

**THE ROLE OF THE REFORMED CHURCH IN ZAMBIA IN
PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY: A CASE OF LILANDA AND
GARDEN HOUSE CONGREGATIONS IN LUSAKA DISTRICT**

BY

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of the Requirements for the Award of the Degree of Master of Education in
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DECLARATION

I, **Dickson Njobvu** hereby declare that this dissertation represents my own work, except where acknowledgements indicate otherwise. Neither the whole work nor any part of this work has been submitted before for Masters of Education in Religious Studies at the University of Zambia or other universities.

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

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DEDICATION

This report is dedicated to my dear mother Dailess Nkhakali Njobvu for her prayers and lovely words of encouragement. Thank you mum and all the members of my family for all the support you rendered to me during my stay at the University of Zambia (UNZA).

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the role that the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) played in promoting gender equality in Lusaka District particularly in Lilanda and Garden House Congregations. The study investigated the measures put in place by the RCZ in the fight against gender inequality. It also investigated the challenges faced by the Church in this fight. The study used a case study design that involved the use of qualitative methods. The study had a sample size of 28 participants who were all drawn from the Congregations in Lusaka and comprised of the Reverends and their spouses, 2 Church treasurers, 2 Church secretaries, 2 board members, 6 youths, 6 men and 6 women who were all members of the RCZ. The participants were selected using purposive sampling method and the data was collected using an interview guide and a Focus Group Discussion guide. The data collected was analyzed thematically.

The findings of the study revealed that the RCZ played a significant role in the fight against gender inequality in Zambia. For instance, the study revealed that the RCZ had counselling officers responsible for counselling young couples and those who about to get married. The study also established that RCZ introduced women's desk at the Synod office responsible for women's agendas. The study also revealed that the RCZ combated gender inequality mainly through Sunday preachings and teachings. The study further revealed that RCZ faced some challenges in their fight against gender inequality and among the challenges identified in this role included spouses' affiliation to different Church denominations, lack of a clear policy on gender equality and financial constraints.

Finally, the study concluded that though the RCZ played a significant role in the fight against gender inequality in Zambia, it concentrated much at the Congregational level other than the community or country level. This limitation was partly attributed to the financial challenges the Church encountered as well as cultural practices that hindered women from contesting in leadership positions. In this regard, some of the recommendations of the study are that the RCZ should formulate a clear policy on gender equality in order to make the fight against inequality be supported by the policy and also that the RCZ needs to provide funding to the women's desk responsible for women agendas in order to improve its delivery of services to the people.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
BIGOCA	Bible Gospel Church Africa
CBE	Christians for Biblical Equality
CCAP	Church of Central African Presbyterian
CCZ	Council of Churches in Zambia
DRC	Dutch Reformed Church
DRCM	Dutch Reformed Church Mission
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HIV	Human Immuno Deficiency Virus
LFT	Liberal Feminist Theory
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOECS	Ministry of Education Culture and Science
PCG	Presbyterian Church of Ghana
RCZ	Reformed Church in Zambia
UN	United Nation
UNZA	University of Zambia
WCC	World Council of Churches

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This chapter presents the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives, research questions, and significance of the study, the theoretical framework, operational definitions and ethical considerations.

1.2 Background to the Study

Like many other African countries, Zambia was governed by the British crown and this former Northern Rhodesian territory came to be under the British protectorate since 1924. On the 24th October 1964, Zambia attained her political independence with Dr. Kenneth Kaunda as the first African republican president. Zambia, the Southern African nation, is a landlocked country sharing boundaries with eight countries namely Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, Botswana, and Tanzania. Today, the nation boasts of about 73 ethnic groups, each of them interposed with myriads of different religious beliefs. Interestingly, Zambia was declared a Christian nation by its second republican president, the late Dr. Fredrick Titus Jacob Chiluba at State House on 29th December 1991, perhaps with a view of winning political favour from the charismatic Churches such as Pentecostals and many others (Cheyeka, 2014). Despite that declaration, Zambia has continued to accommodate and respect the values and beliefs of other world religions such as Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism.

The first missionary to set foot on Zambian soil was Frederick Stanley Arnot, a young Brethren missionary who settled at Lealui to work among the Lozi in December 1882. On a sad note, these missionaries who came to settle and establish their missionary work in what is presently called Zambia, perceived the Africans as being barbaric and draconian, lacking moral uprightness and hygiene, thus the need to quickly proselytize them (Snelson, 1974). However, this move by the missionaries was the genesis of the missionary work in the then Northern Rhodesia. This invasion and the demise of the famous Scottish explorer Dr. David Livingstone opened many doors to what would be a hive of missionaries' activities in Zambia and Southern Africa in general. Similarly, Ndhlovu (1999) asserted that the opening up of the

African continent to the White missionaries was fuelled by the audacious determinations of David Livingstone.

However, the Dutch Reformed Church Mission, like many other missionaries all have one common goal of making disciples of all nations through teaching and preaching of the gospel as stated in Matthew 28:19. In achieving this missionary great commission, the Dutch Reformed Church Mission opened up several mission stations all over the Eastern Province, extending from Magwero (meaning origin) to Hofmeyr and Madzimoyo (meaning living waters) which came to be the main station (Verstraelen-Gilhuis, 1982).

The Reformed Church in Zambia emanated from the mission efforts of the Dutch Reformed Church Mission of the Orange Free State from South Africa, at the end of the 19th century. This century witnessed a mushrooming of mission fields outside the borders of that country since voluminous missionaries, including the DRCM to central Africa, were all inspired by the opening up of this part of Africa by the great Scottish missionary explorer, David Livingstone in the 1850s (World Council of Churches, 1991). According to Verstraelen-Gilhuis (1982), the Dutch Reformed Church Mission arrived in Zambia from Nyasaland and founded itself in the eastern part of the country at the place called Magwero in 1899. This was the first mission station to be opened by this Church organisation in the eastern part of the former Northern Rhodesia.

As stated by Verstraelen-Gilhuis (1982), Rev. Justo Mwale was the first indigenous African to be ordained as a minister of the word of God in 1929. This occasion further fuelled a mushrooming of various ecclesiastical undertakings. However, this Church organisation was established as the African Reformed Church (ARC) in 1943 and in the same year the local Synod agreed that the training of evangelists was to be commissioned at Madzimoyo. Interestingly, in 1961 this Church organisation had the first African moderator though leadership continued to be in the hands of the White missionaries (World Council of Churches, 1991; Cronje, 1982). In the early 1950's, the indigenous people started demanding for *umwini* (meaning autonomy or independence). This agenda by the RCZ demonstrated their desperate desire to have a complete control of their undertakings. Nevertheless, their cry was heard and *umwini* (independence) was granted to them on the 23rd April 1966 at Katete.

