

**TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY AND EQUITY: CHALLENGES AND  
OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN ADVANCEMENT TO SENIOR EDUCATIONAL  
MANAGEMENT POSITIONS. A CASE OF MATABELELAND SOUTH REGION OF  
EDUCATION IN ZIMBABWE**

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## DECLARATION

I **Dingindawo Ncube** declare that this thesis entitled, **TOWARDS GENDER AND EQUITY:CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN ADVANCEMENT TOWARDS SENIOR EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT POSITIONS .A CASE OF MATABELELAND SOUTH REGION IN ZIMBABWE**, is my own work and has not been submitted in any form for another degree or diploma at any university or other institution of tertiary education. Information derived from the published or unpublished work of others has been acknowledged in the text and a list of references is given.

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

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## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated my loving wife Nomagugu Ncube , daughter Ludo Ncube, son Tjakalisa Ncube and my mother Elitha Khupe. This work is for all of us.

## ABSTRACT

The study sought to evaluate the extent to which the affirmative action policy on the accelerated promotion of women to senior educational management positions has created opportunities for women. The policy was promulgated and implemented in 1995 with the sole purpose of achieving gender parity between men and women in educational management positions. The study was prompted by the underrepresentation of women in senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South province in Zimbabwe against the existence of an affirmative action policy which aimed at increasing the number of women in educational management positions. The study interrogated the effectiveness of the affirmative action policy in creating opportunities for women advancement to senior educational management positions, the challenges experienced by female teachers in ascending to leadership positions, the challenges faced by women in educational management positions, the unintended outcomes and the leadership qualities of women. The study employed a case study design, the qualitative approach and the convenience sampling procedure was used to select study participants. Teachers participated in the study through the focus group discussion while heads of schools, education officers, district education officers and members of the provincial education directorate were engaged through individual interviews. The study revealed that the affirmative action policy on the accelerated promotion of women to senior educational management positions was in place, though not effective because female and male candidates to educational management positions were competing on an equal basis in terms of educational qualifications, experience, and length of service, interview score and the performance rating. Women applicants only supersede their male counterparts in cases where there is a tie after all the above considerations have been made. This approach was found disadvantaging women who in general lack experience and educational qualifications in comparison to their male counterparts hence to date women remain underrepresented in educational management positions in Matabeleland South. The study revealed that women aspiring to ascend to educational management positions lacked family/spouse support and ambitions / confidence to apply for leadership positions. Socio-cultural practices, negative male attitudes about women leadership also constrained women's

rise to leadership positions. Women in leadership positions face resistance from their subordinates and from members of the greater community who are used to be led by male leaders. The study found that the policy has a labelling effect on women promoted on such policies, it has created disharmony in families as women take their headship portfolios home. Furthermore the study established that home –work conflict causes stress on women in educational management positions .Women were found to be hard workers, less corrupt and produce better results than their male counterparts but are emotionally unstable, use autocratic leadership styles and do not take quality decisions. The study recommended that the Civil Service Commission revise, and disseminate the affirmative action policy so as to increase stakeholders' awareness so that it can benefit the women, promote more women to headship positions so as to act as role models for other female teachers. The study proposed a model of leadership development in women by creating an enabling environment at home, school, society, and church and government level for gender equality as a pre requisite for developing self confidence in the girl child and later in women.

**Keywords:** Gender, gender equality, gender equity, affirmative action, senior educational management positions, educational management.

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

PED-Provincial Education Director

D/PED-Deputy Provincial Education Director

DEO –District Education Officer

EO-Education Officer

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## CHAPTER 1

### ORIENTATION AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The affirmative action policies can be used as a useful tool for redressing gender inequalities between men and a woman in as far as the occupation of decision making positions is concerned. This can be true for the promotion of women to senior educational management positions in Zimbabwe in general and in Matabeleland south region of education in particular. This introductory chapter orients and places the study within the framework of the major issues to be interrogated in the study. The background to the study highlights the underrepresentation of women in educational management in Zimbabwe in Africa and from the global perspectives. Covert and overt factors which militate against gender parity are discussed in the context of the affirmative action policy seen as the panacea to these challenges. It is therefore the purpose of this study to assess the extent to which the affirmative action policy on the promotion of women to senior education management positions has assisted women to ascend to educational management positions in Matabeleland South region. Over and above the study evaluates the extent to which the affirmative action policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions has really created opportunities for women in Matabeleland South. Some key terms which comprise of gender, gender equality and senior educational positions are defined. The study is intended to benefit the lady teacher in Matabeleland South, in Zimbabwe, those in the diaspora as well other key stakeholders which include policy designers and policy implementers. The last part of the chapter outlines the organization of the study before the conclusion wraps up the chapter.

#### 1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

In spite of the tremendous efforts by feminist movements, politicians and civic organizations to fight gender inequality characterized by the dominant male and female subordinate relationships, greater challenges still lie ahead. Weiner in Moyo (2003:65)

argues that this relationship is manifest at every level of society: in the family, in the school, in higher education and in the workplace. Zimbabwe being part of the global village has not been spared from this 'scourge' of gender inequality in general and in educational management in particular as women are grossly under-represented in educational management positions as compared to their male counterparts.

At independence in 1980, the government of Zimbabwe came up with a number of measures aimed at liberating the black populace in general and the women folk in particular from both racial and gender discrimination. To confront gender issues and bring women to equal status with men, laws such as, the Minimum Wages Act Regulations 1980, Equal Pay Regulations 1980, Legal Age of Majority Act 1982, Matrimonial Causes Act 1987, the Administration of Estates Amendment Act 1997, the Electoral Act 1990, Sexual Discrimination Removal Act and the Sexual Offences Act 2001 among other such policies were implemented. These and more such policies are enshrined in the Constitution of Zimbabwe as she seeks to put men and women on an equal legal footing.

The education sector experienced interventions enshrined in various policies and statutes meant to regularize and revolutionize the behavior of the government with the sole purpose of achieving gender equality. In this case the talking points are the strategies and interventions formulated and implemented to champion the cause of women. Among the many interventions introduced, is the 1984 Policy on Growth with Equity whose main objective was to ensure that there was a fair representation of both sexes in the economic, social and political development of the country. Secondly there was the 1992 policy on women advancement which aimed to have at least 30% of the women in decision-making positions within a period of five years. Lastly, there was the 2004 National Gender Policy revised in 2013. Its aim was the advancement of women and men in all sectors of human life and to create equal opportunities for women and men in decision making positions in all areas and at all levels. These and other related affirmative action policies were meant, among other things, to accelerate the promotion of women to management positions, in many spheres of life including the education

sector. The net effect of these policies was that they allowed women to supersede their male counterparts when considered for promotion in cases where qualifications and experience are equal, all in the name of gender equity or positive discrimination meant to cushion women from the long and unfair gender discrimination they had suffered since the cradle of mankind.

Now many years after the pronouncement, adoption and subsequently the implementation of affirmative action policies in educational provision in general and educational management in particular, the situation on the ground seems to remain in favour of men against women as educational management positions such as deputy head of school, head of school, education officer, district education officer up to provincial education officer, remain dominated by males at the expense of the females. Oyedele, Mamvuto, and Nhiwatiwa (2010:171) explain that “in spite of the existing measures in many countries including Zimbabwe, women still face an up-hill struggle when it comes to promotions to leadership positions”. This therefore calls for a thorough analysis of the challenges that hinder the smooth advancement of women to educational leadership positions so that robust and women user friendly strategies can be crafted and implemented to achieve better results. It was therefore the intent of this study to interrogate the effectiveness of the affirmative action policies in Zimbabwe which seek to accelerate the promotion of women to leadership positions in education with a view to proffer better and effective measures meant to achieve gender equality between men and women. To give a crystal clear position on the extent of gender disparities between men and women in senior educational management positions I provide the evidence in the subsections that follow:

### **1.2.1 General Trends in Gender Disparity in Educational Management/Leadership Positions**

This section examines the general trends in gender disparity in Educational leadership positions. While the focus of this study was on the position of deputy heads, heads of primary and secondary school, Education Officer, District Education Officer and the Provincial Education Directorate, in some cases examples from the tertiary sector were

used as challenges to women advancement to senior educational management seem to have a universal character. The section is broken down into global, regional and Zimbabwean cases.

### **1.2.1.1 Global Trends in Gender Disparity in Educational Leadership Positions**

Literature shows that trends in gender disparity between men and women in educational leadership positions for the developed world show that women are grossly under-represented at higher and other levels of education. Smith (2010 in Lunyolo, Ayodo, Tikoko and Simatwa 2014:242) asserts *that;*

*In European countries like Britain and Wales only 36% females is in management positions. In agreement to this view, Coleman (2001) noted that women in educational are a minority in the UK, and they are also a minority in other countries, both those in comparable levels of development and those that constitute the newly emerging economies.*

The above quotation shows women underrepresentation in educational management positions is a universal phenomenon as it is shown it is prevalent developed and emerging economies. Similarly Uwizeyimana and Mathevula (2014:1203) posit that;

*A 2012 study conducted in the UK found that teaching has become a female dominated profession in both secondary and primary schools. The same sentiments were expressed by Malheiro de Oliveira and Abreu (2012:226) who argue that in today in France as in the vast majority of developed or developing countries the rate of female teachers is around 80%.*

Although Uwizeyimana and Mathevula (2014) confirm that teaching has become a female dominated profession the same cannot be said about their representation in educational management positions. Cubillo and Brown (2003 in Uwizeyimana and Mathevula 2014:1204) argue that:

*despite the fact that women dominate the primary and secondary teaching profession internationally (in both developed and developing countries), they remain underrepresented in leadership and management positions in both public and private education institutions, at both secondary and primary levels.*

This disproportionate representation of women in the teaching profession to those in management positions truly subscribe to the notion that “women teach while men manage”.

To round off this section literature shows that women underrepresentation in educational management is also prevalent in other developed economies such as the U.SA, Australia, Belgium, the Netherlands and the Philippines to mention just a few. A summarized version of women underrepresentation in educational management positions is presented in table 1 below.

**Table1.1: Global Trends in Women’s representation in educational management**

Country	% Elementary Teachers	% Elementary Principals	% Secondary Teachers	% Secondary Principals
Belgium	75	32	55	33
Brunei	66	2	49	27
Greece	49	41	48	43.5
France	71	45	50	23
Netherlands	65	12	27	4
Philippines	77	22	57	12
United Kingdom	78	44	50	16
U.S. A	83.5	16.9	50.1	3.5

*Adapted from Shakeshaft (2006)*

The information on table 1 above shows that there are more female than male teachers in the elementary level of education in seven (7) countries in the exception Greece .In sharp contrast to the above position women are in the minority in the position of principal in elementary education. At secondary school level female teachers dominate in five (5) countries out of eight (8).This could mean that female teachers are the majority in the developed world as shown by the information given on table 1 above. However the information on table 1 above shows that women are grossly under-represented as secondary school principals. According to the data on table 1 above women form the majority of the teaching force especially at lower levels of the education system, are fairly represented in management positions at elementary levels but are grossly under-represented at principal level at secondary school levels.

*This information compares well with Coleman (2001 as cited in Uwizeyimana and Mathevula (2014: 1203)'s conclusions that in the United Kingdom and Wales women form the majority of the teaching force at lower levels of the education system but are grossly under-represented at management levels especially at tertiary levels of education.*

The above scenario is evidence of women under- representation at educational management positions. It therefore calls for concerted individual and collective effort to rescue women from remaining stuck at the lower echelons of the educational management ladder.

#### **1.2.1.2 Regional Trends in Gender Disparity in Educational Management Positions**

The regional trends in gender disparity in educational management positions are not very much divorced from those of the global ones. To this end Onyango et al (2011:1514) postulate that

*There is a gender gap in educational management globally and particularly in Kenya. For example an investigation by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (1999) showed that although the number of women employed in the education sector is relatively high, they are underrepresented in educational management positions in most countries of the world.*

Some examples from the region mainly from Uganda and South Africa are provided in the sections below.

**Table 1.2: Distribution of Male and Female Head and Deputy Head Teachers in Government-Aided and Licensed Private Schools in Uganda, February 2006**

School Type	Position	Females	Males	Total
<b>Government-Aided Schools</b>				
Boys only	Head	0	29	29
	Deputy	3	46	49
<b>Total</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>78</b>
Coed	Head	78	555	633
	Deputy	119	571	690
<b>Total</b>		<b>197</b>	<b>1,126</b>	<b>1,323</b>
Girls only	Head	46	6	52
	Deputy	31	52	83
<b>Total</b>		<b>77</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>135</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>277</b>	<b>1,259</b>	<b>1,536</b>
<b>Private Schools</b>				
Boys only	Head	0	15	15
	Deputy	2	17	19
<b>Total</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>34</b>
Coed	Head	85	752	837
	Deputy	116	731	847
<b>Total</b>		<b>201</b>	<b>1,483</b>	<b>1,684</b>
Girls only	Head	22	10	32
	Deputy	13	14	27
<b>Total</b>		<b>35</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>59</b>
Not Stated	Head	0	2	2
	Deputy	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>238</b>	<b>1,542</b>	<b>1,780</b>

*Source: MoES, (2006b) (Cited by Jill Sperandio and Alice Merab Kagoda: 2011).*

On the distribution of male and female deputy and heads of schools, Sperandio and Kagoda (2011:7) posit that “leadership of secondary schools in Uganda suffers from a more pronounced under-representation of women. Statistics generated by the Ministry of Education in 2006 for this study indicate that only 12% of the Deputy Heads and Heads of secondary schools in Uganda are women. Women occupy 20% of the headships of government schools, and 10 % of headships in government-registered private schools.”

These are really shocking cases of under-representation of women in educational management positions. This calls for an analysis of the factors which present

hindrances to women advancement to educational management positions with a view to minimize this gender disparity gap. Similarly the South African situation presents a more or less similar picture as the details below can reveal.

**Table 1.3: Gender Composition of South African Public Universities' Senior Leadership, April 2007 (Higher Education Resources Services 2007)**

	Vice Chancellor		Deputy Vice Chancellor		Registrar		Execute Director		Deans	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Gender	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Number	19	4	71	14	18	5	101	21	151	41
% Female	17%		16%		22%		17%		21%	

*Source: Anita (2010)*

The information on this table shows that the bulk of the educational management staff in South African Universities are male with very few women. This shows that women are under-represented in senior educational management positions in South African Universities.

**Table 1.4: Gender Composition of South African Academic Staff 2005 (Department of Education 2006)**

	Professor		Associate Professor		Director		Associate Director		Senior Lecturer		Lecturer		Junior Lecturer		Below Junior Lecturer	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Gender	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Number	1630	370	997	424	75	14	169	65	2451	1597	3018	3139	289	373	29	27
% Female	19%		30%		16%		28%		39%		51%		56%		56%	

*Source: Anita (2010)*

The information on table 4 above shows that in South African Universities, the majority of senior academic staff is male. The numbers of women however become noticeable at the lower rungs of the universities' structure. For example there are more women lecturers, junior lecturers and below junior lecturer positions than men. In contrast, above these positions (lecturer, junior and below junior lecturer) men dominate. This confirms to the widely held saying that 'men manage while women teach.' Below I present the trends in gender disparity in educational leadership positions in Zimbabwe.

### 1.2.1.3 Zimbabwean Trends in Gender Disparity in Educational Leadership Positions

The Zimbabwean case is not different from the global and regional trends as evidence shows that women are grossly under-represented at management positions in education in spite of the concerted government effort to achieve gender equality in all sectors of life. Chabaya, Rembe and Wadesango (2009) postulate that

*Zimbabwe has consistently strived to achieve gender equality since its political independence in 1980. Over the years, in its continued commitment to the removal of all forms of sex discrimination in the society, the government has pledged to several national and international gender declarations and conventions.*

The need for gender equality in Zimbabwe is premised on international, regional and national protocols on gender equality. These are briefly highlighted below. “Among the international instruments on gender equality are the 1965 Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) and the 1979 United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (National Gender Policy: 2013:01)”. Secondly, the Millennium Development Goals to which Zimbabwe is a signatory provide a pathway to the achievement of gender equality between men and women. In particular the Millennium Development Goal 3 seeks to promote gender equality and to empower women. Consequently Zimbabwe, “targeted to increase the participation of women in decision-making in all sectors and at all levels (to 40% for women in senior civil service positions and up to 30% for parliament) by 2005 and to 50-50 balance by 2015 (Millennium Development Goals Status Report: 2010: 25)”. The reference to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women is a strong indication that women are less equal to men in Zimbabwe. At regional level the SADC protocol on gender and development also lays a firm foundation for the achievement of gender equality between men and women in member states, Zimbabwe included. Its key objectives are:

*To provide for the empowerment of women, to eliminate discrimination and to achieve gender equality and equity through the development and implementation of gender responsive legislation, policies, programmes and projects (SADC Protocol on Gender and Development: 2009:10).*

Nationally, the call for gender equality is based on the constitution of Zimbabwe and the national gender policy. This study is therefore premised on the aforementioned documents as its anchors and advocate for the implementation of gender policies for the betterment of the women folk whose position in the Zimbabwean society and perhaps elsewhere has remained subordinated to that of men for some time. The sections 17, 56 and 245 of the constitution of Zimbabwe amendment (No.20) Act 2013, focus on gender equality and collectively call for the full participation of women in all spheres of society on the basis of equality with men. They (sections) call for “the state and all institutions and agencies of government at every level to take practical and positive measures to correct and rectify gender discrimination and imbalances resulting from past practices and policies” (constitution of Zimbabwe amendment (No.20) Act 2013:19). Similarly, the National Gender policy (2013-2017)’s goal is to “eradicate gender discrimination and inequalities in all spheres of life and development. Its vision is to create a gender just society in which men and women enjoy equity, contribute and benefit as equal partners in the development of the country” (National Gender policy 2013-17:12).

Furthermore, evidence from many researches on the existence and persistence of gender disparities at all levels of education indicate that many policies were put in place to advance gender equity. Chabaya et al., (2009:237) chronicle these measures thus,

*The Zimbabwe Government introduced the gender affirmative action in 1992, in turn the Public Service Commission responded to the affirmative action policy by coming up with specific policies meant to expedite the promotion of women teachers to headship positions in both primary and secondary schools. For example Public Service circular No 11(1992:2) states that heads should identify women who could be promoted to headship grade without reference to seniority and recommend them to be given schools to head. Public Service Circular No 22(1996) and Public Service circular No.1 (1997) encourage women to apply for school management posts. These policies were designed on the basis of affirmative action with a deliberate bias to ‘favour’ women in terms of promotion to educational management positions.*

A synopsis of the focus of these policies is that heads should identify women who could be promoted to headship grade without reference to seniority and recommend them to be given schools to head. Secondly, heads of schools should deliberately encourage lady teachers in their schools to apply for headship positions. Last but by no means least these policies dictate that in a case where a lady and a male candidate have same scores in terms of academic and professional qualifications, length of service and experience and the interview scores the post should be given to the lady applicant against the male applicant, all in the name of affirmative action.

With the above measures fully implemented, a drastic increase in the number of women at senior educational management positions was imminent. Chabaya *et al.*, (2009:237) however paint a gloomy picture on the envisaged accelerated promotion of women to educational management positions thus,

*By contrast, as of June 2004, there were 246 secondary school heads in Masvingo province. But of this figure only 14(5.60%) were female heads, and 8(3.25%) were female deputy heads. In the case of primary schools, there were a total of 693 school heads and only 68(9.81%) were female heads while 56(8.08%) were female deputy heads.*

These figures are strong indicator of the existence of barriers for women advancement to leadership positions in education which need a proper diagnosis in order to eliminate them once for all.

In the same vein Rutoro (2012:10) posit that:

*in 2007 according to information obtained from Masvingo District Education Offices, there were 36 substantive education officers in Masvingo Province of whom 29 (80%) were male and 7 (20%) were female. In Masvingo District Primary schools there were 93 substantive heads of whom 78 (83.9%) were male and 15 (16.1%) were female. In the secondary schools there were 37 substantive heads of whom 30 (81%) were male and 7 (19%) were female.*

The above statistics is a testimony of a critical underrepresentation of women in educational management positions in one of the provinces of Zimbabwe. Rutoro (2012)

further provides a more inclusive picture of the underrepresentation of offices in the same province for a period between May 2007 and August 2010 by sex in table five below.

Table 1.5 below shows the scenario of the proportion of top education managers in Masvingo Province in May 2007 and August 2010 by sex

**Table 1.5: Number of male and female top education managers for Masvingo**

Position	Number of males		Number of females	
	2007	2010	2007	2010
Provincial Education Director	1	0	0	1
Deputy Provincial Education Director	-	1	-	1
District Education officers	7	7	0	0
Education Inspectors	20	22	7	2

**Source: Ministry of Education Sport, Arts and culture (Masvingo Regional Offices) cited in Rutoro (2012).**

The above trend is not only peculiar to Masvingo province. Information obtained the Matabeleland South regional office show that women do not take up educational management positions. Below I present gender disparity information on the uptake of educational management positions between men and women in Matabeleland south region in 2010 and 2011.

**Table 1.6: Gender Composition of officers promoted to deputy heads, primary and Secondary schools positions and, education officers 2010 in Matabeleland South Region of Education.**

Education Officers		Deputy Heads (Pry)		Deputy Heads – Sec Schools	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
7	0	24	4	16	1
	0%		14%		6%

**Source: Matabeleland South Province Bulletin Vol. 1 2010.**

It is surprising to note that while there is an affirmative action policy in place to accelerate the promotion of women to management positions in education the information from the above table shows that very few women are coming forward to be promoted. This calls for a serious scrutiny of this policy since it does not seem to benefit the intended beneficiaries.

**Table 1.7: Gender Composition of promoted deputy heads, heads primary and Secondary schools, District Education Officers and Education Officers in 2011**

District Education Officers		Education Officers		Heads		Deputy Heads	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
7	1	7	5	10	5	66	27
	13%		41%		33%		29%

*Source: Matabeleland South Province: Human Resources office.*

The trend shown in 2010 for promoted officers to senior educational management positions in Matabeleland south region was repeated in 2011. Information on table 1.7 above shows that women are not coming forward to take up educational management posts although policies 'favour' them. Low percentages characterize women representation in educational management positions. This is a cause for concern which needs to be investigated as does this study in order to unravel the effectiveness of the affirmative action policies against the underlying barriers to women advancement to senior educational management positions so as to improve the policies in order to benefit the women folk who have endured the brunt of gender inequality since time immemorial in Zimbabwe and elsewhere in the world.

### **1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The government of Zimbabwe through the constitution and other various legal statutes has embraced the principle for equal rights and equal opportunities between men and women. These legal measures were/are meant to give women, among other rights, the right to own property, the right to vote, employment rights and more importantly to accord them equal status with men in all spheres of life. In addition to the above equality measures, more women -specific reforms have been introduced by the government to improve the plight of women. These reforms are based on equity measures which seek to accelerate the promotion of women to senior educational management positions. Although these policies are uncontested, they seem ineffective as educational management positions remain dominated by men at the expense of women. Hence this study attempts to assess the effectiveness of the affirmative action policies in force in respect of the promotion of women to senior educational management positions against the under-representation of women in senior educational management positions

in Matabeleland South region of education with a view to discover the reasons/causes which keep women underrepresented in educational management positions so as to recommend strategies to consolidate the gains made so far in the promotion of women to decision –making positions and to remedy the weaknesses availed.

#### **1.4 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of the affirmative action policies in practice in the promotion of women to senior educational management positions in Matabeleland south region. The perceptions of the participants were used to measure the extent to which these policies are aiding women ascend to educational management positions. The collected data were used to proffer recommendations to strengthen the policy and propose a model that can be used for leadership development programmes for in women in order to improve their appetite and aptitude to leadership positions.

#### **1.5 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of the affirmative action policies in practice in the promotion of women to senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South region. The perceptions of the participants were measure the extent to the policy has created opportunities for women in a fair and just manner to both men and women and what particular prejudices are encountered by women in Matabeleland South region in their quest to ascend to senior educational management positions. Furthermore the study intended to examine the challenges faced by female officers in the execution of their duties. The findings to these issues were used to recommend strategies to consolidate the gains.

The study was directed at the following secondary objectives;

- evaluate the extent to which the affirmative action policies undertaken by the government of Zimbabwe to accelerate the promotion of women to senior educational management positions have achieved their intended objectives;

- evaluate the perceptions of the stakeholders like male and female heads of schools, male and female teachers aspiring to become heads of schools and other senior educational officers on these policy initiatives;
- analyze the challenges female heads/deputy of schools and other senior educational officers face in executing their daily mandates;
- analyse the awareness levels of teachers on the existence of the affirmative action policies on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions against the factors which hinder women from taking up these positions;
- assess the gap between the policy intentions and policy output or outcomes;
- contribute knowledge to the discipline of research in terms of challenges and opportunities towards women advancement to educational management positions; and
- To develop a model aimed at further leveling the promotional terrain in educational management positions between men and women.

## **1.6 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The study was executed through the research questions as outlined below.

### **1.6.1 Major Research Question:**

The major research question of this study stands as:

To what extent have the affirmative action policies on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions have created opportunities for women advancement to senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South region of education?

### **1.6.2 Sub research Questions**

The study sought to tackle the problem through the following sub questions:

- To what extent has the affirmative action policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions created opportunities for women in the Matabeleland South region?

- What gaps have emerged between the policy intentions and policy output or outcomes?
- How do stakeholders view the affirmative action policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions in terms of effectiveness?
- What are the challenges faced by female heads/deputy heads of schools and other female officers in senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South Region?
- To what extent are teachers aware of the affirmative action policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions in Matabeleland south region of education?
- What barriers are there for female teachers who aspire to ascend to educational management positions?
- How do social, cultural, attitudinal or organizational constraints impinge on the implementation of this policy?
- What models exist on gender equality and equity in promotion of women to senior educational management positions?

## **1.7 ASSUMPTIONS OF THE STUDY**

The study assumed that:

- current affirmative action policies are ineffective hence disparities in educational leadership are still in favour of men;
- challenges do exist in the implementation of current affirmative action policies in promotion of women to senior educational management positions; and
- Participants in this study do have perceptions on the effectiveness of the affirmative action policies on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions.

## **1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The study attempts to contribute theoretical and practical ideas which could be of significance to key stake holders as outlined below;

Educational planners, policy makers and implementers may derive the necessary conceptual and analytical tools to assess, redefine and formulate user friendly and non-offensive policies which are value laden and attempt to equalize promotional opportunities between the two sexes. Furthermore educational planners and policy makers may attend to inadequacies and inconsistencies which dog the current scenario so that robust and progressive rather than biased policies which perpetuate the oppression of one gender by the other are implemented.

Other researchers, more importantly the less informed in the field of research may benefit from this study as it may offer them knowledge and skills on the dictates of research, as related literature is availed and appropriate methodological framework proposed to them. The organization, findings and recommendations will undoubtedly offer concrete theoretical and practical realities of conducting a study of this magnitude. More importantly, the study attempted to add value to the body of knowledge with regards to the promotion or advancement women to senior educational management positions.

The study hopefully may contribute to the development of theory regarding women development in general and the policies on women advancement to senior educational management positions in particular. Basically, the findings of this study could be used to:

- Accelerate the advancement of women to senior educational management positions through a transparent and hassle free equity measures;
- Consolidate the advancement of women to senior educational management positions by intrinsically appealing to their self-confidence;
- Remove the emotional undertones embedded in the current strategies as their male counterparts could be left aggrieved due to the fast tracking of women to senior educational management positions at the expense of men; and
- Consolidate the current gains in the affirmative action policies on women advancement, remove the negative perceptions and chart new, robust and

nationally acceptable policies to meet both individual and national interests in matters of promotion.

## **1.9 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS**

Some terms used in this study may assume specialized meaning hence the need to define them.

### **1.9.1 Affirmative action policies**

Affirmative action policies are seen as meritocratic programs that aim to achieve fairness in recruitment by removing practical barriers that disadvantage women. In this study affirmative action policies refer to laws that aim to achieve fairness in terms of promoting men and women to educational management positions by giving privileges to women over men.

### **1.9.2 Challenges**

In this study challenges refer to physical and non-physical barriers that hinder women from taking up senior educational management positions.

### **1.9.3 Opportunities**

In this study opportunities refer to conditions that allow women to access senior educational management positions without hindrances.

### **1.9.4 Women advancement**

In these study women advancement refers to the ascendance of women to senior educational management positions starting from the position of deputy head of a school, head of a school, education officer, and district education officer to the provincial education director.

### **1.9.5 Gender**

Moyo (2003:61) views gender as “a social construct to describe people as male and female. It differs from sex in that it is not based on biological conditions but on socialization”. In this study it was simply used to describe people as male and female.

### **1.9.6 Gender equality.**

Gender equality as meaning that women and men of all races would have the same opportunities to obtain professional credentials and occupational training, and would be distributed in the same proportions as they are in the paid force across work places, job titles, occupations and hierarchical positions.

In the context of this study gender equality refers to the equitable distribution of educational leadership positions from the substantive deputy head of school to the provincial education director between women and men without bias or prejudice.

### **1.9.7 Gender equity**

In the context of this study gender equity refers to the affirmative action policies that seek to correct past prejudices against women by giving them privileges over men in terms of promotion to senior educational management positions.

### **1.9.8 Senior educational management positions**

In this study, senior educational management positions are leadership positions in education which include the deputy head of a school, head of a school, education officer, district education officer and ultimately the provincial education director.

## **1.10 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The study focused on the extent to which the affirmative action policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions has addressed the plight of women in Matabeleland South region .It assesses the effectiveness of the policy in terms of achieving the intended objectives in Matabeleland South region of education only. Furthermore it focuses on the challenges faced by women who aspire to occupy

senior educational management position and those women who occupy these positions. Lastly it examines the leadership qualities of women versus the demands of educational management positions.

## **1.11 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY**

The study is organized in the following format:

### **Chapter 1: Introduction**

This introductory chapter provides the background to the study, the statement of the problem, aims and objectives of the study, significance of the study, theoretical framework, the research questions, delimitations and definition of key terms among other issues related to the introductory chapter.

### **Chapter2: The concept of gender and its related concepts**

In this chapter 1 define and explore the concept of gender and the related concepts which include gender equality, gender inequality, gender equity and feminism in relation to the study at hand. A brief outline of gender equality and equity policies on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions in Zimbabwe and the factors hampering the implementation of these policies is given.

### **Chapter 3: Redressing past injustices through affirmative action policies.**

In this chapter literature related to the use of affirmative action policies to redress past injustices on women and other minority groups/races is explored. It covers the merits and demerits of using affirmative action policies to tackle gender inequality in respect of promotion of officers to decision making positions with special attention to women and other disadvantaged groups.

#### **Chapter 4: Research design and methodology:**

The chapter clearly and concisely describes how the study was conducted .Major issues examined are the research design, sampling techniques, research instruments, and trustworthiness and other methodological issues.

#### **Chapter5: Presentation and analysis of Data:**

The data gathered from the research participants is presented in this chapter. The presentation and analysis incorporated the literature reviewed in chapters 2 and 3.The discussion of the data was also linked to the liberal feminism as a theoretical framework for this study.

#### **Chapter 6: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations of the study.**

In this study focus was given to the responses of the participants to the research questions which are anchored on the liberal feminism .A summary of the research study was made, followed by the research findings anchored on the research questions. Conclusions were then drawn from the findings. The conclusions gave birth to the recommendations of the study which incorporated a model for leadership development in women.

### **1.12 CONCLUSION**

This chapter highlighted that women underrepresentation in educational management positions is a global phenomenon. Literature revealed some examples from the U.K, France and the U. S .A .South Africa, Uganda and in Zimbabwe to mention just a few. This is in spite of the fact that evidence on the ground show the education sector globally employs more female than male teachers .Efforts have been made globally in individual countries to avert this un desirable state of affairs through constitutional provisions, the Millennium Development Goals and other strategies such as the affirmative action policies and other related measures. The main objective of the study was to examine the extent to which the affirmative action policy in Zimbabwe has addressed the plight of women in Zimbabwe. Consequently the research questions revolved around this objective against the effectiveness of the affirmative action policy

in place in Zimbabwe. The chapter also indicated that challenges encountered by women aspiring to occupy educational management positions and those in such positions are to be interrogated in this study. Last but not least the chapter outlined how the study is going to be executed. The next chapter on review of related literature examines the concept of gender and its related concepts which comprises of gender equality, gender equity and gender inequality among other terms.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### THE CONCEPT OF GENDER AND ITS RELATED CONCEPTS

##### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The understanding of the concept of gender and its associated terms will help this study address the theoretical and practical issues in the struggle for gender equality in general and in educational management in particular. The prejudices women face in their daily life undertakings against the privileges bestowed to men by different societies, social groups, races and cultures justify the search for gender equality between the two sexes. This chapter defines and explores the concept of gender and its related terms which include gender equality, equity and inequality. These terms are examined in the context of the study at hand so that the theoretical understanding of these terms will inform the practical processes such as data collection and data analysis. The chapter looks at the international efforts to achieve gender equality between men and women. These international efforts are enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) 1948, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms Discrimination against women 1979 (CEDAW), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action Fourth World conference on Women 1995 and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). On the local scene (Zimbabwe) the chapter briefly interrogates the gender equality initiatives that have been undertaken to achieve gender equality between men and women. These include the Equal pay regulations 1980, Legal Age of Majority 1992(LAMA) and the Matrimonial Causes Act 1997 to mention but a few. In terms of the gender equity initiatives the chapters cover quota systems, the lowering of entry points for girls and women at the University of Zimbabwe and financial assistance to the disadvantaged pupils and students to name just a few. This study is anchored on the liberal feminism theoretical framework, hence this study discusses feminism in general and liberal feminism in particular.

## **2.2 The Concept Of Gender And Its Related Terms**

The term gender encompasses gender inequality, gender equality and gender equity in its broader sense. This family of words always poses difficulties in understanding and application to many people, hence I attempt to isolate and briefly examine them below in the context of this study.

### **2.2.1 Gender**

The term gender is closely associated with the term sex and in many instances these two have been used interchangeably though erroneously. Reeves and Baden (2000:30) differentiate these two terms thus; “sex’ refers to the biological characteristics that categorise someone as either female or male; whereas ‘gender’ refers to the socially determined ideas and practices of what it is to be female or male. Mutswangwa (2010:48) posit that “sociologically, the word gender refers to socio-cultural definition of man and woman and the way societies distinguish men and women and assign them social roles”. In the same vein Gandari, Chaminuka and Mafumbate (2010:5) posit that gender “refers to the rules, norms, customs and practices by which biological differences between males and females are translated into socially constructed differences between men and women and boys and girls” From the above cited authorities it is clear that gender roles, rights, responsibilities and expectations are a function of socialisation and that gender is culturally ascribed depending on the value attached to each sex.

The concept of gender is therefore heavily dependent upon one’s sex as societies have different roles, responsibilities and expectations for each sex. Mutswangwa (2010:48) postulate that “the fact that gender revolves around expectations, characteristics, aptitudes and likely behaviour of both women and men, it is therefore socially significant because it leads to differential treatment of men and women in the family and in the wider society”. The differential treatment of men and women in the family, and in wider society becomes the rallying point for gender discrimination between men and women. This is substantiated by Mafumbate et al (2010:5) thus; “these expectations come from the idea that certain qualities and roles are “natural” for women while other qualities are

“natural” for men.” In this light it can be argued that this kind of categorization results in unequal value and unequal treatment between the sexes by different societies. The unequal treatment and value bestowed to men and women becomes a prelude to the prejudices women encounter and men’s privileges in accessing to power, opportunities, choices and resources. This unequal value and unequal treatment of men and women creates gender inequality between men and women and the subordination of women to men. From the foregoing discussion, it can be seen that this social power differential between men and women permeates throughout all spheres of life; hence women play second fiddle to men across the broad life spectrum. The same supposition can be seen in educational management positions where women are outnumbered by men in general and in Matabeleland South in particular. Thus socialisation becomes the precursor to gender inequality between men and women. However, feminist groups, gender activists and other women action groups can take solace in the knowledge that gender roles and responsibilities are not biologically ascribed but socially learned over time and consequently such subordination can be changed or ended. But this change cannot be achieved overnight as it needs a concerted and coordinated approach to make an impact lest victory may remain elusive for some time to come. Gender roles and responsibilities disadvantage women and favour men. This results in gender inequality, a concept that is explored below.

### **2.2.2 Gender inequality**

The assertion that ‘men are all equal but some men are more equal than others’ by Orwell (2000:10), aptly describes the unequal relations between men and women. To qualify this relationship Mutswangwa (2010:48) sees gender inequality in a broader sense and posit that:

*Gender is closely related to the roles and behaviour assigned to women and men based on their sexual differences. As soon as a child is born families and society begin the process of gendering .The birth of a son is celebrated, the birth of a daughter is filled with pain; sons are showered with love, respect, better food and proper health-care. Boys are encouraged to be tough and outgoing; girls are encouraged to be home bound and shy...gender inequality is therefore a form of inequality which is distinct from other forms of economic and social inequalities. It dwells not only outside the household but also centrally within it. It stems not only*

*from pre-existing differences in economic endowment between women and men, but also from pre-existing gendered social norms and social perceptions.*

It can therefore be seen that gender inequality is deeply rooted in the cultural and traditional perceptions of sons and daughters by different societies and cultures. These perceptions and socialisation patterns culminate in value differential between the boy and the girl child. They grow up into men and women who are valued differently, obviously the girl child/woman with more prejudices while the boy child/man has more privileges, hence gender inequality. Inequalities between men and women take many forms but are generally visible in under-representation in education, legislative bodies, and land ownership just to name a few areas. The World Bank Human Development Report (1995) in Dollars and Gatti (1999:5) provides some concrete illustrations of gender inequalities between women and men under the law in many countries:

- Right to nationality. In much of West Asia and North Africa women married to foreigners cannot transfer citizenship to their husbands, though men in similar situations can.
- Right to manage property. Married women are under the permanent guardianship of their husbands and have no rights to manage property in Botswana, Chile, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland.
- Right to income –earning opportunities. Husbands can restrict a wife's employment outside the home in Bolivia, Guatemala and Syria.
- Right to travel. In some Arab countries, a husband's consent is necessary for a wife to obtain a passport, but not vice versa. Women cannot leave the country without their husband's permission in Iran.

