arena regardless of one's biological make up.

4.3.6. Religious views and moral values

Religious views were also considered as some of the factors against women's active representation in the political sphere. One participant had this to say:

Some religious practices do not allow women to give sermons or lead the church service, for example, Zion Christian Church (ZCC) and the End Time Messages, hence they also do not allow women to take part in decision-making positions (Cinnamon: f, 36 to 45).

This statement shows that women might be pushed out of most of the decision-making positions in the public arena because of the religious argument that women came from a man's rib, hence they should remain submissive and under him. This religious sentiment was highlighted by Jackson (2011) who notes that religious barriers were for a very long time some of the obstacles to women's entrance into politics. This is because religions emphasize the fact that women are under men while men are the heads. This however, is at loggerheads with the South African equity act which stipulates that no form of practice which might include traditional, customary or religious practices should impair women's dignity or in any form undermine equality between the man and the woman.

Therefore, taking note of this, religious beliefs that women are inferior to men, more women never got a chance to equally express themselves in the political arena as men although this is against the equity act. South Africa should ensure that all policies and acts are being followed by religious organizations, political parties and the socio-economic entities.

On the question whether women who take part in the political arena are of less morals, all the participants indicated that women who took part in this were not of less morals. Various answers were given. Some of are shown below:

Everybody is driven by passion and desire to achieve a specific objective; therefore, morality has nothing to do with this (Microsoft: m, 36 to 45).

Another participant said that:

Politics is for everyone, whether male or female, it has nothing to do with morals (Advocate: m, 26 to 35).

Yet another participant pointed out that: Being a politician does not imply that someone is of loose morals (Charity: f, 46 and above).

This suggests that women who actively participate in influential political positions are no longer regarded as immoral, as they were regarded in the past. The United Nations General Assembly (2015) observes that during the 19th and 20th century, women in politics were considered as loose and in need of male supervision. This shows a great transformation of people from the previously blinkered and myopic attitude towards women's involvement in the heavily masculine public territory. Therefore, with a great sense of development and progress like this among many states, one day women will find it more easy to follow their dreams and passion in the public spheres such as the political arena without any stereotypical criticism. However, attitudes change slowly. Kadaga (2013) purports that the patriarchal thought in Nigeria limits opportunities for women, especially in the political sphere as they are viewed as subordinate and unstable for positions of leadership, while those who take part are of no morals. Similarly, Matuba (2016) notes that women who participate in politics are subjected to more scrutiny of their personal lives as they are labeled as having slept their way to a leadership position.

On the other hand, the participants had much to say on what could be the possible causes of gender gaps in the political arena. Ninety percent of the participants aired out some of their views which they believed contributed to the gender disparities when it comes to representation of women in the political sphere. The gender differences were attributed to the following:

Treatment given by the society as a whole creates gender gaps as males are given more responsibilities from birth than females giving them more status in the societies (Honest: f, 46 and above).

Patriarchy- women are told by men that it is not their place to lead or make decisions (Cinnamon: f, 36 to 45).

Cultural background that men should be leaders and religious beliefs (Charity: f, 46 and above).

Lack of confidence in women as they think they cannot make it (Advocate: m, 26 to 35).

Limited time due to household chores (Flower: f, 36 to 45).

Lack of resources (Microsoft: m, 36 to 45).

Therefore, considering the participants' understanding of the various barriers that are surrounding them, it is clear the world is faced with numerous obstacles to women's participation in the political arena. This supports the argument by the United Nations (2015) that unfavorable cultural practices added to lack of financial resources, lower levels of education, less access to information, family responsibility and rights deprivation has left fewer opportunities for women to acquire political experience. Hence, it is safe to argue that indeed almost in all societies women are subject to inequalities as a result of the existence of discrimination in the family, community and the workplace. Thus, discriminatory and gender bias practices work against the promotion of women leadership in local governments.

4.4. Gender equality, visibility of women and its advantages

This part of the study seeks to investigate whether men and women in Vhembe District are being viewed as equal. It also seeks to understand whether women are visible enough in the political arena. Additionally, the study sought to understand the advantages and disadvantages that women might bring to the political sector if they are to hold the most influential decision making positions in politics.

On the question of whether equality between men and women is being enhanced in Vhembe District, seventy percent of the participants pointed out that it is being enhanced. Some of the respondents had this to say:

The government is trying to put across a lot of awareness campaigns to educate its people and encourage equality between men and women in South Africa (Advocate: m, 26 to 35).

Previously, men and women were not equal in rights and work, but nowadays they are being given equal chances (Society: f, 18 to 25).

The South African government has taken an initiative to fight for the rights of women, and so did our district. Various educational programs of gender equality are being promoted in Vhembe District (Charity: f, 46 and above).

These statements suggest that both Vhembe District and the South African society are trying to educate people on gender equality so as to mitigate the gender disparities that are still prevalent. However, in as much as they are trying to do away with gender inequalities they, have not yet reached the gender parity phase. This is seconded by some of the respondents who indicated that difficulties still exist. This is what some of them pointed out:

Gender equality is being enhanced in Vhembe and South Africa, but it has not been easy for men to accept women leaders (Cinnamon: f, 36 to 45).

Several cultural beliefs are still contributing immensely on the issues of equality as this has not translated into full gender equality (Microsoft: m, 36 to 45).

Equality is being applied in organizations for the sake of compliance (Honest: f, 46 and above).