However, the DRC changed its name to Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) two years after *umwini*. In addition, Sakala (1996) of the RCZ gives a historical background to the theological training in Zambia before and after *umwini*. Interestingly, the RCZ theological learning institution was named Justo Mwale, the first African minister to be ordained in this Church organisation. Formerly, Justo Mwale Theological College used to be a learning institution only for RCZ pastors but it has now expanded to become an international university, which admits pastors from different Churches and countries.

Having looked at the history of when the DRCM was established in Zambia, and how this Church organisation changed its name to RCZ, the researcher has found it cardinal to also look at the history of gender inequalities in this church organisation. However, the study of the history or background of a particular organisation or something is important because it will help an individual to understand more about it and be able to discover its weaknesses and strengths. As defined by Trachtenberg (2006), history is the study of the past events or ideas manifesting into the present. Therefore, the function and goal of history is to bring the past ideas or events back to life by rethinking past thoughts in the present. Hence, the study of history of gender inequality in the RCZ will help the researcher to trace the exactly sources of these gender disparities and many other social evils.

With regard to the history of gender inequality in the RCZ, Leyenaar (2004) argued that the RCZ originated from Netherlands where men considered themselves as superior to women. This position was as the result of their Dutch culture which encouraged women to be homemakers and children caretakers while men were traditionally considered to be breadwinners of their families. Similarly, women in the Dutch society were not allowed to take up key leadership positions in the Church and the society. This position was also noted by Arbor (2014) who argued that the Dutch culture never allowed women to take up formal employment in government and non-governmental organisations since they were highly dominated by men.

Unfortunately, the Dutch culture on gender in Netherlands had a serious bearing in the running of the Dutch Reformed Churches in Africa and particularly in Zambia. The RCZ as the product of the DRCM seems to have been influenced by the Dutch Reformed Church Missionary approach which was discriminative in nature and this culture seems to have spread to all the Dutch Congregations in Africa and particularly in Zambia. Similarly, Leigh

and Associates (2012) stated that women in the Dutch societies were regarded as home caretakers and children inculcators of good moral values. This culture appears to have spread to the DRCM where women were discriminated and their roles do not involve holding of highly profiled positions. Interestingly, the Dutch culture is contrary to the Bible position in Mathew 28:19 that command all Christians regardless of their gender and status to go and make disciples of all nations.

As noted by Munamati (2014), the historical background of the unequal representation of female Church members in leadership positions including in decision making boards originated from the Dutch culture which was in favour of male dominated leadership. For example, the first 63 evangelists and 71 ministers who were trained to particularly serve in the RCZ were all men despite women being the majority of the Church adherents (Verstraelen-Gilhuis, 1982).

With regard to the ordination of women, the year 2017 marks exactly 16 years since the RCZ accepted the ordination women as ministers of God's Word in February, 2001. Interestingly, the first women to be ordained as Reverends in the RCZ were Monica Banda and Rose Maloba. Presently, the RCZ has 53 trained evangelists of which 49 are men and 4 are women; it has also 139 ordained pastors of which 128 are men and 11 are women. The RCZ Synod Executive has 7 members of which 6 are men and 1 is a woman. Currently, this Church organisation has 154 Congregations spread across the country and it is believed to have over five hundred thousand members. Several of its Congregations are in the Eastern Province where the Church was first established. These Congregations are convened in a cluster called Presbytery and in total there are 16 presbyteries in Zambia (Reformed Church in Zambia, 2011).

As observed by Bosch (1991), the cultural and religious understandings of patriarchy are the matters that the modern Churches observe. Such undertakings were observed and encouraged by the early missionaries who came to settle in the continent of Africa and Zambia in particular. Similarly, Arce-Valentin (2017) argued that several missionaries went out in every part of the world in the 19th century with a view of spreading the gospel of Christ yet their attitude towards the indigenous people were colonial and oppressive.

However, the word equality means achieving fairness of privileges and representation between women and men (Reeves, 2002). As put it by Ella (2014), gender equality is a human right as well as a foundation of social, religious, political, and economic development. This refers to the equal perceptibility, liberation, accountability, and involvement of men and women in all aspects of community life. Unfortunately, the Dutch culture did not allow women to have the same privilege in life as men. For example, the RCZ did not tolerate the ordination of women as Reverends in their Church organisation. Similarly, Arce-Valentin (2017) argued that a deep experience of unity among the Reformed Churches requires attention to situations where women are excluded from ordained positions of Church leadership simply because they are women or where ordained women are treated differently than men. The fight against this injustice is not an endeavor to halt unity among Christians but to excavate it.

Furthermore, Christians for Biblical Equality (2015) argued that man hierarchy over women was not in God's original plan at creation. The relationship in the first union between Adam and Eve was affectionate and equal (Genesis 1:27). The rule of man over a woman came as part of the curse of the fall in Genesis 3:15 and this is supported in verse 16 of the same chapter 3 where God said to the woman, "He will rule over you." The first mention of male rule over a woman is found in Genesis 3:16 and this came about as the direct result of the fall. Therefore, Genesis 3:15 was also the genesis and source of all gender based subjugation and discriminations that women are experiencing in the Church and the society today.

With regard to salvation and restoration of gender equality, Luke 19 verse 10 says, "The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." This Bible passage is in line with the findings of Kohm (2008) who argued that Christ brought freedom for humanity from sin, regardless of their gender, status or national foundation. Another interesting Bible passage in Genesis 3 verse 15 says that God said to the serpent, "The seed of the woman will crush your head." This was a prophetic word which came to pass in the New Testament when Jesus overcame Satan through His painful death on the cross. In other words, He defeated the initiator of gender inequalities and many other social evils (Matthew 27:45-56; Romans 16:20). On the other hand, Pederson (2006) argued that the Jesus movement offered women a seat at the table and a place in the Church which was a sign that Jesus came to liberate the women from gender inequality. This gesture by Jesus symbolised that even in the Jewish culture were

women were not considered as first class citizens; Jesus tried to defy gender inequality by letting women join His table and team.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The RCZ is one of the famous missionary Churches which did not ordain women as Reverends or allow them to occupy certain leadership positions in the Church, such as Synod Moderator. The situation has now changed because the RCZ is currently allowing women to serve as Reverends and Evangelists. However, there is still gender inequality being practiced within this Church organisation, as women cannot hold the highest positions. This Dutch culture and missionary attitude against women's full participation has created a gap which the current study would like to fill.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the role played by the RCZ in promoting gender equality in the Church and the community at large.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were as follows:

- (i) To investigate the role played by the RCZ in promoting gender equality in Lusaka District.
- (ii) To examine the factors that influence gender inequality in the RCZ.
- (iii) To examine the teaching of the RCZ on gender equality.
- (iv) To analyse the measures taken by the RCZ in order to mitigate gender inequality in the Church.