The examples mentioned here reveal the perpetual subordination of women to men, depriving them of their inalienable right to dignity and other fundamental rights and personal freedoms. Women continue to be marginalized and denied the full enjoyment of their rights and liberties. Though somewhat universal, gender bias differs in magnitude from one community to another. To this end, Dollars and Gatti (1999:20) concluded that:

*the relative status of women is generally poor in the developing world compared to developed countries .In the poorest countries ,as a rule girls get less education than boys, there is less investment in women's health than in men; legal rights of women in the economy and in marriage are weaker than men's rights, and women have less political power (as evidenced ,for example ,by their low representation in parliaments).*

The above evidence exposes the harsh and painful reality that women continue to suffer. There is justice in struggles for the emancipation of women by women rights organisations, human rights groups, gender activists and national governments.

### **2.2.2.1 The Origins of Gender Inequality**

The origins of gender inequality are rather obscured. Many authors offer speculative rather than researched and factual information about this important topic. Some writers trace the origins of gender inequality through the religious route of creation that indicate that a woman was created from a man's rib hence should subordinate herself to the man. Others are blaming it on culture and socialisation as a source of gender inequality. Gandari et al (2012:6) contend that:

*In gender socialisation male babies get blue blankets, female pink ones. Boys are expected to play with trucks, blocks, and toy soldiers and girls are given dolls and kitchen goods. This being the case, boys are expected to be masculine that is, active, aggressive, tough, daring and dominant whereas girls must be feminine, that is soft, emotional, sweet and submissive.*

This socialisation is embedded in cultural norms and traditions of different societies which determines social roles and responsibilities of each child according to sex. Hence as children grow up they are socialized into adult male and female roles which are also a source of inequality. Reeves and Baden (2000:28) blames the patriarchal system of societies as:

*Systemic societal structures that institutionalize male physical, social and economic power over women. Some feminists use the concept of patriarchy to explain the systematic subordination of women by both overarching and localized structures .These structures work to the benefit of men by constraining women "life choices and chances".*

History shows that the patriarchal system and the social inequality between men and women are strongly linked to the division of labour between men and women. Gandari et al (2012): posit that:

*According to Marxian feminist perspective, the subordination of women came into existence with the mode of production that introduced private property. In Engels' (1884) Classic, the original Family; Private Property and the State, he argued that when hunting –gathering was replaced by agriculture, a more efficient and productive mode of production, a few men got control of the productive resources and transformed them into private property.*

While men ventured into the productive labour sector women remained responsible for reproduction. Reeves and Baden (2000:8) postulate that:

*Women are generally expected to fulfill the reproductive role of bearing and raising children, caring for other family members, and household management tasks, as well as home based production. On the other hand men tend to be more associated with productive roles, particularly paid work, and market production .In the labour market, although women's overall participation rates are raising, they tend to be confined to a relatively narrow range of occupations or concentrated in lower grades than men, usually earning less.*

The pre- historic era division of labour based sex has continued to this day resulting in women's productive roles being ignored or undervalued while men's work was better valued. It therefore becomes visible that socialisation is/was responsible for gender inequality as girls are normally socialized to imitate the life of a traditional wife and mother responsible for domestic duties including child care while boys are socialized into traditional leadership roles of working men. This needs a lot of effort and resources to dismantle otherwise it looks easy to accept the status quo than to challenge it. The removal of all forms of inequalities between men and women leads to equality between men and women in all spheres of life.

### **2.2.3 Gender Equality**

The need for equal treatment between men and women is to achieve gender equality. Reeves and Baden (2000:10) posit that “gender equality denotes women having the

same opportunities in life as men, including the ability to participate in the public sphere.” In the same view the Unit for the Promotion of the Status of women and Gender (2000:5) posit that gender equality between men and women:

*Entails that all human beings, both men and women, are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles and prejudices. Gender equality means that the different behaviour, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally. It does not mean that women and men have to become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female.*

The legal framework of the equality of sexes is enshrined in a number of international, regional and domestic statutes. Hence the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948 cited in Gutsa (2011:81) declares that:

*“All humans are born free and equal, and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women stressed the terms “equal rights of men and women”, “equality of rights of men and women” and “full equality of men and women”.*

The same source posits that CEDAW goes on to enumerate the “same rights” and the “same opportunities” which must be available to all men and women in various fields of human activities including, but not limited to, education, marital status and labour. Thus, the concept of gender equality maybe taken to primarily refer to the full equality of men and women to enjoy the complete range of political, economic, civil, social and cultural rights, with no one being denied access to these rights, or deprived of them, on the basis of their sex.

It is out of the above identified international statutes that a number of legal, regional and national policies have been crafted and implemented to curb gender discrimination. Examples of such policies include Equal pay for Equal work, Sex Discrimination Act and 1975(UK), the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, 2000(South Africa) and etc. The enactment of such statutes is critical in the achievement of gender equality between men and women, but it is even more critical that they are

properly enforced otherwise cultural beliefs are seen as the stumbling block to attaining real equality between men and women.

The above argument is very important in the attainment of gender equality as men and women are born free, equal and with equal rights. It is the socialisation premised on culture that differentiates women from men as women are treated as second class citizens, thus relegating them to be the “hewers of wood” and “drawers of water” for their men folk. Consequently with women playing second fiddle to men the achievement of equal representation between men and women in educational management positions can never be attained.

Gender inequality is a universal phenomenon as many cultures across the globe practice ‘son preference’, which accords more privileges to the son than to the girl child. Such cultures include those found in Asia and the Far East. To this end UNESCO (2003 in Ncube 2013:8) reports that:

*Countries in North Africa, the Middle East, South Asia [Pakistan, India and Bangladesh] and East Asia [China, Republic of Korea] communities exhibit strong cultural preference for sons. Gender inequalities in education in such societies are simply one aspect of generalized and systematic discrimination against women and girls. Son preference has far reaching consequences on the provision of education for girls as they are discriminated against, starved of both material and moral support, as the resources are set-aside for sons.*

To achieve gender equality between men and women, cultural practices which are a cause and effect of gender inequality have to be addressed as the root cause and a stumbling block to gender equality. Hence Gandari, Chaminuka and Mafumbate (2010:93) observed that:

*The World Health Organization (WHO) is implementing educational programmes to teach women about protecting their health, but traditional cultural practices continue to perpetuate discrimination against women. This situation in turn forces women into high risk situations. Women are therefore put at a disadvantage because of cultural practices.*

The discrimination and the bias women have endured over many years has not gone unnoticed. Efforts have made and continue to be made to free women from un-envied position of subordination to men in all spheres of life across the globe.

### **2.2.3.1 Attempts at Gender Equality/ Initiatives to achieve Gender Equality**

In the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which declares that all humans are born free and equal, the international community, in the observance of the above declaration has come up with a number of interventions to achieve gender equality. These interventions are premised and anchored on the notion that women's rights are human rights hence; women are entitled to equal rights with men and should be accorded the requisite fundamental freedoms without restrictions. The purpose of this section is to detail, international; regional and some domestic efforts that attempt to promote gender equality and eradicate gender discrimination between men and women. The discussion encompasses economic, social and political contexts.

### **2.2.3.2 The International Arena**

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948(UDHR) is the basis for the international community's commitment to the achievement of gender equality. Through the UDHR, member states have pledged to achieve universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms and the equal rights of men and women. The declaration clearly stipulates that the will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government. This means that member states will subordinate their will to that of the people, a kind of rule for the people by the people .This is based on the principle that everyone has the right to take part in the government of his/her country, directly or indirectly, and to a just and favourable conditions of work.

The above provisions are comprehensive and all-embracing setting a tone for the achievement of gender equality. The provisions call for the observance and respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms at government level. The declaration therefore sets legal and political framework meant to usher democratic governance by member states so that the will of the people should be a strong anchor of the government where

both men and women are equal before the law. Education is tasked with the promotion of gender equality which can only be achieved by appointing women to half of the ministry's posts. Women should be actively and fully engaged in policy development, decision making and implementation rather than being mere passive implementers of policies. The declaration makes benchmarks of how member states can achieve gender equality. On the basis of the aims and provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDR) it is that the declaration benchmarks sets clear platform for the realization of gender equality by member states in their different capabilities. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights has been operationalised through the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

### **2.2.3.3 The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women 1979 (CEDAW)**

Still in pursuance of the cause of women, the international community under the auspices of the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women in 1979 (CEDAW) . CEDAW is described as an International bill of rights for women. The convention consists of 30 articles and defines what constitutes discrimination against women and sets up parameters for national action to end such discrimination.

Gutsa, Tom, Chihambakwe and Chideya (2011:73) elaborate on the dictates of the convention thus: “by recognizing the convention’s mandate member states commit themselves to undertake a series of measures to end discrimination against women in all forms including:

- To incorporate the principle of equality of men and women in their legal system by abolishing all discrimination laws and adopt appropriate ones, prohibiting discrimination against women.
- To establish tribunals and other public institutions to ensure the effective protection of women against discrimination and

- To ensure elimination of all acts of discrimination against women by persons, organisations and other enterprises.”

The above broad provisions of the convention sets in motion the process of liberating women from all forms of discrimination and set a stage for women to achieve their full potential in all fields of human activity including access to resources for empowerment. It only remains to be seen how member states respond to such guidelines and obligations.

The struggles for gender equality however did not end with the two International instruments mentioned above as victory remains elusive to this day though some measurable successes have been scored. The year 1995 is famous for yet another milestone in the quest to achieve gender equality as The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action Fourth World Conference on Women was hailed as one of the greatest achievement in the fight for gender equality in general and the upliftment of the status of women in particular.

#### **2.2.3.4 The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action Fourth World Conference on Women 1995(p 2-3).**

At this conference Governments reaffirmed their commitment to

- The equal rights and inherent human dignity of women and men and other purposes and principles enshrined in the charter of the United Nations to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments, in particular the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child as well as the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and the Declaration on the Right to Development;
- Ensure the full implementation of the human rights of women and of the girl child as an inalienable ,integral and indivisible part of all human rights and fundamental freedom

- Build on consensus and progress made at previous United Nations conference and summits on women in Nairobi in 1985, on children in New York in 1990, on environment and development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, on human rights in Vienna in 1993, on population and development in Cairo in 1994 and on social development in Copenhagen in 1995 with the objectives of achieving equality, development and peace;
- Achieve the full and effective implementation of the Nairobi forward looking strategies for the advancement of women;
- The empowerment and advancement of women including the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief thus contributing to the moral, ethical, spiritual and intellectual needs of women and men individually or in community with others and thereby guaranteeing them the possibility of realising their full potential in society and shaping their lives in accordance with their own aspirations.

Furthermore the Governments were convinced that:

- Women empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society including participation in the decision making process and access to power are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace;
- Women`s rights are human rights;
- Equal rights, opportunities and access to resources, equal sharing responsibilities for the family by men and women and a harmonious partnership between them are critical to their well- being and that of their families as well as to the consolidation of democracy;
- Eradication of poverty based on sustained economic growth, social development, environmental protection and social justice requires the involvement of women in economic and social development and equal opportunities and the full and equal participation of women and men as agents and beneficiaries of people centred sustainable development;

- It is essential to design, implement and monitor with the full participation of women, effective, efficient and mutually reinforcing gender sensitive policies and programmes at all levels that will foster the empowerment and advancement of women.

Governments also pledged their determination to:

- intensify any actions to achieve the goals of the Nairobi forward looking strategies for the Advancement of Women by the end of this century;
- ensure the full enjoyment by women and the girl child of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and take effective actions against violations of these rights and freedoms;
- take all necessary measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and the girl child and remove all the obstacles to gender equality and the advancement and empowerment of women;
- encourage men to participate fully in all actions on equality
- promote women`s economic independence including employment and eradicate the persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women by addressing 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
- Promote people centred sustainable development including sustained economic growth through the provision of basic education, life-long education, literacy and training and primary health care for girls and women.

Source (UNESCO2000:2-3)

To further the struggle for the emancipation of women from all forms of discrimination the international community through the United Nations came up with the Millennium Development goals as set targets for measuring development targets.

### **2.2.3.5 The Millennium Development Goals (MDGS)**

In September 2000, under the auspices of the United Nations, the presidents, prime ministers, and monarchs unanimously adopted the Millennium Declaration, committing themselves to a series of international development objectives to be attained by 2015. According to the World Bank, the Millennium Development Goals are commonly accepted as framework for measuring development progress. Gutsa et al (2011:54), said,

*“Basically the commitments include halving poverty head counts, achieving universal primary school completion and cutting child mortality rates by two thirds.”*

However the focus of this study is on gender issues in general and gender equality in particular, hence below are the relevant gender equality oriented statements of the Millennium Development Goals:

- Achieve Universal primary education: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike will be able to complete a full course of primary school.
- Promote gender equality and empower women eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, no later than 2015(Gandari, Chaminuka and Mafumbate 2010Appendix IV: 24).

The two goals and targets are long term and complementary in that education, as a social phenomenon, holds key to the advancement and empowerment of girls and women. Low educational or no qualifications at all for women is seen as detrimental to women advancement/empowerment. It can therefore be argued that creating opportunities for girls’ participation in education is a pre requisite for women’s full participation in educational management positions. In Zimbabwe a number of measures have been put in place to achieve gender equality between men and women. Some of these measures are outlined below.

### **2.2.4 GENDER EQUALITY LAWS IN ZIMBABWE**

The Government of Zimbabwe is a signatory to various international and regional conventions, treaties, declarations and protocols that seek to promote gender equality and eradicate all forms of discrimination. As such the post-colonial Zimbabwean government formulated and implemented policies and laws to achieve gender equality since 1980. These laws are presented below as outlined by Gutsa, Tom, Chihambakwe and Chideya (2010:90-98).

#### **2.2.4.1 Equal Pay Regulations 1980**

This regulation prescribes equal pay for work of equal value against a background of unjustifiable inequalities in pay and recognition/status that were based on social constructions of sex (gender). Women were not only discriminated against in terms of recruitment but also in terms of levels of remuneration. Women earned lower wages and salaries regardless of the fact that they do the jobs done by men. However, the post-colonial government in Zimbabwe introduced equal pay regulations in 1980 so that differences in pay will be determined by skill, grade and qualification variations. However, despite equal pay for equal work legal provisions, long standing negative gender perception are enduring in some societies to the extent that employment and promotion practices remain biased against women.

#### **2.2.4.2 Growth with the Equity Initiatives 1980**

According to the Zimbabwe MDG Mid Term Progress Report, poverty reduction agenda became a priority in the first decade after independence as the government sought to reverse colonial imbalances. Government spending was geared towards increased social expenditure, expansion of rural infrastructure and redressing social and economic inequalities through land redistribution, price controls, minimum wages and indigenization programmes. Some of the policy initiatives during this era were education for all, and housing for all by year 2000. The post-colonial focus on growth with equity was pivotal in bringing social and economic development.

#### **2.2.4.3 Legal Age of Majority Act -1982 (LAMA)**

LAMA was enacted in 1982 and it conferred majority status on women. Before this law Zimbabwean women were regarded as perpetual minors. Custom prescribed that women are minors therefore subordinate to men throughout their lives. The implications of such customary values and practices meant that women remained as perpetual subordinates to men. LAMA recognises that both men and women are equal human beings and on reaching 18 years they are both recognised as adults who can make independent decisions. This Act has changed the situation for the better mostly for women but in some cases patriarchal customary laws still look down upon women and emphasises their dependency.

#### **2.2.4.4 Labour Relations Act 1984-Revised in 1993**

The Labour Relations Act has several sections and sub sections relating to lawful relationships and practices between the employers and employees. The government is the third party in the tripartite relations and negotiations. The Act prohibits employers from discriminating against any prospective employee in relation to employment on the basis of sex, race, ethnicity, and HIV status. For example, women are entitled to 90 days maternity leave, equal pay for equal work, equality in recruitment, promotion, training programmes and benefits. These regulations are in line with the legislative framework by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) whose mandate is to achieve fair labour practices across the world. The Act also stipulates the role of Labour courts and Labour Tribunals on labour issues including discriminatory practices. Remarkable changes have been made in the area of gender equality in the work place although some organisations still discriminate against women (or men) indirectly.

#### **2.2.4.5 Public Service Pension (Amendment) Regulations 1985**

The amended Public Service Pensions regulations make provisions for female workers in the public service to contribute to their pension at the same rate as male contributors. As was explained in previous sections, the whole employment practice in the colonial and early post-colonial eras were biased against women. Contribution to Pension Funds was not an exception. For example, the majority of the women were employed in export

processing zones where they were not covered by labour laws. This resulted in most women being poorly remunerated and failing to contribute to pension funds as safety nets.

#### **2.2.4.6 Matrimonial Causes Act 1987**

This Act provides for equitable distribution of matrimonial assets on divorce. It is crucial to note that distribution of matrimonial assets on divorce was determined by patriarchal relations in society. Zimbabwe is basically a patriarchal country and patriarchal values pervade all aspects of life. The norms of distribution of assets were shaped by patriarchy to the extent that most women went away with nothing else of value except clothes and kitchen utensils. Core valuables were retained by the men regardless of the fact that the two would have worked together to acquire the property. This was pure gross abuse of the human rights of women therefore change was necessary. However, some sections of the population engaged in customary marriages are still maintaining alienation of women from getting core property on divorce.

#### **2.2.4.7 The Electoral Act of 1990**

The Electoral Act allows women to participate in general and by elections for the presidency or Parliamentary and local elections as voters or candidates without any discrimination. This Act is a response to increasing pressure on all governments across the world that they should eliminate all forms of discrimination against women. Women were either not considered as eligible voters or participants in national governance positions (or both). This exclusion on the basis of gender is now viewed as illegal and abuse of women's human rights at national, regional and international levels. Zimbabwe is among the few countries with a female Vice President, Deputy Prime Minister, President of Senate and several Members of Parliament and other levels of national governance. These are positive developments for women in general because they are no longer mere voters but active agents in national politics. The political level is the highest stage of decision making in every country therefore the active participation of women at this level increases chances of inclusion of their needs and interests.

#### **2.2.4.8 The Administration of Estates Amendment Act 1997**

The aim of this Act is to protect the inheritance rights of surviving spouses and children. In Zimbabwe and other African countries, the inheritance of property after the death of the husband/father has largely disadvantaged women and children because of male biased customary law. Male dominance in all spheres of life meant that inheritance of estate was a preserve of the male line regardless of the contributions by wives to the accumulation of such an estate. Rigidity still exists in some groups in Zimbabwe but advocacy for equal inheritance rights by both state and non-state actors has led to positive changes for women.

#### **2.2.4.9 National Gender Policy 2004**

The vision of this policy is to have a society in Zimbabwe where there is economic, political, religious and social equality and equity among women and men in all spheres of life and at all levels (Republic of Zimbabwe: National Gender Policy document The policy addresses two broad sectors namely the economic and social sectors.

The three goals of the policy are listed below:

- To eliminate all negative economic, social and political policies. Cultural and religious practices that impede equality and equity of the sexes.
- To mainstream gender in all aspect of the development process.
- To ensure sustainable equity, equality and empowerment of women and men in Zimbabwe in all spheres of life.

The main objectives of the National Gender Policy are to:

- Mainstream gender issues into all sectors in order to eliminate all the negative economic, social and cultural practices that impede equality and equity of all the sexes.
- Strengthen links between governments, non-governmental organisations and the private sector in mainstreaming of gender in the respective sectors.
- Promote equal and equitable access, control and ownership of resources in order to address gender inequalities.
- Promote equal advancement of women and men in all sectors.

- Create equal opportunities for women and men in decision making in all areas and all levels.
- Promote the projection of both men and women's efforts and contributions in national development.
- Establish the institutional framework to ensure implementation of the Gender Policy as well as the monitoring and evaluation of its impact.
- Strengthen the institutional and legal capacity to deal with gender violence, inheritance and land property rights.

#### **2.2.4.10 Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment 17 of 2005**

The constitution of any country is the mother of all laws. Amendment of section 23 of the constitution of Zimbabwe seeks to protect people from discrimination on any grounds such as race, gender, ethnicity etc. This section makes it clear that it is essential to implement affirmative action programmes for the protection or advancement of persons or classes of persons who have been previously disadvantaged by unfair discrimination .In addition, the 2005 amendment to the Republic of Zimbabwe constitution stipulates that in implementing any programme of land reform the government shall treat men and women on an equal basis with respect to the allocation or distribution of land or any right or interest therein under that programme.

It is believed that the enforcement of these laws and objectives will lead to gender equality between men and women in Zimbabwe. But still measures have to be found in Zimbabwe and elsewhere to compensate women for the prejudices they had endured over time. Such measures are lead to gender equity.

#### **2.2.5 Gender Equity**

Among the measures to achieve gender equality is gender equity. The Unit for the Promotion of the Status of Women and Gender Equality (2000:5) posit that:

*Gender equity means fairness of treatment for women and men, according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is*

*different but which is considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities.*

In the same vein the NSW Health Department (2000:1) posit that:

*Equity is generally regarded as a state of fairness or justice .It requires that the specific needs of particular groups are considered separately and acted upon accordingly.*

Gender equity emphasises on fairness and justice in the treatment of the previously marginalised group or race. Reeves and Baden (2000:100) posit that gender equity denotes:

*The equivalence in life outcomes for women and men, recognizing their different needs and interests, and requiring a redistribution of power and resources. The goal of gender equity, sometimes called substantive equality, moves beyond equality of opportunity by requiring transformative change. It recognises that women and men have different needs, preferences, and interests and that equality of outcomes may necessitate different treatment of men and women.*

In addition to fairness and justice, compensation is added as a means of redressing for past historical and social disadvantages suffered by women. UNESCO (2003:1) argues that, “to ensure fairness, strategies and measures must often be available to compensate for women’s historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from operating on a level playing field.” In this case, gender equity calls for positive discrimination or affirmative action in order to speed up the recovery of women from past injustices suffered at the hands of men. In its broadest sense, it encompasses fairness, justice, equality, right and morality. It can therefore be seen that gender equity is concerned with compensatory strategies which aim to correct past injustices by allocating “more” resources to the previously disadvantaged groups, races and etc. in order to achieve social justice. In this instance women are the beneficiaries. In Zimbabwe an array of affirmative action measures has been put in place for the benefit of those groups who have been previously disadvantaged. These measures are discussed below.

### 2.2.5.1 Affirmative Action in Zimbabwe

The government of Zimbabwe has come up with a number of affirmative action programmes to improve and compensate the indigenous citizens in general and the women and girls in particular from historical and colonial prejudices they faced over a long period of time. These measures and policies are anchored on the international and regional conventions which seek to promote gender equality between men and women. These have already been alluded to in earlier sections.

- **Quota system**

In an effort to increase women representation in the political domain, the government has come up with a quota system. The Election Resource Centre (2013:3) posit that:

*A gender quota is where a certain portion of seats in parliament or candidates are reserved for women in order to increase their representation or to increase their chances of being elected. Quotas, also known as affirmative action are often applied to redress an entrenched historical imbalance that appears to be immune to change or is changing too slowly. This system has also been embraced by political parties.*

In same vein Chipaziwa (2005:3) reports that:

*political parties in Zimbabwe have adopted a quota system which has seen an increase in women's representation in politics even though this is still below the 30% quota set by the African Union and the 50% gender parity set in the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development 2008."This policy has also been extended to other sectors such as education.*

- **The Lowering of Entry points for women at the University of Zimbabwe**

In an attempt to redress the imbalance brought by the socialisation process, the University of Zimbabwe has embarked on an affirmative action programme aimed at increasing the number of female students entering the institution. Zindi (1996:45) posit that:

*In 1995 the University of Zimbabwe also introduced an affirmative action policy which resulted in girls with less entry qualifications than boys being enrolled for degree courses after 'A' Levels, but despite these efforts less than 40% were enrolled.*

- **Accelerated Promotion Of Women To Educational Management Positions**

The government has come up with a policy to speed up the promotion of women to educational management positions in the education sector. These positions include deputy head of school, head of schools, education officer, district education officer and the provincial education director. Chabaya et al (2009:237) explains these measures thus, “in response to the persistent gender disparity in decision-making positions in Zimbabwe, the government introduced the gender affirmative action policy in 1992. In turn, the Public Service Commission responded to the affirmative action policy by coming up with specific policies meant to expedite the promotion of women teachers to headship positions in both primary and secondary schools. For example, Public Service Circular No.11 of 1991:2 states that heads should identify women who could be promoted to headship grade without reference to seniority and recommend them to be given schools to head. Public Service Circular No.22 of 1996 and Public Service Circular No.1 of 1997 encouraged women teachers to apply for school management posts”. All these were measures taken to speed up the promotion of more women teachers to school leadership positions .Additionally the policies would dictate that at the selection point, women would supersede their male counterparts when the interview scores and other selection criteria are equal .This policy is meant to increase the number of women in administration. This policy has however courted a lot of controversy, as in many instances the intended beneficiaries hesitate to take up this offer. Secondly, the policy is seen as a reverse discrimination with men now being the victims, hence men seem not to recognise it, let alone supporting it. It is these controversies and misgiving about this policy which has necessitated this study.

- **Financial Support to Disadvantaged Pupils and Students.**

In an effort to assist disadvantaged students, the government of Zimbabwe came up with some financial schemes .These are the Social Dimensions Fund (SDF) and the Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM).Through the Social Dimensions Fund and the Basic Education Assistance Module, the government offered financial support to students and pupils from poor home back grounds. This support covered tuition and

examination fees thus allowing students from poor home background to remain in school. Similar equity measures are applicable to tertiary level through the cadetship scheme. The 2010 Millennium Development Goals Status Report (2010:11) report that:

*The government has budgeted for social assistance in education for vulnerable groups through a Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM). This was established in 2000 and targeted poor and vulnerable children in both primary and secondary schools. However, BEAM assistance to pupils has been erratic and financially inadequate. BEAM has catered for about 600,000 children in 2009.*

- **The Allocation of Grants to Schools.**

According to Education (TUITION and BOARDING FEES) (GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS) REGULATIONS, 1991 cited in Govere (draft module: p10) for purposes of aiding the disadvantaged schools:

*Government schools are classified as P1, P2, and P3 primary schools situated in low density urban areas, high density urban areas and rural areas respectively. Secondary schools are classified as S1, S2 and S3 to represent similar areas where the schools are situated. The tuition fees are highest for S1 and P2 and lowest for S3 and P1 schools. However for the purposes of paying grants the S3 and P3 gets the highest grants while the S1 and P1 get the least. This is called positive discrimination meant to assist poor schools to develop the much needed infrastructure which is in critical shortage.*

- **Building of more schools in rural areas**

The government of Zimbabwe has since independence concentrated in building of more schools in rural areas than in urban areas. This is meant to improve access to educational opportunities for rural students and pupils who often walk long distances to and from schools resulting in high dropout rates especially among the girl children. This policy is executed in conjunction with the one which calls for the building of primary schools with a 5kilometre radius from one another in rural areas.

- **Establishment of A Women University**

The government of Zimbabwe has deliberately caused the establishment of a women's University to cater for the educational needs of women in Zimbabwe and in Africa called

the Women's University in Africa. Available information indicate that the University is expected to enroll more women than men, in fact women should constitute 60% of its enrolment.

- **Allowing Pregnant Girls to Return to School After Giving Birth**

A paradigm shift has also been taken in education to ameliorate the plight of school girls who fall pregnant by allowing them maternity leave and come back to school after delivery. Circular Number P 35 of 2001 allows pregnant girls to go back to school after delivery. This policy is a welcome move to empower the girl child who had suffered injustices for a long time. This policy gives a second chance to the girl child to re-launch her studies in order to get a career that would enable her to fend for herself and the baby as well.

These affirmative action policies are viewed as a relief to the plight of women in all spheres of life in general and to the advancement to educational management positions in particular. It is hoped that if successfully implemented gender parity between men and women in educational management positions can be achieved in Zimbabwe in general and in Matabeleland South in particular. This study is anchored on the liberal feminism theoretical framework, hence the section below discusses feminism in general and liberal feminism in particular.

### **2.2.6 Feminism**

In its broad sense feminism is about women's struggle for emancipation from the discrimination that they have suffered from and continue to suffer from in their communities. According to Moyo (2003:61) feminism is "*derived from the Latin word femina which means woman. The original meaning of the word refers to having characteristics of being female, but in the gender debate it is used as a perspective on sexual equality*". Feminism is about the struggle women have engaged in overtime to achieve equality with men in all spheres of life. These struggles were of socio-political and economic nature as women's groups campaigned for the right to vote, to own property, the right to sign legal documents, to keep their own salary and many other

such rights. Over time these aims have changed and the strategies have changed as well but what remains a fact is that women at birth are equal to men but they are faced with exclusion and discrimination from childhood to adulthood in their daily endeavors. One such area of discrimination and exclusion is in educational management positions where women are grossly underrepresented. Feminism has taken many forms, hence feminist theories.

### 2.2.6.1 Theories of Feminism

Feminist theories have come in different forms and shades such as radical, liberal, Marxist, Socialist, cultural, lesbian and Black women feminists. This study however would like to focus only on three major ones namely radical, Marxist and liberal feminist theories.

- **Radical Feminism**

*“Radical feminists focus on oppression of women that is imbedded in patriarchy and seek to change society through activism”* (Gandari et al 2010:18). Similarly, Moyo (2003:64) contends that *“radical feminists use the concept of patriarchy, i.e. the rule of the father, to analyse the exploitation of women by men”*. The two citations concur on the existence of both oppression and exploitation of women by men. They see the patriarchal system of society as the origins of this inequality between men and women. Radical feminists see men as having benefited from the subordination of women who have undertaken free labour for men by caring for children and doing housework. Moyo (2003:64) further explains that:

*“This situation is regarded as universal oppression whereby women are even denied access to positions of power and that only a revolution could bring about women liberation”*.

Radical feminists however differ among themselves as a group on the origins of women’s oppression. Some see biology as the origins of gender inequality while others accord it to socialisation. Firestone in Moyo (2003:65) believes biology created women’s oppression and raises the following points:

- *Women have physical burdens such as pregnancy and child birth*
- *Women depend on men over the period of child birth and this produces unequal power relationship*
- *Infants depend on their mothers for a long period of time.*

Although this argument has not been substantiated by many scholars, one is tempted to agree to some extent as women are somehow biologically “handicapped” during certain periods in their lives as compared to men who are generally physically fit and raring to go especially when considering the pre-historic times where hunting and gathering was the key economic activity needed more stamina than intellect. On the contrary, Ortner and Rosanaldo in Moyo (2003:65) sees “*culture and not biology as the devaluating factor for women status in society*” .They (radical feminists) also attribute women’s subordination to men on the basis of division of labour between the public and the domestic world. They see men’s involvement in public arena and political affairs as enabling them to assume power over women who are confined to the domestic sphere.

Generally, radical feminist’s ideological orientation attributes inequalities between women and men to patriarchal forces and male domination in education. They view the power relationship as characterised by the dominant male and the subordinate female relationship. Wiener (1994) in Moyo (2003:65) describes this “*relationship as manifest at every level of society: in the family, in the school, in higher education and in the workplace.*”

Radical feminists pursue policies that focus on women’s right to make choices about mother hood, conception, abortion and sexual orientation. Gandari et al (2010:18) posit that

*patriarchy must be defeated by beginning with a basic reworking on women’s consciousness so that each woman recognises her own value and strength; rejects patriarchal pressures to see herself as weak, dependant and second – class; and works in unity with other women regardless of differences among them to establish a broad –based sisterhood of trust, support, appreciation and mutual defense.*

Furthermore Moyo (2003:65) argues that *“educators should involve the community in re-educating society into nonsexist behaviours and practices as part of the overall feminist challenge to patriarchal forces.”* The process of reeducating society into non-sexist behaviours and practices would seek to revolutionise culture, traditional practices, and the education system itself so as to launch a multi- pronged and comprehensive strategy to end the male dominated school curriculum in conformity to reforms taking place in the greater society so that gender parity in the home, school, workplace and community at large is achieved.

- **Marxist Feminism**

These feminists base the origins of gender inequality on capitalism. Haralambos and Holborn (1994) and Sarup (1982) in Moyo (2003:66) see capitalism as *“having developed with the domestication of animals when people acquired property and men gained control over women. This situation brought about established marriages and marked the beginning of patriarchal family.* Similarly, Gandari et al (2010:17) assert that the:

*Subordination of women came into existence with the mode of production that introduced private property. Contemporary Marxist feminist continue this line of argument by asserting that capitalism, the current form of class society, perpetuates the subordination of women by enforcing their economic dependence on men.*

Women are said to do a lot of unpaid domestic work for the family from child birth to child care and other related household chores, which further subordinate them to men economically.

Gandari et al (2010:17) assert that:

*Marxist feminists concern themselves with policies that deal with issues such as occupational segregation, low pay, poverty and discrimination. To emancipate women from oppression and domination Marxist feminists believe that women must destroy capitalism and replace it with a socialist system... They argue that only with socialism will classes disappear and the true basis of gender equality will be established.*

### 2.2.6.2 Liberal Feminism

Liberal feminism is viewed as the mainstream feminist theory. Dekker and Lemmer (1991), Haralambos and Holborn (1991) and Weiner (1994) cited in Moyo (2003:67) see liberal feminism as a “*more moderate approach on gender issues. Liberal feminists aim for equality between men and women. In bringing about this, they advocate for gradual change in the political, economic and social system, because they believe that nobody benefits from gender inequality*”. In the same vein Gandari et al (2010:17) posit that:

*Liberal feminism is rooted in the tradition of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century liberal philosophy which focused on the ideals of equality and liberty .The first western feminist theorist, Mary Wollstonecraft, in a “A Vindication of the Rights of Women with Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects”, “argued that women’s capacity to reason was equal to that of men and that biological differences were irrelevant to the granting of political rights.*

Liberal feminists rest their case for equality on the premise that all people are created equal and endowed with inalienable rights to pursue life, liberty and happiness hence the advocacy for equal rights between men and women. These feminists do not want to change society drastically or turn society’s values upside down; they just want to extend them one step further in order to accommodate the need of women. They believe that women deserve equality with men because they have the same capabilities as men. They argue that when work and social environments are bias free, then differences between men and women will be less problematic, hence to achieve gender equality between men and women would need some adjustment to the social environment. Gandari et al (2010:16) postulate that:

*“Liberal feminists point out that the reason why women appeared to be intellectually inferior to men was due to their inferior education and, therefore was a result of inequality, rather than a justification for it”.*

Liberal feminists see women’s subordination as resulting from gendered norms (socialization patterns) rather than biological and sex differences. Furthermore, liberal feminists focus on equal opportunities for women and men. Their advocacy for equal opportunities in education and in the political, social and economic domains before the

law between men and women has motivated worldwide campaigns for women's voting, property and reproductive rights among the many other rights.

Liberal feminists pursue change through legislative means such as litigation, regulation and through appeal to the human capacity for reasoned moral judgments, that is, the capacity of the public to be moved by arguments for fairness. Moyo (2003:68) assert that *"the liberal feminist believe that equality can be achieved through legislature, for example in Britain liberal feminists supported the Sex Discrimination Act of 1975 which makes direct and indirect discrimination illegal"*. Elsewhere across the globe liberal feminists have campaigned for voting rights, abortion rights, affordable health care, equal educational, and economic opportunities. Liberal feminists also agitate for equal representation in decision making positions such as the legislature, cabinet, judicial and equal responsibilities for the activities of the family life, elimination of sexist messages in family, education and mass media. Ritzer (2008:466) posit that *"liberal feminists have mobilized to have sexual harassment in the work place legally defined as "job discrimination" and they have demanded both "pay equity" (equal pay for equal work) and "comparable worth" (equal pay for work of comparable value.*

The nature of the liberal feminist theory and the methods used for campaigning for equal rights between men and women was found relevant to this study. As a tool for analysing the underrepresentation of women in senior educational management positions and the challenges faced by women in educational management positions, the liberal theoretical framework informed and appropriately guided this study to its logical conclusion. It remains to be seen whether the recommendations proffered in this study can bring about the desired results if fully implemented or not.

## **2.3 CONCLUSION**

This chapter examined the concept of gender in relation to the study at hand. The understanding of the concept of gender was found to be critical in the proper examination of critical issues in the study at hand since it is deeply embedded on gender perspectives of men and women in relation to the occupation of decision making

positions in education. Gender was found to be based on the socially ascribed qualities, roles and responsibilities an individual assumes due to the socialisation process an individual undergoes. The socialisation of boys and girls follows cultural approved norms and values accorded each child. Boys are valued than girls hence are prepared for leadership positions while girls are conditioned for their domestic roles. The differential socialisation process boys and girls are exposed to create gender inequality between boys and girls. Girls /women carry less status to boys/men hence they eventually shun leadership positions leading to women underrepresentation in decision making positions in general and in educational management positions. In order to increase the number of women in decision making positions equity measures are needed. Gender equity is concerned with the application of strategies to compensate women from the discrimination they have suffered over time. These compensatory measures are known as affirmative action programmes. These measures are meant to achieve gender equality between men and women. Hence this chapter outlined some equality and equity measures undertaken by the government of Zimbabwe to bring about gender equality between men and women. This study has very much been informed by the examination of these terms since it is based on the affirmative action policy on the promotion of women to educational management positions. The chapter examined feminist theories in general and liberal feminism in particular as the theoretical framework of this study. The issues examined in this chapter laid a firm foundation for the efficient execution of the data collection and data analysis processes in the chapters to come. The next chapter reviews literature on the effectiveness of affirmative action policies on the promotion of women to educational management positions and the challenges they face as educational managers.