Various cultural beliefs and practices influence the achievement of gender equality as women are considered weaker than men as well as dependent. The discriminatory and gender bias practices that work against the promotion of women leadership in local governments are perpetuated by the survival of stereotypes and cultural beliefs detrimental to women (Mavindidze, 2016). Culturally, women are expected to come under men and follow their directive. Jackson (2011) observes that culture totally excluded women from active participation in decision making in their societies because it reflected women's social marginality.

This creates gender inequality with men being superior to women. While causes and consequences may vary from country to country, discrimination against women is widespread as it is perpetuated by the survival of stereotypes and traditional, cultural and religious practices and beliefs detrimental to women (Magagula, 2009; Mavindidze, 2016). The obstacles can only be dealt with if the government actively and thoroughly comes up with various strategies to deal with the root cause of gender inequalities in society; that is, culture and socialization.

4.4.1. Women's visibility in the political sphere

Investigating the visibility of women in influential political positions in Vhembe District, eighty percent of the respondents indicated that women are now visible in the political sphere than in the past. This is what some respondents said:

Since the resolution of the ANC in Polokwane, women are in higher positions, for example, as speakers, chief whips, mayors, managers and directors of political parties (Cinnamon: f, 36 to 45).

Women are beginning to claim their space due to changes in global legislations on views of gender (Microsoft: m, 36 to 45).

There are some women who are now ministers, members of parliament, councilors and mayors, for example, the Thulamela mayor is a woman (Advocate: m, 26 to 35).

This part contradicts the section on gender representation where the majority shared the view that gender equality has not been realized. The majority of the respondents are of the opinion that equality has been achieved and that women are now visible in political decision making positions. Therefore, it poses uncertainty on whether South Africa is getting there or not. However, some participants disputed this notion as they argued:

Lately, there are policies that favor women, but the traditional and cultural background of South Africa still regards women as inferior which is the reason why they are being given low level positions (Honest: f, 46 and above).

This suggests that, in as much as women are being put in positions of power in the political sphere, they are mainly restricted to the low levels of political leadership. This is in line with the SADC Gender Protocol (2015) which notes that the ANC boasts many senior women with impeccable credentials, such as former Minister of Home Affairs Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, currently Chairperson of the African Union (AU) and two former women deputy presidents Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, who is now head of UN Women and Baleka Mbete speaker of national assembly. Yet ANC officials have touted these women for any of the top posts in the party. Therefore, looking at this situation and considering the fact that ANC is the ruling party and should be acting as a role model to other political parties and the society at large, it shows that indeed women are still subject to lower leadership positions in the political sphere of South Africa. Even though there have been efforts by the government to end gender inequalities there are still barriers acting against the full realization of gender equality. Thus, political parties in South Africa are no exception to patriarchal barricades.

4.5. Advantages or disadvantages of having women in influential political positions

Investigating on the advantages and disadvantages of having women occupying influential political positions, ninety percent of the participants indicated that women actively participating in

the political sphere is an added advantage to societies. Some of the participants assert that women will bring the caring aspect into the public sphere. This is what one respondent said:

Women are mothers who are loving and caring, they encourage progress in the families and society as a whole and are able to bring harmony to the society (Microsoft: m, 36 to 45).

Some think that women will represent the needs and interests of women. This is the view on one participant below.

While the other participant said that:

Women are always more considerate about social and economic issues in the community (Cinnamon: f, 36 to 45).

This is demonstrative of the fact that women's presence can add much value to the political arena, which has always been seen as masculine oriented (Maqubela, 2013). Women who are regarded as pacifiers can be used to the advantage of the societies as they are more familiar with bringing families and people together in times of conflict (Maqubela, 2013). They can manage the families and the societies on their own best terms. They have knowledge on economic budgets to sustain the livelihood of the family. This is in line with Inglehart & Norris (2013) who posit that women should actively participate in the political arena because of the different experiences they hold in both the family and the society. Thus, indeed it is a huge advantage to have women participating actively in the decision-making positions in the political sphere.

4.6. Ways in which women can be empowered

This part of the research solicited recommendations from the participants on how women could be empowered so that they can be actively represented in the political realm. Various suggestions were given by the participants some of which are discussed below:

The first suggestion provided was enhancement of self-confidence on the part of women:

Women should enhance their self-confidence (Microsoft: m, 36 to 45).

A greater number of women still lack self-esteem to represent fellow women as well as taking up challenging influential political positions. This is in line with Lawless & Fox (2012) who argue that despite the changing political landscape and the emergence of several high-profile female candidates between 2001 and 2011, women remain sixteen percentage points less likely than men to have the confidence of running for office.

Secondly, it was suggested that women should be given a chance to assume influential positions in the political realm as men.

Women should be given more challenging positions, for example, presidency and vice presidency of South Africa (Charity: f, 46 and above).

However, in as much as the participants saw the need for women to take up presidential and vice presidential positions, there have been various challenges against their ascendancy due to patriarchal, traditional and political masculine norms. This resonates with Tripp (2013) who argues that the public-private dichotomy in traditional definition of politics is used for excluding women from the public political sphere and even when they are brought to politics they are admitted as mothers and wives. Bari (2005) also argues that male domination of politics and culture of formal political structure is another factor that hinders women's political participation.

Thirdly, it was pointed out that women should be given adequate resources to pursue their political dreams. One respondent said:

They should be given adequate resources and barriers that promote gender inequality should be dealt with (Advocate: m, 26 to 35).

In the similar vein, another respondent suggested:

Women should be given the support they need to follow their political ambitions (Given: m, 36 to 45).

Monopolization of the economic power and resources by men, added to cultural expectations, leaves women out of the public sphere, especially, the political arena. Women's meager economic power generally disqualify them from the race of political power, therefore, access to assets and services, being able to seize opportunities on an equal footing is vital to improving their political participation (Jackson, 2011; World Bank, 2015).