1.6 Research Questions

This study sought to address the following research questions:

- (i) What is the role of the RCZ in promoting gender equality in Lusaka District?
- (ii) What factors influence gender inequality in the RCZ?
- (iii) What is the teaching of the RCZ on gender equality?

- (iv) What measures have been put in place by the RCZ in order to mitigate gender inequality in the Church?

1.7 Significance of the Study

The study was significant in that the findings might help the RCZ policy makers to examine themselves on issues related to gender equality and to know how to incorporate the Church members in curbing gender based violence and gender inequality. The results of this study might also encourage the RCZ policy makers to promote women's full participation in leadership position in the Church and decision making, just like participation of women in leadership in the area of politics and economics is so important. The results of this study might further be used as reference material to students and lecturers in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Zambia and other universities and Colleges of Education.

1.8 Delimitation of the Study

The study was conducted at Lilanda and Garden House Congregations in Lusaka District. It was confined to these townships because of the perceived gender inequality within the Church in the areas. The sites were chosen because of their accessibility and proximity.

1.9 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by the Liberal Feminist Theory (LFT) which was founded by Wollstonecraft (1975). In her study on the vindication of the right of women, she questioned the viewpoints about women which are destructive and discriminatory. As defined by Adawo (2011), the LFT is a theory that seeks no special privileges for women but simply demands that everyone receives equal considerations without discrimination on the basis of sex.

On the other hand, Agassi (1989) asserted that the modern LFT was based on the assumption that in order for women to achieve equal status, all stereotyped social roles for men and women had to be abolished. He further asserted that the abolishment of gender segregation of occupational roles was necessary for the achievement of women's equality. Similarly, Bem (1974) stated that the Liberal Feminist Theorists believe that men and women can work together to androgenize gender roles and eradicate old-fashioned guidelines and practices that discriminate. Therefore, the LFT was applicable and suitable to the current study because it

held the view that supported equal not special treatment for women and men. The theory propagated for equal presentation of opportunities for women and men. It was developed with the view that women were discriminated against even when they were qualified for certain positions in society. It was due to such segregation that the theory was developed to curb the segregation of women. Lastly, the theory propagated that women should be considered for the opportunities and jobs as much as men were. In this regard, it propagated for fair play in the field of provision for opportunities for both sexes.

1.10 Operational Definitions

Equality: equal opportunity for all.

Equity: equal treatment of unequals.

Gender: the assigning of different roles based on ones' sex.

Gender Equality: also known as sexual equality; is the state of equal ease of access to resources and opportunities regardless of sex.

Gender Inequality: the unequal treatment or perceptions of individuals wholly or partly due to their sex

Promoting: the aspect of marketing programs and projects to its intended stakeholders.

Discrimination: unfair or unequal treatment of an individual based on certain characteristics such as gender, tribe, religion, or physical status.

Sensitization: the process of disseminating information so as to impart knowledge.

Church: an organized system of people sharing common beliefs values and attitudes aimed at shaping behaviour change through scriptural means.

Programme: a set of interrelated activities aimed at archiving set objectives.

1.11 Summary

This Chapter presented the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, objectives, research questions, significance of the study and operational definitions. The next chapter presents the literature review.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview

This chapter presents a review of the literature related to the study. Kombo and Tromp (2006) defined literature review as a description of what has been published on a topic by accredited researchers. The purpose of literature review is to document the data that already exists with a purpose of discovering gaps that need to be filled. Most of the literature was reviewed from the protestant Churches such as Reformed Churches, Presbyterian Churches, and Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) materials because these Churches are considered to be sister Churches. Therefore, the literature was reviewed and discussed under the following headings: Studies in Netherlands, studies in England, studies in Africa and studies in Zambia.

2.2 Studies in Netherlands

With regard to studies done in Netherlands, Watling's (2002) study was found relevant to the current study because in Netherlands the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) believed that women were traditionally put in the second position and could not take up the key leadership positions in the Church and the society. Similarly, Arbor (2014) argued that the DRC originated from Netherlands where the Dutch people have a culture that permitted the majority of women to do part time jobs in work places that were highly dominated by men. As noted by Leyenaar (2004), women in Netherlands were encouraged to be homemakers and caregivers while men were traditionally considered to be breadwinners of their families. The protestant Churches such as the DRC and many other Church denominations in Netherlands borrowed the cultural ideology of considering women as second class members, who could not even take up paid jobs. Furthermore, Leigh and Associates (2012) asserted that there were different roles of men and women in the Dutch society, even though the law puts women to be equal with men. Mostly, women tend to take up lower jobs in comparison to their male counterparts. As noted by Plantenga and Remery (2015), women in Netherlands had a relatively low share in the key leadership positions in the Church and the society.

In addition, Kasomo (2010) argued that the priority in religious professions was dominated by men who considered women to be people of low esteem and physically weak. For that

reason, women were only allowed to perform domestic activities like food preparations and providing moral foundation to their children. Women accept such derogatory remarks from their male counterparts not because they are happy but rather to uphold peace and harmony in the Church and the community. With such discriminatory and oppressive remarks, women get weakened from the opportunity of living a happy and evocative life.

On the other hand, Green (2003) asserted that Jesus demonstrated that the behaviour of men towards women does not always reflect God's position. Therefore, any ideology born out of the people's selfish ambitions for power and privileges is definitely not part and parcel of God's master plan for mankind. According to DAG (2011), the original relationship between man and woman as created by God, was to be one, demonstrating His image and likeness and not to be hierarchical. In addition, Genesis 1:26 states that both male and female were created in God's image and likeness. This stance in the Bible further exemplifies that God's original plan for both male and female is the unity of purpose, love, care and respect for each other regardless of their gender and status in the Church and the society.