## CHAPTER 3

### REDRESSING PAST INJUSTICES THROUGH AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The introduction and subsequent implementation of the affirmative action policies as a panacea for solving discrimination against minority groups/races, women and the disabled among other social groups should have been applauded by civil rights groups and the intended beneficiaries. The affirmative action policies are meant to eliminate discriminatory and prejudicial practices in all spheres of life in order to bring about an egalitarian society free from discrimination. Onyango (2011:1519) postulate that “if affirmative action is implemented more women would be involved in school management. These women will act as role models and mentors for other women who will be motivated to participate in school management hence increasing representation of women in educational management positions”. It is against such a noble and celebrated perception that this study in general and this chapter in particular assesses the effectiveness of the affirmative action policy in creating opportunities for women advancement to senior educational management positions in Matabeleland south region. The first section briefly introduces the term affirmative action, defines it briefly, and discusses its origins (historical background) and its subsequent evolvment and adoption the world over. The interrogation of the effectiveness of the affirmative action policy in achieving the intended objectives forms the core of the chapter. The review of the related literature is therefore examined under the following subheadings; the extent to which affirmative action policy has created opportunities for women advancement to senior educational management positions, the emerging gaps between the policy intentions and policy output or outcomes and the stakeholders’ perception of the affirmative action policy and the challenges faced by female officers in ascending to senior educational management positions. Furthermore the chapter analyses the challenges faced by female officers in senior educational management positions and the existence of a model or models on leadership development in women as a strategy

for preparing women to confidently aspire and access senior educational management positions.

### 3.2 AFFIRMATIVE ACTION DEFINED

The need to achieve racial and gender equality between the minority and the majority groups/races on one side and between men and women on the other has led to the formulation and implementation of different policies the world over. One such policy is commonly known as affirmative action. Edigheji (2007:1) defines affirmative action as:

*Corrective measures to ensure representation of all races, genders and people with disabilities in the public service...in the Employment Equity Bill it is defined as measures designed to ensure that suitably qualified people from designated groups have equal employment opportunities and are equitably represented in all occupational categories and levels in the work force of a designated employer.*

The salient elements about affirmative action are that, it is about corrective steps to ensure that the previously disadvantaged groups are accordingly compensated. It is about ensuring that the previously marginalized groups such as women, the disabled, the minority and the colonized are recognized and duly compensated in order to bring about social justice among citizens of a country. To that end Wangare (2009:13) posit that:

*The term affirmative action refers to policies that take race, gender or ethnicity into account in an attempt to promote equal opportunities, it calls for minorities and women to be given special consideration in employment, education and making decisions.*

Similarly Pienaar (2009:10) defines affirmative action as,

*a temporary, systematic and planned intervention to achieve equal employment opportunities through a proactive and conscious effort to place and develop competent or potentially competent persons (in the collective sense) in, or to positions from which they were debarred in the past (a fact which they do not need to prove), thereby rendering the workforce more representative of the population.*

From the three definitions cited above it is clear that affirmative action is deliberate policies meant to redress imbalances created by history, tradition and or custom. These

policies target formerly marginalized groups to help eliminate past and present discrimination based on race, colour, religion, sex, or national origin. Examples of such marginalized groups include the Blacks in America, the designated groups in South Africa who are victims of the Apartheid regime and the women across the globe who have been discriminated against. These policies/programmes come in the form of financial assistance, quota systems in employment contracts, specialised admission requirements in higher and tertiary institutions and etc. From the above definitions and discussions it is now paramount to summarise this section by briefly characterizing the affirmative action policies.

### **3.2.1 Characteristics of Affirmative Action Policies**

Pienaar (2009:11) characterises affirmative action policies as;

- temporary interventions designed to achieve equal employment opportunity without lowering standards and without unduly trammeling the career aspirations or expectations of current organisational members who are competent in their jobs
- the result of sets of policies or practices that has the purpose of working against inequalities that have come about on social, economic and educational spheres because of unfair discrimination against certain groups.
- Systematic and planned processes whereby the effects of colonialism (in post-colonial states) and racial discrimination (in countries where racial discrimination is an issue) are being reversed in all areas of life.
- A system of racial- and ethnic preferences or quotas that have been the real-world results of goals and timetables.
  - A proactive, conscious effort to redress disadvantages in the past and to increase representation of marginalised groups of the population in leadership positions in society.
  - Is not meant to make identified victims (of past discrimination) whole, but rather aims to dismantle prior patterns of employment discrimination and to prevent discrimination in the future. Such relief is provided to the class as a whole rather than individual members; no individual is entitled to

relief, and the beneficiaries need not show that they were victims of discrimination

- A temporary measure, because it is merely a measure and not a value or a right. ...Measures are temporary and “pragmatic” whilst “values and rights last forever.

For the purposes of this study affirmative action is seen as a systematic and planned process composed of concrete steps that are consciously taken to eliminate gender discrimination in the advancement of women to senior educational management positions in an attempt to redress the effects of past discrimination. The context of these measures (affirmative action) need a historical background for better understanding.

### **3.3 ORIGINS OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION**

Available literature shows that affirmative action has its origins in the United States of America following a protracted struggle by Civil and Human Rights groups who had suffered many forms of discrimination for many years. The minority groups comprising of the African Americans, Hispanic Americans and Asian Americans were segregated into low wage jobs while the most of the high positions were the preserve of the Whites. In fact all these groups including women did not have American citizenship hence were relegated to sub-human status. It was in response to these minority groups’ pressure to achieve equal status with the majority that led to the birth of the affirmative action. Wangare (2009:1) indicates that:

*The term affirmative action was first introduced by President Kennedy in 1961 through Executive Order 10925 as a method of redressing discrimination that had persisted in spite of civil rights laws and constitutional guarantees.*

Dong(2008:3) posit that; “*at the time the policy makers conceived affirmative action blacks as a group were severely handicapped in American life ,particularly in education*”.

It was however in 1964 that the concept of affirmative action was established by President Lyndon Johnson. Wangare (2006:3) report that *“the Civil Rights Act (July 2, 1964) was signed by President Lyndon Johnson that prohibited all kinds of discrimination based on gender, race, color, religion or nationality origin in the U.S.A.”*

Dong (2008:4) concurs with Wangare (2006) that:

*President Johnson through the Civil Rights Act in 1964 illustrated that: “You do not take a man who for years has been hobbled by chains ,liberate him ,bring him to the starting line of race ,saying, “You are free to compete with all the others’, and still justly believe you have been completely fair”. The implication of this statement was the calling for “not just freedom but opportunity, not just equality as a right and a theory, but as a fact and as a result” (Ibid p4).*

Wangare (2006:3) reports that, it was:

*On September 24, 1965 that affirmative action was enforced for the first time by Executive Order 11246. This Executive Order required contractors doing business with the federal government to take additional obligations to determine the under utilisation in their workplace and to develop a plan to remedy it, thus marking the beginning of “affirmative action.*

On the same note Moens (1985:23 in Hlongwane2013:18) confirms:

*That on 24 September 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson, signed an Executive Order 11246 which accentuated the need for the implementation of affirmative action programmes by all state contractors and subcontractors. The major aim was to promote non-discrimination against the minority groups and ensure that they were given preference. Among other things the Executive Order 11246 outlawed discrimination by contractors against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, colour, religion, sex or national origin.*

Dong (2008:4) postulates that:

*While the Johnson Era initiated the first step in affirmative action, it was really the Nixon Era that witnessed the big advances .Federal civil rights policy shifted from an ‘equal treatment to basis’ in the 1960s to an ‘equal results basis’ in the 1970s. Over time, affirmative action has come to benefit some other minority groups and women .And the founding rationale, which targeted past discrimination, was redefined and rejustified accordingly in terms of overcoming “underrepresentation” and “achieving diversity.*

Drawing from the experiences of the United States of America, the affirmative action policy was adopted and adapted by many other countries. Available literature shows that affirmative action programmes have been carried out in India, Nigeria, Canada, Sri-Lanka, Malaysia, Brazil, South Africa, Kenya, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

Lunyolo, Ayodo, Tikoko and Simatwa (2014:242) indicate that “in 2004 the Kenyan Government took a bold step through policy framework (Republic of Kenya, 2005) to make it compulsory that at least one third of Boards of management of Secondary School positions should be held by women”. “In Kenya affirmative action is applied in admission criteria to University education whereby female students are admitted two points lower than their male counterparts”(ibid p242). These policies (affirmative action) have become a constitutional issues in many countries. Uwizeyimana(2014:1206) indicate that a number of Acts, such as the Labour Relations Act(No.66 of 1995), the Employment Equity Act ,55 of 1998, the Employment of Educators Act, Act 76 1998, and the principle of Affirmative Action among other measures ,have been established in order to give effect to the constitutional mandate in South Africa.

In Zimbabwe an array of affirmative action policies have implemented to benefit the indigenous people in general and the women in particular who had been discriminated in past. An examination of these policies was made in the previous chapter. This section therefore just lists them as points of reference.

- The constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No.20) Act of 2013.
- The Lowering of Entry points in higher and tertiary institutions for women and girls.
- The National Gender policy(2013-2017)
- Financial assistance to disadvantaged pupils and students.
- The allocation of grants to schools.
- Building of more schools in rural areas
- Establishment of a women University
- Allowing Pregnant Girls to return to school after giving birth
- Accelerated promotion of women to educational management positions

This is the target policy of this study. It has also been briefly discussed in the previous chapter and is articulated in public service circulars. These are: Public Service Circular No.11 of 1991 which stated that heads of schools should identify women who could be promoted to headship grade without reference to seniority and recommend them to be given schools to head. Public Service Circular No.22 of 1996 and Public Service Circular No.1 of 1997 encouraged women teachers to apply for school management posts. All these measures were taken to speed up the promotion of women teachers to school leadership positions in order to compensate them for the discrimination they had suffered for a long time. It however remains to be seen how much has the policy women benefited from inception to date.

### **3.4 THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY ON THE PROMOTION OF WOMEN TO SENIOR EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT POSITIONS HAS CREATED OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN ADVANCEMENT**

The increase in representation of women in educational management positions cannot be treated in isolation to increase in women and girls' enrolment in higher education. The increase in women and girls' enrolment in higher education is a pre-requisite to increase in women taking up leadership positions in education and the opposite is true. Hence Oplatka (2006:606) asserts that...

*“The entry of more girls into schools in developing countries is assumed to increase their potential incidence in future in administrative positions in the education systems within their countries, although some cultural and societal factors might slow the process or limit its scope”*

In the same vein Onyango (2011:1519) opined that;

*“Affirmative action policy in schools and colleges would enable more girls to join schools and colleges, education would make girls to discard culture and feel that they are equal and as competent as men even in leadership positions”.*

Based on this assumption a lot of policies in Zimbabwe and elsewhere have been put in place to increase the enrolment of girls and women at all levels of education. For example at lower levels financial aid is given to girls from poor families and girls who fall pregnant are given a second chance to continue with schooling after giving birth. At tertiary institutions women and girls are allowed to enroll into programme with less point than boys and men. Another milestone was the establishment of women only University in Zimbabwe called Africa University for Women. In the case of Kenya Lunyolo, Ayodo, Tikoko and Simatwa (2014:242) posit that

*“In Kenya affirmative action is applied to in admission criteria to University education whereby female students are admitted two points lower than their male counterparts”.*

In addition to educational provision affirmative action programmes have been implemented in the employment sector aimed at creating opportunities for women and other marginalised groups. Uwizeyimana and Mathevula (2014:1206) argue that:

*A number of Acts, such as the Labour Relations Act No.66 of 1995, the Employment Equity Act, 55 of 1998, the Employment of Educators Act, Act76 of 1998, and the Principle of Affirmative Action, among many other measures, have been established in order to give effect to the constitutional mandate in South Africa. However, despite these policies, women remain underrepresented in school management positions.*

The failure by these policies to achieve their intended and desirable effects on the target group means that a lot more needs to be done to diagnose the gap between the policy intents and policy outcomes. Similarly Ncube and Tshuma (2010: 183) report that in Zimbabwe,

*although policies, such as the affirmative action, and the legislation such as equal opportunities in employment, have been crafted with the aim of emancipating women from subservient position, they seem to have had a minimal gain, particularly for women, because of the cultural demands on them and also because of the lack of institutional mechanisms to ensure that these and other interventions are operationalised.*

A combination of cultural demands on women and the non-operationalization of these policies negate their objectives. This state of affairs is corroborated by Chipunza (2003:1) thus, “...although most developing countries refer to equality and egalitarianism in their policy documents, they have done very little to fulfill these noble objectives”.

The above arguments negate the belief that affirmative action policies are a panacea to women’s underrepresentation in educational management positions. It is however not true that the affirmative action policies *per se* are not effective but it is the lack of political will by the implementing agencies and governments to implement them whole heartedly in order to realise the intended objectives due to some vested interest. Lunyolo et al (2014:247) argue that “there are some policies on Gender balance but they are never monitored and implemented at all levels”. The net effect of this inept implementation is that gender parity between men and women in education management positions remains a challenge. It can therefore be seen that the affirmative action policy on the promotion of women to educational management positions has so far not achieved its intended objectives. Hence Chabaya et al (2009:238) argues that:

*In Zimbabwe policies and legislations have been put in place designed to address the problem of women’s underrepresentation in positions of educational leadership, yet gender inequalities persist.*

Interestingly this study also aimed at finding out whether there are gaps between the policy intentions and policy output or policy outcomes. This aspect is examined in the next section.

### **3.5 WHAT GAPS HAVE EMERGED BETWEEN THE POLICY INTENTIONS AND POLICY OUTPUT/OUTCOMES?**

The affirmative action policies in general and the one on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions were intended to empower the intended beneficiaries. Invariably some unintended outcomes have been noted and mostly on the negative. Collins (1998 in Nan-chi Tiao 2006: 46) found that the:

*Implementation of affirmative action could have both a positive and a negative impact on women. Specifically, women will be viewed as either a “token” hire or as a qualified, ideal selection depending on whether they were hired under the protection of affirmative action or not.*

In the same light Hlongwane (2013:40) contend that:

*The opponents of affirmative action regard it as a reverse discrimination since the white males are not able to compete with the previously disadvantage groups due to preferential treatment.*

The two authorities indicate that the affirmative action policies are generally viewed with a lot of negativity.

It has also been argued that affirmative action policies have brought about racial disharmony between the intended beneficiaries of the policies and those previously privileged by the previous social-political and economic order. Hlongwane (2013:29) posit that:

*According to BMF (1993) the black advancement policy in Zimbabwe was successful in attaining its objective which was exposed by the dramatic exit of the whites from the country. The researcher is of the opinion that Zimbabwe was far from being successful because integration of whites and blacks was not attained.*

Similar sentiments of racial disharmony between the minorities and the whites have also been raised in countries such as the United States of America, the United Kingdom and other developed economies because of the implementation of affirmative action policies.

Literature also shows that the policy has brought about conflict between men and women at the workplace .Chipunza (2003:2) postulate that,

*society encourages men and women to behave in specific ways according to its norms and regards any deviance as inappropriate and unacceptable ...Consequently, there is resentment when roles commonly held to be appropriate to one sex are assumed by members of another .This is especially true in education where some school headship positions are considered appropriate for one sex rather than the other.*

Obviously this mentality has a negative effect on women who are supposed to benefit from this policy, when they find themselves at loggerheads with social norms and beliefs which do not encourage them to take up educational management positions.

The policy has also been received with scorn in Zimbabwe by the intended beneficiaries (women) who feel it stereotypes them as people who are incapable to lead. From a study by Maphosa and Mugabe (2013:12) it was reported that “*most participants felt that the Affirmative Action policy demeaned them as it assumed that women had to be “favoured” since they were less capable*”. This confirms the view that the affirmative action policies in general have a labeling effect on the beneficiaries. It therefore could mean that some women in Zimbabwe do not identify with this policy and most probably are not taking advantage of it as intended beneficiaries. This negative attitude about the policy could therefore account for the continued underrepresentation of women in educational management position in spite of the existence of these policies. These unintended policy outcomes of the affirmative action policy link well with the general perceptions stakeholders hold about the policies.

### **3.6 HOW DO STAKEHOLDERS VIEW THE AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY ON THE PROMOTION OF WOMEN TO SENIOR EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT POSITIONS?**

Different perceptions are held by different people depending on their circumstances. Those who are privileged by these policies view them in a positive manner but those who are likely to be prejudiced by these policies look at them with a scorn. Hence these policies have been associated with negative identities such as, tokenism, drop in standards and racism in reverse among others. Peenar (2009:29-40) briefly highlights the negative views/debates on affirmative action policies in the context of Racism (in reverse), 2) Merit, 3) (Drop in) standards, 4) Tokenism, and 5) Quotas.

- **The Racism In Reverse Debate: Reverse Discrimination**

Individuals that hold negative views of affirmative action as a result of the fact that they believe it leads to reverse discrimination and unwarranted preferences view the process

as being nothing less than yet another form of discrimination . That is to say that just like apartheid, South Africans feel that affirmative action perpetuates racial discrimination and increases the already strained tensions in the country. For example, according to Dupper (2004 in Peenar 2006:32).

*...affirmative action programmes often perpetuate patterns of discrimination” and ...“any preferences based on race, sex or disability is as much a form of invidious discrimination – as objectionable as the discrimination it is meant to remedy.*

The racial alienation in America due to affirmation action is reported to be on the increase. Information available report increased racial tension at schools, colleges and universities due to aggressively enforced affirmative action policies. This is evidence that opponents of affirmative action believe the preferential policies have created a new racism in American universities and elsewhere instead of bringing racial harmony or gender equality.

- **The Merit Debate**

A second debate that influences individual attitudes towards affirmative action is that of merit. The application of affirmative action raises the question of whether race or gender is being substituted for merit, which refers to qualifications and experience. In this regard it may be argued that the members of the Non-designated group (White males) in South Africa that are sensitive to the merit issue, are those that have invested heavily in terms of resources and time in educating themselves (earning merit) so as to position themselves in certain careers. Now though being competent and efficient they are finding it difficult if not impossible to get the jobs they dreamt as these jobs are being reserved for the beneficiaries of affirmative action. The proponents of the merit debate feel that resentment and stigmatization are on the rise as incompetent people who accept positions because of their race or gender, and not because they are actually suitably qualified for the positions in question. *Peenar (2006:35)* however disagrees with this view thus; employers in South-Africa are not required to appoint unqualified individuals just because of their group membership but on qualifications, skills and experience.

- **The Drop In Standards Debate**

This debate issue is related to the previous debate of merit as it assumes that once a country does not have merit-based employment opportunities, it is inevitable that (work and performance) standards will drop. This, of course, is an economics-based argument, putting less qualified people into positions will damage South Africa's economy. For example, individuals that are negatively inclined towards this debate argue that affirmative action will decrease economic productivity and international competitiveness because hiring standards are lowered. Edigheji (2007:3) confirms that:

*For most of the critics, the issue is simple, the new elite is looking after its own, pushing whites out of the economy, denuding business and government of skills and destroying standards as the competent give way to the politically favoured.*

Similar sentiments have been raised in American education and in other countries alleging the drop in standards due to the implementation of affirmative action policies. This argument has no merit as *Peenar (2006:37)* points out that:

*The South Africa's Employment Equity Act (1998), states that the employer is not required to appoint or promote people who are not suitably qualified, even if they originate from the designated groups.*

- **The Tokenism Debate**

Hlongwane (2013:42) reports that “*tokenism is a concept utilised to refer to the employees who gained their positions through affirmative action whereas they do not satisfy the employment requirements*”. This concept in its simpler term refers to ‘place holders’ or ‘window dressing’, whereby some employees seem to hold executive positions in organisations but are not able to make decisions because they have been put in those positions to full-fill prescribed government measures. Research studies have also documented the negative perceptions that some members of the designated groups may have of tokenism of which a loss of self-confidence and negative feelings of distinctiveness and vulnerability were the most frequent concerns reported. Affirmative action could lead to employment equity candidates feeling they do not deserve their positions and in turn, this leads to negative feelings of self-worth. The perception of the

practice of tokenism in itself therefore often elicits negative perceptions from both the Designated and Non-designated groups.

- **The Quota Debate**

The issue of the “quota-system” or the use of quotas in furthering affirmative action targets is strongly related to the reverse racism, merit, tokenism, and (drop in) standard debates and emerges as another highly sensitive topic whenever attitudes towards affirmative action programmes are discussed and explored. The underlying rationale for this opposition, it is argued, lies in the fact that many employees find it hard to accept that previously disadvantaged persons “must” be employed in certain positions just in order to meet certain targets, regardless of their qualifications or potential. Its detractors, on the other hand, argue that the appointment of people simply to meet affirmative action targets will lower standards, demotivate members of the Non-designated groups, and worsen the existing racial tensions in the country.

### **3.7 WHAT ARE THE MAJOR CHALLENGES FACED BY FEMALE OFFICERS WHO ASPIRE TO ASCEND TO SENIOR EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT POSITIONS AND THOSE IN SENIOR EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT POSITIONS?**

An array of challenges faces both female officers who aspire to occupy senior educational management positions and those already in educational management positions. These challenges take many forms but basically they are of cultural, personal, official, administrative and gendered nature. These challenges are interrogated in the sections below.

#### **3.7.1 Challenges Faced By Aspiring Female Officers to Get To Management Positions**

- **Lack of spousal/family support**

Female teachers in general who want to ascend to senior educational management positions lack support from their spouses or from family members. Literature has

indicated that some husbands do not allow their wives to venture into educational management positions for various reasons. Rutoro (2012:67) argues that:

*Some husbands hinder their wife's career development and some husbands are not supportive of their wife's career's development as their self-esteem is lowered if a wife is better than them professionally.*

This practice limits if not completely obliterating female teacher's interest in taking up educational management positions. In the same vein Onsongo (2004 in Lunyolo et al 2014:245) report that:

*In Kenya it is an established fact that women are discouraged from participating in educational management by male colleagues and spouses due to societal stereotypes and this makes women lack confidence... as such men prefer their spouses to take care of children at home and perform domestic chores.*

In a study conducted by Chabaya et al (2009:242), it was reported that:

*It also surfaced in the focus group that women had problems in applying for headship posts because they needed to consult their husbands before applying .If a husband does not approve, then she will not apply.*

The above scenario is a blatant indicator that women really need the support and permission of their husbands to apply for educational management positions. In the same vein Oplatka (2006:614) contend that:

*Kenyan women cannot take managerial posts because of the travel time involved. Likewise, heavy domestic responsibilities and husband's resistance were identified by both male and female teachers in Kenya as barriers to career advancement.*

Besides the challenges narrated above women are also known to experience challenges which emanate from within themselves hence are referred to as personal barriers.

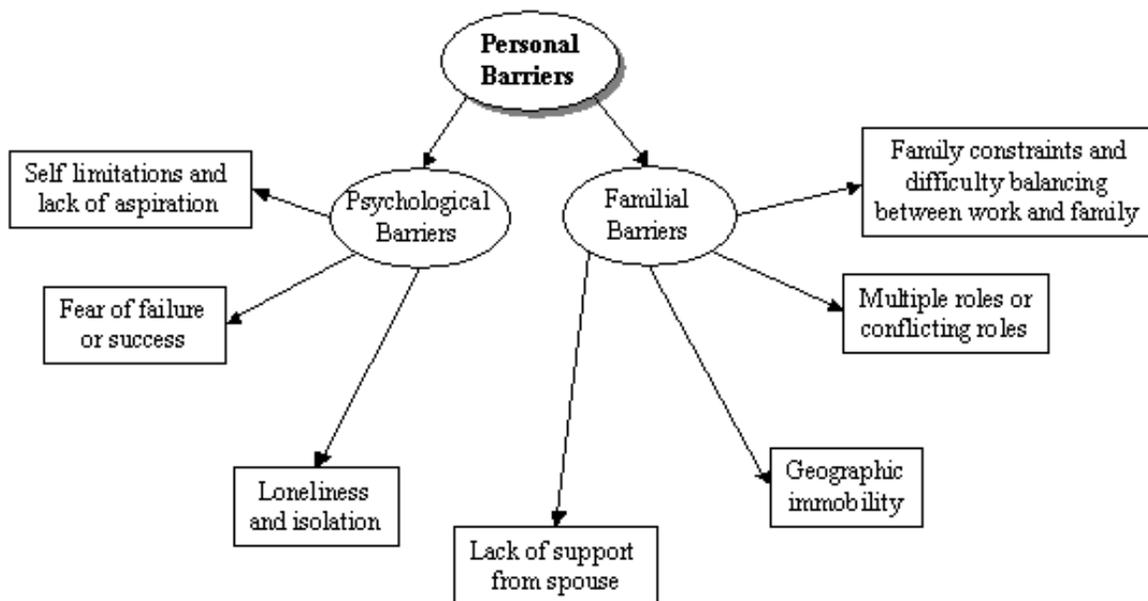
- **Personal Barriers to Success**

Literature has shown that women harbour no leadership ambitions because of personal reasons. These are also known as personal barriers because they emanate from an individual. These personal barriers are summarised by Nan-Chi Tao (2006:37-40) below. Nan-chi Tiao (2006:37) posits that:

*Personal barriers reported by women leaders can be grouped into these two categories: psychological and family-related barriers. Almost all of these personal barriers are directly or indirectly related to the polarized value systems and gender roles of men and women in American society.*

These barriers are diagrammatically presented and briefly examined by Nan-Chi Tiao (2006:38) in Fig 3.1 below.

**Figure3. 1: Personal Barriers to Success**



**Source: Nan- chi Tiao (2006)**

Witmer (1995 in Nan- chi Tiao 2006:38) described fear of success and fear of failure as “two sides of the same coin”. She believed that since women are not socialized to compete and stand out (positively or negatively); they have more to deal with, win or

lose. Since women usually take their jobs more seriously than men, they frequently have difficulty separating failure of a task from failure as a person.

Nan-chi Tiao (2006:38) observes that,

*Although women today can pursue their own careers, they are still expected to put their families first because no matter how good they are in the workplace, home is still “their” primary job. For women who want both a career and a family, balancing these two priorities becomes their biggest personal challenge. This is also called home-work conflict.*

Nan-chi Tiao (2006:40) has cited relocation (geographic immobility) for career advancement as a strong barrier to the attainment of leadership for women. The argument is such that, such geographic immobility can lead to limited bargaining power, limited job market and career choices, lower salaries, and infrequent promotions. Moving the whole family only for the sake of the wife’s advancement is still less acceptable in society and, thus, becomes an obstacle for women’s career advancement. These barriers severely limit the number of women in educational management positions thus leave them underrepresented in these positions. In other ways the same barriers negatively affect the implementation of the affirmative action policies.

### **3.7.2 Challenges Faced by Female Officers in Senior Educational Management Positions**

Women in senior educational management positions are faced with a multiplicity of challenges. These challenges are of social, cultural, attitudinal or organisational nature and are discussed below.

- **Social Challenges Faced By Women In Senior Educational Management Positions.**

Women in senior education management positions face a number of challenges due to the responsibilities they hold in the family set-up. Khumalo (2006:27) argues that;

*Women managers are confronted with double pressure from both home and work situations. Responsibilities which also need much time include child bearing and taking care of their husbands. In the morning women have to ensure that children have washed and also have to prepare food.*

In the same vein Okafor (2011:6724) contend that

*A good number of women have problems in juggling with roles such as mothers, house wives, home –makers and managers at work. The challenge of maintaining work /life balance when traced to time to meet their various commitment gets them frustrated and they feel trapped.*

Women in educational management positions suffer from work-home conflict, this is also called double shift and give them a lot of pressure. To this end Ncube and Tshuma (2010:176) posit that;

*The concept of ‘double shift’, which entails women in management positions engaging in full-time paid work outside their homes and taking care of domestic duties put pressure on these women .These numerous domestic chores that include general housekeeping issues and child care will interfere with management duties for attention. Female managers, as a result, are negatively affected by the ‘double shift’ resulting in low performance.*

The issue of work –home conflict for women in senior educational management positions is a critical one .Elmuti (2009:171) postulates that;

*For many women, in addition to the roles they hold in their companies, they remain the primary caretakers for their families. As the time constraints and demands of a job become more important upon promotion, forces many women to choose between family and career.*

It can be seen that women really suffer from the ‘double shift’ phenomenon as they cannot escape their domestic responsibilities of being wives and mothers hence balancing these very demanding household responsibilities with equally hectic managerial responsibilities leave women in a quandary. Jack and Suzy Welch (2007 in Elmuti 2009:171) portray the dilemma female managers’ experience thus;

*Very few women CEOs and women executives have children due to the effect it would have on their career. Conversely many women have left their jobs due to family decisions.*

The authorities identified in this section bear testimony that women in senior management positions are overburdened by work and domestic responsibilities and these roles and responsibilities have been reported to result in health problems for women, unstable marriages, divorce and isolation. “These women find themselves between a rock and a hard place that is, choosing between a husband and a job” (Ncube and Chuma 2010:177). Besides the social challenges faced by women in educational management positions they are also faced with cultural constraints.

- **Cultural Constraints faced by women in educational management positions.**

A number of cultural factors negatively affect the implementation of the affirmative action policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions. This is due to the fact that some cultures do not advocate for equality between men and women. Women’s appetite for leadership positions is curtailed from any early age. Hence Khumalo (2006:13) provides the cultural/traditional beliefs about men and women’s leadership characteristics thus,

*men should lead and women should follow; men are more intelligent than women are; men should not be instructed by women; a woman’s place is in the kitchen; women are not made to lead but to be lead and that the family suffers if a woman concentrates on her career.*

Such cultural beliefs puts a lot of pressure on women in educational management positions as they are not respected by their subordinates as well as the communities they serve in.

In the same vein Lunyolo et al (2014:242) posit that:

*Culturally there is a belief that women are supposed to be led and not to lead. In fact stereotyped notions about women constitute a major barriers; assertiveness is frequently interpreted as aggression. In this respect women find it difficult to exert authority over males since society still suffers from the myth that women are too emotional and weak for senior management.*

Such cultural stereotypes limit women's ability to take up senior educational management positions let alone success in these positions. Furthermore Elmuti (2009:173) contend that

*Past perceptions of leadership skills, competence, and assertiveness may hinder the ability of women to succeed in management .Many companies associate masculine characteristics with success and achievement. These include assertiveness, aggressiveness and task oriented leadership abilities. Other stereotypes of women include the expectation of being modest, quiet, selfless, and nurturing.*

These cultural beliefs put a lot of pressure on women in senior educational management positions because they are perceived as incapable of succeeding in these masculinised positions which need more aggression than modesty, consequently women are stigmatized as unsuitable for leadership positions. Such cultural beliefs and practices do negatively affect the implementation of the affirmative action policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions.

- **Attitudinal challenges faced by women in educational management positions.**

The successful implementation of the affirmative action policy is negatively affected by the negative attitudes people hold about women in general and about their leadership capabilities in particular .In many African societies patriarchal values are dominant and such values devalue women in general and their leadership in particular. Rutoro (2009:80) asserts that:

*African beliefs and traditional systems devalue, degrade and dehumanize women. Their socialisation has made them subordinate to male, silenced them in the home and in the society, and led them to think that their role is to support their husband's development and not their own. They have been stereotyped as weak, immature, thoughtless, always children, indecisive, subservient, and passive and dependent on males on everything.*

The above view corroborates with Okafor et al (2011:6718)' findings which indicate that:

*Female managers, who are hitherto called “women managers”, are faced with strongly held negative stereotypes, distinguishing them from their male counterparts in the workplace. Past research results indicated a tendency to describe female managers as less self-confident, less emotionally stable, less analytical, and less consistent and having poorer leadership abilities than male managers.*

Such negative attitudes adversely affect women’s leadership ambitions as they are seen as people who do not deserve to preside over men in whatever capacity. Dorsey (1996 cited in Chabaya et al (2013:239) explains that

*From an early age daughters are groomed for their marriage roles of wives, mother and provider...and they are conditioned from any early age to believe that a woman is inferior to a man and that their place is in the home.*

Such socialization of the girl child perpetuates gender inequality as the girls are indoctrinated into believing that their place is in the kitchen. Last but not least Chipunza (2003:4) -portrays men’s attitude about women thus;

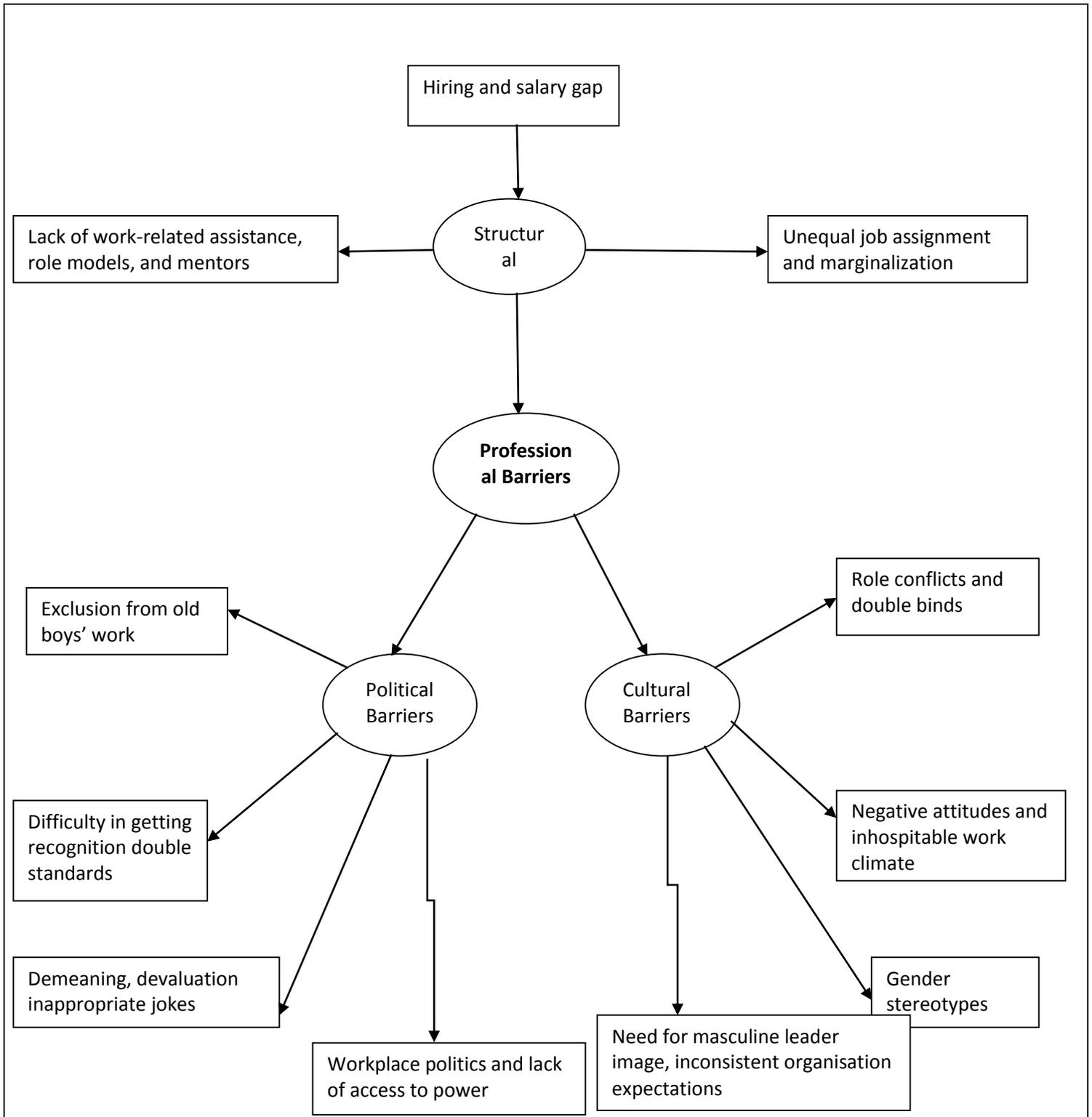
*the statement that ‘a master should not serve under a mistress’, continues to hold true in educational management, for attempts in Zimbabwe to introduce equal opportunities for all have met with resistance.*

It there goes without saying that the successful implementation of the affirmative action policy is not guaranteed against such hostile and negative attitudes men hold about women. Such attitudes create a hostile work environment where a woman is in charge.

- **Organisational/Structural challenges faced by women in educational management positions.**

Organisational culture presents some covert and overt barriers to women advancement and success in education management positions. Nan-chi Tiao (2006:44) posit that; “women in higher education administration have repeatedly reported negative experiences at all levels, that is, interpersonal, institutional, and societal levels, these barriers are referred to as professional barriers”. These barriers are diagrammatically presented in Fig 3.2 and briefly discussed by Nan-Chi-Tiao (2006:44-48) below.

**Figure 3.2 Professional Barriers to Success**



Nan-Chi Tiao (2006:45-48) summarises these barriers below.

The first types of barriers, structural barriers, include sex segregation in occupations, promotions, positions, and earnings, among others; these barriers are more obvious and can be more easily measured. After Tinsley (1986 in Nan- Chi Tiao 2006:45) reviewed the literature available at that time, she concluded that most women administrators in higher education were still doing “women’s work” and that they were far more likely to be assistants to, assistants, or associates than they were to be directors, deans, vice presidents, provosts, or presidents. In addition to visible structural obstacles, women leaders experience more intangible cultural bias in the workplace. Socio-cultural barriers such as gender stereotypes, negative attitudes about women in leadership positions, or an inhospitable organizational climate are often products of the widely accepted traditional ideas about men, women, and leadership.