On the other hand, in as much as women need support to go for influential decision making positions in politics, various challenges have been the norm. Men and women seem to be reluctant to offer encouragement and support to women with political ambitions. This is in line with Jackson (2011) who argues that without support from the society, women pursuing political seats find themselves more out of the political arena as even ordinary men and women's support for them to enter politics is unlikely.

Fourthly, it was suggested that the government should employ empowerment programs that act against gender inequality. One respondent said:

The government should launch more empowerment programs directed to women (Cinnamon: f, 36 to 45).

To do away with gender inequality, South Africa adopted several gender tools. However, gender inequalities still persist in the country. This is in line with Mavindidze (2016) who states that in many African countries including South Africa even though they are putting across legislations and laws to counter inequalities, gender disparities still exist especially in terms of representation of men and women in the political sector.

Fifth, participants pointed out that stereotypes on women should be changed to pave way for equality in the society.

The social orientation towards women need to be changed (Honest: f, 46 and above).

It is not easy to do away with traditional and cultural beliefs that have been followed since the beginning of time. Women are perceived as weak, dependent and lenient and unable to take challenging posts in the political arena. Kadaga (2013) states that the traditional thoughts limit opportunities for women, especially in the political sphere as they should be subordinate and uphold feminine characteristics that leaves them unstable for positions of leadership.

Lastly, it was suggested that days should be set aside for educational meetings to encourage women to take part in politics.

Specific days should be set aside for meetings to be held to encourage women to take part in the political realm (Society: f, 18 to 25).

Setting days for meetings can be a way to channel women into positions of decision making in the political sphere. The Inter-Parliamentary Union & United Nations Women (2015) purports that the working environment for women is still unfriendly as political meetings are set during odd times that women leaders are still faced with patriarchal traditional roles as they have to meet work expectations. However, it becomes difficult for women to get involved in political sectors.

In as much as this has been pointed out, it is clear that indeed the South African citizens are concerned about the gender inequalities in their political sector. Therefore, the government should try and come up with resolutions to do away with the existence of societal gender gaps. This is supported by the SADC Gender Protocol (2015) which notes that despite the tremendous strides

over the last two decades, gender gaps remain in almost all areas of political decision making. These require deliberate measures to ensure that gender equality is raised to the level of importance that the constitution calls for.

4.7. Knowledge on gender instruments

Participants' knowledge on the existing gender policies was also tested in this study. This helped to get an insight of what those who were having positions in the political parties of South Africa knew about gender transformation and development. Questions on policies implemented were grouped into three categories, that is, internationally, regionally (SADC region) and nationally.

4.7.1. Knowledge on international gender policies

Three of the international gender policies were asked to participants to see whether they knew about them. The three policies asked were; the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Beijing Platform for Action and the Quota system.

4.7.1.1. The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

Eighty percent of the participants who took part in this investigation indicated that they did not know the existence of the CEDAW. They indicated that they did not know what CEDAW was all about. Only twenty percent of the participants knew the existence of CEDAW as a gender tool. The respondents who said they knew CEDAW they indicated that they only knew its existence and that they did not have any detailed knowledge about it.

This shows that even though the South African government is trying its best to come up with solutions to address gender equality it is only preaching gender equality on paper whilst employing a passive approach. This is disturbing because South Africa is one of the countries that ratified the CEDAW in the year 1995.

The Advocacy Aid (2015) states that despite South Africa's commitment to modify social and cultural behavior patterns using the CEDAW, it is challenging as these are based on stereotyped notions about the roles of men and women. It however shows that South Africa is only applying gender policies so that it can be identified as a democratic country, while still pursuing its patriarchal notions that promotes gender inequalities in the society.

4.7.1.2. The Beijing platform for Action (BPA)

Seventy percent of the respondents indicated that they did not know the BPA. The remaining thirty percent indicated that they knew it. The respondents who knew about the existence of the BPA indicated that they have knowledge on this. One of the respondents had the following to say:

The 1995 Beijing Platform for action flagged twelve key areas where urgent action was needed to ensure greater equality and opportunities for women (Cinnamon: f, 36 to 45).

The statement above shows knowledge of the participant on this tool for gender equality even though they could not identify the twelve key areas of the BPA. The fact that the majority of our political leaders know nothing about the existence of this Action Plan as an instrument that advocates gender equality, is a worrying sign. This may serve as part of explanation on the huge gender gap in the decision-making bodies of the South African political sector.

4.7.1.3. The Quota System

The majority (eighty percent) of the participants of this study indicated that they did not know the quota system. Of the twenty percent who knew the existence of the quota system, they knew nothing about its use in the gender equality issues. This might be the reason why women are still not equally represented in the political sphere of South Africa. The SADC Gender Protocol (2015) states that still of concern is the country's dependence on the ANC for gender parity as it is the only political party with a 50/50 quota.

Therefore, the South African government should effectively implement the quota system to achieve the goal of equal participation of men and women in political decision-making positions. This will be advantageous as it will provide a balance that will more accurately reflect the composition of the society and strengthen democracy.

4.7.2. Regional gender instruments

The SADC region has come up with various policies to combat the existence of gender inequalities. Among those policies, the research sought to understand knowledge of some of the instruments that were implemented in Southern Africa from the participants' perspective. Those which were used for this study include the SADC Gender Protocol, the Maputo Protocol and the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies.