2.3 Studies in England

With regards to studies done in England, Mouton (2015) observed that the missionary theology of gender was representative of perceptions of gender in the Church of England, characterized by the Victorian ideology of womanhood. It was a continued literal appropriation of gender-biased biblical texts in the history of the Christian tradition. He further asserted that for nineteen hundred years, the Church generally adhered to understanding of the Bible as prohibiting the ordination of women to the Church offices of minister or elder. For example, Paul's injunction in the first book of Timothy 2:12-15 was almost universally understood to prohibit women from exercising spiritual authority over men. On the other hand, the role of women in the early Church was acceptable and considerable by some of the male counterparts who did not adhere to Timothy's teachings.

As observed by Adeney (2005), the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church in England discussed the issue of gender equality in the Church and one major progress was the victory of a 1969 suggestion to amend a system of the Church governance so that they should open all offices to women. Adeney also stated that the 1969 General Synod refused to open the offices which belonged to the Church elders and ministers to women but they only allowed

women to have some sessions to assist in the office of deacon. Adeney further asserted that another major point was the General Synod's crucial pronouncement in 1979 that the Bible was to be considered as the "word of God without error in all that it teaches." Finally the debate on the ordination of women came to the conclusion in 1981 after the General Synod refused to change the system of Church governance. They chose to consider the subject closed by refusing to engage a training team to deliberate women's ordination to ministerial positions.

In addition, Charlton (1997) stated that despite men and women being created in the image and likeness of God, some religious institutions and clergy men were busy with the business of promoting gender discrimination against women. Women were actually perceived to be discriminated against, and restrictions are placed upon their participation in the public sphere because their image and their traditional beliefs considered them as inferior and thus unsuitable for certain religious roles and managerial positions. Similarly, Anderson (2012) argued that the model of Christian families that existed during the early missionaries, forced women to carry out the role of the house wife and mother responsible for the domestic chores. This tendency has continued to be noticeable in some Church denominations in Europe. This shows that the early missionaries were also the culprit who promoted gender discrimination and injustice against women and young girls. On the other hand, Seymour (1994) argued that the ordained positions which men could occupy in the Church of England were several and well established but the positions for women were not there. In the mid-1980s women were stopped from the ordained positions which were considered to be for men. In this regard, women were restricted to the position of deaconesses, which the Church introduced in 1858.

Another scholar, Beasley (1999) argued against the view that the teachings of St. Paul did not allow women to be ordained as preachers. Beasley also argued that people were separated by over nine hundred years before the New Testament scriptures were written. On the other hand, the world of today is very different from the world of St. Paul, Peter, John and James. There is need to comprehend the situations that prevailed in the early Church. It is interesting to note that the original New Testament scriptures were written in Greek and that there were some translation difficulties. These challenges underlined the fact that the interpretation of scriptures should not be done by one person or based on one scripture. Beasley further argued

that the task of correctly interpreting the scriptures is the duty of the entire Church. Therefore, it is only God's responsibility to bring up leaders with the ability of interpretation and to effectively teach His word (Acts 17:11).

2.4 Studies in Africa

With regard to studies done in Africa, Nell (2014) argued that women in Africa like all women world over have experienced a long history of patriarchal leadership not only in the area of politics, economics, and culture but also in the area of religion. In this regard, several women aiming for religious leadership experience fate obstacles from their male counterparts. Likewise, Arce-Valentin (2017) argued that it is nothing amazing to note that the Church lost its energy after it lost the vision of the equality of women and men. When the Church was established in the continent of Africa by the first missionaries, it applied its power like an imperial state. As the Church became more famous and powerful in the society, the role of women was completely sidelined and its leadership became dominated by men. This move by the Church was as the result of the missionary approach and patriarchal structural systems which favoured men than women.

Similarly, the continent of Africa has been, and is still, a home of gender inequality, marital conflicts and other social evils which erupted as a result of men's strong bias and unfair treatment towards women. In the midst of this great oppression, the Church has the task of bringing the message of hope to the oppressed women. On the contrary, Dreyer (2011) argued that in male-dominated communities, women intermingle with men to admit bad descriptions ascribed to them such as weak, inactive or evil. They accept such derogatory remarks from their male counterparts not because they are happy but rather to maintain peace and harmony in the community.

Regarding studies done Kenya, Kasomo (2010) asserted that the problem of social inequality between males and females was influenced by the African social norms. The differences in the gender perception made African women not to be understood and be considered as people not worth of holding high positions. Kasomo (2010) further asserted that in Kenya among the Turkana people, the Ngamurok (women who performed healing rituals) could not assume any prophetic roles in the community as the patriarchal society allowed males to dominate all the structural systems including politics, socio-economic and religious systems. Hence, the

matriarchal societies (that give women more powers to take leadership roles) were suppressed.

Another scholar from Kenya, Ndeda (2015) stated that equality between men and women in relation to God's will continued to co-exist with the complete male dominance of the leadership in the Church and the society. Similar to the way culture treats women in Netherlands as second class citizens, Ndeda's study established that women affairs in the Dutch Reformed Church in Kenya were closely linked to the family patriarchal systems. Hence, the study recommended the need for a research on the liberation of men's involvement on gender issues in the Church.

On the other hand, Kanyongo and Onyango (2012) argued that human dignity exists in the loving action of Jehovah God. It is interesting to note that human dignity is a God given dignity and therefore, it should not be degraded by people. Kanyongo and Onyango further stated that the Reformed Church believed that human beings need to focus on God who gave them life, and who satisfies and completes a life filled with His glory. As noted by Webster (2006), God crowned humans with glory and honour, creating them beneficiaries of His endorsement, and sanctifying them for fellowship with Him and other believers in Christ. Webster further asserted that both men and women were receivers of the honourable life which they could use to serve Him in the Church according to their abilities.

Furthermore, Anthonia and Ukpong (2012) observed that in order to dethrone the patriarch and establish a gender balanced community, men and women needed to carefully assess the traditional practices that discriminated against women for them to be of great importance in national building. The study carried out by Anthonia and Ukpong further stated that gender discrimination was fuelled by wrong biblical interpretations and traditional practices of some religious communities. Similarly, the study by Casimire, Chukwuelobe and Ugwu (2014) identified the injustice and systematic disadvantages against women in gender relationships in Nigeria. Their findings revealed that there were misinterpretation of theological and cultural aspects contained mostly in Christian scriptures and societies operating in Africa. The study recommended the need for both men and women to work together on gender issues so as to achieve the potential of women in the Church.