The last category of obstacles emerged from the struggle over power and status between men and women. Political conflicts over positions, ranks, resources, influence, information, and alliances between men and women are often hidden, yet real. Stokes (1984 in Nan chi Tiao 2006:48), for instance, selected 23 possible barriers reported in the literature and asked 240 women administrators working in nine Florida universities to identify which ones they had encountered. The top four barriers were, less access to power (89%), exclusion from informal networks (87%), having to work twice as hard (87%), and difficulties in receiving recognition (81%). In brief, since leadership and management are still considered male domains, women today continue to be at a disadvantage and are still facing visible and invisible obstacles that hinder them from achieving success easily. These challenges militate against the successful implementation of the affirmative action policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management. One wonders whether the same scenario exists in Matabeleland South province. Having examined the challenges faced by female teachers in ascending to educational management positions and the challenges faced by those in educational management positions what remains is a search for a model to prepare women navigate against both sets of the challenges.

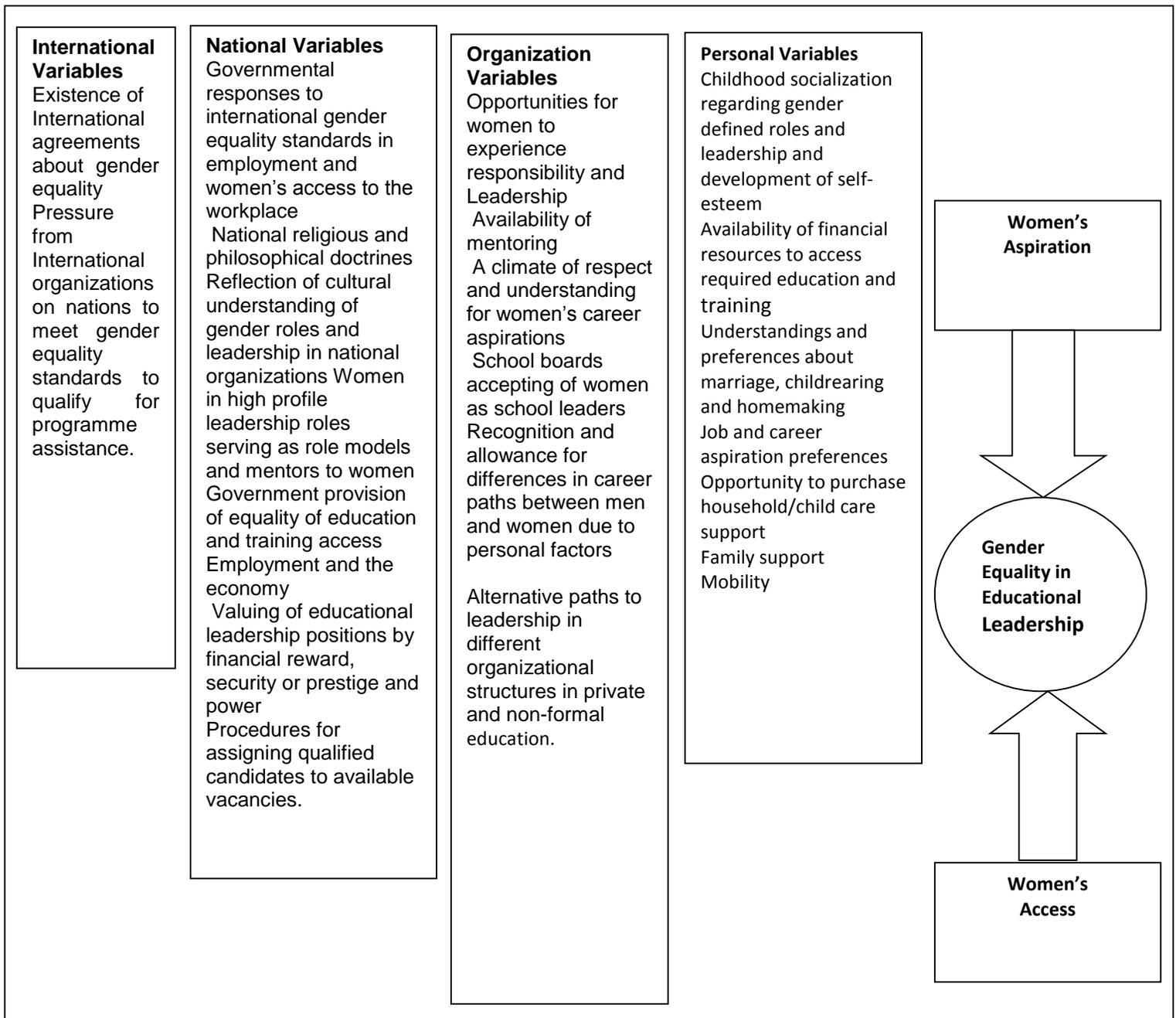
### **3.7.3 What Models Exist On Gender Equality And Equity In Educational Management Positions?**

One of the gender equality and equity model in educational management is the Access and Aspiration model. This model is presented in diagrammatic form and summarised by Sperandio (2011:5-10) outlined below.

#### **3.7.3.1 The Access and aspiration model**

Sperandio (2011:5) explains this model using the Ugandan case thus; My reading of existing research studies of women in educational leadership, and my own studies in Uganda and in India lead me to propose that factors that impact women's aspirations and access to leadership can be grouped into international, national, organizational and personal categories (see Fig 3.3 below ( Sperandio 2011:6)

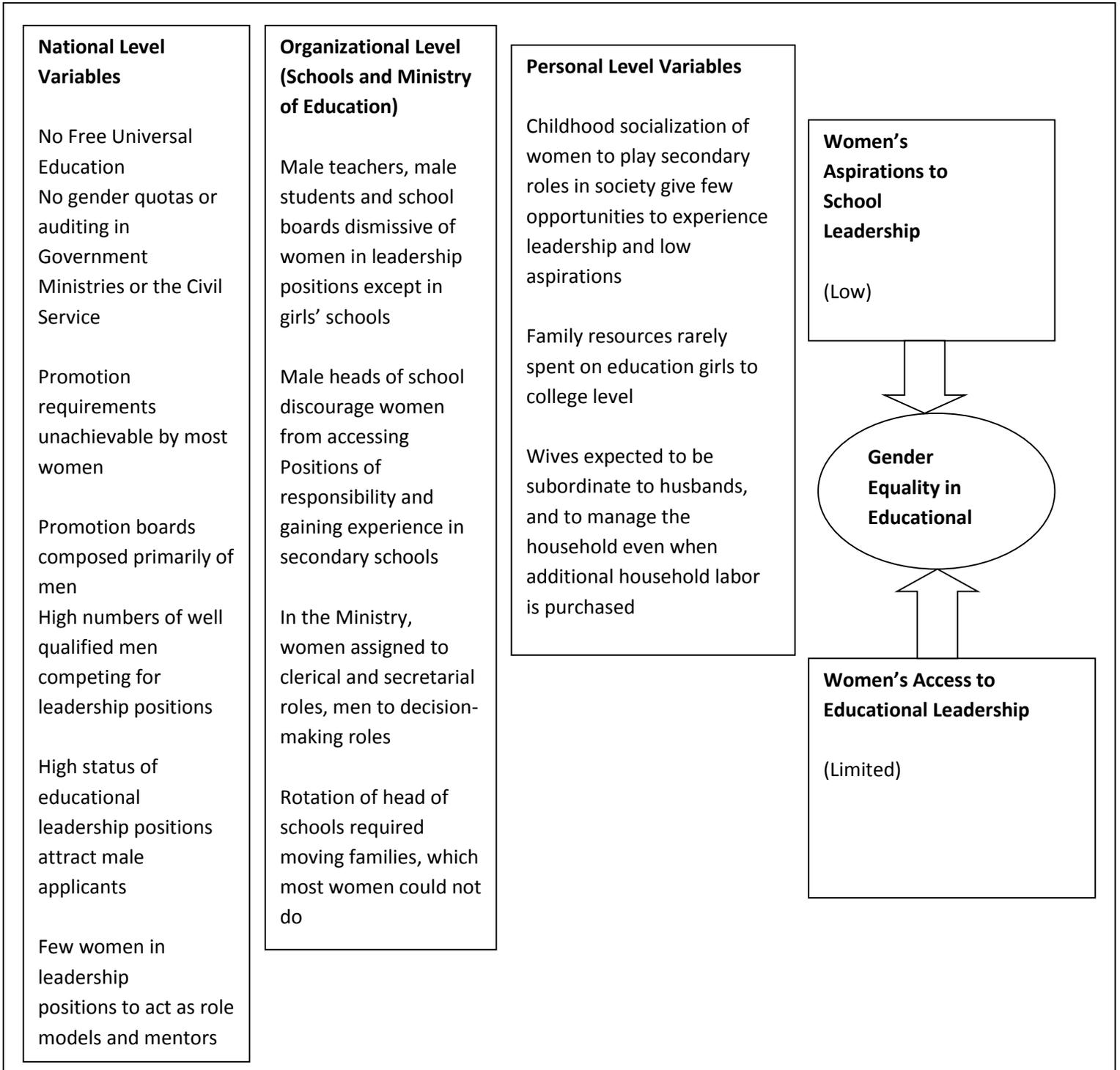
**Figure 3.3: Variables influencing women’s aspirations and access to educational leadership**



Source: Sperandio (2011)

### 3.7.3.2 Applying the Model

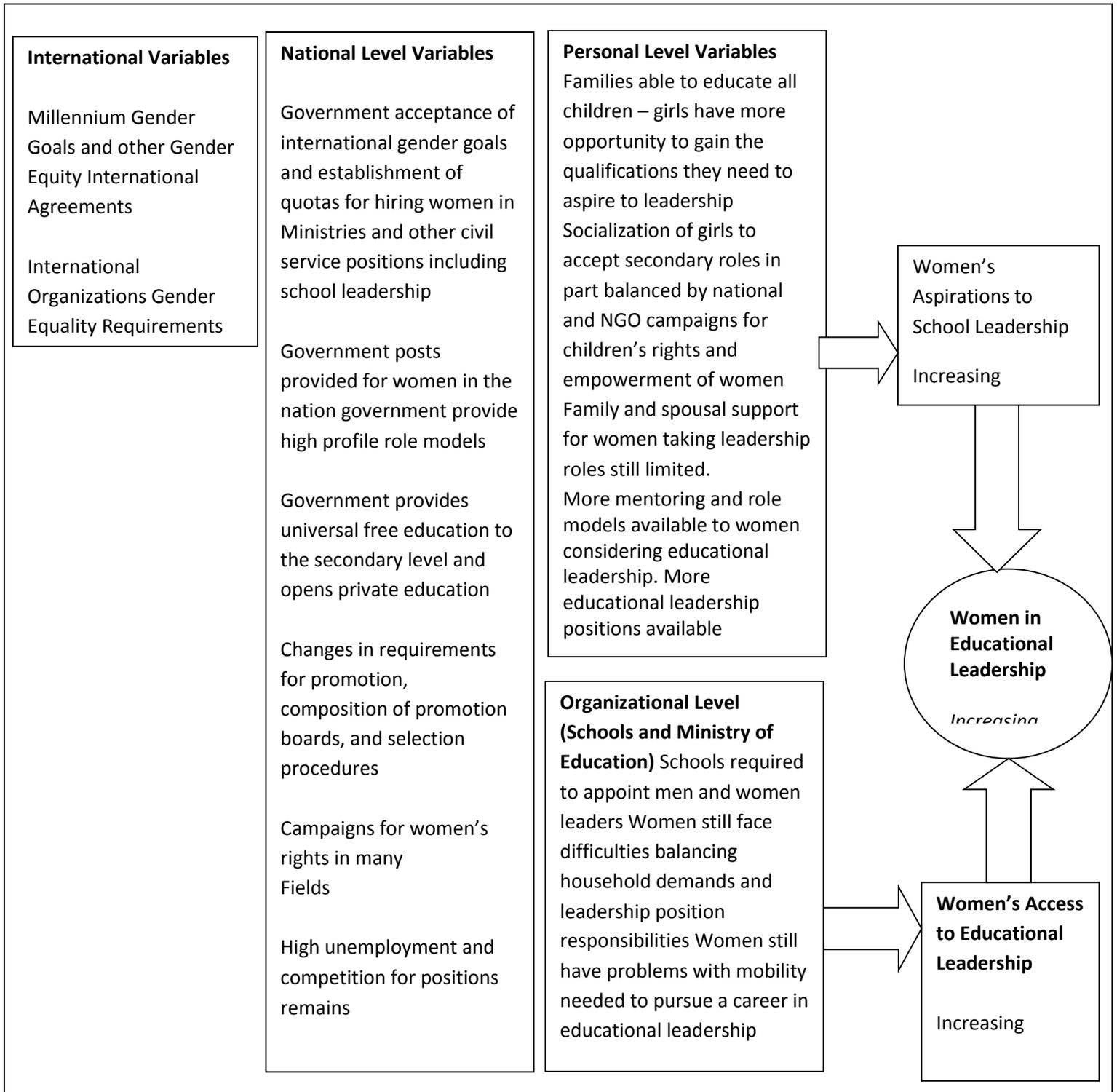
**Figure 3.4. Uganda pre-2000**



*Source; Sperandio (2011)*

Sperandio (2011:8) explains the model thus; qualitative studies conducted with women in educational leadership positions in Uganda, combined with data gathered about policies suggests how changes can be brought about to the benefit of women. Previous to year 2000 (figure 3.3) it can be seen that in Uganda, the national education system did not provide universal free education and the personal/family costs associated with primary and secondary education resulted in few girls educated to secondary and tertiary levels in a society that valued boys over girls. There was no provision for private education pre-1990. High unemployment resulted in high levels of competition for government and civil service posts, including teaching and school leadership, which favored men. A male oriented culture was unsupportive of women moving into leadership positions, and resulted in the structuring of organizations to the benefit of men – male preferences for leadership styles were valued above those of women, making it difficult for women to command the respect of male subordinates. Women were socialized to assume secondary positions in the home and workplace, had few female role models in leadership to inspire them and were unlikely to have family support if they chose to aspire to leadership positions. Cultural understandings of gender roles did not discourage women from aspiring to positions that placed them in situations of greater power or prestige than their husbands, nor could they expect their husbands to relocate if their promotion depended upon this, which was often the case in Uganda where school leadership positions were rotated every three years (Kagoda and Sperandio, 2009). These and stringent measures impacted negatively on the aspirations of women to leadership positions. To this end Sperandio (2011) continues, women aspiring to leadership positions were required to obtain recommendations and appraisals from members of the school administration, which was heavily male, dominated. They were also required to go before a selection committee comprised of senior educators, similarly weighted towards male members.

Figure 3.5 Uganda Post 2000



Source: Spirandio (2011)

To bring about the desired changes within the framework of the Access and aspiration model Sperandio (2011:10) provides the summary thus, the setting of international goals for gender equality (UNDP, 2003) and Uganda's adoption of the international gender equality indicators embedded in them, together with the acceptance of gender auditing and the use of affirmative action in the form of quotas has required all government departments, including those involved with educational decision-making, to recruit more women. The current government has been proactive in allocating elected offices to women, hence providing visible role models who raise the aspirations of women at every level of society. An active women's movement mentors women with aspirations to leadership in all fields and targets female students. The opening up and expansion of private education has created additional teaching and leadership positions in coeducational schools (although it is unclear whether biases against female school leaders still operate) and has increased the number of single sex girls' schools, who prefer female administrators. In response to calls for the provision of safer and more supportive school environments for adolescent girls in Uganda, government regulations also require that each coeducational school has a woman in the position of principal or deputy principal (Republic of Uganda, 2002). The institution of universal primary and secondary education in 2000 and 2008 respectively will ultimately increase the pool of educated women reaching tertiary education and teacher training for secondary schools. Recent changes in the civil service procedures and regulations for the composition of selection committees may ultimately offset cultural biases against women seeking promotion to leadership positions.

A analysis and comparison of Figures 3.2 and 3.3 shows that the interventions in part by the international community with concern on gender equity and Uganda's national politics have led to the fast tracking of universal education and the recognition of the importance of women's support. Sperandio (2011:10) however shows that in spite of the gains the struggle is far from being over as she laments, deeply imbedded social beliefs about gender roles, and the fierce competition for high status and well rewarded employment, together with mobility issues that affect women rather than men, still have

to be resolved before women's representation in educational leadership is equal to that of men.

Summarily, the Access and Aspirations model provides a framework for analysing challenges women face to access educational management positions. Sperandio (2011) staunchly believes that the model can be successfully implemented in order to achieve gender equality in educational management positions. The model shows that a host of interventions by different stakeholders are needed in order to bring about a level playing field between men and women in terms of promoting men and women to educational management positions.

### **3.8 CONCLUSION**

The literature reviewed in this chapter revealed that affirmative action originated in the United States of America as an effort to redress racism which was a disadvantage to minority groups. It covered mainly the public sector employment and education. From there it was adopted and adapted by different countries including India, Nigeria, Canada, Srilanka, Malaysia, Brazil, South Africa and Zimbabwe among other countries of the world. Literature reviewed indicated that affirmative action policies have indeed created opportunities for women to ascend to management positions in education as well as to other spheres of life. It is argued that the equity measures granted to girls at primary, high school and tertiary levels complemented the affirmative action programmes for women at employment levels. In spite of the opportunities created by affirmative action policies, the underrepresentation of women at management levels remains a worrying phenomenon across the globe. Women continue to meet challenges in their quest to rise to management positions due to historical, cultural, political, administrative, personal, professional and attitudinal reasons. The old adage; men 'manage' and women 'teach' aptly summaries the plight of women. The Access and Aspiration model was identified as a panacea to the problem of women underrepresentation at managerial level. The advocates of the model call for a conducive atmosphere characterised by national policies which encourage and provide for gender equality at all levels of society, increased access to education for both sexes

and affirmative measures for women at employment levels. This is believed to greatly ameliorate if not eradicate the underrepresentation of women at management position

## CHAPTER 4

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The two previous chapters reviewed literature related to this study which has greatly enriched and guided this study with reference to critical issues in gender studies in general and on gender equality and equity in particular. Key to this chapter, the reviewed literature provided the methodological framework of research which informed the structure of this unit. This chapter on research design and methodology tackles the case study design, qualitative research, population, the sample and sampling techniques. Qualitative data to be collected are identified and justified including the instruments to be used which are also critiqued. The chapter rounds off with issues of trustworthiness, ethical considerations and limitations of the study. These subheadings are interrogated section by section below.

#### 4.2 THE RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is “a plan or strategy which moves from the underlying philosophical assumptions to specifying the selection of respondents, the data gathering techniques to be used and the data analysis to be done” (Maree 2007 in Tshuma 2010:125). In other words a research design can be seen as a plan of action, framework or structure which links the philosophical foundations and approach to its methods in order to provide credible, accountable and legitimate answers to the research questions. Its purpose is to integrate the different components of the study into a coherent and logical entity, thereby ensuring the research problem is adequately and effectively addressed in a systematic and comprehensive manner that gives credibility to the research results rather than in a haphazard manner. It therefore goes without saying that a research design is of paramount importance in the successful execution of a research study. To that end Heppner, Kivlighan, & Wampold (1992:43) highlights that:

*A research design assists to examine specific questions in valid, systematic and objective manner by reducing as many rival explanations as possible and yet isolating the variables of interest to the research question.*

This study used the case study design which is briefly presented below.

“A case study is a research method which allows for an in-depth examination of events, phenomena or other observations within a real-life context for purposes of investigation, theory development and testing, or simply as a tool for learning” (Yin 2003 in Tshuma 2010:135). It should be noted that the research design broadly conceived, involves a clear focus on the research question, the purpose of the study, what information most appropriately will answer specific research questions and which strategies are most effective for obtaining that information. It can therefore be summed up that a case study is an in-depth study of a particular situation in its real-life context for the purposes of solving a problem of interest to the researcher. It provides rich descriptions (in-depth study) of a particular (single case) rather than a sweeping statistical survey which lacks in detail. Secondly as a method, it is used to narrow down a very broad field of research into a single researchable that easily produces authentic findings through the use of multiple sources of evidence. The justification for choosing the case study for this study is detailed below.

#### **4.3 RATIONALE FOR CHOOSING A CASE STUDY**

The choice of the case study in the current study was not accidental; it was because of its merits, relevance and suitability in social sciences research including education based on its principle of an in-depth examination of events, phenomena or other observations within a real-life context. It was the intention of the researcher to study in depth a single case (Matabeleland South Province out of ten (10) educational provinces in the country) in its natural setting rather than using a sweeping statistical survey so as to produce credible and acceptable findings. Modesto (2013:117) views the case study as a “design that is based on a naturalistic approach where the researcher develops a complex, holistic picture, analyses documents, and detailed views of the informants and

conducts the study in a natural setting”. One can therefore view a case study as a comprehensive method used when a holistic, in-depth investigation is needed to bring out the details from the viewpoint of the participants by using multiple sources of data. In this light Newman (1997 in Tshuma 2010:135) notes that, “reports from case study researchers get rich descriptions, colourful details and unusual characters instead of a formal neutral tone with statistics”. Furthermore Keith Punch (1998 in Silverman 2010:138) postulates that:

*The basic idea is that one case(or perhaps a small number of cases)will be studied in detail, using whatever methods seem appropriate .While there may be a variety of specific purposes and research questions, the general objective is to develop as full an understanding of that case as possible.*

From the above authorities it is clear that the nature of this study which does not need the manipulation of research subjects but for the researcher to be deeply immersed among them so as to observe them in their natural settings, it can be concluded that the case study’s relevance and suitability cannot be overemphasised .Through interviews and focus group discussions the researcher interrogated the effectiveness of the affirmative action policy on the accelerated advancement of women to senior educational management positions. The perceptions of teachers, heads of schools, District Education Officers, Education Officers and the Provincial education Directorate informed this study. The perceptions of these research participants enabled the researcher to get the much needed information on the performance of the affirmative action policy under scrutiny thus providing the solution of the problem and drawing conclusions from the research findings. In spite of the strengths of the case study elaborated above some concerns have however been raised on the pitfalls of this design.

Yin (1984: 97) posits that:

*Critics of the case study method believe that the study of a small number of cases can offer no grounds for establishing reliability or generality of findings. Others feel that the intense exposure of study participants to the researcher*

*biases the findings. Others dismiss the case study research as useful only as an exploratory tool. Yet researchers continue to use the case study research method with success in carefully planned and crafted studies of real-life situations, issues, and problems.*

However as a remedy to the above criticisms of the case study method the current study employed a multiple sources of data collection as advocated by Rowley (2002:17) thus, “typically case study research uses a variety of evidence from different sources, such as documents, artifacts, interviews and observation and that goes beyond the range of sources of evidence that might be available in a historical study”. This characteristic of the case study automatically links it well to the qualitative research paradigm which is treated below.

#### **4.4 THE RESEARCH METHOD**

Research can take a quantitative, qualitative or a mixed method paradigm. This depends on a number of factors but chiefly on the nature of an inquiry and the researcher’s orientation. In this study a qualitative research paradigm was chosen based on the nature of the study at hand which sought to explore participants’ views on the effectiveness of the affirmative action in creating opportunities for women advancement to senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South.

##### **4.4.1 Qualitative Research**

Golafshani (2003:600) posit that:

*Qualitative research uses a naturalistic approach that seeks to understand in context-specific settings, such as ‘real world setting [where] the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest. Broadly defined means any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification.*

To learn about this phenomenon, “the inquirer asks participants broad, general questions, collects the detailed views of participants in the form of words or images, and analyzes the information for description and themes” (Creswell 2003 cited in Tichapondwa 2013:108). From the above definitions it is clear that qualitative research

is a process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data by observing what people do and say. It is participants driven in terms of collecting data as the researcher has to be immersed within the participants in their communities so as to observe and record data as it happens. It is chiefly non-numeric and it tends to focus on exploring in as much detail as possible to achieve 'depth' rather than 'breadth'.

The above sources view qualitative research as an inquiry based approach that is applicable to many disciplines, fields and subject matter; hence it aids researchers to easily understand and effectively address phenomena of interest. One of its key attributes and strengths is that as an approach it places research participants at the centre of the study as they provide views, opinions and facts as sought by the researcher. Patton(2001 in Golafshani 2003:600 ) posit that:

*Qualitative research uses a naturalistic approach that seeks to understand phenomena in context-specific settings, such as "real world setting [where] the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest" This means that respondents are not manipulated in any way, rather the researcher is immersed among the respondents in their natural settings in order to observe and record what they do and say in their daily life undertakings.*

This therefore means that data is collected as it happens as the phenomenon of interest unfolds naturally which gives the researcher a global picture of the underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations of the subjects of interest, thus allowing a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of interest to the researcher.

In this study qualitative research was found suitable because issues interrogated are social issues and can only be better understood by observing and interacting with the respondents in their real- life settings. Issues of affirmative action draw a lot of emotions, and personal experiences hence can only be studied and understood better by interacting and interfacing with research participants. To effectively ascertain whether or not the affirmative action policy has really created opportunities for women advancement to senior educational management positions in Matabeleland south, opinions of teachers, heads of schools, education officers and the provincial educational

directorates were interviewed. This face-to-face- technique allowed the study to collect authentic data in rich descriptive details of the phenomena under scrutiny as they naturally unfolded situated and embedded in local contexts as both individual and focus group interviews were used allowing participants to draw on personal experiences and opinions. This compares well with Creswell(2007 in Tshuma 2010:142)'s point that, "qualitative data collection methods vary and use structured, unstructured and semi-structured techniques, some common methods include focus groups (group discussions), individual interviews, and participation/observations). From this rich descriptive data, that is context specific to the research setting (Matabeleland south region) the researcher was able to analyse and interpret the meaning of the information in an effort to answer the question at hand. Therefore to justify the use of qualitative research in this study, Creswell, Klassen, Clark and Smith 2011:4) posit that:

*One salient strength of qualitative research is its focus on the contexts and meaning of human lives and experiences for the purpose of inductive or theory-development driven research, qualitative researchers want those who are studied to speak for themselves, to provide their perspectives in words and other actions. Therefore, qualitative research is an interactive process in which the persons studied teach the researcher about their lives. It is a systematic and rigorous form of inquiry that uses methods of data collection such as in-depth interviews, ethnographic observation, and review of documents. Qualitative data help researchers understand processes, especially those that emerge over time, provide detailed information about settings or context, and emphasize the voices of participants through quotes.*

#### **4.5 THE TARGET POPULATION**

Best and Khan (1993:13) describe a population as,

*Any group of individuals that have one or more characteristics in common that are of particular interest to the researcher. ...it may be all the individuals of a particular type, or a more restricted part of that group, e.g. all public school teachers, all male secondary school teachers, all elementary school teachers, or all Chicago kindergarten may be populations.*

In the same vein Tuckman, (1994 in Tshuma 2010:86) posit that:

*The population in a research context is any target group of individuals that has one or more characteristics in common that is of interest to the researcher for purposes of gaining information and drawing conclusions.*

In this study the target population comprised of all primary and secondary school teachers, heads of schools, deputy heads of schools, education officers, district education officers and the provincial education directorate in Matabeleland south province of education. Included also in the target population of this study are all the eight districts of the province .It were from this population that a sample was chosen for an intense study through relevant sampling strategies.

#### **4.5.1 Sampling Strategies**

Best and Khan (1993:30) posit that “the primary purpose of research is to discover principles that have a universal application, but to study the whole population to arrive at generalizations would be impracticable if not impossible.” To solve the aforementioned dilemma, this study used the purposive sampling technique. Tichapondwa (2013:124) posit that,

*The primary consideration in purposive sampling is your judgment as to who can provide the best information to achieve the objectives of the study... You as a researcher only go to those people who in your opinion are likely to have the required information and will be willing to share it with you.*

In the same vein, Shava (2012:160) advices; that “the aim in purposive sampling is to identify “information –rich” participants who have certain characteristics, detailed knowledge or direct experience relevant to the phenomenon of interest to the study/researcher”. This study used this technique (purposive sampling) to get a sample of four districts out of eight districts in the province, 5 district education staff members and 4 Provincial education office staff members), 11 heads/deputy heads of secondary schools and 19heads/deputy heads of primary schools. Similarly purposive sampling

catered for 48 secondary school teachers and 48 primary school teachers. A summary of the sample detail is shown on the table below.

**Table 4.1: Sample of the study**

District	District Staff		Secondary Schools				Primary Schools				Regional Office Staff	
			Heads		Teachers		Heads		Teachers		Male	Female
	Male	Female	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	2	2
Gwanda	2	1	3	1	6	6	3	4	6	6	-	-
Umzingwane	1	0	2	1	6	6	2	3	6	6	-	-
Bulimia	1	0	1	2	6	6	2	2	6	6	-	-
Matobo	0	0	1	0	6	6	2	4	6	6	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>

Total Sample size 138  
 Female Participants 68  
 Male Participants 70

#### 4.5.2 Data Collection Methods

Data was collected through individual interviews and focused group discussions. These data collection techniques are examined in the sections below.

##### 4.5.2.1 The Interview Technique of Data Collection

Frey and Oishi (1995:01) define the interview technique as "a purposeful conversation in which one person asks prepared questions (interviewer) and another answers them (respondent)". In the same vein Best and Khan (1993:61) see an interview as

*A two way conversation or oral questionnaire initiated by the interviewer for the purpose of obtaining research –related information and to learn about ideas, beliefs, views, perceptions and opinions of the interviewees.*

Over and above to these two definitions one can add that the interview technique is a face-to -face interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee in order to gain information on a particular topic or a particular area of interest to the researcher. Berg (2001:70) categorises interviews into three categories namely; "the standardized (formal or structured) interviews, the unstandardized (informal or non-directive) interviews, and the semi standardized (guided-semi structured or focused) interviews."

This study used the semi- structured individual interviews (see Appendices A, B and C) that facilitated direct interaction between the researcher on one side and the heads/deputy heads of schools, district education officers, education officers and the provincial education directorate on the other. The interviews enabled the researcher to collect rich descriptive data from the information rich informants that provided a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of affirmative action policy in creating opportunities for women advancement to senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South region. Furthermore interviews zeroed on challenges faced by aspiring female heads/deputy heads and seating female heads /deputies and other female officers in executing their duties, perceptions on the effectiveness of affirmative action policy, and whether there are gaps between policy intents and policy output. To this end Jones (1985 in Punch 2009:155) posit that

*In order to understand other persons' constructions of reality, we would do well to ask them... and ask them in such a way that they can tell us in their terms (rather than those imposed rigidly and a priori by ourselves) and in a depth which addresses the rich context that is the substance of their meaning.*

The indication here is that interviews allow people to tell their own story in their own words. Interviews are therefore ideal for the exploration of individual experiences and perceptions in great details and are useful in obtaining detailed information on the phenomena of interest to the researcher based on the personal feelings, knowledge, experiences, perceptions and opinions of the participant in his or her own language or words. Similarly, Cohen et al, (2006 in Tichapondwa (2013:126) values interviews in that:

*They provide access to what is 'inside a person's head' which makes it possible to measure what a person knows(knowledge or information),what a person likes or dislikes (values and preferences) and what a person thinks(attitudes and beliefs).*

The semi –structured interviews used in this study enabled the researcher to first ask a series of structured questions before delving deeper by using open-ended questions in

order to obtain more data and to allow respondents to express themselves at some length. This compares well with Berg (2001:75)'s assertion that:

*In semi-structured interviews, the questions are typically asked of each interviewee in a systematic and consistent order, but the interviewers are allowed to digress, that is, the interviewers are permitted (in fact expected) to probe far beyond the answers to their prepared and standardised questions.*

The researcher used the semi-structured interview's flexibility, adaptability and human interactivity to probe the interviewees, follow-up leads, elaborate on the original responses and obtain additional more detailed data to clarify issues. In the same vein Tshuma (2010: 144) explains, "in addition to the established questions, the interviewer uses prompts and probes to clarify concepts, elicit detail, follow –up on incomplete answers and extend narratives". Besides providing the much needed data, the interviews allowed the researcher to pick up nonverbal cues, including facial expressions and tones of voice which allowed the researcher to validate the authenticity of the collected data which would not have been possible with the questionnaire. These interviews were highly interactive as they were anchored on the rapport between the researcher and participant, thus fear and suspicion removed as they were held in the participants' localities thus ensuring familiarity.

Although the interview technique is so much valued in data collection, it has some weaknesses which need to be avoided if its utility is to be maximized. All interviews require careful preparation that means time and effort hence, interviews are more costly means of data collection in comparison to questionnaires. Akbayrak (2000:4) qualifies this point thus, "arrangements to visit; securing necessary permission; confirming arrangements; interviewing; rescheduling appointments to cover absences and crises; transcribing and analyzing need a time".

In order to militate against these short comings of the interview, the researcher took all the precautions to plan all the work in time and recording all the information carefully to

avoid the mix-up in the information collected to allow for a smooth data analysis process.

Akbayrak (2000:6) postulate that:

*Interviews are more prone to bias than questionnaires because of the interviewer factor, 'interviewers are human beings and not machines', bias can be present in wording questions, the way they are read, tone of voice and in the manner that they are expressed or simply by the appearance, dress and accent of the interviewer.*

Being aware of the aforementioned problems the researcher created a non-threatening environment that allowed participants to freely interact with the interviewer on an equal footing.

The lack of anonymity of the interview in data collection makes it vulnerable. Interviewees may feel uneasy about the anonymity of their response and the confidentiality of their identity in a face- to- face interview hence may not fully cooperate. Nachmias and Nachmias (1989 in Tshuma2010:141 ) argue that “the interview lacks the anonymity that is provided by the questionnaire, thus leaving the participants feeling threatened and withdrawn especially if the topic is a sensitive one”. The researcher was able to reduce the effects of this weakness by emphasizing on the confidentiality of the responses and that of their identity and the assurance that the data was going to be used for academic purposes only. This was done before the real interviews but during the familiarization process where the researcher took time to introduce himself, the study and its objectives so that the participants could figure out what to expect during the interview. This follows, Gill, Stewart, Treasure and Chadwick (2008:292)’s advice who postulate that,

*Before an interview takes place, respondents should be informed about study details and given assurance about ethical principles such as anonymity and confidentiality, this increases the likelihood of honesty and is also a fundamental aspect of the informed consent process.*

In order for the researcher to concentrate on listening, probing and responding to the interviewees, the researcher used a voice recorder to record the interview sessions. This allowed the researcher to capture all the discussions and responses from the interviewees without omission. This was later analysed during data analysis. Besides individual interviews the study used focus group discussion in collecting data.

#### **4.5.3 The Focus Group as a Data Collection Technique**

A focus group is defined as a small gathering of individuals who have a common interest or characteristic, assembled by a moderator who uses the group and its interactions as a way to gain in-depth information about a particular topic (Kark and Williams 2000 Tichapondwa2013:128). The focus group technique is also known as guided discussions or group interviews among a small group of people who share a common characteristic central to the topic of interest. From the above authorities it is clear that focus groups are deliberately created for the purposes of soliciting in-depth information on the phenomenon of interest to the researcher. The participants are not just assembled wily-nilly but are chosen because of the rich information they possess about the topic, hence they are seen to serve as a catalyst to generate unique insights into understanding shared experiences and norms. Some literature also view focus group discussions as a form of group interviews of approximately six to twelve people who share similar characteristics, common interests and experiences which are of significance to the researcher.

The researcher used focus group discussions in order to “utilise the interactions among group members to widen the range of responses, activate forgotten details of individual experiences and release inhibitions that otherwise discourage participants from disclosing information” as advised by Maree (2007 in Tichapondwa2013:128). In this study primary and secondary school teachers formed focus group discussion in their respective schools (See Appendix C). In the selected schools the researcher conducted the sessions in person and groups were made up of an average of six participants with gender balanced between female and male teachers. The key aspects of the discussions centred on the participants’ understanding of the affirmative action on the

promotion of women to senior educational management positions, the manner of its implementation, strengths and weaknesses. Their perceptions were also sought on the leadership capabilities of female senior officers and the manner they executed their duties in comparison to their male counterparts. Finally the participants examined the socio-cultural and physical challenges female heads/deputy heads of schools experience in the execution of their duties. These sessions were very fruitful as participants freely interacted with each other without inhibitions and shared experiences and opinions such that the views of the participants emerged rather than those of the interviewer. This compares well with Maree (2007 in Tshuma 2010:147) who says, focus group interviews enable participants to complement each other's ideas, comments and experiences and produce data that is rich in detail and not attainable from individual interviews". The researcher played a moderation role, and listened not only for the content of focus group discussants, but for emotions, ironies, contradictions, and tensions, which enabled the researcher to learn or confirm not just the facts (as in survey method), but the meaning behind the facts .These sessions were guided by prepared questions ,which began with broad and less structured set of questions to ease participants into a process where they debated issues in an environment that allowed participants to share their experiences without inhibitions. This agrees with Freitas, Oliveira, Jenkins and Popjov (1998:4) who argue

*That FG permits richness and flexibility in the collection of data that are not usually achieved when applying an instrument individually; at the same time permitting spontaneity of interaction among the participants.*

The strength of focus group discussions is that it is an interactive process of a small group that can generate new thinking about a topic which will result in a much more in-depth discussion thus generating comprehensive information that is of interest to researcher.

Freitas et al (1998:4) further argue that the:

*Application of this method facilitates the collection of interesting data. This data contributes to a stronger conviction on the part of the researcher or analyst, as it is a good source of information for the formulation of hypotheses or for the construction of frameworks.*

It can therefore be added that the use of focus group in data collection gives the researcher the confidence in the data collected as it is first-hand information. This is also true in that data comes from people's shared understanding of everyday life and the ways in which individuals are influenced by others in a group situation. It was the need for capturing broader and deeper insights into the challenges that women face in taking up educational managerial positions in Matabeleland South region that focus groups were used.

It can therefore be summed up that, through this interactive process of the group and the interviewer, the interviewer gets the content from the responses on the spot and allows the researcher to make use of nonverbal cues in order to verify the authenticity of the responses through observations of group members' facial expressions to pick up on emotional responses, contradictions, stress, anger, frustration, enthusiasm and other feelings that do not come through a structured questionnaire. The researcher took advantage of this interactive process of the focus group to learn a lot about the issues under spot light as participants freely expressed their opinions, thus contributing the much needed information.