4.7.2.1. The SADC Gender Protocol

As the researcher inquired if participants know about the above mentioned regional instrument, half of the participants indicated that they knew about the existence of the policy, while the other half indicated that they did not know this protocol. However, of the fifty percent that acknowledged that they knew the protocol, they indicated that they did not know its contents or how it can be employed to achieve the 50/50 gender equality. This is a clear indication that in as much as the South African government has adopted this protocol, it has however not implemented this fully so that all those who hold political positions follow it and transform societies and their institutions. This also partly explains why South Africa is still suffering from unequal gender representation in the political realm.

Despite the adaptation of the quota system to fifty percent in 2009 by the ANC in May 2014 national elections, the party did not live up to its voluntary quota and zebra-style party list, which was meant to interspace women and men. It fielded fewer women as preferred candidates and men occupied the top three party positions (SADC Gender Protocol, 2015). This shows that, even the ruling party which is adopting the gender equality tools is still promoting patriarchal styles in influential leadership positions. This creates a huge gender gap in the representation of women in the decision-making positions of the political realm. It is now the duty of the government and the ruling party to ensure that each and every political party adopts this system effectively for a better and equally represented South Africa.

4.7.2.2. The Maputo Protocol

The Maputo Protocol aims to combat discrimination against women and to promote political gender representation. Seventy percent of the participants indicated that they were not aware of this policy. Of the thirty percent who indicated that they knew this policy, they however indicated that they did not know how it can be implemented to eliminate gender inequalities.

Considering the fact that the people who are holding political positions in South Africa are not even aware of some of the gender legal imperatives, South Africa might be adopting most of the gender policies that they are signatory to so as to be regarded democratic. Mavindidze (2016) notes that representative democracy seems impaired, partial and unjust when women, as a majority of citizens, fail to see themselves equally reflected in the leadership of their polity. This explains why South Africa has not yet reached its 50/50 mandate which it has been aiming for. Therefore, it can be concluded that, South Africa is still a long way from the realization of full gender equality.

4.7.2.3. The Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies

Upon enquiring on the knowledge about the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategy, the majority (eighty percent) of the participants to this study indicated that they did not know of this strategy as exemplified in the quote below:

Again, I am not aware of this strategy so it's difficult for me to give my opinion (Advocate: m, 26 to 35).

This might be one of the reasons for the huge gender gaps experienced in the South African political arena, even though it has been rated among the leading countries in increased women representation in the political arena in the SADC region.

Of the twenty percent who knew of this strategy, they were however not aware of its efficiency towards the realization of gender equality. Therefore, there is no difference between those who knew and those who did not as they all did not know the significance of having this strategy in action. This may be the reason why South Africa is still one of the biggest victims of gender inequalities, both in the society as a whole and decision making positions in the political sphere. This is in line with United Nations General Assembly (2015) which has argued that not much progress has been made as most countries that agreed to this protocol are still faced with huge inequalities between men and women when it comes to representation in politics.

4.7.3. The National gender tools

This study also sought to investigate participants' knowledge on national gender instruments. The study only included the South African Constitution and the Employment Equity Act of 1998.

4.7.3.1. The South African Constitution

The South African Constitution talks on gender equality as it has the Bill of Rights which states the country's democratic values of human dignity and equality.

Sixty percent of the participants of this study indicated that they know of the South African Constitution and how it stands for gender equality for its citizens. As can be seen in the example below:

The constitution of South Africa indicates that all people are equal before the law and they have equal rights (Lovely: f, 36 to 45).

Considering the participants' knowledge on what the constitution says about the issues of gender equality, it is worth to note that those who are in positions of power in the political arena are aware of some of their national gender instruments. However, the sixty percent figure is not impressive enough to fully complement South African political leaders on the knowledge of their own constitution. This is because of the remaining forty percent which had no idea of the constitution and what it stands for when it comes to gender equality. This may be one of the reasons why South Africa as a nation is still suffering huge gender inequalities both in the political sector and the society as a whole.

4.7.3.2. The Employment Equity Act (EEA) no 55 of 1998

On the question of knowledge about the existence of the EEA, stated above, ninety percent of the participants indicated that they have knowledge of the EEA. However, they had shady ideas of what the act says about gender equality. This might explain why there are still gender differences in decision making positions in the political sector, as leaders are not fully aware of their country's policies. SADC Gender Protocol (2015) notes that political parties in South Africa have failed to implement special measures nationally, to increase women's political participation. Therefore, in order to achieve this, South Africa should move beyond just gender and responsive governance and totally adopt new measures.

4.8. Governments efforts

This section sought to investigate participants' knowledge and views on the various structures, and efforts that the South African government has put in place to address gender inequality. These include the Office of the Status of Women (OSW), the Commission on Gender Equality (CGE), the South African Men's Forum SAMPF, the Civil Society and the Gender, Education and Training network (GETNET).

4.8.1. The Office on the Status of Women (OSW)

Here the researcher continued to probe participants on the South African structures that deal with gender justice. as the OSW is a constitutional body established by the Commission on Gender Equality Act 39 of 1996 to support the development and implementation of gender equality in the nine provinces of South Africa. The majority (seventy percent) of the participants indicated that they did not know its existence. Of the thirty percent who knew its existence, one of the respondents had this to say:

It is general knowledge, it promotes the importance and dignity of women in the society (Microsoft: m,36 to 45).

The above-mentioned statement, shows that although participants know the existence of such government effort to reduce gender inequalities, they do not really know its significance. This demonstrates that participants do not know what their government is doing for South Africa to fully realize gender equality.