As observed by Hendriks (2012), gender roles and sexual indifferences were purely human creations which might be amended as well as reversed. Another scholar from Nigerian, Babalola (2014) argued that the discrimination against women by their male counterparts emanated from their culture, religious beliefs and other aspects of the society. The study further reviewed the changed attitudes of women towards gender differences. For example, one respondent argued “My sex disqualifies me from the role of male, but my heart is more heroic than a man’s.” Although a woman cannot function and play the duties of a man, she can be more courageous than a man.

With regard to studies done in Ghana, Panuccio (1989) observed that in the Northern part of the country, the patrilineal family arrangement influenced by Islamic practices suppressed the status of women. This position was augmented by Baden and Green (1994) who saw the need to promote female enrolment in education at post primary level in order to increase their knowledge and skills. Revising the literacy curriculum in Ghana would broaden women’s economic activities aimed at balancing gender equality. Furthermore, White (2015) argued that in Ghana women were subjects of questions and disputes in many Churches. The study sought to answer questions such as, “were women equal to men? Could women exercise the same spiritual gifts as men could do in the Church?” These were the same questions that the current study sought to answer.

On the other hand, the findings of Omenako (2015) established that the Ghanaian women have endured the impact of discriminatory practices which have been termed as oppressive and a huge hindrance towards the improvement of women’s social, economic, educational, and religious life. In this regard, women in Ghana have vehemently differed with the belief that says that leadership positions are only fit for men in their culture. Omenako (2015) also argued that women are the majority of the membership in the Presbyterian Church in Ghana (PCG) yet they never had any leadership positions. Unfortunately, men in Ghana considered women as people who were responsible in inculcating knowledge to their children, house caretakers, and service providers for their husbands and other family members. Omenako further observed that women in the PCG started supporting themselves for theological learning institutions. Although the PCG never allowed women to participate in leadership positions, they still performed as choir Choristers, singing in bands or choirs, cleaners and decorators of the house of the Lord. They also helped in collecting offerings and tithes and

counting the money. Furthermore, women in the PCG are commonly used as Sunday school teachers and many other lower positions that exist in the Church.

Similarly, Omenako (2015) argued that although the Presbyterian Church of Ghana preaches a holistic Gospel, gender inequalities still affects the position of women in Church leadership. According to Omenako's (2015) findings, women in leadership positions in the PCG are still facing several challenges such as religious factors, political factors and social factors. Women in the PCG passed through a lot of hardships before being ordained as ministers of the Gospel. He further stated that the PCG accepted the ordination of women in their 47th Synod meeting in 1976. Interestingly, the Church finally endorsed the ordination of women as clergy and apportioned to them as ministers of God's word and other leadership positions in the Church.

With regard to women participation in leadership roles in Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Omenako (2015) argued that it took about 47 years for women to be allowed to start serving as leaders in the PCG. Since then, women have been serving in various capacities like presbyters, deaconesses, lay preachers, ministers and other positions. Amusingly, women leaders got on developmental projects in the Church and fully participated in all Church activities regardless of their gender. Therefore, fellow women in Ghana were now happy to see their colleagues taking part in all Church activities, especially that of preaching the Gospel and helping the vulnerable in the society.

As observed by Omenako (2015), women leaders are extremely working well in their apportioned positions but some of the derogatory remarks that were used to make them stay away from the leadership roles in the Church still exists. In some situations women leaders are prohibited from totally taking part in all the Church activities. This is due to some members who have continued to practice some outdated leadership styles which emanated from patriarchal system which mostly favours men than women.

In addition, Haralambos and Holborn (2000) asserted that recognising the dignity of men and women offered a concrete mandate and is vital for Churches, both on the African continent and elsewhere in the world to work with both sexes equally. Haralambos and Holborn asserted that the Church requirements demands people to seek freedom and justice for men and women. They also argued that the dependent notions of freedom and justice are

fundamental in the growth of human dignity. Truly, without justice there could be no dignity and fairness in the Church and the world in general. The joint mission for justice demands that human beings participate in all decision-making bodies regardless of their gender. They further argued that a culture based on the enhancement of human rights without discrimination, is vital to the attainment of all human right, e.g. dignity, freedom and justice.

Furthermore, Young (2004) identified five forms of oppression that people need to be freed from, namely, freedom from manipulation, freedom from demotion, freedom from helplessness, freedom from traditional dominion, and freedom from violence. These forms of oppression against fellow humans can be overcome if gender equality is practiced in all spheres, including the Church organisations. As observed by Collins (2000), gender inequality in the Church is not an exclusive African phenomenon but is faced in other organizations throughout the world. He further stated that in almost every society, men have more power than women; men are free to make decisions; to decide their own conduct and control incomes than women.

Le Roux (2003) observed that in Burundi culture was found to be a great factor that tolerated gender inequality not only in the Church but also in the society. Le Roux further identified some cultural beliefs that caused women and girls to be extremely vulnerable to physical abuse including the assertion that men had the right to engage in extra marital relation, e.g. polygamy. Young girls were expected to share the room with male guests and women were often forced by their families to stay in oppressive marriages. The above noted cultural beliefs greatly affected how women were looked at in almost all walks of life including the Church. Similarly, Bosch (1991) asserted that the Church including its entire leadership organizations have been the carriers of culture. In this regard, cultural and religious views of patriarchy are the issues that the present Churches observe and proclaim. However, such organisation structures were abhorred by the early missionaries who came to settle in the Africa continent.

With regard to studies done in Malawi, Mhango (2004) argued that the discrimination against women in Malawian society emanates from patriarchal cultural values, religious instructions, and poor financial status. In this regard, men are fond of taking advantage of their societal view to abuse women in order to satisfy their own selfish interests. Although some Churches

like Blantyre and Livingstonia Synods have now started ordaining women to ministerial positions such as Reverends and evangelists, the Church structure has continued to be patriarchal as well as male-dominated. Interestingly, the Malawian government has also taken a keen interest in eradicating practices that victimise against women. Despite all these commitments by the Church and the government, women have continued to encounter severe restrictions in attaining equality with men.

As observed by Phiri (2014), Christianity maintains culture in a positive way and it also justifies the freedom of both women and men in the continent of Africa and Zambia in particular. According to Silvosio (2015), Christ intended the Church to be a counterculture, instead of a subculture. In a subculture, people are satisfied to exist under the dominant culture, but in a counterculture the aim is to change the dominant culture to adhere to a different set of values. Similarly, Kanyoro (2016) argued that the cultural practices which are not in line with God's word need to be challenged, especially in this era of HIV and AIDS pandemic, such abhorrent and meaningless cultural practices as sexual cleansing ought to be condemned and jettisoned. According to Arce-Valentin (2017), the cruelty of the treatment of women in the entire world today reveals an ancient view in certain cultures that women in the natural perspectives are considered to be weaker than men, deserve neither respect nor dignity, formed to serve and to be submissive to men. Arce-Valentin further argued that women are also prohibited to leave their homes and participate in the broader life of the society.