Last but not least focus group discussions have low costs since they generally require little to no technology and are often completed in just a few hours or one day. This factor also realises efficiency in that about ten participants could be engaged at one time as opposed to individual interviews which need more time. In this study the focus group were voice recorded hence not much technology was used. In spite of the above articulated strengths of focus group discussion as a data collection technique, it is not completely free from weakness.

The basic weakness of the focus group discussion lies in the role of the moderator. Naturally some people are dominant in group dynamics; hence focus groups tend to become influenced by one or two dominant people in the session thus making the output very biased. However, the presence of moderator should guard against such a scenario of some members dominating the discussions. Freitas et al (1998:4) posit that:

*The participants influence each other through their answers to the ideas and contributions during the discussion. The moderator stimulates discussion with comments or subjects. The fundamental data produced by this technique are the transcripts of the group discussions and the moderator's reflections and annotations.*

It can be seen that a moderator plays an important part in seeing that all participants equally take part in the discussion. It is also important that the moderator strictly plays the role of a moderator instead of hijacking the discussion or allow it to generate into a form of a talk show. In order to handle successful focus group discussion I played the moderator's role by allowing the discussants to share their views freely, I was a good listener and talked less only in circumstances which needed me to talk. Otherwise the discussions belonged to the participant.

With the above advice the researcher was able to avoid the pitfalls of focus group discussions by playing a regulatory role, being a good listener, and provided the necessary leadership that allowed all members to participate on an equal basis so that group responses rather than individual responses were captured.

Last but not least focus group discussions make it difficult to have the participants share their real feelings towards some sensitive topics publicly. However in this study there is nothing sensitive as gender issues are really daily discussions and in particular this study is of a generic nature, hence participants were freely and openly engaged.

With the careful guidance of the moderator (researcher) all the focus group discussions were held in a free and open atmosphere which allowed group members to participate

freely without any one domineering and dictating the sessions. Hence group rather than individual inputs were captured. All the data collected through interviews and focused group discussions was carefully analysed and interpreted in order to gain meaning from it.

#### **4.6 ANALYZING QUALITATIVE DATA**

The analysis of qualitative research data is a mastery of a special set of interpretive practices and narrative techniques .Borgden and Biklen (1982 in Shava 2012:150) defines qualitative data analysis as, “working with data, organizing it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and deciding what is important and is to be learned and deciding what you will tell others”. Patton (1990 in Golafshani 2003:602) has it that

*Qualitative data analysis requires some creativity, for the challenge is to place the raw data into logical meaningful categories, to examine them in a holistic fashion and to find a way to communicate this interpretation to others.*

Lincoln and Guba 1985 in Shava 2012:172) postulate that:

*Large quantities of data are usually collected through qualitative research and this data can be physically sorted out or using some of the several computer software programmes such as MAXQDA and Nivivo, but the benefits of such software are mainly in sorting and segregating, rather than in processing or analysing the data.*

In this study the physical sorting and analysis of the qualitative data was done. The raw data was coded into themes, categories, general ideas, concepts or similar features that relate to the main research question .From there, the researcher described, analysed and interpreted what was seen and heard in terms of common words, phrases, themes or patterns that would aided the understanding and interpretation of that which was emerging. Data from audio taped interviews was transcribed verbatim before analysis. Finally data from both the individual and group interviews was linked to form a global picture that answers the question at hand.

## **4.7 QUALITY ASSURANCE TECHNIQUES**

In order to quality assure this study a number of processes were taken into consideration. These are briefly discussed below.

### **4.7.1 Trustworthiness in conducting qualitative research**

In quantitative research the value of any piece of research work is measured against the validity and reliability of the processes undertaken by the researcher to finally arrive at the results/findings. Contrarily in qualitative research the focus is on the standards of rigor also known as trustworthiness. In this study the standards of rigor discussed include credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. This is in line with Lincoln and Guba (1985 in Krefting 1990: 217) who associate the “trustworthiness” of qualitative research with terms such as “credibility”, “transferability”, and “dependability”, and “confirmability.” Similarly Golafshani (2003:601) argues that; in any qualitative research project, “four issues of trustworthiness demand attention; these are credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability”.

### **4.7.2 Credibility**

According to Polit et al (2001:32), credibility refers to “the confidence of the data. It is similar to internal validity in quantitative research. Credibility exists when the research findings reflect the perceptions of people understudy”. Credibility is “an evaluation of whether or not the research findings represent a credible conceptual interpretation of the data drawn from the participants’ original data” (Lincoln & Guba 1985: in Tshuma 2010: 160).

To enhance the credibility of the research findings, the researcher made use of multiple and different sources of data which included teachers, heads of schools, district education officers and etc. This allowed the corroboration of the findings from these different participants. Secondly the researcher employed the member checking strategy. In the process of Member Checking, some research participants reviewed a summary of the data analysis procedure and a summary of the final results of the inquiry. They

offered comments on whether or not they felt the data were interpreted in a manner congruent with their own experiences. Last but not least the researcher provided rich, thick descriptions of the setting, participants, processes, and interactions.

### **4.7.3 Transferability**

Transferability is the degree to which the findings of this study can apply or transfer beyond the bounds of this research project .Guba (1981 in Krefting 1990:216) sees transferability, as

*The criterion against which applicability of qualitative data is assessed, research meets this criterion when the findings fit into contexts outside the study situation that are determined by the degree of similarity or goodness of fit between the two contexts.*

Lincoln and Guba (1981 in Golafshani: 2003:601) propose that “it is up to the reader, rather than the original investigator, to determine if the findings can be transferred or applied to another setting. This is an equivalent of generalisability in quantitative research”. To achieve transferability the researcher “ provided rich, detailed and thick description about research methods, strategy of inquiry used; the researcher’s role; sampling; data collection; procedures for recording, storing, and managing information; data analysis steps, including coding, interpretations, validation, and data presentation” as is advised by Krefting( 1990:218).This was done to help place the reader in the context, and to allow the reader to determine if findings are transferable. In addition to the above strategy the researcher used peer debriefing which is a process of involving a person who reviews and ask questions about the study so that the account will resonate with people other than the researcher .Through the use of fellow students doing the same course at the same institution and colleagues at work the study was continuously appraised so that it was weeded of the researcher’s own perceptions, beliefs and inclinations. These processes enhanced the transferability of the study.

#### 4.7.4 Dependability

Guba (1981 in Krefting 1990:221) “proposed that the dependability criterion relates to the stability and consistency of findings”. In the same vein, Polit et al (2001:35) view dependability as “the stability of data over time over conditions. This principle can be likened to the idea of reliability in quantitative studies. A dependable study should therefore be accurate and consistent”. The dependability of a study can be achieved through two methods namely stepwise replication and an inquiry audit also known as audit trail. According to Polit et al (2001:36) “step wise replication is an approach that involves several researchers who can be divided into two teams to conduct separate inquiries with a view to comparing data as well as conclusions”. The fact that this study was supervised by two promoters catered for this aspect as they time after time compared opinions over the progress of the study. Tobin and Begley (2004:392) posit that:

*Dependability (comparable with reliability) is achieved through a process of auditing, inquirers are responsible for ensuring that the process of research is logical, traceable and clearly documented.... can then be demonstrated through an audit trail, where others can examine the inquirer’s documentation of data, methods, decisions and end product.*

In order to ensure the dependability of this study, the researcher kept the voice tapes of containing raw individual and focus group interview data, the typed transcripts, blank individual and focus group interview instruments and the final draft of the research project for auditing and verification by interested groups and individuals. The auditing of the research processes can also be used to authenticate confirmability.

#### 4.7.5 Confirmability

According to Tobin and Begley (2004 392) confirmability (comparable with objectivity or neutrality) is,

*Concerned with establishing that data and interpretation so that the findings are not figments of the inquirer’s imagination, but are clearly derived from the data” Confirmability is a measure of how well the inquiry’s findings are supported by the data collected*

According to Lincoln & Guba, 1985 in Krefting (1990:221) the issue of confirmability:

*Focuses on the characteristics of the data collected and the processes leading to its collection. These processes of data collection can yield research findings that are objective, neutral, credible and consistent as opposed to those that are based on the researcher's perceptions and preconceptions.*

As alluded to in the previous section dependability and confirmability are interwoven processes hence the material that has been identified for auditing was made available for those interested in auditing the study.

## **4.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH**

In undertaking an educational research, the interaction between the researcher and the participants (respondents) in their communities and set ups cannot be avoided as education is a social science. In this interaction (between the researcher and the communities of interest) social norms and ethics are likely to be violated as the researcher searches for the much needed data. In order to avoid ethical pitfalls there is need for the researcher to take consideration of the following concerns of respondents.

### **4.8.1 Confidentiality**

Denzin and Lincoln (2000:139) posit that “confidentiality must be assured as the primary safeguard against unwanted exposure...all personal data out to be secured or concealed and made public only behind a shield of anonymity”. In short this means that research participants' identities need to remain anonymous as the investigation may reveal sensitive information. There is therefore need not to disclose the names of the respondents by the researcher. In this study the researcher did not reveal any names of participants in any way so that research participants' identities remain anonymous. Instead of names of participants, secret codes of names and locations were used to protect the identity of the respondents.

#### **4.8.2 Informed Consent**

Flick (2009:40) postulate that “dignity and rights of the participants are linked to consent given by the participants, to sufficient and adequate information provided as a basis for giving that consent, and that the consent is given voluntarily” The researcher ensured that he secured the consent of the respondents by adequately informing them of the aims and objectives of the study under way. The researcher also pledged his commitment to confidentiality and privacy as well as anonymity of the respondents as much as possible. The researcher sought permission from the provincial education director to carry out the study in the province and participants were asked sign letters of consent.

#### **4.8.3 The Right to Prove That the Researcher Is Responsible**

The participants have the right to know the intentions of the researcher in conducting the research. To ensure the above research ethic was observed the researcher informed the participants of the intentions of the study and promised them that the information collected will be used for purely academic reasons only.

#### **4.8.4 The Right to Privacy and Non-Participation**

The participants have the right to know the intentions of the researcher in conducting the research. To ensure the above research ethic is observed the researcher informed the participants the intentions of the study and promised them that the information collected will be used for academic purposes only. The participants were also informed that participation in the study was voluntary and they had the right to withdraw during the course of the study should they so wish.

#### **4.8.5 Objectivity and Integrity**

The researcher ensured objectivity and integrity in the research by avoiding academic fraud and plagiarism. This was be done through accurate recording of data, utilizing the data received as they are, rather than as one wishes them to be, and acknowledging all the research participants and sources of information in the ways that are acceptable to the research or academic community.

#### **4.8.6 Reporting and Publication**

Finally the researcher ensured that the full report is produced in the acceptable format without misrepresenting the research results, taking into cognisance the researcher's constraints and limitations of the findings.

#### **4.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The major limitation of this study is that it was based on a case study design with only one region of education out of ten being studied. Hence the findings may not be generalised to the rest of the country let alone the region and the global arenas. Secondly the researcher could not prolong his engagement in the field for persistent observation of research participants to enhance the credibility of the study due to financial and time constraints. However the convenience sampling technique employed by the researcher enabled him to reach for the information-rich sources within a reasonable length of time without necessarily travelling the whole length and breadth of the region thus maximizing on both time and funding. Last but not least the limited face-to-face contact time between the researcher and the promoters was another limitation to this study as the researcher was a part-time student resident in another country. However the use of on-line communication was able to militate against this challenge thus making the study manageable with minimal compromise.

#### **4.10 CONCLUSION**

This chapter outlined and detailed the research methodology. Specifically it focused on the research design, the research paradigm, population, the sample and sampling procedures. A case study was used in this study as it allowed the researcher to concentrate on single case (Matabeleland South). In line with the case study design a qualitative approach was used since this study is of a social nature. The use of a case study allowed for an in-depth covered of the issues under consideration. Qualitative research aims to collect no-numeric data from research participants in their natural settings. The researcher therefore interacted with research participants in their schools and other places of work within their environments. Through purposive sampling teachers from primary and secondary schools, education officers, district education

officers and members from the provincial education director's office were sampled. Teachers participated through focus group discussions while the rest were engaged through individual interviews. The participants aired their views on the effectiveness of the affirmative action policy as a strategy of achieving gender parity between men and women in educational management positions. Furthermore perceptions of participants were sought on the intended and unintended outcomes of the policy, barriers to female teachers' advancement to educational management positions, challenges faced by women leaders and the leadership qualities of women. Data gathering techniques discussed included individual interviews and focus group discussions. The chapter also discussed trustworthiness issues such as confirmability, transferability, and dependability. Similarly consideration was given to ethical considerations comprising of informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity were also examined. The next chapter focuses on data presentation, analysis and interpretation

## CHAPTER 5

### PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I present the data on the extent to which the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions has created opportunities for women in Zimbabwe in general and in Matabeleland South particular. The data was collected from a sample comprising of teachers, Deputy and Heads of schools, Education Officers, District Education Officers and Deputy Provincial Education Directors. Teachers from both primary and secondary schools participated through focus group discussions while the rest participated through individual interviews. The presentation follows a thematic approach based on the emerging themes from the data collected in compliance with the qualitative approach to research as outlined in chapter four of this study.

Four themes that emerged are; the existence of the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions, barriers for women advancement to educational management positions, leadership qualities of women and challenges faced by women in senior educational management positions. These are discussed in details in this chapter in conjunction with the objectives of the study.

The need to achieve gender equality in Zimbabwe is premised on international, regional and national protocols on gender equality. These are briefly highlighted below. On the international arena the Millennium Development Goals to which Zimbabwe is a signatory provide a pathway to the achievement of gender equality between men and women. In particular the Millennium Development Goal 3 seeks to promote gender equality and to empower women. Consequently Zimbabwe, “targeted to increase the participation of women in decision-making in all sectors and at all levels (to 40% for women in senior service positions and up to 30% for parliament) by 2005 and to 50-50 balance by 2015” (Millennium Development Goals Status Report: 2010: 25).The

reference to gender equality and the empowerment of women is a strong indication that women are less equal to men in Zimbabwe.

Regionally the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development also lays a firm foundation for the achievement of gender equality between men and women in member states. “Its objectives are to provide for the empowerment of women, to eliminate discrimination and to achieve gender equality and equity through the development and implementation of gender responsive legislation, policies, programmes and projects” (SADC Protocol on Gender and Development: 2009:10).

Nationally, the call for gender equality is based on the constitution of Zimbabwe and the National Gender Policy. This study therefore cites the aforementioned documents as its anchors and advocates for the implementation of gender policies for the betterment of the women folk whose status in the Zimbabwean society has remained subordinated to that of men for a long time. Sections 17, 56 and 245 of the constitution of Zimbabwe amendment (No.20) Act 2013, focus on gender equality and collectively call for the “state and all institutions and agencies of government at every level to take practical and positive measures to correct and rectify gender discrimination and imbalances resulting from past practices and policies”(constitution of Zimbabwe amendment(No.20) Act 2013:19).Similarly ,the National Gender policy(2013-2017)’s goal is “to eradicate gender discrimination and inequalities in all spheres of life and development. It’s vision is to create a gender just society in which men and women enjoy equity, contribute and benefit as equal partners in the development of the country” (National Gender policy 2013-17:12).

As one of the mechanisms of achieving gender equality for a gender just society, Affirmative Action is seen as a viable and robust policy initiative for this cause (gender equality).In relation to the Affirmative Action Policy, the National Gender Policy (2013-2017:12) says:

Notwithstanding the principle of gender justice, this policy acknowledges that measures (legislative or others) designed to advance sex disadvantaged by previous unfair discrimination may be taken. As such, Affirmative Action shall be pursued for more rapid and efficient progress towards redressing gender inequality particularly where targets have to be met within set time frames.

In pursuant of the above National Gender Policy objective the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development headed by a woman has been created as a custodian of all gender equality needs of the nation.

The above discussion based on the Millennium Development Goals, the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, the Constitution of Zimbabwe and the National Gender Policy orients this study towards the implementation of gender equality policies and programmes in a bid to compensate women in Zimbabwe who have been disadvantaged for a long time. True to these aims and objectives of gender equality, arrays of affirmative action policies have been implemented on economic, social and political spheres including education. This study therefore has been undertaken to examine the extent to which the Affirmative Action Policy on the accelerated promotion of women to senior educational management positions in Zimbabwe has created opportunities for women advancement to senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South region.

This presentation is punctuated with quoted statements from the participants in order to authenticate the findings. In an effort to clearly present the quotations I used codes for referencing purposes. The codes I used are as shown on table 5.1 below

## The Coding System used in the study.

**Table 5.1 Coding System used in the study**

Key to Coding	Explanation	Participants involved	Intv no
IT	Individual Interviews	Head of school(HoS) Deputy head of school(D/HoS), Human Resources Officer(HRO), Education officer(EO) District Education Officer(DEO) Deputy Provincial Education Director(DPED)	Interview number.
FGD	Focus Group Discussion	Teachers( primary and secondary)	Fdg no
			Focus group number.

All the interviews (individual and focus groups) were voice recorded in a numerical and ascending order from the first to last one. These were then transcribed in preparation for data presentation and analysis. The individual interviews (IT) are numbered separately in numerical order, hence in the text IT intv no 1 means individual interview number 1. Individual interview participants were Heads of schools (HoS), Deputy Heads of schools (D/HoS), Education Officers (EO), District Education Officers (DEO) and Deputy Provincial Education Directors (D/PED) .Each participant was numbered in ascending order for ease of identification, e .g HoS1for Head of School no 1. The same format was used for focus group discussions (FDG) .They were also recorded separately numerically in an ascending order, hence FGD no 1 means focus group discussion number 1.The teachers were also numbered within their focus discussion group for ease identification, hence(FGDno1/T1)means focus group discussion number 1teacher number 1. These codes are used in data presentation and analysis in the text.

## 5.2 THEMES AND SUBTHEMES EMERGING FROM THE DATA COLLECTED

**Table 5.2: Themes and sub themes emerging from individual interviews and focus group discussion data**

No	Theme	Sub-themes
5.2.1	Existence of the policy on women advancement.	5.2.1.1 The Policy 5.2.1.2 Documentation of the policy 5.2.1.3 Stakeholders' awareness of the policy. 5.2.1.4 Creation of opportunities for women advancement. 5.2.1.5 Women's representation in leadership positions 5.2.1.6 Intended (positive) effects of the policy. 5.2.1.7 UN intended (negative) effects of the policy.
5.2.2	Barriers for women advancement to educational posts.	5.2.2.1 Poor working conditions. 5.2.2.2 Lack of family/spousal support 5.2.2.3 Family commitments/demands 5.2.2.4 Lack of leadership ambitions/ low self-esteem/low self-confidence. 5.2.2.5 Lack of relevant qualifications 5.2.2.6 Cultural factors and the socialisation of the girl child/women. 5.2.2.7 Domination of selection/promotion boards by men and other organizational factors. 5.2.2.8 Polarisation of leadership positions in Zimbabwe.
5.2.3	Leadership Qualities of women	5.2.3.1 Women are hard workers& produce better results than men 5.2.3.2 Women are patient and accommodative 5.2.3.3 Women do work according to procedure 5.2.3.4 Women are poor in making quality decisions 5.2.3.5 Women work on emotions, keep grudges &like gossiping
5.2.4	Challenges faced by women in management positions.	5.2.2.1 Lack of confidence/inferiority complex. 5.2.2.2 Lack of respect from subordinates. 5.2.2.3 Physical challenges 5.2.2.4 Work overload 5.2.2.5 Role conflict 5.2.2.6 Too high expectations from society 5.2.2.7 Negative attitudes from society

## 5.2.1 Data Presentation

### 5.2.1.1 The existence of the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions

The data gathered from participants through individual interviews and focus group discussions shows the existence the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South. The policy is anchored on the Constitution of Zimbabwe and the National Gender Policy and has revolved over the years from inception in the 1990s to the present day. The details are provided below.

#### 5.2.1.1.1 The Policy

The Head of school (no 14) confirmed the existence the policy by saying;

*Yes there is a policy on the accelerated promotion of women to senior educational management positions. It was introduced in 1995. During that time female teachers were being promoted to the position of Deputy Head even before they had gone through their probation period. Senior lady teachers were promoted to the position of Head of school. But you see with gentlemen they did not do that, but of late I think merit has become the basis of promotion for both women and men. The government is saying that both men and women should have the requisite qualifications to be promoted (IT/ HoS14-intv no 42).*

The above response shows that women's accelerated promotion to Deputy Heads and Heads of schools began in 1995 where probationers were taken from the classroom and promoted to Deputy Heads while senior lady teachers were promoted to Heads of schools at the expense of men. The Head of school (no 8) concurred with the above response thus:

*... At its inception, it was a matter of taking a woman out of the classroom and straight to an administrative position, some without having been interviewed. I remember when I left my former station it was in 1995 when the policy started and women were coming straight from the classroom into the office, no interviews, no induction, they just started working. I was a victim of that situation, I was actually an acting head and then one lady just came to take over and I had to move on (IT/ HoS8-intv no 19).*

Head of school (no15) who had also experienced the policy in action comprehensively elaborated;

*... let me first of all give the historical background to this policy ,the historical perspective began in the late 1980s to the 1990s when government made it a priority not only to achieve gender equality but also gender equity. Gender equity in the sense that there will be equal opportunities for men and women leaders in education. In that regard the government then made several policies through pronouncements and circulars, where the entry requirements were lowered for women to enter leadership positions in education, first as Deputy Heads then as Heads of Schools... I remember at some other time it was required for male applicants to leadership positions to have a minimum of four years of experience in teaching but for women it was lowered to about two years .There were a number of circulars, I cannot remember them off hand and most of them are now in the archives (IT/ HoS15-intv no 44).*

The Deputy Provincial Education Director (2) also affirmed the existence of policy on the accelerated promotion of women to senior educational management positions when he said,

*... That policy exists but nowadays there is no policy document to this policy but in the beginning in early 1990s there was a policy document referred to as G46. It outlined how women were to be aided to get promoted to educational management positions in order to achieve gender parity .It stipulated the quota for women in any list of promotion, and it stood at about 30-40 % by then .In view of this policy, a lot of women were promoted to educational management positions. (IT/ D/PED2-intv no 23).*

From the above response it is clear that from the early 1980s into the late 1990s the government of Zimbabwe had a documented Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to educational management positions. Chabaya et al (2009:237) posit that “in response to the persistence of gender disparity in decision making positions in Zimbabwe, the government introduced the gender Affirmative Action Policy in 1992. These measures were introduced through Public Service Commission Circulars No 11 of (1992), No 22 of (1996) No 1 of (1997)”. These policy circulars outlined how the deliberate promotion of women to senior educational management positions was supposed to be done. The above mentioned documents are in agreement with Ritzer (2008:466) who argue that “liberal feminists pursue change through law-legislation,

litigation and regulation and appeal to the human capacity for reasoned moral judgments...”

This policy was however strongly opposed by men who felt it disadvantaged them. Head of school (no11) substantiated the outcry from men *thus*;

*“... Gentlemen were crying foul saying those ladies who were superseding them were their juniors. The ground was no longer level for them but ladies were getting an upper hand and some gentlemen were saying they will wait until they were ladies in order to be promoted.”(IT/ HoS11-intv no 37).*

The men’s dissatisfaction of the policy as outlined above could have led to the policy metamorphosis from an effective policy of the past to the new and current one which is preferential and less effective. The current Affirmative Action Policy is aptly recorded in a chronicle newspaper article of Wednesday 25July 2014 headlined, “ Female civil servants shun promotions,” in which the Deputy Commissioner of the Civil Service Commission Steven Ngwenya said, *“in making promotions women are preferred to men in circumstances where both men and women would have scored equal points or had the same qualifications”*(Chronicle Wednesday 25 June 2014;pg 2). From the above statement it can be seen that the current policy is based on preference, that is, women are being preferred over men only in circumstances where the qualifications and interview scores are equal. This is evidence that the current practice is not deliberately in ‘favour ’of women as one would have thought.

One participant from a focus group discussion acknowledged the existence of the current Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to educational management positions thus, *“I think it’s a matter of preference, it’s preferential, woman are being preferred over men ( FGD no12/T3).*

But those who experienced the 1990s policy see the current policy as being as good as not being there. The Deputy Provincial Director of Education (no 2) in Matabeleland South had this say about the current policy;

*There are no concrete and documented policy but based on the constitution, the National Gender policy and the MGDs, the government has shown commitment*

*to the upliftment of women hence ,you will see that vacancy circulars carry a statement that, “Female candidates who qualify are encouraged to apply for posts”. It is this call that the Ministry is holding on to which carry the day for women because those women who qualify and go through interviews are guaranteed to get the post because it is the spirit of the ministry and the region to see women take up these posts”(IT/ D/PED2-intv no23).*

The Deputy Provincial Education Director (no 1) conquered with his counterpart by saying;

*... If you look at these adverts for posts, they will draw anybody’s attention to women having to apply; it says eligible women must apply. That is the way to try to encourage them to apply. That call is not for men but for women only, it is the females who are being encouraged to apply (IT/ D/PED1-intv no 20).*

On whether the policy was being headed by the target group or not, Head of school (no15) was of the opinion that it was not motivational enough when he said;

*...you see for any policy directive to succeed you need a lot of ratcheting of motivation around it, just a statement in a circular is not enough because there are many other issues that arise .There are cultural issues, women’s position in society, the family in the home as mothers and usually husbands are not supportive of the policy because of the cultural notion that says a woman’s place is in the home and I think that does affect women (IT/ HoS15-intv no 44).*

From the above responses I conclude that the government of Zimbabwe remains committed to achieve its constitutional mandate of achieving gender parity between men and women in decision making positions. The current policy however lacks the cutting edge to see women being promoted in large number as what happened with the previous policy directive. This is confirmed by Head of school (no15) who has the 1990s experience. He said:

*...my view is that we have regressed in that thrust in having more women in managerial positions in education. If you look at what happened in the 1990s and now, you can really feel and see that not so many women are getting promoted as they were in the past. There is no affirmative action pronouncements to the extent it was then and you do not see a lot of women coming through the thrust of Affirmative Action Policy (IT/HoS15-intv no 44).*

### 5.2.1.2 Documentation of the policy

In trying to consolidate my understanding of the current policy initiative I enquired from interviewees if there are any documents to this policy and the responses are outlined below. In fact no one affirmed to having seen the policy document for the current policy directive. The District Education Officer (no 2) said; *“We used to have them (documents) but now when they are advertising these leadership posts they simple say eligible women are advised to apply...”* (IT/ DEO2-intv no 41). Head of school (no9) also concurred with the DEO as not having seen the document thus; *“ I haven’t actually got my hands on it(policy document) except that we hear that we should support the emancipation of women in terms of accessing leadership positions, but otherwise I haven’t got my hands on the paper itself”(IT/HoS9-intv no21).*

From the above interviewees’ responses it is clear that there is no policy document in the province if not in the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education as a whole that clearly articulates how the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions should be done. There is only a statement on vacancy circulars which says, *“Female candidates who qualify are encouraged to apply for posts”*. It is a statement with a dead end in that it lacks detail, appeal, motivation and is accessed by only a privileged few teachers who happen to have access to these vacancy circulars .But for an ordinary teacher who has no access to vacancy circulars it remain unseen, yet it is intended to benefit the ordinary female teacher who unfortunately cannot easily access it (circular).This is evidenced by one focus group discussant who said; *“We have never seen the circular”* (FGD no 1/T4). Another participant from focus group discussion number 12 elaborately lamented the inaccessibility of vacancy circulars by saying;

*...most of these posts which are advertised generally you usually find out after people have been interviewed or when they are going for the interviews. You later hear of stories that in such and such posts no women applied but you rarely hear of the advertisements( FGD no 12/T5).*

While the absence of a policy document cannot be seen as the absence of a policy because policies can be pronounced without being documented. The presence of a

policy document would provide the necessary details for ease of policy implementation. The absence of a policy document therefore casts doubt on stakeholders' awareness of the policy; hence the sub theme below interrogates the issue of stakeholders' awareness of the existence of the policy.

### **5.2.1.3 Stakeholders' awareness of the policy**

The stakeholders referred to in this section are teachers, Heads and Deputy Heads of schools, Education Officers, District Education Officers and members of the provincial education directorate as major policy consumers and policy implementers in the Public Service Commission. Their views are presented below.

One focus group discussant indicated his unawareness of the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women by saying; *"It's just those speeches that we hear from newspapers about gender empowerment but on the ground like where are, I haven't seen any promotion of women to educational management positions by government"* (FGD no 13/T1). Another teacher from the same group concurred, *"I concur with the previous speaker, women here are promoted locally. They are just temporary in those positions done at the discretion of the Head of school but not directly by the government on gender lines. So in terms of policies we really do not know what is happening"* (FGD no13/T3).

Another indicator that stakeholders in the province are not conversant with the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions is indicated by stakeholders' reference a wrong policy like in the case below. *I actually notice that all universities requirements rather give women more opportunities than men because girls/ women are allowed to enroll with less points than boys and men that is what I am aware of. As to the promotion of women to educational management positions, I am not clear of what criteria is being used but I think there is a 50-50 chances for men and women* (FGD no10/T2).

In the same vein another focus group discussant professed her ignorance of the details of the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions when she said; *“We do not have the details about what it says, we only hear about this Affirmative Action Policy and we are not very sure about what it wants” (FGD no 6/T5).*

The above responses are an indicator that the intended beneficiaries are not informed about the details of the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions. One wonders how they can benefit from a policy they are not aware of. Similarly another response from Deputy Head of school (no 5) shows lack of awareness of this policy, when he responded;

*“...it has been said that women have been disadvantaged over a long period of time, so the policy wants to accelerate their promotion. For example at institutions of higher learning you find a boy getting into a programme with 12 points but for girls they say may be 10 points, so I think it’s ok...” (IT/D/HoS5- intv no 32).*

Another unconvincing response was given by Deputy Head of school (no 1) when she said:

*What I know are the Millennium Development Goals where one of the goals is to uplift the status of women, to put them in leadership positions. I hear that there is this policy of trying to advance women to leadership positions. I have never seen it (the policy document) I do not have the details (IT/D/HoS1- intv no14).*

All the above responses failed to articulate the policy on the accelerated promotion of women to educational management positions. The correct version of the policy was explained by the Deputy Commissioner of the Civil Service Mr Steven Ngwenya who said *“in making promotions women are preferred in circumstances where both men and women applicants would have scored equal points or had the same qualification” (Chronicle Wednesday 25 June 2014; pg 2).* This gives me the confidence to conclude this section by saying that stakeholders in Matabeleland South are not fully aware of the

policy on the accelerated promotion of women to senior educational management positions.

#### **5.2.1.4 Creation of opportunities for women advancement.**

The need for the Zimbabwe government to archive gender parity between men and women in decision-making positions led to the crafting and implementation of Affirmative Action Policy on the accelerated promotion of women to senior educational management positions .It is this study in general and this section in particular that tries to answer the question, “to what extent has the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions has addressed the plight of women in Matabeleland South region?” The interviewees gave their opinions below.

The Deputy Provincial Education Director (no 2) had this say about the policy;

*In view of this policy in the 1990s a lot of women were promoted to educational management positions .There was a time when the Secretary for education could not approve appointments without women included in the list. The idea was to promote as many women as possible (IT/D/PED2 intv no23).*

In the same vein the Head of school (no15) opined thus;

*In terms of the policy, there is not much that is happening as I have said. We do have women who are aspiring for those positions and they do get them but I think the policy is no creating opportunities for women; it is not assistive as it was sometime back. Perhaps what the government needs to do is to revisit that policy, re -pronounce it, give it new vigour and encourage women with the right qualifications and qualities to take up the positions (IT/HoS15- intv no 44).*

The above response shows that the current policy is not assistive; women who ascend to positions of authority do so unaided and out of their own effort. This is an indicator that the current Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to educational management positions in Matabeleland south region is not effective.

The Deputy Provincial Education Director (no 1) concurred with the above view by saying;

*... I am not sure how it advantages women but I was going to understand it better if it was saying that for every man promoted let's promote three women. I was going to say there is a way forward in covering the gap because the positions of the Deputy Head and the Head in school are largely dominated by men. It is true the gap won't close as long as women are being promoted on an equal basis with men, that is my opinion(IT/D/PED1-intv no 20).*

The fact that women are being promoted on the same basis with men in terms of qualifications, experience and interview score means that they are faced with stiff competition from men. This scenario is being seen as being unfair to women who have been disadvantaged over a long time. This is confirmed thus;

*I think it is not really fair because if we are saying same scores, same experience, same everything women are disadvantaged in a number of ways. There should be a special consideration for women like what happens with entry qualifications for the medicine degree at the University of Zimbabwe where male applicants are considered with 14 or 15 points while female applicants are considered with 12 or 13 points ( FGD no 3/T4).*

The above response reveals that the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions in force in Matabeleland South region is neither fair nor assistive to the cause of women. Chabaya et al (2009:238) argues that “ ... in Zimbabwe ,policies and legislation have been put in place designed to address the problem of women’s under-representation in positions of educational leadership ,yet gender inequalities persist.” The consensus among study participants is that not much has done in terms of achieving gender parity between men and women in educational management positions. They indicated that the current policy is ineffective in terms of creating opportunities for women advancement to educational management positions. As indicated earlier on women are only preferred over men in cases where a male and female candidate have the same qualifications, same experience and same interview score. This is in sharp contrast to the effective policy of the 1990s where a lot of women were promoted. It therefore goes without saying that women remain under –represented in educational management positions. This is confirmed by the section below.

### 5.2.1.5 Women's representation in leadership positions

On whether women's representation in senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South is equal to men, one participant had this to say;

*Not yet, women are still outnumbered by men, we still have very few women coming up to take these positions of authority. For example in our last interviews for Deputy Heads of secondary schools out of 35 candidates only 8 were women and the rest were men(IT/HRO- intv no 24).*

The Deputy Provincial Education Director (no 2) echoed the words of his Human Recourses Officer by commenting that;

*No, it is not, in fact we seem to have gone some steps backwards because the momentum and pace we had set had been lost. This could perhaps be due to some complaints from men who felt disadvantaged. If you look nowadays women are still underrepresented in educational management positions especially at secondary school education level. There are very few women Deputy Heads and Heads of secondary schools as compared to men. But if you look at the number of teachers in schools especially in urban centres, you will find that women outnumber men (IT/D/PED2-intv no23).*

The above response shows that the momentum of the 1990s has been lost and the gender gap between men and women in senior educational management positions remains wide open and in favour of men especially at secondary schools level. This compares well with the findings by Makombe and Geroy (2009 in Rutoro 2012:11) who argue that "while Zimbabwean women have penetrated the workforce, few women have gained access to senior management positions". The head of a school (no9) concurred with the Deputy Provincial Education Director (no 2) by saying that;

*I wouldn't say that the policy has made much of a difference because when I look at the number of Heads who are men vis-à-vis the number of women there is still a large gap. It is as if there is no direct policy that is directed at accelerating the promotion of women. It's unlike when you look at scholarships that are sometimes put up by Econet where girls qualify with 10 or 12 points, and then boys qualify with 16 points. When I see a kind of this practice in terms of promoting women I would be saying this policy is working (IT /HoS9-intv no 21).*

The interviewee acknowledges the existence of a big gender gap in senior educational management positions between men and women and bemoaned the lack of a deliberate and clear cut policy aimed at assisting women rise to leadership positions. He went further to provide an analogy of some of the known and clearly articulated Affirmative Action Policy by Econet Wireless to assist girls' access to scholarship funds without much competition from boys.

The Deputy Provincial Education Director (1) in the region sounded the words of the previous interviewee on the status of women's representation in leadership position by saying;

*For now the statistics show that the situation is heavily tilted in favour of men, perhaps it's because of where we are coming from. For example when you look at the post of the DEO, we have only 3 DEOs out of 8 in the province and nationally I doubt if we could have 20 out of 57 ... (IT/D/PED1-intv no 20).*

From the responses quoted above I conclude that women remain under represented in senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South. This has been largely due to lack of an effective Affirmative Action Policy that should redress the plight of women who have played second fiddle to men for a long time thus denying them equal opportunities with men. This point collaborates well with Peenar (2006:27)'s findings which indicate that "the implementation of affirmative action and equity legislation has not had the intended effects on most members of the designated groups as racial disparities still exist in the South African labour market". Similarly and more specifically Oyedele, Mamvuto and Nhiwatiwa (2010:171) argue that "in spite of the existing measures in many countries including Zimbabwe, women still face an up-hill struggle when it came to promotions to leadership positions". In spite of this gloomy picture painted by the above responses, the study participants indicated that the policy has some intended/positive effects on the target group.

#### **5.2.1.6 Intended effects of the policy**

The study wanted to find out whether the policy has some intended (positive) and unintended (negative) effects on stakeholders and this section is dedicated to that.

Firstly, focus is on the intended (positive) effects of the policy and later attention shifts to the unintended (negative) effects. The intended effects include; empowerment/upliftment/recognition, motivation for women; a means of gender equality, financial empowerment for women and that it is a source of motivation for women aspiring for senior educational management positions. The responses of the interviewees are provided below.

The Head of school (no15) indicated that the Affirmative Action Policy has some positive effects on women when he said;

*...it is a very positive thing because women in society also need recognition as men particularly if they have the relevant qualifications, experience and expertise. I think it is ok, what could be a problem in my opinion is that women are just being pushed into positions for the sake of being women because at the end of the day they would not be confident in those positions because the issues of qualifications and experience have not been met (IT/HoS15-intv no 44).*

The above interviewee views the Affirmative Action Policy on the accelerated advancement of women to senior educational management position as a worthwhile strategy of recognizing women in the same mould with men. He however advocates for the consideration of relevant qualifications, experience and expertise so as to promote confidence on those women who are promoted.