4.8.2. The Commission on Gender Equality (CGE)

Here the researcher sought to determine whether participants were aware of the existence of the CGE. Half of the respondents indicated that they know of its existence. However, even though they indicated that they know about this commission, participants indicated that they did not know its objectives and aims. Therefore, they did not know how it can be of any significance towards gender justice and transformation. The other fifty percent, on the other hand, indicated that they did not know about its existence. However, no differences could be drawn from those who knew its existence and those who did not as they all did not have an idea how having such a commission in place would help their society to do away with gender inequalities.

This means that even though the South African government tries to come up with various strategies to do away with gender inequalities, such efforts are not well communicated to the citizens. Thus, the existence of gender inequalities and the resultant under-representation of women in the political decision making positions will continue unabated. To achieve equality, the South African government should work towards honoring the commitment it made to achieve the 50/50 gender parity.

4.8.3. The South African Men's Forum (SAMPF)

Another South African government effort to make citizens aware of the importance of gender equality in the country, is through the SAMPF. However, the majority (seventy percent) of the participants indicated that they did not know SAMPF. The lack of awareness of these gender awareness initiatives may be attributed to lack of education and communication of gender policies to the public servants.

4.8.4. The Civil Society

The mandate of the Civil society organizations in South Africa is to promote constructive male involvement through awareness programs. Disappointingly, the majority (eighty percent) of the study's participants indicated that they did not know anything about it. This may be one of the

reasons why South Africa is still suffering gender inequalities in both the private and the public sphere. This also may be why there is still a huge gender gap when it comes to representation in the decision-making positions in the political arena. In this regard, the SADC Gender Protocol (2015) notes that in South Africa the political parties ensure that all politicians remain popular with (mostly male) party bosses to survive. Therefore, the South African government should work towards sensitizing both men and women of the importance of being equal in order to have a better future.

4.8.5. The Gender, Education and Training Network (GETNET)

GETNET was one of the first organizations to present workshops aimed at engaging men in gender issues and aimed at changing men's consciousness about it. However, the majority (ninety percent) of the respondents indicated that they did not know GETNET. Of the ten percent, which indicated their knowledge about this training network, they however indicated that they did not know how it is used to curb gender inequalities. This however, is an indication of lack of knowledge and awareness among those who are supposed to be the 'knowers' of such activities against gender inequality. This might be the reason why South Africa is still a victim of gender inequalities at societal level and the representation of women in the public sphere more especially the political arena.

4.9. Summary

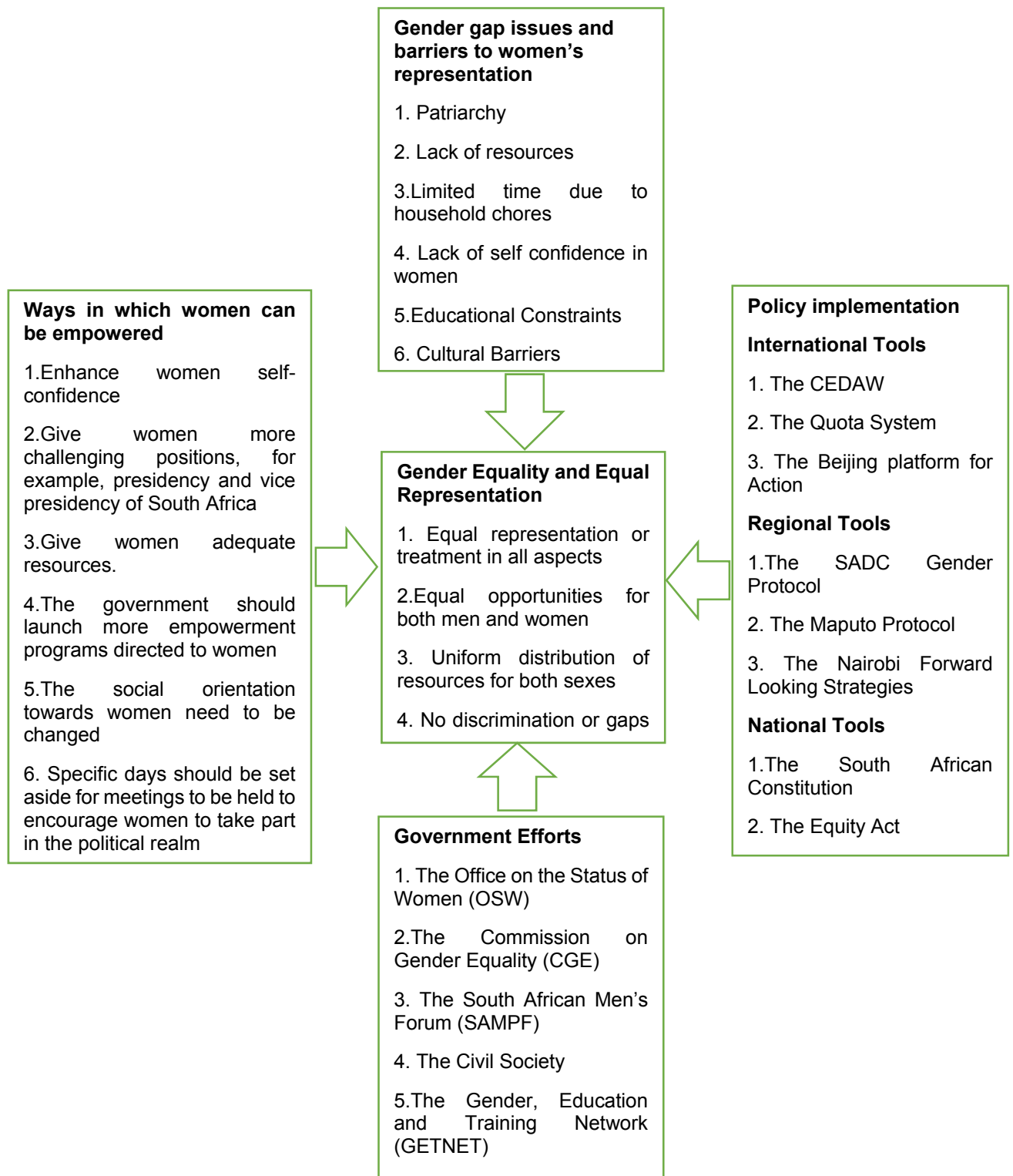
The purpose of this study was to investigate gender representation in party politics. The findings show that respondents defined gender equality in various ways in more or less the same way. respondents also mentioned various barriers such as patriarchal, socio-cultural, economic, religious factors that act against women's equal representation in the political arena. A number of opinions with regards to ways that might address gender inequalities were also suggested by the participants. These include the need to have specific days for educating women about leadership positions, giving them access to challenging positions, fair distribution of resources and the changing of social orientation towards women. The participants' knowledge on various gender instruments and government efforts was also tested to assess their understanding of gender inequality mitigating instruments.