Another scholar from Malawi, Nyirenda (2013) asserted that the Nkhoma Synod of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) acknowledged women to minister in Church in 2005, and then in 2007 they were allowed to take up some leadership positions such as deacons and elders which their Church doctrine did not accept. Since the establishment of CCAP in Malawi, in 2009, women were for the first time elected as deaconesses in various capacities. On a sad note, those who were given some privileges to minister in the Church, their messages were attacked and considered to be retaliatory. This is the more reason why their male counterparts have continued passing on derogatory remarks against female leaders.

In addition, Nyirenda (2013) asserted that in Malawi women were not allowed to be Church ministers and not even accessible theological training by the CCAP. This position arose from the patriarchy teachings. Similarly, Phiri (1997) asserted that when the missionaries

introduced Christianity in the continent of Africa, it was a fully male dominated organisation. Everything that was in line with women's agenda was shot down. It was with this background that the Dutch Reformed Church Mission in Central Malawi never allowed women to serve as evangelists, deacons, and elders. Generally, missionaries considered women as weak people who cannot be used by God in that capacity.

With regard to the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe, Munamati (2014) argued that the position of elders and deacons were also male dominated. The Church elders play a role of supervising the conduct of Church members and safeguarding their Church doctrine. The deacons are in charge of collecting and counting Church offerings and tithes. At Nyajena Congregation of the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe, females are the majority of the Church membership than male yet it is highly dominated by their male counterparts in terms of governance. Statics shows that out of the 2 464 confirmed members from 1982 up to 2013, females totaled 1 897 whereas males are only 567. Munamati also added that the Congregation was only run by male ministers. Perhaps the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe follows the Shona patriarchal system which recommends male domination in every aspect of social life. This Shona culture is totally against the Liberal Feminist Theory which actually encourages equality between male and female regardless of their gender.

However, Munamati further argued that the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe had no female minister and it was only recently when the first female minister Rev. Mubwandarikwa was ordained in 2007. Although the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe started ordaining females as Reverends, they are still unwilling to take up the key leadership positions in the Church fearing the prevailing inferiority complex as well as gender discrimination from their male counterparts. This situation shows that the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe has not yet fully responded to the Liberal Feminist Theory due to the influence of Shona culture. This attitude still affects most women negatively.

Furthermore, Bourdillon (1990) argued that the most credible time for the inculcation of knowledge on gender issues among individuals in the Church was during his or her theological training. He also asserted that the Church can never address gender issues if the leadership at the theological seminary did not practice gender equality themselves. They could only be able to do that if they were authorized by leadership on Synodical level.

Nevertheless, the problem of gender issues and the Church is obvious, that is, people should be humble to accept that they do not have all the answers and perhaps never will, but that does not give the right to have further discourse to the status quo. They need to participate willingly and with integrity in the discussion.

As noted by Rutoro (2012), gender justice was neglected until 1984 when women were allowed to be elected as elders and in 2002 when they could train as ministers of the gospel of Christ. This transpired when Rangarirai Rutoro and Wilbert Runyowa in their report titled: 'Resource Development and Women in Leadership positions in the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe' was presented to the General Synod. Therein, they gave the view that there is need to focus attention to the views of African women theologians on feminism.

Similarly, Phiri and Nadar (2006) viewed Feminist Theology as taking a special interest in the lives of women, their stories, hopes, aspirations, beliefs, experiences of oppression and liberation. Phiri and Nadar further asserted that the Feminist Theology sought to shape Christian activities around the norms and visions of liberation as well as a positive change. There is willingness to be in God's hands and creating societies of endurance, hope and new understandings of what constitutes human liberation and amusement of all rights. African Feminist theologians talk of responsibility and teamwork in relation to diverse cultures and a shared obligation as conditions for their praxis. They conclude their opinion of this praxis by viewing it as a critical analysis of the situations of gender roles and engaging such with liberating and transformative praxis in order to encourage human rights (Phiri and Nadar, 2006). Thus, furthering God's reign on earth.

Additionally, Townshed (2008) in his study on a gender-critical approach to the Pauline material and the Zimbabwean situation with a particular references to the position and role of women in selected denomination, argued that the word of God was a basis of influence in the Church. It had a positive influence in the lives of numerous people and it was so powerful to such an extent that it was able to control how people behaved. Townshed added that the continuous teaching from the Bible passages which promotes a subordination position for men has led in structures that are deliberated to be normal, such as allowing only male clergy in the Church. This has made people to think that men have a distinctive relationship with God than women. He further argued that the patriarchal power in the Church keeps women in a subordinate position. Townshed's study recommended that the patriarchal structural power

should be abolished in order to create an atmosphere where men and women will be able to work together in the Church and the society.

As noted by Dreyer (2011), the Bible is part of human account and has been used as an instrument of power for years. The Church should therefore, utilise its inherited influence to eradicate disparities which are against women not only on the African soil but also the whole world in general. Similarly, Christians for Biblical Equality (CBE) (2015) asserted that the religious teachings on gender and power had an enormous impact on human lives, especially those of women and girls. CBE further emphasized that the book of Genesis teaches that man and woman were created equal in the image of God and together had dominion over the earth. Similarly, God in His own wisdom and power never created a slave; He created a man and woman in His own image and likeness so as to make them share equal dignity and power as proclaimed in the book of Genesis chapter 1 verse 26. In the same vein, Uchem (2005) affirmed that men and women were equal in the eyes of God and that He has never placed any supremacy on the man over a woman, He created them equal but different. Therefore, Christians have a responsibility to correctly analyse biblical teachings on gender equality to avoid any form of dispute and injustice against women.

Furthermore, Ndlazi (2004) argued that in KwaZulu Natal, South Africa Church institutions had a crucial task to transform gender relations in Churches by ensuring that gender equality prevailed within the Churches and other religious institutions. Ndlazi (2004) further argued that the protestant Churches such as mainline Churches and other religious groups have come a long way and achieved landmarks in their attempts to transform gender relations and ensure gender equality. Additionally, Lesejane (2005) argued that in South Africa ordination of women was still a big challenge in several Churches, and women could not rise beyond certain positions or levels of service such as Bishop or Church overseer; an example is Purity Malinga who was the only female Bishop at the time. Such records create gaps, as the situation seems not to be favourable for women in the Church despite them being the majority of the membership.