In the same vein the Head of school (no 9) had this to say on the positive effects of the policy;

*...it shows society the respect it accords to women, that they are equal to men. The policy is uplifting the women who have been down trodden since biblical times, belonging to the kitchen. Now it's time for society to recognize that women are as capable as men. Some women have distinguished themselves in the army, in the police and even among us as heads of schools... (IT/HoS9-intv no 21).*

The response above shows that the Affirmative Action Policy is a way in which society accords respect to women as equal to men, a way of uplifting them from the oppression they have suffered for a long time. Women are being recognised for their capabilities

which they have shown in the army, police force and even as heads of schools. This view positively correlates to the liberal feminist philosophy which “asserts that equality of male and female is possible through political and legal reforms” (Naz, Ibrahim and Ahmad, 2012:166).

In addition to the above points the policy is seen as motivating women to participate in societal realms of their society’s affairs as well as in taking up public offices. This is confirmed by Deputy Head of school (no 4) thus,

*“I think it’s quite motivating in that it allows women to be recognized in society, that they have something to contribute, it is actually bringing them out to participate in societal issues, I think it’s good”(IT/D/HoS4- intv no 22).*

On the aspect of motivation, the Deputy Provincial Education Director (no 1) had this to say:

*I think it motivates women because they see their women folk occupying positions of authority and of course those who are intrinsically motivated will try to aspire those posts of educational management hence they would apply when the posts are announced(IT/D/PED1- intv no 20).*

From the above information it can be added that women promoted under the Affirmative Action Policy act as role models for those aspiring to occupy senior educational management positions. Those women aspiring for leadership positions will believe that if other women can do it what can stop them from occupying these positions as well, hence they will go for these positions when advertised.

The study participants also view the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions as a means of achieving gender equality. This is revealed in the Head of school (no8)’s response as shown below.

*Actually the issue goes back to the last government, women were never given opportunities to rise and be equal to their male counterparts. That is why now the focus of the government is to redress that problem, after all we have same qualifications,*

*similar training, similar experience but then when it came to promotion men were given first priority (IT/HoS8-intv no; 19).*

The above words show that the Affirmative Action Policy is seen as a compensatory measure for women who have been disadvantaged by the previous government in it occupying senior management positions which were a preserve of the males at the expense of the females.

From a focus group discussion one participant acknowledged the positive effects of the affirmative action policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions as a way of harnessing the intelligence of women by saying;

*"...the other positive thing is that the intelligence of women has not been fully exploited because we had this barrier which did not allow women to rise but this policy has shown that women are also capable like men" (FGD no 4/T6).*

It therefore means that by sidelining women in promoting officers to decision making positions, society is in fact denying itself the benefit of using some of its intelligent women. Head of school (no 5) echoed the same sentiment to those of the focus group participant thus,

*... Women can now sit and debate issues with men and their views are being accepted. In some instances their views outweigh those of their male counterparts, ...it really assists because women are now at par with men , even at the work place no one is looking down upon a colleague, we are all the same(IT/HoS5-intv no 9).*

This policy has brought relief to women since they are now equal to their male counterparts in as far as participating in public life and holding public offices are concerned. Women can now sit and discuss matters of public interest with their male counterparts on an equal footing and at times their views even outweigh those of their male counterparts. Mugweni (2011:92) posit that "when women assume leadership positions ,society can benefit a lot since it can shift from seeing women and girls as second class citizens to people who are equal to men, who can equally contribute to

the development of their country.” This therefore means that the Affirmative Action Policy has a positive effect of achieving gender equality between men and women.

The fact that women are now at par with men and can access positions of authority means that they can now also get the financial privileges which used to be the preserve of men only. A study participant from focus group discussion number 6 explains the financial benefits to women when she said;

*The positive effect of this policy is that women get empowered economically. When a woman assumes a position of leadership her salary rises, with this improved salary she is able to cater for her needs and those of her family and I also see some form of achievement which leads to respect from society ( FGD no 6/T4).*

The above view is a testimony of the fact that the Affirmative Action Policy is a medium of gender equality as women in educational management positions earn the same salaries with their male counterparts occupying similar positions with the same qualifications and experience. This point concurs with Peenar (2006:25)’s finding which says “it appears that White females have made the most gains in this period (e.g. growth of 30%) followed by Black females (18, 6%) and then Black males (18, 4%).all previously disadvantaged groups gained on White men in terms of their earnings”. It should however be noted that unlike in the Zimbabwean case the Affirmative Action Policy in the South African situation did not equalize the salaries for both sexes and races.

The study participants view the Affirmative Action Policy in a positive manner in that it is motivating women to apply for educational management post. This is evidenced by Head of school (no 5) thus;

*It is giving advantages to women in that it motivates them to apply for leadership positions. We used to look down upon ourselves thinking that whatever challenging work is there it can only be done by men. But now we are free to apply for these posts, to share our views with our male counterparts and they are accepted with respect. (IT/HoS5-intv no9).*

Based on the above response I conclude that women now feel motivated to apply for senior educational management positions. They feel encouraged by the existence of the Affirmative Action Policy and those women who have been promoted through it. The policy has created a platform for women to be motivated, recognized, respected and accepted on an equal footing with their male counterparts in terms of occupying leadership positions. The women who have been promoted act as role models and possibly as mentors of those aspiring to be promoted to these positions. In contrast to this view Rutoro (2012:10) says “in 2007 according to information obtained in Masvingo District Education offices, there were 36 substantive education officers in Masvingo province of whom 29(80%) were men and 7(20%) were female.” This shows that while it is believed that the Affirmative Action Policy inspires women to take up educational management positions, in some cases women do not take advantages of such policies.

#### **5.2.1.7 Unintended effects of the policy**

The study sought to find out whether the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions has some unintended/negative effects on stakeholders or not. The study participants indicated that this policy is plagued with challenges especially the 1990s version where gender was the defacto qualification for promotion. These unintended effects include; discrimination against men, promotion of incompetent officers, creation of conflict between men and women at work and has a labeling effect on women leaders. The views of the participants are detailed below.

One participant from a focus group discussion indicated that the policy discriminates against men by saying;

*“It disadvantages men with the right qualifications, experience and the qualities than women who are given the position simply on the basis of gender balance” (FGD no12/T2).*

The above concern is echoed by a participant from focus group discussion number 7 who said;

*...in trying to compensate women you will find that in 10 or 15 years to come we may find men in a similar situation saying that they have been disadvantaged. You will also remember that some time back the ratio of women to men in positions of authority women were far less than men. So if this policy continues without checks in the long run we may be forced to have an affirmative action policy for men, trying to compensate for this period (FGD no 7/T4).*

The two responses above indicate that men with the right qualifications, experience and qualities are being left out and the expense of less qualified and less experienced women. Secondly the participants warn that if the policy is not time framed in the future a reverse policy may be needed to compensate men who are not benefiting at the moment. This compares well with Peenar(2006:30)'s position who posit that "individuals that hold negative views of affirmative action as a result of the fact that they believe it leads to "reverse discrimination and unwarranted preferences", view the process as being nothing less than yet another form of discrimination". Equally important is the view that incompetent people are promoted at the expense of the desired ones; this assertion is explored in the section below. The District Education Officer (no 2) sees the weakness in promoting women to educational management positions on the strength of the Affirmative Action Policy as outlined below;

*Yes we are trying to fast track the promotion of women because they have been neglected for too long and they must be given special preference .But at times we need to consider qualities we are looking for when it comes to a post, not to say because at least we need a woman then we promote a woman. The moment we do this we end up compromising leadership in our institutions because we are just taking someone because of the sex, but later she may fail to perform. (IT/DEO2- intv no 41).*

The words of the District Education Officer above show that it is detrimental to promote officers to public offices strictly on sex lines as this neglect some important leadership ingredients. This fact is confirmed by Sadie (2005 in Kiamba 2008) who says "it has been argued that such strategies violate the principles of fairness and competence and contribute to a culture of laxity in women". The promotion of officers to senior educational management positions simply on the basis of sex comes with dangers as is shown in the words of focus group discussant who said;

Similarly and in a more comprehensive manner, another focused group discussant said; *The promotion of women based on such policies compromises the experience that is needed in such positions. Women in general are less experienced than men and if they say women are encouraged, they are compromising on the quality of the person they are going to promote. To some extent men are being left out in these positions, at the end of the day the selection is not competitive because of the selection criteria that is biased towards women who may have lower qualifications than men (FGD no13/T5).*

The advice from the above participants is that in addition to sex, considerations such as experience, seniority and qualifications should be added so that the person who is finally promoted has the correct and balanced leadership attributes and credentials. This agrees with Idasa (1995) cited in Peenar (2006) who says,

“The application of affirmative action raises the question of whether race or gender is being substituted for merit, which refers to qualifications and experience”.

Similarly, Head of school (no 9) explains the negative effects of the Affirmative Action on the promotion of women to educational management positions by saying;

*The negative impact is that if you know of sport where they talk about a quota system in a bid to try and promote those who have been down trodden for a long time; sometimes you even reach a situation where you can even promote mediocrity at the expense of talent. That generally creates a negative effect in that you are saying you are promoting women for the sake of being women (IT /HoS9-intv 21).*

The above interviewee sees the Affirmative Action Policy in the light of a quota system which is not based on merit but simply to fulfill a requirement as specified in the policy which however has more demerits than merits. In this light Peenar (2006:36) says:

“The issue of quota-system or the use of quotas in furthering affirmative action targets is strongly related to the reverse racism, merit debate, tokenism and drop in standards debates and emerges as another highly sensitive topic whenever attitudes towards

affirmative action programmes are discussed and explored. This leads to a drop in work and performance standards as merit is substituted by gender.”

The issues of qualifications, seniority, and the relevant leadership qualities are seen as paramount in promoting the right personnel, hence Head of school(no6) argued that;

*Many women were promoted not necessarily that they had the right leadership qualities and they are finding it difficult to administer schools .Some of them are juniors who were promoted following the enactment of the policy and some of them are finding it difficult to lead people who are more senior to them, they are very- very junior in terms of their experience... (IT/HoS6-intv no 17).*

The above interviewee calls for the women’s promotion to be based on relevant experience so that the officers promoted do not find themselves with the task of leading more experienced men and women who are bound to challenge their leadership styles and abilities.

Another negative aspect of the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management position was highlighted by a head of school (no 8) who said;

*... The other thing is that women naturally are said to be the fairer sex, they fail to oversee or supervise their male counterparts. There is always that frictional atmosphere as men take their commands with a pinch of salt... (IT/HoS8-intv no 19).*

The above response shows that women in educational management positions do not command respect from their male subordinates. This creates conflict between the super ordinate and their subordinates. To this end, (Buzzanell 1995, Kimmel, 2004 and Mark, 1981 in Nan-chi Tiao (2006:20) contend that “since work has traditionally been the centre of the men’s lives, women who are trying to expand their boundaries by working in historically “men’s fields” will be perceived as a threat to men and, thus, will face scrutiny and resistance”. This is however in contrast with the liberal feminist theory which “focus on the eradication of institutional bias and implementation of gender-balanced laws”(Naz et al 2012:166) Besides facing resistance from men women in educational management positions are also labelled in various names.

Participants indicated that women who embrace the policy of gender equality are viewed with scorn as the words of a focus group discussant reveal;

*I want to say that the policy of gender equality between men and women was just introduced without enough consultation and education. A lot of women see it as an alien idea and do not practice it and those who are into it are seen as feminists. It impacts negatively on marriages and divorces are now prevalent as women see themselves as more powerful than men, have the positions, own money and own the children ( FGD no 9/T6).*

The above view indicates that women never got the correct orientation when issues of gender equality and the Affirmative Action Policy in particular were introduced because the majority of African women do not partake into such policies .Those who subscribe to these ideas are labelled as feminists who would want to act outside African traditional values run the risk of losing their marriages. In view of this point Chipunza (2003:5) posit that:

“Men, it has been observed, readily refer to the highest ranking women as ‘token’, supposing that they were in their positions, not because they are competent, but because they are ‘equity flagships’. Often, it has been charged that successful women got to where they are by ‘fluttering their eyelashes’ at male superiors.”

In addition to women being labeled this policy is believed to expose women to sexual exploitation. One focused group discussant had this to say about sexual exploitation of women by men in positions;

*“In Zimbabwe nowadays corruption is rife, to get service you have to pay and for women to be considered for promotion they have to offer sexual favours to men who are in positions of authority and responsible for promotion” (FGD no 2/T4).*

The above view shows that the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions in Matabeleland south exposes women to sexual exploitation .They have to offer sexual favours in exchange to appointment to educational management positions. Maphosa and Mugabe (2013:7) refer to this practice as “as Quid pro quo-something for something”.

## 5.2.2 Barriers for women advancement to senior educational management positions

In this study I also explored the social, cultural and attitudinal factors which impinge on the implementation of the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South region. The views of the interviewees are detailed below subsection by subsection.

### 5.2.2.1 Poor working conditions

Poor working conditions are cited as a deterrent factor for women advancement to senior educational management positions thus;

*... in line with this policy, the other factor is on remuneration, because currently the salary of a Head of school is not much different from that of a teacher considering the hardships one has to endure like the distance to be walked especially in remote places. It is really not motivating to take up these posts. I may have the right qualifications but for me to abandon my current post for a school in the remote areas, it's not appealing (FGD no13/T1).*

The above view is that women are not motivated to take up senior educational management positions especially in rural areas where conditions are difficult because of meagre financial gains. The above view is further elaborated by Head of school (no 4) who postulated that;

*What make women not want these senior educational management positions is the low financial rewards. As you can see, as the head of a school, it's just the position I hold without money. The difference between me and my juniors is US\$10.00 or US\$5.00 but I have a lot of responsibilities which include writing reports and other administrative duties. This is the reason why women are not keen to take these positions, in the past it was better (IT/HoS4 –intv no 5).*

From the above scenario it is clear that women do not take up senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South region because of low financial gains. It is probable that until such a time when financial gains of Heads of schools and other educational managers are meaningfully increased those women will be interested in taking them up. This point positively correlates with Mugweni et al(2011:92 )'s finding

who postulate that " those who were not willing to take up leadership posts gave the following views :remuneration does not tally with the amount of work load; leadership is too involving, lecturers need time to do personal duties, and some were very comfortable in current operation as mere lecturers". In the same vein Wangui (2012:30) says "according to Pont, Nusche and Moorman (2008), potential candidates are often hesitant to apply for the vacancy because of overburdened roles, insufficient preparation and training, limited career prospects and inadequate support and rewards." I conclude this point by saying that the financial gains associated with leadership positions do not entice women to apply for these positions. It has been argued that leadership positions require hard work; long hours which are stressful and a few women can withstand that.

### **5.2.2.2 Lack of family/spousal support/marriage**

Lack of family/spousal support and marriage are seen as impinging on the successful implementation of the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions. The Head of school (no11) remarked that;

*The other factor is that those women who are not married can take up these posts but for the married ones, marriage becomes a stumbling block .And from the grapevine people usually say that women use "bottom power" to rise. Then in such a scenario our culture makes it difficult for men to believe that their wives are being promoted on merit and on the basis of their qualifications and experience. (IT/HoS11-intv no 37).*

Marriage and suspicion from the spouse are deterrent factors for women to take up educational management positions. This fact corresponds well with Chabaya et al (2009:242)'s findings who argue that "it has also surfaced in the focus groups that women had problems in applying for headship posts because they needed to consult their husbands before applying. If a husband does not approve, then she will not apply." In the same vein Oplatka (2006:614) contend that"...Kenyan women cannot take managerial posts because of the travel time involved. Likewise, heavy domestic responsibilities and husband's resistance were identified by both male and female

teachers in Kenya as barriers to career advancement". Marriage was also mentioned by another participant who postulate that;

*... the other thing could be marriage, these senior management jobs sometimes demand much of your attention and at the same time at home your attention is needed 24/7. At the same time, you will be needed at work to attend workshops far away from home like in Harare and your children and the husband may end up complaining .At the end, the women resolve to remain just teachers in order to dismiss at 1 o'clock then go home to attend to family demands (FGD no 12/T6).*

The point above is that women are needed at household level full time to attend to children, the husband and other household responsibilities. Oplatka (2006:614) concurs thus, "in the traditional societies, women are expected to be responsible for their families, including remaining close to their children, the husband, and the extended family." This makes it very difficult for married women to take up an administration posts which equally need their attention full time. This results in a clash of interest between home and work commitments. I cap this sub section with the views of the Head of school (no 6) who said;

*"...the other factor could be the marriage, marriage could hinder one from rising, if one is married to a man who does not support nor encourage his wife to apply for leadership position, he will not allow her to apply or to rise ..." (IT/HoS6- intv no 17).*

This view links well with Rutoro (2012:67)'s argument that; "some husbands hinder their wife's career development and some husbands are not supportive of their wife's career development as their self-esteem is lowered if a wife is better than them professionally". I conclude this sub section by noting that marriages, lack of family and spousal support hinder women from taking up educational management positions. This point relates positively with the one on family commitments/demands which is examined below.

### **5.2.2.3 Family commitments/demands**

Family demands are viewed as a barrier for women advancement to educational management positions. One study participant indicated that;

*Once in a leadership position there is need to spend more time at work, sometimes till late in the evening. At times one goes for business trips, as a married woman the husband may not feel ok when for example the wife goes on weeklong business trips, or workshops. During that time there will be a big gap at home; this becomes a challenge which limits women's desire to take up these positions (FGD no9/T3).*

Another participant said;

*"Let us look at my case, I am employed and I have been forced to bring with me the child here yet the father of the child is self-employed" (FDG no 3/T4).*

The old saying that 'a woman's place is in the kitchen' though oppressive on its own cannot be ignored as the views above indicate. In the same vein Jones(1993;Kimmel, 2004; Mark, 1981; Witmer,1995 in Nan-chi Tiao (2006:39) observe that, "although women today can pursue their own careers, they are still expected to put their families first because no matter how good they are at the work place home is still "their" primary job." This view is complemented by the views of Human Resources Officer at the provincial office, who said,

*"... Married women fear that if they apply they could be separated from their families, hence they value their families most, this is really one of the most hindrances for women in taking up these posts..."(IT/HRO intv no 24).*

The need to preserve one's marriage, looking after children and the value women attach to their families hinder them from taking up these senior educational management positions. Barmao (2013:44) affirms to this point thus, "the dual role of women in the families as mothers and wives contributes greatly towards their career progression. Women are principally responsible for work associated with production and maintenance of the family like child care and controlling other assets in the family." Besides the above mentioned points women are seen as harbouring no leadership ambitions. This point is presented in details below.

#### **5.2.2.4 Lack of leadership ambitions/low self-esteem/low self confidence**

The implementation of the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions is being hampered by women's lack of

leadership ambitions. The Head of school (no13) had this to say on women's lack of leadership ambitions to educational management positions;

*Women lack the correct information about the existence of the policies which favour them. They also do not trust themselves that they can deliver (lack of confidence). The other thing is that naturally women are not adventurous as compared to men, hence they see administrative positions as belonging to men (IT/HoS13- intv no 40).*

In the same vein Head of school (no14) acknowledged that;

*Traditionally women are not very much willing to take up positions as far as educational management is concerned. They feel there are lots of challenges but of late I think it's becoming better but the trend has been that women have not been very much interested in taking up leadership positions(IT/HoS14-intv no 42).*

Women have been portrayed as a people without leadership ambitions as they view it as a men's domain. Secondly they lack the confidence to take up these positions. This view is shared by Oplatka(2006:608) who says, "women's under-representation in leadership positions may be attributed also to women 's own decision not to apply for promotion in education for a variety of reasons ,such as lack of necessary aspirations, lack of awareness of the promotion system and a lack of confidence that they will succeed...". These factors are also referred to as psychological factors which encompass, low self-esteem, low self -concept, fear of failure and lack of competitiveness. Still related to this opinion is that women are naturally not adventurous, this is indicated thus;

*“Women are not adventurous by nature and secondly they seem to be comfortable where they are especially those in urban centres. There is this fear that if I apply I may be appointed in remote schools, hence they are not forth coming” (IT/HRO/ intv no24).*

The above sections have shown that women do not take up senior educational management positions because they lack leadership ambitions; they lack the confidence because socially they have always known men to occupy these positions. Coleman (2004 cited in Chabaya et al 2012:240) acknowledges this fact thus; “in

surveys conducted in 1990s and in 2004 in the UK women were found to be more likely than men to refer to lack of confidence or their own perceived faults that stopped them thinking they could become school heads”. Women are by nature not adventurous hence they are not willing to take up leadership positions; they are content of being simple classroom practitioners and allow men to take up leadership positions. Besides the factors mentioned above women are also said to lack the relevant qualifications to take these positions.

#### **5.2.2.5 Lack of relevant qualifications by women**

On lack of relevant qualifications the Head of school (no15) had this to say;

*I think one problem for women is access to higher education, women are largely baby seaters, looking after children, the family, and their jobs and do not find time for other things. This leaves them with little time for academic advancement .I have not done research but by casual looking at universities, I see more male students than female students. Naturally later in life there will be more men with higher educational degrees than women... (IT/ HoS15-intv no 44).*

The reason why women generally do not possess the requisite educational qualifications to take up senior educational management positions is due to their family responsibilities of baby seating .They also have the responsibility of taking care of the family in general and this leaves them with no time to academically advance themselves. Added to this factor is that women in general lack access to university education in comparison to men. Kagoda (2011:10) assert that “women lack the required postgraduate training and skills to compete for promotion and positions of leadership. Time to study, research and write is also rare for women”. In the same vein, the District Education Officer (no2) had this to say about women’s lack of educational qualifications and family responsibilities;

*...the challenge that we are facing is as follows:(1)the majority of our women lack some of the pre-requisite qualifications because they were left behind for too long a time, (2) secondly because of our culture ,women always want to stay with their husbands, so when they attain their first degree they think it’s enough. They do not want to study for second degrees and because of that when it comes to competition for posts women lose out easily (IT/DEO2-intv no41).*

The reason why women fail to compete favourably with men in terms of having the prerequisite educational qualifications is because they have been 'denied' access to higher education in the past. To this end Chipunza (2003:3) postulate that;

In Zimbabwe as elsewhere in Sub-Saharan Africa, the marginalisation of women has its roots in the school system itself that has, traditionally, treated the boy child differently from the girl child. Moreover, unequal access to secondary education in much of the Sub-Saharan Africa and, indeed, the rest of the developing world has severely disadvantaged women in their efforts to achieve professional advancement.

Culture played a very big part as it (culture) always tie women to the household chores including child bearing, child care and care of the husband. So in general the majority of women are in possession of inferior qualifications to men- first degree if not a diploma. The above point is consolidated by one study participant thus;

*...we are a group of 50 students and only 15 are ladies and 35 are men, so basically they might be hindered by the role they play at home. Some ladies, after qualifying as a teacher they get married, they may not be eager to acquire higher qualifications. They will just be content with what they have so I believe that is what contributes to the low numbers of ladies with the necessary qualifications to take up educational management positions (FGD no 12/T2).*

The example above shows the source of low numbers of women with the relevant educational qualifications because the majority of those enrolled at universities are men. Oplatka(2006:612) posit that "very low numbers of girls participating in primary and secondary education in many developing countries makes it less plausible for many women to be able to acquire skills, training and competencies necessary for professional and managerial positions in education". This situation is due to the demand for women to get married and raise families while men continue with schooling. Secondly women hold inferior educational qualifications to men because among other reasons they lack the initiative to take up studies after attaining a diploma in education if not a first degrees. Mugweni et al (2011:92.) concurs with this view thus, "in the traditional society fewer women had schooling opportunities, women have been

discriminated from a cultural and policy point of view and this has resulted in the system developing very few women to top leadership positions. On aggregate, women are less educated than men, and professionally, there are fewer females in universities..."Family responsibilities encompassing culture, dictate that marriage comes first hence women are disadvantaged in comparison to men and later in life they are found wanting when academic qualifications are needed. This practice however contradicts the liberal feminism which is "primarily concerned with giving equal and same opportunities to both men and women in education" (Daraz, 2012 and Naz, 2011 cited in Naz 2012:166) Culture as a barrier to women's advancement to senior educational management positions is treated in the section that follows.

#### **5.2.2.6 Cultural factors and the socialization of the girl child/women**

The information gathered from the participants indicates that the implementation of the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions is being hampered by cultural factors and the general socialisation of the girl child. The District Education Officer (no 2) explained it thus;

*... because of our culture women have to be at home always, but for one to become a district head (DEO) you have to be somebody who must be exposed to a number of things. You move a lot, at times being away from home for a week or two just doing work business .Women are afraid that when they go for too long without coming home they will find the husband having been taken over by the house girl. So they normally would want to be very close to their husbands and to monitor what the children are doing. Generally women have their children at heart more than men; they do not want to be away from their children for a long period of time at the expense of work. So generally women tend to shun some of these posts because of those challenges (IT/DEO2-intv no 41).*

The culture of the people in the region make women remain at home taking care of the children , the husband and the general house hold chores rather than being at work- away from home for a long time. Barmao (2013:43) argue that "most respondents argued that headship responsibilities require time which is limited for women because of the role they play in the family, hence marriage and motherhood has been seen to slow down the process of career advancement among them." In addition to culture, religious

beliefs do contribute to barriers faced by women who want to take up educational management positions. One focus group discussant had this to say;

*Culturally women who want to take up positions of authority have challenges because Christians believe that initially a man was created from dust in the image of God. Then a woman was created from a man's rib, this therefore makes a woman a very good advisor to a man and not an equal...Let us also take a look at this example of a female chief in the locality, she had difficulties in taking that chieftainship because she is a woman. The community did not want her but it only became possible because she was the only child to be considered (FGD no 9/T1)*

Women find it difficult to compete with men in taking up educational management positions because of both traditional practices and religious beliefs which accord less status to women than men because women were created from the rib of men. This makes them less equal to men hence can only be advisors to men. The same view was raised by another teacher from focus group discussion number 9 who said;

*Culturally when we look at African societies, parents always favour educating boys than girls especially for those families which are not enlightened. In the long run women are disadvantaged when qualifications are needed later in life. Some parents still believe that educating a girl is a waste of money and resources since she would get married and transfer the wealth to the other family (FGD no 9/T5).*

Generally the girl child has not been given equal access to education like the boy child among the African communities, hence when qualifications are needed later in life women find themselves disadvantaged. This is called son preference and UNESCO (2003 in Ncube 2013:8) reports “ that countries in North Africa, the Middle East, South Asia [Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh] and East Asia [China, Republic of Korea] communities exhibit a strong cultural preference for sons”. The words of the Human Resources Officer in the region aptly denote this practice thus;

*...in terms of cultural beliefs and traditional practices women are accorded less status to men and as they grow up they are treated as minors. Their roles are geared towards domestic chores in the family, to take care of the husband, the children and the family property while men are socialized to take up challenging posts in managerial positions. Even if you look at their treatment during school*

*days, generally women are not given first choice to boys. When resources are not enough they are last to get into school the first to drop out of school while boys remain in school (IT/HRO-intv no 24).*

From the above words it is clear that both the home and the school combine to suppress women from taking up decision making positions because in the home women/girls are accorded less status than men/boys .Dorsey(1996) cited in Chabaya et al(2013:239)explains that “from an early age daughters are groomed for their marriage roles of wives, mother and food provider...and they are conditioned from an early age to believe that a woman is inferior to a man and that her place is in the home. They are socialized to see themselves as less equal to men”. This practice is perpetrated by the school system which fails to create leadership ambitions in women but consolidate what the home has done to them.

The patriarchal system of communities in Matabeleland South are seen as hampering the successful implementation of the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior education management positions. The head of school (no 8) had this to say in respect to the patriarchal system;

*Our societies are patriarchal in nature, the woman’s place naturally is in the kitchen, and women naturally are prepared to be subservient to men, to take instructions from men while men are prepared for leadership positions (IT/HoS8-intv no 19).*

The above interviewee’s opinion shows that women remain ‘trapped ‘in the kitchen/home due to the patriarchal nature of African societies which prepares women to be subservient to men. This point compares well with Rutoro (2009:80)’s assertion that African beliefs and traditional systems;

"Devalue, degrade and dehumanize women. Their socialisation has made them subordinate to male, silenced them in the home and the society, and led them to think that their role is to support their husband's development and not their own. They have been stereotyped as weak, immature, thoughtless, always children, indecisive, subservient, and passive and dependent on males on everything."

This is seen as a barrier to women's advancement to leadership positions as they are made to believe that their place is in the kitchen while leadership positions are for men. Dorsey (1996) in Chabaya et al (2009:245) confirms this point thus, "a girl is conditioned to believe that women are inferior to men, that her place is in the home and that she is therefore there to be seen and not to be heard"

The African traditional set-up including marriage confine women to the home at the expense of taking up leadership roles. Chabaya et al (2009:239) observes that:

Family attachment was found to be the most major reason why women teachers did not apply for school headship positions, women were found not prepared to take up positions away from their husbands and children. In fact given a choice between career advancement in places away from the family and staying with one's family, most women appeared to prefer the latter.

In the same vein Khumalo (2006:13) provides the cultural/traditional beliefs about men and women's leadership characteristics thus, "men should lead and women should follow; men are more intelligent than women are; men should not be instructed by women; a woman's place is in the kitchen; women are not made to lead but to be led and that the family suffers if a the woman concentrates on her career." This has resulted in men taking up leadership positions without much challenge from women. Consequently this has seen men dominating promotion/ selection boards, a situation that is viewed as a barrier for women to ascend to leadership positions. However Naz et al (2012:166) argues that:

The philosophy of liberalism as argued by Ritzer (2000) express that women may claim equality with men and augment that gender inequality is a result of patriarchal and sexist patterning of division of labour, and that gender equality can be produced by transforming division of labour through re-patterning of key institutions-law, work ,family ,education and media.

### **5.2.2.7 Domination of selection/promotion boards by men and other organizational factors**

The under-representation of women in decision making positions has led to the domination of selection/promotion boards by men to the disadvantage of women who want to take up positions of authority. The experiences of the interviewees confirm this assertion. This factor is explained by the Head of school (no 4) thus;

*... many women occupy school based positions like the Head and Deputy Head, but when you move upwards to positions of EO and DEO there are very few women in those positions because they are very demanding. You have to be on duty always as compared to the position of Head and Deputy Head. If I were to be asked to move into one of these positions I would refuse because in those positions you are expected to be on duty even on Christmas day... (IT/HoS4- intv no 5).*

One teacher from a focus group discussion blames the school in poor information dissemination of vacancy circulars as a factor thus;

*The other thing is that vacancy circulars come to schools but we are not made aware of such circulars. Ladies are not approached ,we are not even aware of what the policy says and all that, so in the end women remain behind while their male counterparts take these leadership positions( FGD no 1/T3)*

The above scenario agrees with Kagoda (2011:9) s view that says:

There are structural/institutional barriers that create an uneven playing field for women and hinder their progress. For example, there are obstacles in the organisation's policies, practices, process and procedures. These include the patriarchal organisational culture, unclear allocation of the staff development fund, limited sharing on study research and publishing opportunities”

The Deputy Head of school (no4) had this to say about the composition of the interview panel she faced;

*...those who were interviewing us ,there was one lady and two gentlemen, there was another gentlemen who was an observer and a lady who was taking minutes ,so in the room there were two ladies and four gentlemen(IT/D/HoS4-intv no 22).*

The interview panel described above was composed of more men than women, a factor that could affect the performance of women candidates. The Head of school (no 1) agrees with the previous one on the composition of the interview panel when he says;

*“There were more males, in fact all of the ten were males except the Human Resources Officer, and I was encouraged” (IT/HoS1-intv no1).*

This male interviewee felt comfortable to find himself before a panel that was dominated by men at the expense of women. This could have worked to his favour; contrarily the Deputy Head of school (no3) expressed her discomfort about the male dominated interview panels when she said;

*I wasn't comfortable but what made me feel comfortable was the way the interview was conducted, the chairman was so welcoming ,the welcome made me feel comfortable but otherwise I had that fear, saying why only these gentlemen (IT/D/HoS3-intv no 16).*

The domination of interview boards by men does not augur well with the policy of promoting gender equality between men and women as enshrined in the constitution of Zimbabwe. This is seen as a way of discriminating against women. Chabaya et al (2009:242) found that:

Some participants in the sample claimed that women were discriminated against and kept away from promotion by the education system just because they were women. They felt that discrimination was implicit in the organizational structure or in attitudes of those in authority. So in referring to the interview panels for headship posts, one interviewee stated that ‘panels of interviewers are mainly men and they are biased – those who appoint have a negative attitude towards female heads’.

In the same vein the Deputy Head of School (no2) describes the composition of the panel he faced thus;

*Fine, let me see ,right the panel consisted of 5 people ,there was one lady ,the Provincial Human Resources Officer Mrs. Ncube and the rest were gentlemen, Mr Gumbo from Public Service Commission , Mr.R.F.Ndlovu , Mr Changweshu, Mr Jamela and Mrs. Ncube was the only lady and the other lady was not part of the interview panel, that is Mrs. Mkandla. She was running errands to call the next interviewee, so I would say it was severely improperly constituted in terms of gender balance (IT /D/HoS2-intv no 15).*

The experiences of the candidates highlighted above show that in Matabeleland South region selection boards are highly dominated by men at the expense of women. This is likely to have a negative effect on women applicants. Oplatka (2006:613) argues that "...studies conducted in developing countries reveal a wide variety of discriminative behaviour towards women in educational administration. Male teachers are preferred by authorities to hold educational leadership positions....This is due to men's tendency to hire people who look, think and act like them. "Ballenger and Austin (2010:12) call this practice "a concept of similarity attraction based on the "good old boy network" composed of men only (men only club) where decisions on persons and positions are made and women are not invited or welcomed .These men share information that the females are not exposed to until after the fact". The few women cited in these selection boards performed menial functions like taking minutes or ushering in candidates to the interview. This is in bad spirit of gender equality between men and women as it is not encouraging women to apply for these posts. Furthermore party politics in Zimbabwe is seen as a factor that militates against the smooth implementation of the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions. **This element is covered below.**

#### **5.2.2.8 Polarisation of leadership positions in Zimbabwe.**

The polarisation of the leadership positions in Zimbabwe as a barrier to the smooth implementation of Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions is elaborated by Deputy Head of school (no2) thus;

*I think the system in Zimbabwe has become polarised because for one to become a head of a school one needs some political affiliation. Very few professional women in Zimbabwe would like to identify with a political party in order to get a leadership position because women in general do not like politics .I*

*have seen party politics playing a part in our system with those linked to the ruling party getting the recognition. Secondly there is corruption in Zimbabwe, in order for one to access a position, sexual favours have to be given to those in charge of promotion –the men. This become a barrier because the majority of women may not be politically affiliated and not willing to offer sexual favours hence may not apply for positions (IT/D/HoS2- intv no 15).*

From the above words it is clear that for one to be promoted to a decision making position political affiliation holds key. For those not supporting the ruling party may have fewer chances of being promoted, this is called politics of patronage. Secondly it is mentioned that for one to be considered for promotion, sexual favours have to be provided to those who are in charge of short listing, selection, and interviewing. In this regard Kagoda (2012:7) argues that “although in theory the merit principle is used to guide the selection of head teachers by the Teaching Service Commission, most positions are filled on the basis of trust and rapport and /or patronage”. This is really not in the interest of women, women are by nature not interested in politics and to offer sexual favours for exchange of management position could be demeaning to them. This becomes a barrier to women taking up senior education management positions, thus negatively affecting the implementation of the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions in Matabeleland south region.

### **5.2.3 Leadership qualities of Women**

One of the objectives of this study was to examine women’s leadership qualities in order to appreciate their abilities as public officers. The study participants indicated that women are less corrupt than men, women are hard workers and produce better results than men, they are patient and accommodative and they work according to procedure .On the other hand the study revealed that women are poor in making quality decisions, work on emotions, keep grudges, like gossiping and employ autocratic leadership styles-want their powers to be felt .I provide an outline of these qualities as opined by the participants below:

### 5.2.3.1 Women are less corrupt than men

Study participants indicated that women are less corrupt than men. This is revealed thus;

*...women are by nature less corrupt than men, and if you look at the schools that are run by ladies they are more successful in most instances than those that are run by men. When a lady says I want to do this, she means it and it will be done well and if you look at the statistics of those involved in corruption you will find that 70% are men (FGD no 13/T4)*

The above response shows that promoting women to educational management positions is a positive move as they do not indulge much in corrupt activities than their male counterparts.

### 5.2.3.2 Women are hard workers

In addition to the view that women are hardworking and run successful organisations, the District Education Officer (no3) concurs thus:

*...from the statistics, generally I would say women are better than men, they are perfectionist, they love their job because if you look at some of the schools being headed by women they have been excelling so well, in general women leave no stone unturned (IT/DEO3- no43).*

In the same vein the Head of school (no9) had this to say on women being hard workers;

*...I know some men who can deliver and some men who do not deliver. The same scenario applies to ladies but in my opinion ladies tend to be hard workers and respond better than men in terms of meeting deadlines and adhering to regulations, hence it helps them to become more efficient than us men... (IT/HoS9- intv 21).*

Besides being as good as men in delivering the desired results, women are seen as having an edge over men as they tend to be more efficient than men. They tend to positively respond to duty by meeting deadlines and adhering to regulations. This fact collaborates well with Cockburn (1991 in Chipunza 2003:5) who argues in favour of women in managerial positions by stating that,

Women are especially competent, diligent, industrious, and practical and would therefore make better managers because, ironically, their experience of running households, a role that has previously often been standing in the way of many a woman's career, is actually an asset in terms of managerial skills. In addition to being hardworking, women are also seen as being patient and accommodative to their clients/subordinates.

### **5.2.3.3 Women are patient and accommodative**

This quality is presented thus;

*Women are very understanding; they have that soft spot of understanding issues. They are considerate and want to address issues of staff welfare well unlike men who are aggressive, intolerant and do not want to consider a lot of environmental factors in order to solve a problem. Men are strict, women are very hard working, and they put maximum effort in their work (FGD no 9/T2).*

In addition to being hard working, women are seen as understanding, tolerant, not aggressive and not strict but carefully attend to staff welfare in a positive manner .Davies (1990 cited in Chipunza 2003:5) supports this view by claiming “that feminine styles of management, which more often than not include gentility, nurturing, and understanding qualities, are more accepting of differences than male styles”. In the same vein Oplatka (2006:614) posit that “women in educational management positions display the following attributes; gentleness, affectionate, loyal understanding, warmth, tolerant, stressed on team work above individual effort and aim to raise teachers' morale than demoralise them” These qualities make women better leaders than men who are seen as aggressive and intolerant .On the negative women are however viewed as poor in making quality decisions.