In summation, four major themes were identified in this study namely;

1. Gender gaps and barriers towards women's equal representation in politics;
2. Ways in which women can be empowered;

3. Policy implementation from a global perspective, regional perspective down to the national perspective and;
4. The various government efforts meant to improve gender equality in South Africa.

Figure 4.4 Research Summary



These four themes affect gender equality and equity in party politics in distinct ways as shown in Figure 4.4. For each theme, there are various factors or sub-themes which need special or different attention in trying to address the issue of gender equality in party politics. Indeed, from the figure, a clear definition of gender equality proffered by the respondents revolved around four phrases; equal representation or treatment in all aspects, equal opportunities for both men and women, uniform distribution of resources for both sexes and no discrimination or gaps. This enabled the researcher to define gender equality as fair and equal opportunities in all spheres of life to both genders.

The next chapter will draw conclusions on the study and come up with recommendations to assist women, men, policy makers, the South African government and students in understanding gender equality and representation in party politics.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

The study investigated gender representation in influential or decision making positions in politics. It sought to address obstacles that stand in the way of gender equality. This chapter presents and discusses an overview of the study, the summary of findings, how the study addressed the research questions, conclusions and what this study has contributed to the body of knowledge in this field.

5.1.1. Overview of the findings

The following is a summary of the major findings of this study:

Findings have demonstrated adequate knowledge of the concept 'gender equality' and indicated that there has been some movement towards gender equality at district level as well as the national level. Granted, gender equity and equality has not been achieved in political parties in Vhembe district. Rather, women representation and visibility in the political parties has increased as a result of them being put in positions for the sake of numbers, rather than creating equal power relations between men and women. The gender difference was attributed to patriarchy, lack of confidence in women, culture, tradition and religious beliefs. Furthermore, limited time due to household chores, lack of finance and resources, marriage, educational constraints were also some of the factors against the upward mobility of women in decision making positions in political parties in Vhembe District.

Findings also indicated that it is appropriate for women to participate in political decision making positions. Women's participation in the political realm was not considered a measurement of their morals, instead, it is accorded to capability. Their active participation in positions of decision making in the political realm was considered an added advantage due to their feminine aspects of multi-tasking and caring qualities to counter the rigidity of masculinities. Hence, their biological make up was not considered a barrier in assuming decision making positions in the political sphere.

Findings also highlighted various ways in which women can be empowered so that they can actively and effectively participate in influential decision making positions in politics. These include, having stipulated meeting times, educating societies on the importance of having women in political decision making positions, changing cultural roles and stereotypes. Matuba (2016)

notes that until the society breaks the patriarchal barricades, particularly in politics, the struggle for equality will remain a lip service.

Findings of the study also illustrated that participants are not aware of the international, regional and national policies used to fight gender inequalities. Participants were also not aware of various programs that the South African government have put in place in order to combat gender inequalities at social and political levels. Thus, there is need to sensitize citizens on the advantages of gender equality, particularly with regards to politics. However, it should also be noted that in order to deal with gender inequality, the root cause should be addressed at societal levels. The next session discusses how the research findings addressed the research objectives.

5.2. How the research findings addressed the study objectives

This part of the study seeks to show how the research findings have addressed the study objectives.

Objective 1: gender representation in influential or decision making positions in politics in Vhembe District

As one of the objectives of this study was to determine gender representation in influential decision making positions in political parties in the Vhembe district, findings to research indicated that gender equity has not been realised. Even though men and women are currently holding influential positions, only a handful of women have had access to the most influential political positions. The majority of women are still holding lesser positions such as being councillors. Matuba (2016) notes that at local levels, political structures across political parties in South Africa have a majority of women deputising as secretaries or kept as branch treasurers. Thus, political parties in the Vhembe district as well as South Africa in general are no exception to patriarchal barriers, despite that women constitute the majority of members in political parties.

Objective 2: Investigation of challenges in the way of gender equality and representation in politics in Vhembe District

The research findings also demonstrate that there are various obstacles that persist in political parties that create gender inequalities when it comes to the representation of men and women in political parties. Women are the ones faced by barriers in regard to their ascendance to decision making positions. These range from patriarchal and cultural barriers that include, women's multiple roles, marital and child care responsibilities, lack of confidence as well as religious barriers. On the other hand, formal barriers ranging from awkward meeting times, masculine

organizational culture, lack of economic and political resources, educational constraints have also been contributing factors.

Objective 3: Investigation of the South African government policies and efforts to mitigate disparities that exist between men and women in the political sphere.