Similarly, Sundkler and Steed (2000) asserted that women are models of the Church and general public not only in times of struggles, but also in times of peace. With or without education, women continue to show allegiance to Christ and His Church. The habit of male

dominance has ensured that women remain observers in Churches and the community in general. Sundkler and Steed also stated that Patriarchal systems that support male dominance in African societies have influenced gender imbalances and GBV in the Church and Africa in general. This traditional practice describes women as weak, home caretakers and children nurturers. Sundkler and Steed further observed the decisive role the Church has played in enhancing for women's emancipation.

2.5 Studies in Zambia

With regards to studies done in Zambia, Ndhlovu (1999) of the RCZ argued that women composed of the majority membership of the RCZ yet they were not part of most major decision making bodies. They were also not fully involved in the ministry of preaching the word of God. This approach to the ministry was the real manifestation of the Dutch culture and missionary position which deemed to be discriminative and oppressive to women.

Furthermore, Moyo (2009) argued that being brought up in a remote area of Zambia and raised up in the midst of the Ngoni people of the Eastern Province, at a tender age of her life she begrudged the position of men in society where they were highly favored. Usually male figures are extremely favored by society. For example, the backing they get from society, the type of food they eat, the type of work they do and the type of marriages they come into. This attitude towards men among the Ngoni society was influenced by the patriarchal system which mostly favored men than women in all aspect of their life. As observed by Moyo (2009), the patriarchal system does not accept that women should voice anything during meetings. Similarly, the Churches established among the Ngoni society tend to practice the patriarchal system which favours male dominated leadership than female. Despite females being the majority of the Church membership, the key leadership positions were occupied by male counterparts.

As observed by Ndhlovu (1999), women in the RCZ have proved themselves to be the observers of traditions and mentors of children and have been also productive in carrying out their task in the Church. Although women have not been allowed to take up certain key leadership positions in the RCZ, they still contribute in one way or another in the development of the Church. Ndhlovu further observed that women were not part of the major decision making bodies of the RCZ. Interestingly, it was only recently when the RCZ started

ordaining women as Reverends and evangelists. Ndhlovu (1999) further established that women in the RCZ were considered substandard creatures and not worthy to be greeted in public places. They were therefore considered mediocre to conduct sacraments because of their genetic aspects such being pregnant or having monthly periods in the course of the administration of the communion. Similarly, Arce-Valentin (2017) argued that cultural beliefs, symbols, and religious rituals under the patriarchal system impetuses women to restrictions seeing them as contaminated based on the release of the menstrual blood. During this time women are prohibited from discharging some house chores, social and religious activities.

With regard to training of women, Phiri (2008) defended the position of educating women worldwide by African Churches and Theological institutions, with the view of promoting the attitude of working together between men and women in religious institutions. This shows that the Church acknowledges the gifts from God to His children to develop the Church. The training should be viewed as empowering Christ's servants for the people who were willing to build a community of women and men. Similarly, Philip (2015), in his paper presentation also argued that men and women were created by God as equal beings who should exercise authority according to their calling by God. Furthermore, DAG (2011) asserted that the qualifications for the Christian service include obedience to Christ and empowerment by the Holy Spirit. Regardless of their culture, men and women should be given equal opportunities in the roles they perform in the Church.

On the other hand, Ndhlovu (1999) explored alternative ways of supporting every Church member regardless of their gender to fully participate in all Church activities. The study showed that Church members who have the ability to lead the Church should receive sufficient training in financial management and many others. He also stated that training of the Church leadership empowered the Church to have energetic vision that embraces any Church member regardless of their gender. He further asserted that education establishment to all Church members of miscellaneous classes, from ordinary members to those at the Synod level, bestowed the Church with information and skills intended to advance the understanding of Church policies. Training is one way of providing answers to different evils that the Church members encountered in their everyday life.

In addition, Hendricks and Soko (2011) also of the RCZ established that the purpose for suitable changes in the Pentecostal Churches in Zambia was not to continue unbending with the old leadership styles, because society was going through social, economic and political changes. The old-fashioned Church leadership style in Zambia was seen to be unproductive in the growth of the Church. They also asserted that the Pentecostal breakaway groups, such as the Bible Gospel Church in Africa (BIGOCA), which broke away from the RCZ, incorporate new leadership styles that were more flexible and involved women in all aspects of the enhancement of the Church. They further asserted that women's leadership skills and spiritual gifts were integrated with the rise of Pentecostalism which sustained people's views and culture.

With regard to enhancing Christian unity among women (Colossians 3:24), the RCZ established women's fellowship which is commonly known as *chigwirizano cha azimai*. The major aim of this establishment was to serve the Lord Jesus Christ (Galatians 5:13-16). These women have their own leadership which is headed by the Reverends wife at each Congregation. Ndhlovu (1999) of the RCZ asserted that women's fellowship has its own constitution and administrative structure to keep them together and provide guidance to all the members. As noted by Verstraelen-Gilhuis (1982), the *chigwirizano cha azimai* has been in Zambia from the time it was established in 1949. The *chigwirizano cha azimai* is part and parcel of the Church organisation with the aim of touching people's lives with the message of peace and reconciliation. Since the early missionaries never allowed women to preach or take up leadership positions in the Church, but through the *chigwirizano cha azimai* women were able to share to each other the word of God. Women were also able to learn leadership skills through this same '*chigwirizano*.' Similarly, Phiri (2007) stated that before the formation of *chigwirizano cha azimai*, the women thought that only men were called to the ministry of preaching God's word. As women looked at the *chigwirizano* as a podium of improving their preaching and leadership skills, Church leaders got scared and thought that they were planning to come up with another Church. Furthermore, the establishment of this *chigwirizano* to women was a visible indication of Christian maturity and Church development.

As regarding to the ordination of women, Susan (2006) argued that there are numerous denominations which currently grant women access to the ordained ministry, but information

regarding clergywomen's proficient outcomes revealed the prevalence of gender stereotypes and discrimination within the Church organisation. In the wake of gender equality in Zambia, many institutions and organisations are being encouraged to practice gender equality and ensure that the rights of women are supported; women participation and gender based violence are at the center of the debate. Similarly, Arce-Valentin (2017) asserted that the ordination of women is a prevailing witness to the equality of women and men in the eyes of God. This is also a manifestation of appreciation for women's opulent gifts of leadership that rejuvenate the life of the Churches.