### **5.2.3.4 Women are poor in decision making**

One interviewee pointed this out thus;

*With men where there is need to take decisions, they take quality decisions but women do not take quality decisions. In most cases they do not want to involve subordinates in*

*decision making but end up consulting people from outside the workstation .They end up running the school from borrowed ideas, yet institutions should be run from ideas of the staff...When these borrowed ideas fail to work due to lack of staff support, the Head would want to intimidate the subordinates, which is wrong (FGD no2/T6).*

The study participants see women as incapable of making quality decision as compared to their male counterparts. This point compares well with Mapfumo et al (2007 in Makura 2012:208)who argue that “girls and women are portrayed as having a low self – esteem hence unable to tackle tasks demanding higher intellectual abilities thus reducing women’s ability to make informed choices.” This does not make them good candidates for senior educational management positions as educational managers occupy decision making positions hence they should be decisive. As a remedy to low self-esteem Kenway (1992 in Makura 2012:280) says “on this basis, liberal feminism seeks to alter those aspects of the school curriculum and culture which socialise girls in sex-typed ways by building their self-esteem and teaching them assertiveness through counselling.”

#### **5.2.3.5 Women work on emotions, keep grudges and like gossiping**

Furthermore study participants opined that women work on emotions, keep grudges and like gossiping. The evidence is shown below

*... women in leadership positions tend to go by what is written like she is using a manual and that is why they become emotional when teachers want to make suggestion on school governance to the female Head. It becomes difficult for her to accept the advice because she will think that you are undermining her authority but with men we can talk and understand each other (FGD no 11/T3).*

The participant’s opinion is that women tend to be emotional when suggestions are made emanating from the fact that they follow procedures to the letter thereby becoming rigid. This makes the running of an institution to be a one man show. The same opinion is revealed by another participant from the same focus group discussion who said;

*“In most cases when women are dealing with administrative issues they tend to be emotional instead of being professional in dealing with issues like men” (FGD no11/T1).*

Some women are said to become emotional when dealing with administrative issues instead of being professional like their male counterparts. This view is shared by the Head of school (no10) who said;

*...women tend to keep grudges especially against their female subordinates whom they ill-treat as a way of settling old scores. They want their powers felt as they always think that subordinates despise them. This could be due to inferiority complex, but I think they just need to be firm and fair to both male and female staff members (IT/ HoS10- intv no 35).*

Women in educational management positions are advised to be firm and fair when conducting their professional duties. They need to treat their subordinates equally unlike in cases where they ill-treat their female subordinates. This position is supported by Khumalo (2006:20)who posit “that women are generally seen as being unable to control their tempers ,throwing temper tantrums and are also seen as having attitudes such as keeping grudges and not easily forgiving and forgetting when hurt.”

### **Women employ autocratic leadership styles and want their powers to be felt**

Study participants indicated that women in educational leadership positions employ autocratic leadership styles in order to make their powers felt. The Deputy Head of school (no 5) had this to say;

*What I have discovered is that women in power want their powers to be felt; in the process they employ an autocratic leadership style that is one problem. Instead of wanting their powers to be felt, they should make their expectations known to everyone (IT/D/HoS5-intv no32).*

It has been noted that women leaders employ autocratic leadership styles due inferiority complex as Head of school (no 9) elaborated thus;

*...there seems to be that inferiority complex among women in leadership positions. They think that their subordinates despise them and they respond by*

*employing autocratic leadership styles in order to instil fear in their subordinates. Yet a mixture of autocracy, democracy and laissez-faire could be ideal in order to motivate staff members rather than keep them fearful and demotivated. (IT/HoS9-intv 21).*

Instead of women in senior education management positions being autocratic due to inferiority complex among other personal attributes they need to use a mixture of leadership styles depending on the situation at hand in order to get the trust and support of their subordinates. This view however contradicts Makura (2012:285 )'s findings which portray the qualities of women leaders thus; "the perception of the female sample through their personal narrations yielded that the Masvingo female school heads possessed the following strands of leadership: collaborative, instructional leaders, public relations officers and compassionate".

#### **5.2.4 Challenges faced by women in senior educational management positions**

The study sought to find out the challenges faced by women in senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South. The interviewees gave their views and experiences as outlined in the sections below.

##### **5.2.4.1 Lack of confidence/inferiority complex**

One of the challenges encountered by women in educational management positions in Matabeleland south region is lack of confidence or suffering from inferiority complex. This is confirmed by a focus group discussant who says;

*I think that women on their own have an inferiority complex, a woman would feel comfortable working with men, when it is another woman they feel other women are a threat to them .Let's take examples of women who were Heads here, they preferred to work with men than with other women, what is the point of working with men when you are a woman (FGD no12/T3).*

Women are said to be uncomfortable working with other women hence they prefer working with men. This could simple mean that women lack confidence in their positions, feel threatened to work with other women; hence they find comfort in working with men who could give them sound advice. This agrees with Owen and Todor (1993) cited in Okafor et al (2011:6718) who say; "past research results indicated a tendency to

describe female managers as less confident, less emotionally stable, less analytical, and less consistent and having poorer leadership abilities than male managers”. This makes women in general poor candidates for senior educational management positions.

#### **5.2.4.2 Lack of respect/support and resistance from subordinates (both male and female)**

Also related to the previous point, the Head of school (no15) had this to say on challenges faced by women in senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South region;

*...I think its common knowledge that women despise each other; they do not support each other. Some people have often spoken about a syndrome which they call PHD syndrome “pull her down” syndrome. There is so much gossip about each other and I think women find it more challenging superintending over other women than it is with men (IT/HoS15 intv no44).*

The above words express the challenge women in educational management positions encounter from their kith and kin (the women) who do not support each other. In the same light Head of school (no 3) had this to say about women being a challenge to women in leadership positions;

*...What I have noted is that women do not support other women, they are sort of jealousy. If you are in a position of authority and you are a woman, they will always talk bad about you, women do not support other women, and we have that problem. Even if you look at politics where people are supposed to vote, women will never vote for another woman, they would rather stand against a woman and support a man IT/HoS3-intv no 4).*

In as much as women are not supportive to women in leadership positions men are equally not supportive to women in leadership positions as well. The Deputy Provincial Educational Director (no1) describes men as also a challenge to women in educational management by saying;

*The challenges are very few; they range from subordinates who happen to be wild by not recognizing or acknowledging that they are being led by a woman. All this emanates from our culture which allows men to occupy leadership positions*

*ahead of women. But some ladies have acquitted themselves well by managing schools with high pass rates and others have managed to get the respect from the people they lead... (IT/D/PED1- intv no 20).*

The above challenge is centred on the cultural practices which see men as leaders ahead of women and the opposite is seen as a social anathema and a source of discord at work and at home. Burns (1979 cited in Tiao (2006:21) postulate that:

Over the centuries, femininity has been stereotyped as dependent, submissive and conforming, and hence women have been seen as lacking in leadership qualities. In some cultures in consequence women are cut off from power positions as well as from stepping stones and access routes that reach towards leadership....

This view is collaborated by the Deputy Head of school (no3) who said, *“The ladies have some challenges facing male members of the community and their colleagues who do not respect them.” (IT/D/HoS3-intv no 16).* Besides facing challenges from their subordinates, female senior educational managers also face disrespect from members of the greater community who are accustomed to men being in charge. To this end Chipunza (2003:2) contends that:

“... society encourages men and women to behave in specific ways according to its norms and regards and deviance as inappropriate and unacceptable ...Consequently, there is resentment when roles commonly held to be appropriate to one sex are assumed by members of another. This is especially true in education where some school headship positions are considered appropriate for one sex rather than the other”. In the same vein, Head of school (no3) mentioned men being a challenge to women Heads of schools when she said;

*“Sometimes you find that most men do not enjoy being led by a woman that is true. We have met such cases, you find that they resist and they would give problems at work, they would try to push you down because they do not want to be led by a woman” (IT/HoS3- intv no 4).*

Chipunza (2003:4) aptly describes men's attitudes to women leaders thus "the statement that 'a master should not serve under a mistress' ,continues to hold true in educational management , for attempts in Zimbabwe to introduce equal opportunities for all have been met with resistance from men".

Besides facing challenges from their subordinates and members of the greater community women in senior educational management positions also face physical challenges which are presented and examined below.

#### **5.2.4.3 Physical challenges (long distances in remote rural set ups, attacks from thieves/robbers)**

The challenges presented below are peculiar to those based in rural and remote areas. The District Education Officer (no 2) elaborated the challenges thus;

*...the challenges they are facing are in rural areas where we have schools in resettlement areas. There is no transport in these areas, men can walk as far as 17-20km to the district office but women cannot do that. Some of the schools like the ones I visited last week are very- very remote in the middle of the resettlement. These schools are prone to unwanted visitors, (the thieves especially gold panners). Even in trying to take the receipted money for banking in town, she would have to foot that long distance with the school funds, she can be robbed along the way but men can endure all that (IT/DEO2- intv no41).*

The interviewee mentioned the lack of transport where women have to walk long distances to get to the district office on school business including banking services. To this end Maphosa and Mugabe (2013:12)'s findings indicate "that life is very difficult in rural areas due to poor road networks, lack of healthy facilities, scarce sources of water and lack of electricity. Women avoid rural schools because they would make "mother – work" more difficult". There are also security concerns in the areas for female Heads of schools as they can be attacked by robbers looking for school finances they keep especially those schools in the vicinity of gold panning activities These issues really compromise the work of women in senior educational management positions as they have to rely on their male subordinates to attend meetings on their behalf yet men can

fit anywhere as long as a vacancy exists. In addition to the above challenges there are issues of work overload which are treated in the next section.

#### **5.2.4.4 Work overload**

Some of the interviewees indicated that there is too much work to be done by female educational managers'. The Head of school (no 5) expressed this challenge by saying;

*We can say we have got a challenge of being housewives and Heads of schools at the same time. So there is a lot of demand and pressure from home and at work. You have to attend workshops far away and for those who have husbands and children, at times it becomes a big challenge but we are trying to work within those challenges (IT/HoS5- intv no 9).*

The above words show that women who are in educational management positions face the challenge of being home and school managers at the same time. At home they have to take care of the children, the husbands and other household chores at the same time being in charge of educational institutions with their own demands. Khumalo (2006 27) argues that “women managers are confronted by double pressure from both home and work situations. Responsibilities which also need much time include child bearing and taking care of their husbands. In the morning women have to ensure that children have washed and also have to prepare food” In the same note Wangui(2012:30) argues that; “in many countries the men and women who run schools are overburdened ,underpaid and near retirement, and there are few people lining up for their jobs. The work is perceived by many potential candidates as undesirable and or/ impossible.” This brings pressure to women in charge of institutions. In the same vein, the Head of school(no1) said “*There is too much work, that is, work overload, those are the challenges at places of work*” (IT/HoS1- intv no1).The issue of home- work conflict has been identified as one of the most undoing to women aspiring to occupy educational management positions in Matabeleland South.

#### **5.2.4.5 Role conflict (work and home responsibilities)**

The Head of school (no 15) expressed the role conflict women in senior educational management positions face thus;

*...I think one of the things is that they cannot apply themselves fully to the task of administration ,I mean the married ones because they have a lot expected of them .There are also those cultural beliefs and attitudes where some males despise them This really compromise the work of women educational managers.... (IT/HoS15- intv no 44)*

The above response shows a host of challenges women encounter as senior educational managers, the family issues against work issues, male subordinates' resistance, cultural beliefs and attitudes as some of the challenges women face. The issue of role conflict is further elaborated by a focus group discussant by saying;

*When a woman is promoted there might be a role conflict because at times a woman cannot differentiate the role as a mother and the post she occupies at work .Drawing a line between these different places and responsibilities might be a problem, they may take the office home and the husband may feel it ( FGD no 12/T5)*

Furthermore, the above point is consolidated by the Education Officer (no 2) who said;

*“One point to make is that women should learn to separate their home duties from their office duties. They should not take their offices with them home, and at home they should submit themselves to their husbands” (IT/EO2- intv no 27).*

This point agrees with Nan-chi Tiao (2006:39)'s view which says; “for women who want both a career and family, balancing these two priorities becomes their biggest personal challenge...this is called home-work conflict”. On the same note Okafor et al(2011:6724) argue that “a good number of women have problems in juggling with roles as mothers, house wives ,home-makers and managers at work .The challenge of maintaining work/life balance when traced to time to meet their various commitments gets them frustrated and they feel trapped.” This becomes a threat to family set ups and marriages as women have always been subordinates of men at home who may not be comfortable with the women's divided attention.

#### **5.2.4.6 Too high expectations from society**

Women who occupy senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South are faced with too high expectations from society. This is confirmed thus;

*I think it is high time that society recognizes that women are as capable as men because there is this mentality that women are of a weaker sex and cannot lead men. When a woman is promoted to a position of authority people do so without trust and are always watching her, wishing her the worst. So that they would say I told you, what good can a woman do .So women need to take up this challenge to prove to society that they can do it the same way as men ( FGD no 13/T4).*

The comments from a focus group discussant above show that society sees women as weaker than men in terms of leadership abilities. When they are promoted to positions of authority a watchful eye is always kept on them scrutinizing their performance in order to prove the perception that women are incapable to lead educational institutions. In the same vein the same challenge was mentioned by another participant from focus group number 12 who said ; “ *Again you find that challenges arise when it is always said that what can you expect from a woman after all she was not promoted on merit meaning to say that the male dominance is still there...*” (FGD no12/T3).

The above views compare well with Kanjere ([www.emasa.co.za](http://www.emasa.co.za))’s findings that;

women have to convince men in their schools and surrounding communities that they are capable of leading, they have to work extra hard in their schools as compared to their male counterparts who are readily accepted in their communities and that they are scrutinised for what they wear especially if they are to address parent’s meetings. Still related to the above point women in senior educational management positions suffer from negative attitudes society accords them. The details to this challenge are discussed below.

#### **5.2.4.7 Negative attitudes from society**

The Head of school (no15) indicated that women in senior educational management positions are exposed to negative attitudes from society. His comment was;

*I will speak from the perspective of a rural community where I work .The rural communities are very conservative, they stick to their traditional beliefs and what I have seen is that they do accept women leaders but they do not accept them as they accept men. Men are sometimes domineering and they can impose*

*themselves on issues, but women are sometimes apologetic and communities view them as less equal to men so I think there is that attitude especially with the rural communities .When members of the community visit the schools even if the Head is a woman, they ask for the Headmaster, showing that they have always known the Head to be a man but not a woman (IT/HoS15-intv no 44).*

The above view shows that women do not enjoy the respect from communities they work in especially with the rural communities as men do. This point is in agreement with Nan-Chi Tiao (2006:37) view's which says "traditionally, "being a man" requires assertion, separation, control of an environment, competition and rationality, while "while being a woman" demands meekness, connection, cooperation, compassion and sensitivity". Women in charge of educational institutions are viewed as less equal to men. The Head of school (no12) raised the same challenge when she said;

*...women are being undermined by some of the women even some of the men they lead. In my case most of the teachers here are older than myself and they have gone through many male Heads because they started teaching long back, from the early 1980s. So they think male Heads are better than female heads when it comes to leadership abilities (IT/HoS12-intv no 38).*

The above interviewee gave her experience in which most of her subordinates are older and more senior than her in terms age and length of service. They have been exposed to male heads of schools than to female ones so she runs the risk of being despised and unaccepted. This view corresponds well with Kanjere ([www.emasa.co.za](http://www.emasa.co.za)) who found that "male educators find it difficult to submit to the authority of a woman and that female school principals do not get the support from other female colleagues who would also like to work with male leaders". In the same vein a focus group discussion number 9 sees culture as a source of challenges to women in senior educational management positions by saying;

*The other challenge is that culturally a woman is considered a minor all the time and should positively respond to the man's commands and directives but once she is in a position of authority and then starts to command men asking for this and that ,people do not understand ,they would prefer the opposite. It becomes a challenge because society would see this situation as abnormal because people are not used to such an arrangement where a woman presides over men (FGD no 9/T6)*

The women in senior educational management positions in Matabeleland south are a victim of cultural practices which see them as minors who should be subservient to men, hence the coming in of gender equality and gender equity measures are seen as a violation of cultural norms. These patriarchal cultural practices are a big challenge to women in management positions. Similarly a focus group discussant shares this view thus;

*... The major challenge that they are facing are stereotypes, the communities in which they serve have negative perceptions about women being Heads of schools. Our African traditional societies tend to look upon any woman in a position of authority with some degree of inferiority as compared to men. They are perceived as weak leaders whether it is true or not... (FGD no 4/T1).*

From the experiences and views of interviewees above, women in senior educational management positions encounter a host of challenges in carrying out their duties. One cannot be far from the truth to say they are not enjoying their positions because of lack of support from their subordinates as well as from the communities they serve.

### **5.3 MAIN FINDINGS**

In this section I provide a summary of the findings of the study based on the themes and sub themes derived from the data provided by study participants as outlined in table 5.2 above. The findings are in the context of the objectives of the study which sought to: evaluate the extent to which the Affirmative Action Policy on the accelerated promotion of women to senior educational management positions has achieved its intended objectives. Secondly it sought to examine the barriers encountered by lady teachers in accessing senior educational management positions, explore leadership qualities of women and analyse the challenges faced by women in senior educational management positions. Furthermore it aimed at assessing the gap between the policy intentions and policy output or outcomes; contribute knowledge to the discipline of research in the area of educational management and to develop a model that could be used for leadership development in women.

## **The existence of the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to educational management positions**

The study discovered that an Affirmative Action Policy meant to accelerate the promotion of women to senior educational management positions is in place in Matabeleland South. The study participants revealed that this policy was first enacted in the 1990s, pronounced through Public Service Commission Circulars No 11 of 1992, No 22 of 1997, and No 1 of 1997. This phase of the Affirmative Action Policy created many opportunities for women advancement to the positions of Head of school and Deputy of schools without competition from men. In fact female probationers were promoted to Deputy Head of schools while senior lady teachers were promoted to the Head of school position. The policy allowed women to supersede men in order to increase the numbers of women in leadership positions since they had been disadvantaged for a long time. These women became a source of inspiration to other women who aspired to ascend to educational management positions. The policy was however not supported by men who felt it discriminated against them.

The study learnt that men viewed this policy as a form of reverse discrimination and seriously campaigned against it leading to its reform. In contrast of the 1990 policy, the reformed policy does not out rightly favour women in as far accessing senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South is concerned. The policy allows men and women applicants for senior educational management positions to compete equally in terms of educational qualifications, work experience, the interview score and the performance appraisal rating. It is only when all these attributes are adjudged equal that a female candidate supersedes a male one. This version of the policy is seen as ineffective in comparison to the earlier version hence women remain under-represented in educational management positions.

It emerged that the policy is not documented in details but a statement encouraging women who qualify to apply is inserted on vacancy circulars. This strategy has been viewed as an ineffective way of communicating a policy directive to the target group hence the intended beneficiaries are not fully informed and as a result have not

benefited as intended. Ultimately the policy is viewed as ineffective in creating opportunities for women advancement to senior educational management positions. The policy is not protective of women aspiring for educational management positions as it allows men to compete with them on an equal basis. The net effect of this policy is that women have remained under-represented in educational management positions in Matabeleland South.

On whether the Affirmative Action Policy has achieved its intended intentions, the study revealed that to a lesser extent the policy has increased the number of women in senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South. It has also brought about recognition for women as equals to men (gender equality) and improved financial gains of women promoted to educational management positions. In addition to the point above women in educational management positions act as role models for aspiring female teachers to take up educational leadership positions. The study participants also indicated that society has benefited a lot by having women in educational management positions as many of them are generally less corrupt than men and are hardworking.

On the unintended effects of the Affirmative Action Policy the study established that it is being viewed as a new form of discrimination against men (reverse discrimination). The policy is therefore seen as a source of friction between men and women in the home and at the workplace with women leaders being the target of ridicule and abuse. The women in leadership positions are being viewed as less able hence are seen as mere placeholders (the idea of tokenism), as less competent people who are promoted only in the name of gender equality (labelling). This is claimed to bring about a reduction in performance standards. The other vice pointed out by study participants associated with this policy is that it has exposed women to sexual exploitation by men in charge of promotions in exchange for educational management positions.

### **Barriers for women advancement to senior educational management positions**

The study interrogated the barriers for women advancement to senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South and learnt that among other things

women do not take up these positions because of poor working conditions .It was further revealed that women shun leadership positions because they come with more work and more responsibilities which call for more sacrifices against poor remuneration. Participants indicated that the salary rise which comes with these positions is too little to motivate women to take up these positions.

Lack of family/spouse support and the general family commitments/demands hinder women from taking up educational management positions in Matabeleland South region. This is more severe for the married women who are still within the child bearing age and /or have young children to attend to including the husbands. The situation was said to be better for those who are not married and have grown up children. These are able to make independent decisions as opposed to those married who need the support/permission of the spouse to take up educational management positions.

The study discovered that personal/psychological barriers like lack of leadership ambitions, low self-esteem/low, and self- confidence act as barriers for women advancement to educational management positions. Those women who lowly rate themselves are very much unlikely to take up positions of authority; hence in comparison to men women are less keen to take up leadership positions due to low self-confidence and or lack leadership ambitions. These are some of the factors which explain why women remain under-represented in senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South.

Furthermore the study revealed that women possess low academic qualifications than men due to the fact that once women acquire a diploma in education or a first degree they do not further themselves especially those in marriage preferring to give chances to husbands and children. This is as a result of the long and entrenched tradition of affording more schooling chances to the boy than to the girl child and in some Asian cultures this is called 'son preference'. This point is strongly linked to the general socialisation of the girl child who is made to believe that she is a minor to men who are destined for leadership positions while she is prepared for a place in the kitchen. This is

the general gender stereotypes of patriarchal societies which view women as less able, socialized to be subservient and respectful to men, who should be seen but not heard and with no leadership ambitions. The study therefore learnt that women in Matabeleland South to a greater extent are a victim these patriarchal beliefs which view leadership as a preserve of men at the expense of women. This therefore frustrates the effective implementation of Affirmative Action Policy on women advancement to senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South

The study revealed that covert organizational factors such as the domination of selection/promotion boards by men do contribute to barriers for women advancement to senior educational management positions. It was indicated that in Matabeleland South, the majority of those who do the selection, short listing, interviewing and promoting candidates for senior educational management positions are men. Women participants in these processes perform menial functions such as secretarial and ushering duties. This is contrary to the spirit of gender equality and equity, instead it perpetuates gender inequity. The participants pointed out that the responsibilities which come with the movement to the upper echelons of the organization such as the District Education Officer to Provincial Education Director scare women away from taking up these positions as one has to forfeit some privileges such as school holidays which are enjoyed by those holding school based positions.

The study discovered that party politics acts as is a barrier to women advancement to senior educational management positions as politics of patronage has a big say on who should be promoted and who should not .It was made crystal clear that only those supporting the ruling party stand a chance to be promoted against those whose allegiance cannot be proven or is not with the ruling party. Corruption is also seen as being part of a barrage of factors which hinder women advancement to senior educational management positions as those responsible for promotions usually ask for kickbacks in exchange for promotion (something for something). This is said to contribute to women not wanting to venture into educational management positions for

fear of sexual exploitation especially for those women who want to keep their dignity intact.

### **Leadership qualities of Women**

It was also one of the objectives of this study to evaluate the leadership qualities of women in educational management positions in Matabeleland south region. Information gathered showed that women are hardworking, work according to procedure and produce the desired results equal to men and at times they actually surpass men. The study further learnt that women in general are patient, considerate, and accommodative. They show motherly love to both the teachers and students/pupils.

On the other hand the study revealed that women are poor at decision making, they favour making piecemeal decisions at the expense of making holistic ones. Women were also shown as people who like importing decisions from outside institutions, especially from their spouses, for those who are married. These borrowed decisions become sources of conflict in institutions led by women as the decisions lack support from subordinates who feel left out in decision-making on matters of their institutions.

The perceptions of the study participants were that women in educational management positions in Matabeleland South work on emotions, keep grudges and like gossiping. This becomes one of the most undoing leadership qualities of women who should support all of their workmates and subordinates without bias or favour. Once subordinates discover these weaknesses of their super ordinates they lose trust and confidence in their leader thus exposing them. This results in issues of insubordination, conflict and chaos becoming prevalent in the school thus negatively affecting the achievement of set organizational goals.

The study also discovered that some women in educational management positions in Matabeleland south employ autocratic leadership styles. This was said to be true mainly to those who have low self-esteem, low self-confidence and low self-concept. They do so because they are not sure about themselves and their abilities, hence they do not

tolerate any dissenting voices from their subordinates, and such women leaders stay aloof from their colleagues and subordinates.

### **Challenges faced by women in educational management positions.**

On the challenges encountered by women in educational management positions in Matabeleland South region, the participants indicated that women suffer from inferiority complex hence supervising their male and female subordinates becomes a tall order. They face resistance from male members of staff and from male members of the greater community who are socialized to respect male leaders, hence the saying ‘a master cannot be led by a mistress.’ All these attitudes emanates from the stereotypes patriarchal societies have over women in general and women leaders in particular. Women are faced with too high expectations from society, they have to work hard in order to prove that they deserve to hold the educational management positions they occupy.

The study participants indicated that women suffer from home-work role conflict especially those who are married and have young children. At home they are first and foremost wives and then mothers hence should cater for the needs of the husband and of those of the children against the demands of office work, also called ‘a double shift’. This tends to stress women thus affecting both their work in the home and at the office. Furthermore it was revealed that women tend to suffer more from this problem (home – work role conflict) than men who have less house hold chores to attend to in comparison to women.

It was also revealed that women serving in the rural areas face unique challenges from those serving in urban centres which include walking long distances to attend meetings at district offices. Study participants indicated that in some remote areas one has to walk up to twenty (20) kilometres to get to the main road to catch transport and in some places it could be as early as 3-4am and as late 7-8 pm in the evening .This becomes a security threat to the welfare of women as they can be easily attacked let alone raped by unknown thugs. In the same vein the study learnt that women in educational

management positions are also at the mercy of thieves. As custodians of school funds and other institutional assets women in educational management positions live in fear of being attacked or raided by thieves/robbers especially in places where gold panning is rife.

#### **5.4 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter I presented data from the face-to-face interviews and from the focus group discussions. The data presented was based on the themes which emerged from the individual and group interviews. The data is based on the views and experiences of teachers, Deputy/Heads of schools, Education Officers, District Education Officers and members of the provincial education directorate in Matabeleland South region of education in Zimbabwe. The data indicated that the affirmative action policy on the promotion of women teachers to senior educational management positions in Matabeleland south has evolved from the 1990s to date. The earlier (1990s-2000) version was effective and created many opportunities for women advancement to senior educational management positions with the current one being less effective leaving women to compete with men for positions un-aided. The policy is not documented and the majority of the target group are not conversant with the policy hence are not benefiting from it. This policy has not created many opportunities for women advancement to senior educational management positions. Women have therefore remained under- represented in educational management positions in Matabeleland south region. On the positive, policy motivates women to apply for positions of authority but on the negative it is discriminating against men. Women in senior educational management positions face resistance from their subordinates as well as from the members of the greater community who are used to being led by men. Women are equally hard workers and in some instances they surpass their male counterparts in delivering the desired results as they are said to be task oriented, accommodative, and less corrupt than men. The challenges faced by female teachers wishing to take up senior educational management positions include poor working conditions, family/marriage demands and cultural factors. In the next chapter I am going to provide a summary of the study, outline the findings and offer recommendations to improve the

implementation of the Affirmative Action Policy on the accelerated promotion of women to educational management positions.

## CHAPTER SIX

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

In the preceding chapter I presented data gathered on the perceptions of teachers, deputy/heads of schools, education officers, district education officers and members of the provincial education directorate on the effectiveness of the affirmative action policy in creating opportunities for women advancement to senior educational management positions. The data were gathered through individual and group interviews (focus group discussions) which yielded first-hand information based on the participants' experiences, opinions, feelings, and knowledge of issues under discussion. From the gathered data themes and sub themes emerged from the voices of the participants interviewed which form the findings of this study. In this chapter I summarise the study, draw conclusions from the findings and proffer recommendations based on the findings of the study.

#### 6.2 SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

The main purpose of the study was to evaluate the extent to which the Affirmative Action Policy on the accelerated promotion of women to educational management position has created opportunities for women advancement. The study employed the qualitative approach which incorporated individual and focus group discussions in order to solicit for first-hand information from the participants. The Case study design was used since the study was only confined to Matabeleland South region of education in Zimbabwe. Purposive sampling was used to select a sample which was composed of teachers, deputy heads of schools ,heads of schools, education officers, a human resources officer, district education officers and deputy provincial education directors. It was the views of this sample which provided the data which formed the findings of this study. As key stakeholders in the education practice in Matabeleland South they are major policy players, hence they yielded valuable information for this study. The study was anchored on the Liberal feminism which sees both men and women born equal and

with equal inalienable rights allowing them to access equal social, political and economic opportunities. It is however the traditional and other social practices of various patriarchal communities which limit opportunities for women while expanding those of men resulting in gender inequality. In order to achieve gender equality liberal feminists advocate for reforms in legal and social institutions which have created the belief that women are less equal to men. Literature related to this study indicated that Affirmative Action Policies are a global phenomenon whose effectiveness is negatively affected by attitudes of the implementers and resisted by the 'aggrieved' groups. The study employed the face- to- face interviews and the focus group discussion techniques of data collection. The data was presented and discussed from the emerging themes and sub themes comparison with the literature reviewed in chapters two and three.

The objectives of the study were to; evaluate the extent to which the Affirmative Action Policy undertaken by the government of Zimbabwe to accelerate the promotion of women to senior educational management positions has achieved its intended objectives; evaluate the perceptions of the key stakeholders on effectiveness this policy initiative; analyze the barriers faced by lady teachers in accessing educational leadership positions; assess leadership qualities of women in educational management positions, assess the gap between the policy intentions and policy output or outcomes; analyze the challenges faced by women in educational leadership positions ;contribute knowledge to the discipline of research in terms of challenges and opportunities towards women advancement to educational management positions; and to develop a model that can be used for leadership development in women so that they can confidently take up leadership positions. All the answers to these objectives were provided through the data collected from the study participants.

### **6.3 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS AS PER OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY.**

In this section I provide the findings of the study on the extent to which the Affirmative Action Policy has created opportunities for women advancement to educational management positions objective by objective.

### **6.3.1 Main Objective**

*Examine the extent to which the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior education management positions has created opportunities for women in a fair and just manner for both men and women in Matabeleland South region.*

The study revealed that this policy was first enacted in the 1990s, was documented through circulars and created many opportunities for women advancement as a lot of women were promoted without competition from men to positions of deputy head and head of schools. Women probationers were promoted to Deputy Head of school position and senior lady teachers were promoted to the position of Head of school. This policy saw a lot of women ascend to senior educational management positions at the expense of men who were their senior. This practice led to an outcry from men who felt being disadvantaged by the policy as they were superseded by women who were their juniors. The policy was later reformed and it allowed both men and women to compete for leadership positions on an equal basis .Women applicants were and are preferred over men only when there is a tie between a male and female applicant after all considerations (educational qualifications, length of service, seniority, and the appraisal rating) were made. Consequently women faced and still face stiff competition from men as men in general have better profiles to women .In the long run the policy has not done much in creating opportunities for women advancement to senior educational management positions. As a result of this ineffective policy women have remained under-represented in senior educational management positions. This policy has therefore not done enough to achieve gender parity between men and women occupying senior educational management positions (IT/ HoS14-intv no 42),(IT/ HoS8-intv no 19).IT/ HoS15-intv no 44).

### **6.3.2 Sub –objective one**

*Evaluate the extent to which the Affirmative Action Policy undertaken by the government of Zimbabwe to accelerate the promotion of women to senior educational management positions has achieved its intended objectives.*

The Affirmative Action Policy has to a lesser extent achieved its intended objectives in that it has created very few opportunities for women advancement to senior educational management positions. Secondly the policy is a means of achieving gender equality between men and women and has thus brought about recognition for women as equals to men. It has also brought about financial gains and higher status to those women who have taken up educational management positions. The women who occupy senior educational management positions act as role models for female teachers aspiring to take up educational leadership positions. Last but not least the policy has benefited society in that women are generally hard working and are less corrupt than those men (IT/D/PED2 intv no23).

To a greater extent the policy has not achieved its intended objectives of accelerating the promotion of women to senior educational management positions because the policy is viewed as ineffective. While women enjoyed some privilege over men in the 1990s, the reformed policy in the year 2000 was/is retrogressive in that it restored men's superiority over women. It allowed men and women to compete for senior educational management positions on an equal basis with women only being preferred in cases where there is a tie between a male and female applicant. Women have therefore remained under-represented in leadership positions in Matabeleland South region thus gender parity between men and women in educational management is probably yet to be achieved. Chabaya et al (2009:238) argues that " ... in Zimbabwe ,policies and legislation have been put in place designed to address the problem of women's under-representation in positions of educational leadership ,yet gender inequalities persist" (IT/D/PED1-intv no 20 ,IT/HoS15- intv no 44).

### **6.3.3 Sub-objective two**

*Evaluate the perceptions of the stakeholders on the Affirmative Action Policy on the accelerated promotion of women to educational management positions.*

The general perception of the stakeholders (study participants) is that the policy is retrogressive in that it leads to labeling of the beneficiaries of the policy as people who

cannot do it on their own. Secondly it is seen as leading to a drop in standards as it allows those who cannot perform to be promoted only in the name of gender equality. This assertion is shared by Sadie (2005 in Kiamba 2008) who says “it has been argued that such strategies violate the principles of fairness and competence and contribute to a culture of laxity in women”. Besides promoting a culture of laxity in women it has been viewed as promoting mediocrity at the expense of competence. It has also been viewed as having a labeling effect on women and some of the intended beneficiaries do not support it as they see it demeaning on their intelligence and capabilities ( *FGD no 12/T3, FGD no13/T5,IT /HoS9-intv 21*).

#### **6.3.4 Sub-Objective three**

*Analyze the challenges female heads/deputy heads of schools and other senior educational managers' face in executing their mandates.*

Women in educational management positions in Matabeleland South region lack confidence (inferiority complex) to oversee over their male and female subordinates. They face resistance from male members of staff and from male members of the greater community who are socialized to respect male leaders, hence the saying ‘a master cannot be led by a mistress.’ To this end, (Buzzanell 1995, Kimmel, 2004 and Mark, 1981 in Nan-chi Tiao (2006:20) contend that “since work has traditionally been the centre of the men’s lives, women who are trying to expand their boundaries by working in historically “men’s fields” will be perceived as a threat to men and, thus, will face scrutiny and resistance” This resistance originates comes from negative attitudes patriarchal societies have over women in general and women leaders in particular. Women are faced with high expectations from society, they have to work hard in order to prove that they deserve to hold the educational management positions they hold (*IT/HoS6-intv no 17, IT/HoS8-intv no 19*).

Another challenge is that women suffer from home-work role conflict especially those who are married and have young children. At home they are first and foremost wives and then mothers, hence are expected to cater for the needs of the husbands and those

of the children against office work. This tend to stress women thus affecting their work at the office and at home .On the same note Okafor eta al (2011:6724) argue that “a good number of women have problems in juggling with roles as mothers, house wives, home-makers and managers at work .The challenge of maintaining work/life balance when traced to time to meet their various commitments gets them frustrated and they feel trapped.” It was therefore revealed that women tend to suffer from this problem more than men who have less house hold chores to attend to in comparison with women( *FGD no12/T3, FGD no 12/T5*).

The study revealed that women serving in the rural areas face unique challenges which include walking long distances to attend meetings at district offices. Study participants indicated that in some remote areas one has to walk up to twenty (20) kilometers to get to the main road to catch transport as early as 3-4am and to disembark as late 7-8pm .This becomes a security concern to the welfare of women as they can be easily attacked let alone raped by unknown thugs. In the same vein the study learnt that women educational managers are also at the mercy of thieves as custodians of school funds and other institutional assets especially in places where gold panning is rife.

#### **6.3.5 Sub-Objective four**

*Analyze the awareness levels of stakeholders on the existence of the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions.*

The study discovered that study participants especially the teachers in general and the lady teachers in particular are not fully aware of the existence of Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions This was blamed on the lack of the policy document an on the poor dissemination of the information about the policy. The only documented evidence of the existence of this policy is a statement inserted on vacancy circulars encouraging women to apply for educational management positions each time vacancies are announced. These vacancy circulars are not easily accessed by the majority of the target group save for the few teachers who are privileged. Otherwise both male and female teachers

professed ignorance of such a policy and the few who had an idea about its existence failed to articulate it instead described the wrong policies altogether (*FGD no 13/T1, FGD no13/T3, FGD no10/T2, FGD no 6/T5*).

### **6.3.6 Sub-Objective five**

#### *Barriers for women advancement to senior educational management positions*

The study learnt that women do not take up educational management positions because of poor working conditions .It was revealed that women shun these positions because they come with more work, more responsibilities and more sacrifices against poor remuneration. This point positively correlates with Mugweni et al(2011:92 )'s finding who postulate that " those who were not willing to take up leadership posts gave the following views :remuneration does not tally with the amount of work load; leadership is too involving, lecturers need time to do personal duties, and some were very comfortable in current operation as mere lecturers". Participants indicated that the salary rise which come with these positions is too little to motivate women to take up these positions (*FGD no13/T1, IT/HoS4 –intv no 5*).