The research findings indicated that even though South Africa adopted several gender policies and instruments, internationally, regionally and nationally against gender inequalities, they have not been implemented effectively. These include the CEDAW, Beijing Platform of Action and the Quota system. In addition, there is the SADC Gender Protocol, Maputo Protocol and the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies. There is the South African constitution and the Employment Equity Act. There is however due to the lack of knowledge by the participants about the function of these instruments.

Moreover, the research findings indicated that in as much as various programs against gender inequalities exist, most people are not aware of them. Programs against gender inequalities include the Office on the Status of Women, Commission on Gender Equality, the South African Men's Forum, the Civil Society and the Gender, Education and Training Network. Therefore, not much progress has been made about to gender equality in political parties as people are not aware of these mitigating programs. This means that most programs are put in place as a lip service, hence perpetuating gender imbalance within decision making positions in political parties.

5.3. Conclusion

In summation, gender equal representation of men and women in politics has not been achieved in the district under study. This has caused marginalization of women in decision making positions within political parties. Women's marginalization is a result of structural forces, that is, socio-cultural, economic and political forces. Consequently, these barriers must be challenged and changed by linking them with human rights. This can only be achieved if these barricades are tackled from a national level, regional level as well as the international level. The creation of enabling environment for women's participation in politics cannot be viewed only within the boundaries of a country as it must be associated with global factors (Mavindidze, 2016). This is because without changing socio-cultural, political and economic barriers at the national, regional and international levels, the goal of gender equality or women's equal participation in politics will remain impossible to achieve. Thus, the process towards gender equality is moving slowly. Therefore, the obligation to create a supportive environment for gender equality and improvement of women as a shared responsibility falls equally on the national and international communities.

5.4. Recommendations of the study

This study will make recommendations about the understanding of various barriers that work against women's upward mobility in the public sphere, that is, political masculine views; patriarchal and cultural, socio-economic factors. Additionally, recommendations regarding the government, South Africa as a nation, gender parity in the political realm, policy makers and for further studies will be offered.

The following are recommendations based on the findings of the study:

5.4.1. Education

Human capacities are dependent on the availability of resources such as education and economic status as these build capabilities and human choices. Therefore, access to education and sustainable economic conditions are directly linked with women's ability to create space for themselves in politics. So, proper and adequate education should equally be availed to both men and women in developed, developing and extremely marginalized areas to ensure gender equality and equal representation of women in the public sphere, more especially the political realm.

5.4.2. Consciousness and confidence among women

Political consciousness through building of transformative communities is the sustainable way to transform politics. This can be achieved through women's movements and civil societies in helping them to boost their self-esteem so that they can participate in decision making positions.

5.4.3. Domestic chains (Experiences of women)

The domestic barriers experienced by multi-tasking (triple roles) of women in productive, reproductive and community management spheres must inform the efforts for creating a supportive environment for women's political participation. Provision of childcare and care work, knowledge on productive and community work is vital to enabling women to participate in politics as this experience will bring a special focus to politics.

5.4.4. Stereotypes and Gender tools

All societies should work towards encouraging empowerment and emancipation of women by discouraging stereotypical and archaic customs, sexist prejudices as well as women's confined roles established by patriarchy. If societies continue to live by these statutes, progress of women and humanity will be stunted. Therefore, to effectively achieve emancipation and empowerment, states should be urged to use gender tools sensibly while using a practical approach and putting

aside ideologies and politics in favor of common sense and determination to make a real difference to real women in real time in the real world.

Furthermore, socialization of young children should shift from the previously gendered orientation, to an equal upbringing of both male and female children. The South African government should adopt formal school and district policies to promote family involvement about gender equality.

5.5. Recommendations for the roadmap to gender equality in South Africa

Lawmakers must strengthen the National Gender Machinery and monitor the functions of the ministry of women.

Government departments should adopt a standardized monitoring framework in order to monitor gender mainstreaming and collect gender-disaggregated data more rigorously and regularly.

The ruling government needs to put in place laws that make quotas compulsory.

Policy makers should embed gender in institutional culture and practices, including budgeting and the allocation of resources.

Policy makers need to integrate gender into the manifestos of all political parties.

Better public education and awareness on gender equality and gender responsive governance is needed.

5.6. Gender parity in political parties' recommendations

Political parties should amend the Electoral Act and the Municipal Electoral Act.

Political parties should sign into law the Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality.

They should also provide workshops on Women in Politics.

5.7. Policy Recommendations

International bodies like the United Nations (UN) should play a critical role to humanize globalization processes by advocating legislations that address imperfections of the political arena in nation-states.

There is a great need to make the treaty bodies, including Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform for Action, an integral part of the United Nations efforts to empower women, fulfill their rights and achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Moreover, clear guidelines for the implementation of affirmative measures that lead to empowering women and creating their ability to critically engage with the state and the society for a social change and gender equality should also be developed.

International bodies should develop a system of incentives for countries that work towards narrowing the gender gap in socio-cultural, economic and political sectors.

On the other hand, concluding observations and general comments of treaty bodies need to be continuous and not only attended seasonally when it is time for reporting.

5.8. Recommendations for further studies

Research, documentation and dissemination of successful experiences in the world is needed to promote women's participation in politics.

More research should be conducted to address the socio-economic, religious, cultural and traditional values and political factors that act against empowerment of women in the public sphere.