Lack of family/spouse and the general family commitments/demands hinder women from taking up educational management positions in Matabeleland south region. This was said to be critical for those women those who are married and are still within the child bearing age and have young children to attend to including the husbands. This fact corresponds well with Chabaya et al (2009:242)'s findings who argue that "it also surfaced in the focus groups that women had problems in applying for headship posts because they needed to consult their husbands before applying. If a husband does not approve, then she will not apply." The situation was said to be better for those women who are not married and have grown up children as they are able to make their own decisions as opposed to those married who need the support/permission of the spouse to take up senior educational management positions. (*IT/HoS11-intv no 37*).

The study discovered that personal/psychological barriers like lack of interest and low self-esteem/low self-confidence act as barriers for women advancement to senior educational management positions. Those women who lowly rate themselves are very much unlikely to take up positions of authority, hence in comparison to men women are less keen to take leadership positions due to lack of confidence/ and or leadership ambitions. This view is shared by Oplatka(2006:608) who says, "women's under-representation in leadership positions may be attributed also to women 's own decision not to apply for promotion in education for a variety of reasons ,such as lack of necessary aspirations, lack of awareness of the promotion system and a lack of confidence that they will succeed...". This therefore explains why in Matabeleland south women remain under-represented in senior educational management positions (*IT/HoS14-intv no 42, IT/HoS13- intv no 40, IT/HRO/ intv no24*).

Furthermore the study revealed that women possess low qualifications than men due to the fact that once women acquire a diploma in education or a first degree they do not further themselves especially those in marriage preferring to give chances to the husband and children. Kagoda (2011:10) assert that “women lack the required postgraduate training and skills to compete for promotion and positions of leadership. Time to study, research and write is also rare for women”. This is as a result of long and entrenched tradition of affording more schooling chances to the boy child than the girl child, in some Asian cultures it is called son preference (*IT/ HoS15-intv no 44*).

The socialisation of the girl child who is made to believe that she is always a minor to men who are destined for leadership positions was seen as a barrier for women taking up leadership positions. Women are generally prepared for a place in the kitchen. The patriarchal system stereotypes women as less able, who should be subservient and respectful to men, who should be seen but not heard and who should not have ambitions for leadership positions. Dorsey(1996) cited in Chabaya et al(2013:239) explains that “from an early age daughters are groomed for their marriage roles of wives, mother and food provider...and they are conditioned from an early age to believe that a woman is inferior to a man and that her place is in the home. They are

socialized to see themselves as less equal to men”. The study therefore learnt that women in Matabeleland south subscribe to these patriarchal beliefs which view leadership as a men’s domain rather than for women, this is therefore seen as frustrating the effective implementation of Affirmative Action Policy in Matabeleland South region (*IT/HRO-intv no 24*).

The study revealed that organizational factors such as the domination of selection/promotion boards by men do contribute to barriers for women advancement to senior educational management positions. The study learnt that in Matabeleland South region those in charge of selecting, short listing, interviewing and promoting candidates for senior educational management positions are men. Women who participate in these processes perform menial duties such as secretarial and ushering duties. This is contrary to the spirit and dictates of gender equity, instead it perpetuates gender inequity (*IT/HoS4- intv no 5, FGD no 1/T3*).

The study participants pointed out that the responsibilities which come with the movement to the upper echelons of the education system such as the District Education Officer scare away women from taking up these points as one has to be forfeit some privileges such as school holidays which are enjoyed by those holding school based positions, (*IT/HoS4- intv no 5*).

The study discovered that party politics is a barrier to women advancement to senior educational management positions as politics of patronage has a big say on who should be promoted and who should not .It was made crystal clear that in Zimbabwe only those supporting the ruling party stand a chance to be promoted against those whose allegiance cannot be proved. Corruption is also seen as being part of the package of barriers for women advancement as those men in senior positions and responsible for promotions usually ask for kickbacks in exchange for promotion. In this regard Kagoda (2012:7) argues that “although in theory the merit principle is used to guide the selection of head teachers by the Teaching Service Commission, most positions are filled on the basis of trust and rapport and /or patronage”. These factors contribute to women not

wanting to venture into senior educational management positions in fear of sexual harassment and other social ills women applicants get exposed to (IT/D/HoS2- intv no 15).

### **6.3.7 Sub-Objective six**

*Assess the gap between the policy intentions and policy output or policy outcomes*

The study established that the Affirmative Action Policy is being viewed a new form of discrimination against men (reverse discrimination) hence a source of friction between men and women in the home and at the workplace. This compares well with Peenar(2006:30)'s position who posit that "individuals that hold negative views of affirmative action as a result of the fact that they believe it leads to "reverse discrimination and unwarranted preferences", view the process as being nothing less than yet another form of discrimination" (FGD no12/T2).

Women in educational leadership positions are a target of ridicule and abuse by men and women who hold patriarchal beliefs. The women leaders are being viewed as less able or place holders (the idea of tokenism) as less competent people are promoted in the name of gender equality. This is claimed to bring about reduction in performance standards (IT/DEO2- intv no 41, FGD no 12/T3).

The study participants also revealed that the policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions has also led to increased disharmony in families as those women leading educational institutions tend to take their offices home much to the chagrin of their spouses leading to misunderstandings among couples .

It was also revealed that women are being sexually exploited by men in positions in exchange of promotion to educational management positions (FGD no 2/T4). Maphosa and Mugabe (2013:7) refer to this practice as "as Quid pro quo-something for something".

### **6.3.8 Sub-Objective seven**

*Contribute knowledge to the discipline of research in terms of challenges and opportunities towards women advancement to educational management positions.*

This study on Towards gender Equality and equity: Challenges and Opportunities for women advancement to senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South evaluates the effectiveness of the Affirmative Action Policy as a strategy for achieving gender parity between men and women in decision-making in education. Although this study is not completely new from studies conducted by Chabaya et al(2009) ,Chipunza (2003),Mugweni etal (2011) ,Kiamba (2008) ,Peenar (2006), Khumalo(2006) ,Rutoro(2012) ,Oyedele et al(2010),Oplatka (2006) and Maphosa and Mugabe (2013) to name just a few this study is unique as articulated below.

First and foremost, the study is centred on the extent to which the Affirmative Action Policy has created opportunities for women advancement to senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South against their male counterparts as opposed to those studies which concentrated on uplifting one race/group(s) against the other. The scope of this study is different from others in that besides assessing the effectiveness of Affirmative Action Policy in creating opportunities for women advancement to educational management positions; it also interrogates the barriers for women advancement to these positions. The sample of the study is broad based as it included teachers (primary and secondary), Deputy and Heads of schools (primary and Secondary), Education Officers, District Education Officers and Deputy Provincial Education Directors. It is really an information rich sample based on maximum variability of educational personnel who gave first-hand information that adequately answered the question at hand. Furthermore, it assesses the leadership qualities of women in educational management positions and the challenges they encounter in the execution of their daily mandates.

My study therefore revealed that the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South is

ineffective as women remain under-represented in these positions. It also established that although the policy is in existence it is not known by the target group (teachers in general and female teachers in particular) and is not supported by both men and women. Men view it as discriminating against them and that it creates suspicion that their women are being sexually exploited in exchange for leadership positions. The women (female teachers) do not support it because they see it as labeling them as people with no leadership capabilities, who need the policy to ascend to educational management positions. These findings have led to the suggestion of a model for leadership development in women as shall be shown in the section below. The study therefore informs the target group of the existence of the policy, alert the policy designers and implementers of the inadequacies of the policy.

### **6.3.9 Sub-Objective eight**

*Develop a model for leadership development for women in leadership positions.*

## **6.4 RESPONDING TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This section addresses the research questions on the study Towards Gender Equality and Equity: Challenges and Opportunities for women advancement to educational management positions: A Case of Matabeleland South Region.

### **6.4.1 The major research question**

*To what extent has the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions created opportunities for women advancement in Matabeleland South region of education?*

The study revealed that the policy was first enacted in the 1990s and it created many opportunities for women advancement to senior educational management positions to late 1990. Lady teachers who were probationers were promoted to the post of Deputy Head while senior lady teachers were promoted to the post of Head of school without competition from men. Women applicants during that time easily superseded their male counterparts and thus were promoted in large numbers. There was however an outcry

from men who felt being disadvantageded by the policy as they were superseded by women who were their juniors. The policy was later reformed and it allowed both men and women to compete for leadership positions on an equal basis .Women applicants were and /are preferred over men only when there is a tie between a male and female applicant after all considerations (educational qualifications, length of service, seniority, and the appraisal rating) have been made. Consequently women faced and still face stiff competition from men as men in general have better profiles to women .In the long run the policy has not done much in creating opportunities for women advancement to senior educational management positions. As a result of this ineffective policy women have remained under-represented in senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South region. Chabaya et al (2009:238) argues that “ ... in Zimbabwe ,policies and legislation have been put in place designed to address the problem of women’s under-representation in positions of educational leadership ,yet gender inequalities persist.” This policy has therefore not done enough to achieve genderparity between men and women senior educational management positions in Matabeleland south region (*IT/ HoS14-intv no 42, IT/ HoS8-intv no 19.IT/ HoS15-intv no 44*).

#### **6.4.2 Research Sub-problem 1**

*Existence of the affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South.*

The study discovered that an Affirmative Action Policy meant to accelerate the promotion of women to senior educational management positions is in place in Matabeleland South. The study revealed that this policy was first enacted in the 1990s and pronounced through Public Service Commission Circulars No 11 of 1992, No 22 of 1997, and No 1 of 1997. Chabaya et al (2009:237) posit that “in response to the persistence of gender disparity in decision making positions in Zimbabwe, the government introduced gender Affirmative Action Policy in 1992...” This phase (from the early 1990 to late 1990s) of the Affirmative Action Policy created many opportunities for women advancement to the positions of Head of school and Deputy Head of school without competition from men. The policy was however reformed in the late 1990s and

allowed men and women applicants to educational management positions to compete on an equal basis. The reformed Affirmative Action Policy on women advancement to senior educational management positions is announced through vacancy circulars encouraging women who qualify to apply for the posts(IT/HoS8-intv no19, IT/HoS14-intv no 44, IT/D/PED2 –intv no 23)

### **6.4.3 Sub-problem 2**

*To what extent has the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions has created opportunities for women in Matabeleland South region of education?*

The study established that an Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions was first enacted in the 1990s and lasted till the late 1990s. This phase of the Policy created many opportunities for women advancement to the position of Head of school and Deputy Head of school without competition from men. In fact it allowed lady teachers who were still probationers to be promoted to the positions of Deputy Head of schools while senior lady teachers were promoted to the Head of school position. It allowed women to supersede men in order to increase the numbers of women in leadership positions since they had been disadvantaged for a long time. The policy was however strongly opposed by men who felt that it discriminated against them leading to its reformation. The reformed policy allows men and women applicants for senior educational management positions to compete on an equal basis in terms of educational qualifications, work experience, the interview score and the performance appraisal rating. It is only when all these attributes are adjudged equal that a female candidate supersedes a male one. This version of the policy is seen as ineffective in comparison to the earlier version hence women remain under-represented in educational management positions. The policy has therefore not created enough opportunities for women advancement to leadership positions to achieve gender parity between men and women as women have remained under-represented in educational management positions in Matabeleland South region. This compares well with the findings by Makombe and Geroy (2009 in Rutoro 2012:11) who

argue that “while Zimbabwean women have penetrated the workforce, few women have gained access to senior management positions” (IT/D/PED2-intv no 23, IT/D/PED1-intv no 20).

#### **6.4.4 Sub-problem 3**

*What gaps have emerged between policy intentions and policy out or outcome?*

The study established that the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to educational management positions in Matabeleland South has come with some unintended effects. First and foremost, it is being viewed as discriminating against men hence a new form of discrimination (reverse discrimination). The policy is therefore seen as a source of friction between men and women in the home and at the workplace with women leaders being the target of ridicule and abuse. The women in leadership positions are being viewed as less able hence are seen as mere place holders (the idea of tokenism), as incompetent officers are promoted only in the name of gender equality (labeling). There is a claim that the policy has led to a reduction in performance standards. The other unintended result associated with this policy is that it has exposed women to sexual exploitation by men in charge of promotions in exchange for educational management positions.

#### **6.4.5 Sub-problem 4**

*How do stakeholders view the affirmative action policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions in terms of effectiveness?*

The study revealed that the policy is not effective in achieving the intended objectives since men still dominate educational management positions in Matabeleland South region. Women to a larger extent have not successfully penetrated the male dominated educational leadership domain. In light of this point Oyedele, Mamvuto and Nhiwatiwa (2010:171) argue that “in spite of the existing measures in many countries including Zimbabwe, women still face an up-hill struggle when it came to promotions to leadership positions”. Those women who have ascended to the leadership positions are seen as

competitors but not colleagues to their male counterparts hence are being resisted. The policy has not changed the patriarchal attitudes society to view women as capable to lead schools and other educational institutions (IT/HoS8-intv no 9, IT/D/PED1-intv no 20).

To a lesser extent the policy is effective in that it has increased the number of women in senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South. It has also brought about recognition for women as equals to men (gender equality) and improved financial gains of women promoted to educational management positions. In addition to the point above women in educational management positions act as role models for aspiring female teachers to take up educational leadership positions. The study participants also indicated that society has benefited a lot by having women in educational management positions as many of them are generally hard working and are less corrupt than men (IT/HoS9 –intv no 21, FGD no 4/ T6).

#### **6.4.6 Sub-problem 5**

*What challenges are faced by women in senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South region?*

On the challenges encountered by women in senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South region, the participants indicated that women suffer from inferiority complex hence supervising their male and female subordinates becomes a tall order. They face resistance from male members of staff and from male members of the greater community who are socialized to respect male leaders. Chipunza (2003:4) aptly describes men's attitudes to women leaders thus "the statement that 'a master should not serve under a mistress', continues to hold true in educational management, for attempts in Zimbabwe to introduce equal opportunities for all have been met with resistance from men". These negative attitudes towards women leaders emanate from the stereotypes patriarchal societies have over women in general and women leaders in particular. Women are faced with too high expectations from society, they have to

work hard in order to prove that they deserve to hold the educational management positions they occupy (IT/HoS3-intv no 4; IT/D/PED1-intv no 20).

The study participants indicated that women suffer from home-work role conflict especially those who are married and have young children. At home they are first and foremost wives and then mothers hence should cater for the needs of the husband and of those of the children against the demands of office work, this is termed 'a double shift'. This tends to stress women thus affecting both their work in the home and at the office.

It was also revealed that women serving in the rural areas face unique challenges which include walking long distances to attend meetings at district offices. Study participants indicated that in some remote areas one has to walk up to twenty (20) kilometers to get to the main road to catch transport as early as 3-4am and as late 7-8 pm in the evening .To this end Maphosa and Mugabe (2013:12)'s findings indicate "that life is very difficult in rural areas due to poor road networks, lack of healthy facilities, scarce sources of water and lack of electricity. Women avoid rural schools because they would make "mother –work" more difficult". This put women's lives at the mercy of thieves/robbers as custodians of school funds and other institutional assets especially in places where illegal gold panning activities are rife (IT/DEO2-intv no 41).

#### **6.4.7 Sub-problem 6**

*To what extent are stakeholders in education in Matabeleland South region aware of the existence of the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions?*

The study discovered that study participants especially the teachers in general and the lady teachers in particular are not fully aware of the existence of Affirmative Action Policy in place on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions This was blamed on the poor dissemination of the information about the policy. There is no policy document on the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to

senior educational management positions .A statement encouraging women to apply for senior educational management positions is inserted on vacancy circulars each time vacancies are announced. These vacancy circulars are not easily accessed by the majority of the target group save for the few teachers who are privileged to access them. Otherwise both male and female teachers professed ignorance of such a policy and the few who had an idea failed to articulate it, instead they described the wrong policies altogether. It is only the few participants beyond the position of head of school who were aware of the existence of this policy (FGD no 13/T1, FGD no13/T3, FGD no10/T2, FGD no 6/T5).

#### **6.4.8 Sub-problem 7**

How do social, cultural, attitudinal or organizational constraints impinge on the implementation of this policy in Matabeleland South region?

The study learnt that women in Matabeleland South do not take up senior educational management positions because of poor working conditions .It was revealed that women shun leadership positions because they come with more work and added responsibilities which call for more sacrifices against poor remuneration. To that end Wangui (2012:30) says “according to Pont, Nusche and Moorman (2008), potential candidates are often hesitant to apply for the vacancy because of overburdened roles, insufficient preparation and training, limited career prospects and inadequate support and rewards.” Study participants indicated that the salary rise which comes with these positions is too little to motivate women to take up these positions (FGD no 13/ T1, IT/HoS4-intv no 5).

Lack of family/spouse and the general family commitments/demands hinder women from taking up senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South region. This is more severe for the married women who are still within the child bearing age and /or have young children to attend to including the husbands. Oplatka (2006:614) concurs thus, “in the traditional societies, women are expected to be responsible for their families, including remaining close to their children, the husband, and the extended

family." The situation was said to be better for those women who are not married and have grown up children. These are able to make independent decisions as opposed to those married who need the support/permission of the spouse to take up educational management positions. In cases where the spouse or the family does not permit, encourage or support, women do not take leadership positions but the opposite is true (FGD no 12/T6, IT/HoS6-intv no 17).

The study discovered that personal/psychological barriers like lack of leadership ambitions, low self-esteem/low self-concept and low self-confidence act as barriers for women advancement to senior educational management positions. Those women who lowly rate themselves are very much unlikely to take up positions of authority; hence in comparison to men women are less keen to take up leadership positions due to low self-confidence and or lack of leadership ambitions. These are some of the factors which explain why women remain under-represented in educational management positions in Matabeleland South (IT/HoS13-intv no 40, IT/HoS14-intv no 42, IT/HRO-intv no 24).

Furthermore, the study revealed that women possess low academic qualifications than men due to the fact that once women acquire a diploma in education or a first degree they do not academically further themselves especially those in marriage. Kagoda (2011:10) assert that "women lack the required postgraduate training and skills to compete for promotion and positions of leadership. Time to study, research and write is also rare for women". Women prefer to give chances to the husband and children to pursue their academic studies. This is as a result of the long and entrenched tradition of affording more schooling chances to the boy than to the girl child; in some Asian cultures this is called 'son preference'. This point is strongly linked to the general socialisation of the girl child who is made to believe that she is a minor to men who are destined for leadership positions while she is prepared for a place in the kitchen. This therefore means that women do not compete favourably for senior educational management positions due to inferior educational qualifications to men (IT/ HoS15-intv no 44, IT/DEO2-intv no 41, FGDno 12/ T2).

The general gender stereotypes of patriarchal societies view women as less capable to lead, socialized to be subservient and respectful to men, should be seen but not heard and with no leadership ambitions. The study therefore learnt that women in Matabeleland South are to greater extent victims of these patriarchal beliefs which view leadership as a preserve of men at the expense of women. Dorsey (1996) in Chabaya et al (2009:245) confirms this point thus, “a girl is conditioned to believe that women are inferior to men, that her place is in the home and that she is therefore there to be seen and not to be heard” .This therefore frustrates the effective implementation of the Affirmative Action Policy on women advancement to senior educational management positions in Matabeleland South region as women shun these positions preferring men to lead while they follow(IT/DEO2-intv no 41,FGD no 9/T1,FGD no 9/T 5).

Covert organizational factors such as the domination of selection/promotion boards by men do contribute to barriers for women advancement to educational management positions. It was indicated that in Matabeleland South region of education, the majority of those who do the selection, short listing, interviewing and promoting candidates for senior educational management positions are men. Women participants in these processes perform menial functions such as secretarial and ushering duties. This is contrary to the spirit of gender equality and equity; instead it perpetuates gender inequality as it privileges men at the expense of women applicants. The participants pointed out that the responsibilities which come with the mobility from the lower to the upper echelons of the educational administrative structure such as the District Education Office to Provincial Education Director scare women from taking up these positions as one has to forfeit some privileges such as school holidays which are enjoyed by those holding school based positions (IT/HoS4-intv no 5, FGD no 1/ T3, IT/D/HoS4-intv no 22, IT/HoS1-intv no 1).

The study also discovered that party politics in Zimbabwe act as a barrier to women advancement to senior educational management positions as the politics of patronage has a big say on who should be promoted and who should not .It was made clear that

only those supporting the ruling party stand a chance to be promoted against those whose allegiance cannot be proven or is not with the ruling party. In this regard Kagoda (2012:7) argues that “although in theory the merit principle is used to guide the selection of head teachers by the Teaching Service Commission, most positions are filled on the basis of trust and rapport and /or patronage”. Corruption is also seen as being part of a barrage of factors which hinder women advancement to senior educational management positions as those responsible for promotions usually ask for kickbacks in exchange for promotion (something for something). This is said to contribute to women not wanting to take up educational management positions for fear of sexual exploitation especially for those women who want to keep their dignity intact(IT/D/HoS2-intv no 15).

#### **6.4.9 Sub-problem 8**

What leadership qualities do women possess?

Information gathered from study participants indicated that women are hardworking, work according to procedure and produce the desired results equal to men and at times they actually surpass men (IT/DEO3-intv 43, IT/HoS9-intv no 21). The study further learnt that women in general are patient, considerate, and accommodative of their subordinates. They show motherly love to both the teachers and students/pupils.

On the other hand the study revealed that women are poor at decision making, they favour making piecemeal decisions at the expense of making holistic ones. Women were also shown as people who like importing decisions from outside institutions, especially from their spouses (for those who are married). These borrowed decisions become sources of conflict in institutions led by women as the decisions lack support from subordinates who feel left out in decision-making on matters of their institutions (FGDno 2/T6).

The perceptions of the study participants were that women in educational management positions in Matabeleland South work on emotions, keep grudges and like gossiping (FGD no 11/T3,FGDno11/T1,IT/HoS10-intv no 35).This position is supported by

Khumalo (2006:20) who posit “that women are generally seen as being unable to control their tempers, throwing temper tantrums and are also seen as having attitudes such as keeping grudges and not easily forgiving and forgetting when hurt.” This agrees with Owen and Todor (1993) cited in Okafor et al (2011:6718) who say; “past research results indicated a tendency to describe female managers as less confident, less emotionally stable, less analytical, and less consistent and having poorer leadership abilities than male leaders”. The study participants indicated that once subordinates discover these weaknesses they lose trust and confidence in their leader thus exposing them. This results in issues of insubordination, conflict and chaos becoming prevalent in the school thus negatively affecting the achievement of set organizational goals.

The study also discovered that some women in senior educational management positions in Matabeleland south employ autocratic leadership styles. This was said to be true mainly to those who have low self-esteem, low self-confidence and low self-concept. They do so because they are not sure about themselves and their abilities, hence they do not tolerate any dissenting voices from their subordinates, and such women leaders stay aloof from their colleagues and subordinates. This view however contradicts Makura (2012:285)’s findings which portray the qualities of women leaders thus; “the perception of the female sample through their personal narrations yielded that the Masvingo female school heads possessed the following strands of leadership: collaborative, instructional leaders, public relations officers and compassionate”(IT/D/HoS5-intv no 32, IT/HoS9-intv no21).

## **6.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

In carrying out this study I encountered a lot of obstacles which threatened its successful completion. First and foremost I lacked the crafty competency to carry out the study of this level (doctor of education). So it was not easy getting the correct structure, content, jargon, methodology and the resilience that was needed. It was however the assistance I got from the University in general, the school of education, the department of curriculum studies and Educational management and my promoters in particular who helped me successfully complete this study.

It was also difficult accessing University facilities and services such as library, timely supervision, workshops and peer learning as a part-time student from another country (Zimbabwe). The use of the internet for researching and e-mailing the documents helped me bridge this gap. Besides e-mailing my work to my promoters I was also able to attend some of the workshops in person which really assisted me a lot. The libraries in Zimbabwe though some of them are not fully equipped were of great assistance to me.

## **6.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE IN EDUCATION**

In light of the above findings the study recommends that;

- The curriculum designers and planners in Zimbabwe design a curriculum at all levels of the education that builds confidence in the girl child by providing gender neutral content and illustrations including subject allocation. There also need to use examples of heroines (living and departed) like Ambuya Nehanda, Queen Nyamazana and Mkabayi and etc. in order to provide role models to stimulate leadership interest in female teachers, the girl child and women in general.
- The government in partnership with NGOs put up a scholarship fund for needy women and girls at all levels of the education system to assist them access education and training.
- The government of Zimbabwe in partnership with multi-lateral bodies like UNICEF equate senior educational management positions to those in the private sector and pay them equivalent salaries in order to make those positions attractive.
- The government of Zimbabwe re-think the Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to educational management positions by consulting the grassroots (both men and women), document it and disseminate it through all forms of media before implementation so that it is known and accepted by all stakeholders in education especially the target group
- The Government of Zimbabwe to allow women to be promoted to positions of educational management positions with less experience to men, say 5 years for women and 7 years for men but all other attributes like qualifications and

leadership qualities be considered for both applicants and the policy be reviewed every five years.

- The government mounts two weeks orientation workshops(as opposed to the current one day) for newly promoted educational managers in order to prepare them for the new challenges associated with their new roles
- The government of Zimbabwe makes it a policy that every institution headed by a women the deputy be a men and vice versa so that there is stability in public institutions
- The government of Zimbabwe to re-launch educational campaigns in both rural and urban communities on gender equality(equal rights) between men and women so that their mind set of undervaluing women is changed in order for women and girls to be accorded equal status with men and boys in order for equal opportunities to be created for both.
- The government of Zimbabwe to work with churches, schools, communities and the family to create and give equal opportunities to both the boy and the girl child so that they are given equal treatment, value and equal opportunities at all spheres of life.

## **6.7 RECOMMENDED MODEL FOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN WOMEN**

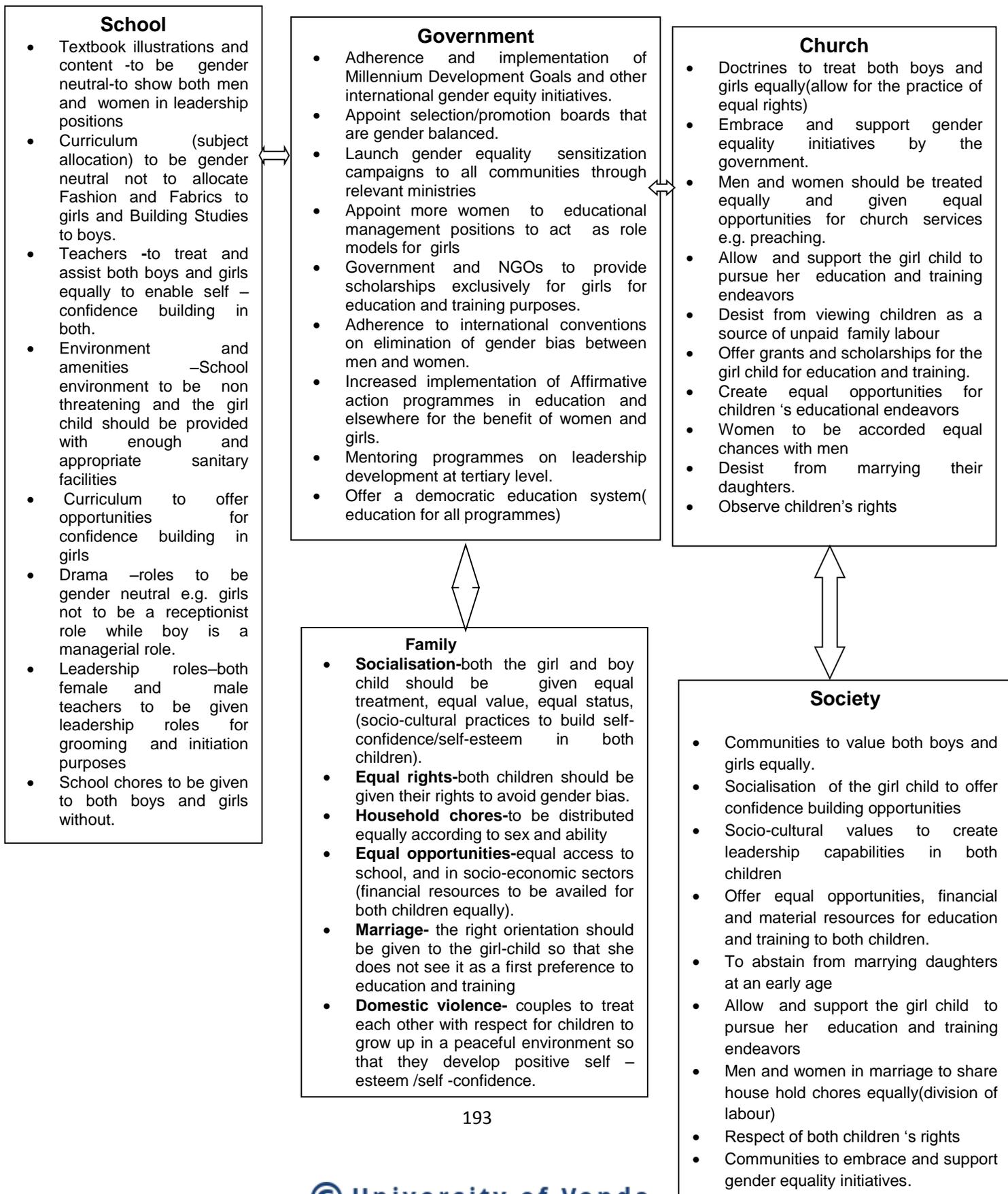
### **The F.S.S.C&G leadership Development Model**

This model revolves around the partnership of the family, school, government, society and the church playing their respective roles in creating an environment that supports gender equality between the girl and the boy child. First and foremost these institutions will remove the barriers that negatively affect the implementation of the Affirmative Action Policies and promote the rise of women to educational management positions. The provision of a democratized education system by the government and supported by other institutions (with scholarship and grants) will allow both boys and girls access to education and training. This will give both the boys and girls the needed educational qualifications later in life to both compete favourable for educational management positions. The government has to revisit the current Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions, breathe new life into

it, give it a new impetus and implement it in a transparent in order to clear the under-representation of women in educational management positions.

The family, church, society and the school should support the government's initiatives to achieve gender equality and equity between men and women in Zimbabwe. In their respective areas of jurisdiction they should socialize both the children to grow up into confident and independent citizens capable of making independent decisions. The children should be socialized to embrace equal rights and gender equality in order to take up leadership positions willingly. If all these institutions place their parts out outlined in the model both men and women will compete for leadership positions in fair manner. For more details refer to diagram 6.1 below.

**FIG 6.1: The F.S.S.C&G leadership Development Model**



## 6.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter summarized the research study as a whole and then summarized the findings of the study per objectives and based on the research questions. The Affirmative Action Policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions in Matabeleland south is not documented. This has led to the target group not being fully aware of it and hence has not benefited as expected. It does not deliberately favour women as intended but only prefers them to men in circumstances where there is a tie between a male and female applicant. Consequently the policy has not created enough opportunities for women advancement to senior educational management positions; hence women remain under-represented in decision-making positions. On the positive, the policy has led to the recognition of women as equals to men but on the negative it is a source of conflict at the workplace and at home. Women face a lot of challenges to advance to leadership positions and these include lack of pre-requisite academic qualifications, lack of confidence, cultural and organizational factors. On leadership qualities, women were found to be hard working, accommodative, patient and working according to procedure. They were however viewed as poor on making quality decisions, employ autocratic leadership styles and keep grudges. The women in educational management positions encounter some challenges which include lack of respect from both male and female subordinates as well as from members of the greater communities. Work overload, role conflict poor road network, lack of clean sources of water were some of the challenges faced by female educational managers especially for those serving in rural areas. The study recommended the strengthening of the Affirmative Action policy and many other related strategies to make it more responsive and effective. A leadership development model which can be used to prepare women for leadership positions was proposed. It calls for the interaction of five institutions namely the government, the family, the church, the school and society in general to join hands groom the girl child to be prepared for senior educational management positions.

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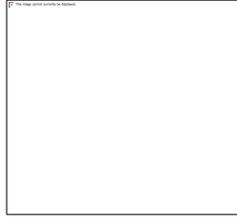
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**Appendix A:**

**Interview Guide for Deputy Heads and Heads of Primary and Secondary Schools**

University of Venda: School Of Education

Department of Curriculum Studies and Educational Management

Title of the study: *Towards Gender Equality and Equity: Challenges and Opportunities for Women Advancement to Senior Educational Management positions. A Case in Matabeleland south Region.*

1. Position: Deputy Head Primary.....  
Deputy Head Secondary.....  
Head Primary.....  
Head Secondary .....

2. Gender: Male..... Female.....  
Type of appointment: Acting...../Substantive..... (*Please tick*)

3. When were you promoted to this substantive post?  
.....

4. What motivated you to apply for this post?  
.....  
.....  
.....

5. Comment on the treatment you received from the officer listed below when you applied for this post.

- (a) Head of the school  
.....  
.....

.....  
.....

(b) District Education Officer

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.....  
.....

(c) The interviewers

(i) Composition of the panel

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.....  
.....

(ii) Questions you can still remember.

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.....  
.....  
.....

(iii) Attitudes of the interviewers

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.....  
.....  
.....

6. The affirmative action policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management position?

(i) State the affirmative action policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management position

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.....  
.....  
.....

(ii) Do you think it is being implemented well?

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.....  
.....

(iii) What negative results could it be producing?

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.....  
.....  
.....

(iv) Do you think this policy is really creating opportunities for women? Explain your answer.

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.....

7. As a female officer what challenges do you encounter in the execution of your duties

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.....  
.....  
.....  
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.....  
.....  
.....

8. How do you describe the treatment you receive from the following people?

(i) Male colleagues

.....  
.....  
.....

(ii) Female colleagues

.....  
.....  
.....

(iii) Members of the community

.....  
.....  
.....

(iv) Male superiors

.....  
.....  
.....

(v) Female superiors

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

9. Suggest solutions to these problems

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.....  
.....

10. How do you compare the performance of women in senior educational management positions with their male counterparts in terms of producing the desired results?

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.....  
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11. What do you see as factors hindering women from taking up educational leadership position?

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12. Suggest strategies which can be employed to solve these problems

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***End of the interview***

***Thank you for your time and information***



## Appendix B:

### Interview Guide for Deputy PED, PED, EOs, and DEOs

University of Venda: School Of Education

Department of Curriculum Studies and Educational Management

*Title of the study: Towards Gender Equality and Equity: Challenges and Opportunities for Women Advancement towards Educational Management positions. A case of Matabeleland South.*

1. Position held:

P.E D: ..... /PED.....

DEO : ..... EO.....

2. Gender: Male..... Female.....

3. When were you promoted to this post?

.....

4. What motivated you to apply for this post?

.....

.....

.....

.....

5. Comment on the treatment you received when you applied for this post from the following officers

(a) District Education officer

.....

.....

.....

.....

(b) Composition of the panel

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

(c) Interview questions

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.....  
.....

(d) Attitudes of the interviewers

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.....

6. In the province/ districts are women equally represented in senior educational management position to men (Deputy Head, Head, EO, DEO and etc)?

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.....

(a) If no, what do you think creates this underrepresentation of women to men?

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(b) If yes, what do you think accounts for this equal representation of men and women in senior educational positions?

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7. In your opinion, how does the performance of women in senior educational management positions compare with their male counterparts in terms producing the desired results?

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.....

8. What is your assessment of the affirmative action policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions on the aspects mentioned below?

(i) Is it functional, explain how the affirmative action policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions creates opportunities for the advancement of women to senior educational management positions.

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.....

(ii) Do you think it is being implemented well? Explain your answer?

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.....

(iii) In your view what are the merits and demerits of this policy?

a) Merits.....  
.....  
.....

b) Demerits.....  
.....  
.....  
..

(iv) Explain the unintended outcomes of this policy  
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.....

9. How can you describe the treatment you receive from the following people?

(i) Male colleagues  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

(ii) Female colleagues  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

(iii) Members of the community  
.....  
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.....

(iv) Male superiors  
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(v) Female superior

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10. In your opinion how do elements identified below hinder women from taking up senior educational management positions?

(a) Cultural

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.....

(b) Social

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.....

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.....

(c) Attitudinal

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(d) Organisational

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11. Suggest solutions to the identified challenges

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.....

12. Briefly explain the challenges women encounter towards securing promotion to senior educational management positions

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.....  
.....

13. List some challenges women in educational management positions encounter in the execution of their duties (rank them in a hierarchical order)

- (i) .....
- (ii) .....
- (iii) .....
- (iv) .....
- (v) .....
- (vi) .....
- (vii) .....
- (viii) .....
- (ix) .....
- (x) .....

14. Suggest solutions to the challenges identified above.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

***End of the interview***  
***Thank you for your time and information.***



## Appendix C:

### Focus Group Discussion Guide for Primary and Secondary school Teachers

#### University of Venda: School Of Education

Department of Curriculum Studies and Educational Management

*Title of the study: Towards Gender Equality and Equity: Challenges and Opportunities for Women Advancement towards Educational Management position. A case of Matabeleland South region.*

1. How do you view the affirmative action policy on the promotion of women to senior educational management positions with regards to both men and women?
  - (i) Is this policy being fairly implemented between men and women? Explain your answer.
  - (ii) Describe how this policy creates opportunities for women advancement to senior educational management positions.
2. How would you compare women educational leaders to men?
3. If given a chance to choose between being led by a female officer and a male officer who would you choose? Give your reasons
4. What do you see as factors hindering the rise of women to leadership positions?
5. What challenges do female officers face in their operations?
6. What positive leadership attributes do you see in women leaders?
7. In your opinion, how does the performance of women in senior educational management positions compare with their male counterparts in terms of producing the desired results?
8. In which way do you see traditional culture, social factors and organisational factors militating against the promotion of women to senior educational management position?

9. What strategies do you think can be implemented to solve the problem of women underrepresentation in Educational management position?

***End of the interview***

***Thank you for your time and information.***