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APPENDIX 1: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE



University of Venda

Department of Youth and Gender Studies

INTERVIEW GUIDE

For a research study entitled:

**Gender representation in Party Politics: A Case Study of Vhembe District in Limpopo,
South Africa**

Research conducted by: **Manuella Nyasha Gaspare**

Contact details: Mobile +27734676900

Email: manugasp21@gmail.com

PARTICIPANTS' GUIDELINES- Your assistance and participation in this interview as frankly as possible will be appreciated.

- The researcher is committed to uphold ethical values and will adhere to ethical conduct as it applies to academic research projects in higher educational institutions in South Africa.
- Your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw whenever you no longer want to participate.
- Participants' responses will be treated in the strictest confidence; anonymity will be guaranteed.

INSTRUCTIONS -There are no **RIGHT** or **WRONG** answers, just be honest about your personal perceptions and respond with as much detail as possible.

Section A: Biographical Data

This section of the interview guide pertains to biographical information. Although we are aware of the sensitivity of the questions in this section, the data you will provide enable us to get a clear understanding of the political nature of our society.

Please answer the following questions by crossing (×) the relevant block

1. Gender

Male	
Female	

2. Age

18-25	
26-35	
36-45	
46 and above	

3. Marital status

Single	
Married	
Other	

4. Education level

Tertiary	
Secondary	
Primary	

Section B

This section explores views on representation of men and women in the political arena, with some open-ended questions.

1. What do you understand by the concept gender equality?

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2. Do you think it is appropriate for women to take part in politics? Yes/No

Explain your answer

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3. Do you think there is equal representation of men and women in political leadership positions? Yes/No

Give reason(s) for your preferred answer

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4. Do you think women who take part in politics are of less morals?

Yes/ No

Give reasons.

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5. What might be the factors that create a gender gap in politics? Explain your answer.

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6. Do you consider these as some of the barriers women face when it comes to political representation?

	Yes	No
Lack of resources		
Women's multiple roles (childcare and household tasks)		
Lack of adequate finance or economic		
Lack of confidence in women		
Cultural practices		
Weakness of women		
Women's educational constraints		

Other reasons specify

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7. Women are less likely than men to think they are qualified to run for office?

Yes /No

Explain.

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8. Is patriarchy (rule by men) a stronghold in women’s marginalization in politics?

Yes/ No

Explain your answer.

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9. Are women biologically weak to take up influential and challenging political positions?

Yes/ No

Explain.

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10. Equality between men and women is enhanced in our society?

Yes /No

Support your answer.

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11. Are women more visible now in political influential positions as men as compared in the past? Yes/No

Explain your answer

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12. Women's active participation in positions of influence in politics is an added advantage to societies. Yes/ No

Explain your answer.

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13. How can the woman be empowered so that she can be visible as men in influential political positions?

Explain your answer.

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Section C: Questions on policy implementation.

This section needs to get a perspective of the participants understanding on how effective are various gender tools that have been implemented on achieving equal participation in influential political positions.

14. Are you aware of any international gender tool(s) that advocate for gender equality from the list below?

International Gender Tool	Yes	No
Convention on the Elimination of all forms of discrimination against Women (CEDAW)		
Beijing Platform for Action		
Quota System		

If yes, to any of the tool(s) justify its enhancement to women's representation and participation in politics.

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15. Are you aware of any regional gender tool(s) that advocate for gender equality from the list below?

Regional Gender Tool	Yes	No
SADC Gender Protocol		
Maputo Protocol		
Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies		

If yes, to any of the tool(s) justify its enhancement to women's representation and participation in politics.

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16. Are you aware of any national gender tool(s) that advocate for gender equality from the list below?

National Gender Tool	Yes	No
South African Constitution		
The Equity Act		

If yes, to any of the tool(s) justify its enhancement to women's representation and participation in politics.

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17. Are you aware of any government's efforts to enhance gender equality and women representation in influential positions from the list below?

Government Effort	Yes	No
The Office on the Status of Women (OSW)		
The Commission on Gender Equality (CGE)		
The South African Men's Forum (SAMPF)		
The Civil Society		
Gender, Education and Training Network (GETNET)		

If yes, to any of the above-mentioned effort(s) justify its enhancement to women's representation and participation in politics

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APPENDIX 2: CONSENT FORM

Institute for Gender and Youth Studies



University of Venda

Informed consent for participation in an academic research study entitled:

**Title of the research: Gender Representation in Party Politics: A Case Study of a District
in Limpopo, South Africa**

Research conducted by: **Manuella Nyasha Gaspare**

Contact details: cell: +27638234350 email: manugasp21@gmail.com

Dear Respondent

You are invited to participate in an academic research study conducted by Manuella Nyasha Gaspare, a Masters student from the Institute for Gender and Youth Studies at University of Venda (UNIVEN). This study has received approval from the School of Human Social Sciences as well as Institute for Gender and Youth Studies at Univen. The purpose of the study is to assess if women are being given an equal chance as men to participate in influential political positions with specific reference to South Africa in Limpopo, Vhembe District.

Please note the following:

- This study involves responding to questionnaires and interview with municipality political officers. Names will not appear in the findings and the answers given will be treated as strictly confidential. You cannot be identified in person based on the answers you give.
- Your participation in this study is very important to us. You may, however, choose not to participate and you may also stop participating at any time without any negative consequences.

- Please answer the questions as honestly as possible. The interview and questionnaire should not take more than 30 minutes to an hour of your time.
- The results of the study will be used for academic purposes only and may be published in an academic journal. We will provide you with a summary of our findings on request.
- Please contact my course leader, **Dr L.N Maqubela**, if you have any questions or comments regarding the study.

Please sign the form to indicate that:

- You have read and understand the information provided above.
- You give your consent to participate in the study on a voluntary basis.

Respondent's signature

Date