With regard to the dignity of men and women at creation, Kasongo (2010) of Zambia affirmed that any biblical discussion of the dignity of men and women has to start with Genesis 1:27: "So God created mankind in His own image, in the image of God He created them; male and female He created them." In other words, men and women are both considered to be equal in the sight of God. Similarly, an apostle Paul in the book of Galatians 3:26-28, exemplifies that the equality of men and women within the Church community turn out to be obvious. He further stresses that within the Church of Christ there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male or female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.

Another scholar, Köstenberger (2012) argued that God bestowed in both men and women with inestimable worth, dignity, and importance. Therefore, human dignity was rooted in creation and this implies that both men and women were naturally praiseworthy of respect in the Church or any other institutions. This respect is derived from being part of God's creation and particularly being made in God's image. Similarly, Hendricks (2012) also asserted that it was important to note that for Christians, human dignity surpassed any human guidelines, agreements, acts or any other such judicial tools. It was something that God brought into being through His divine wisdom and power. The dignity of both women and men should, therefore, be upheld in acknowledgement and submission to God's sovereign design and master plan. When God finally created a man and woman as the climax of God's creative process, He saw that it was very good (Gen 1:31).

Furthermore, Ndhlovu (1999) of the RCZ argued that Christianity as demonstrated by Jesus Christ is not being in favour of male or female but commitment to all regardless of their gender. As people are committed to their biological parents, Jesus also showed his

commitments to His biological parents and many others including Mary Magdalene, the Phoenician woman, the Samaritan woman (Mark 15:41). Ndhlovu further asserted that Paul's life and ministry was purely sustained by women and are mentioned as co-workers in the following scriptures (Philippians 4:1-3, Romans 16:1-3, acts 18: 2-3). In His ministry and life, Jesus demonstrated His love for all by teaching them the doctrine of equality between male and female. He did that in order to show those who considered women as inferior beings and not commendable of education.

2.6 Summary

Literature was reviewed from the global perspective to the Zambian perspective accordingly. The literature explored the background of inequality in the Church and the historical and biblical aspects of gender inequality. Therefore, the results of the study shows that although the Church has been committed in promoting gender equality, traditionally women are still being discriminated against to such an extent that they are given low positions in the Church and the society. The next chapter presents the methodology used in the study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

In this chapter, the researcher describes the research methodology that was used in this study. The research methodology includes the research design, study site, target population, sample size, sampling procedures, data collection instruments and data collection methods were explained. Accordingly, data analysis instruments and procedures are discussed.

3.2 Research Design

This study used a case study design. As defined by Ghosh (2003), a research design is not a stiff plan to be followed without deviation, but a chain of flexible guidance that help the researcher uphold the focus of the study. According to Creswell (2009), a research design is the plan or proposal to carry out a research and this involves the intersection of ideas, approaches of investigation and definite methods. Similarly, Orodho (2003) described it as the system, plan that is utilized to provide solutions to research problems. As defined by Musabila and Nalaila (2013), a case study is an investigation that seeks to describe the phenomenon in detail with a deeper insight and clear understanding of the problem. According to Yin (1989), a case study is an empirical study which investigates a modern phenomenon within its actual life situation, when the boundaries between phenomenon and situation are not clearly evident and in which several sources of evidence are used. The case study design was applicable for this study since its general purpose is to achieve understanding of how people make sense of their lives by allowing for the researcher to undertake an intensive and in-depth study. The case study of the Lilanda and Garden House Congregations allowed an in-depth investigation of the role of the RCZ in promoting gender equality in the Church and the community at large.

The research strategy used in this study was a qualitative method. This strategy was used so as to adequately address the concerns raised by the research topic. As defined by Creswell (2009), a qualitative research method is a way of exploring as well as understanding the individual or group attributed to a social human problem. Similarly, Ndhlovu (2012) argued

that a qualitative research is a logical collection, examination as well as interpretation of data so as to give descriptions and accounts of social proceedings and objectives of the study in their normal settings. As described by Bogdan and Biklen (1998), a qualitative research is a process bound, which means that the researcher is never only fascinated in the results of the research but also on what goes on before one comes to a conclusion. Furthermore, Bryman (2008) asserted that a qualitative research has various characteristics which include realistic, contextual, process bound as well as descriptive. The qualitative research method employed a double data collection mechanism which involved semi structured interviews and Focus Group Discussion.

3.3 Study area or Site

This study was conducted at Lilanda and Garden House Congregations of the RCZ in Lusaka District. Therefore, all the respondents were drawn from these two local Churches. Considering the nature of the study, time, and easy accessibility, the research sites were very appropriate to the researcher.

3.4 Target Population

Ngechu (2004) defines a population as a set of people, provisions, and components, group of things or households that were under exploration. According to Bryman (2004), a population is a space of items from which a sample is selected. The target population for whom the findings under this study were generalised included all members of Lilanda and Garden House Congregations of the RCZ.

3.5 Sample Size

A sample size is a group of subjects or situations selected from a larger population (White, 2005). As put by Webster (2006), a sample is a set part of a statistical population whose properties were studied to gain information about the whole. In this study, the sample of 28 participants was drawn from Lilanda and Garden House Congregations of the RCZ as follows: 6 women participants (3 from each Congregation), 6 men (3 from each Congregation), 6 youths (3 from each Congregation), 2 Reverends and their spouses (1 from each congregation), 2 Church treasurers (1 from each Congregation), 4 Church secretaries (2 from each Congregation) and 2 board members (1 from each Congregation). The participants

for this study were chosen because they were the stakeholders involved in the running of the Church. Respondents were drawn from Lilanda and Garden House Congregations of the RCZ. The sample size was enough and justified for a qualitative study. What is important in a qualitative study is the richness of the collected information and not essentially the number of the respondents.

3.6 Sampling Procedures

Kombo and Tromp (2009) define a sampling procedure as a process that a researcher uses to gather people, places or things to study. Kombo and Tromp (2009) further argued that a sampling procedure is a method in which every person in the definite population has equivalent and independent chances of being selected as part of the sample. Similarly, Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) argued that a sampling procedure is a formula of choosing the subjects or cases to be included in the sample. This process consist of identifying as well as selecting individuals, places or groups of individuals that are specifically well-informed about the topic or study under investigation (Creswell, 2009). This study adopted only a purposive sampling for both interviews and Focus Group Discussion. As defined by Patton (2002), a purposeful sampling is a technique widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources.

As defined by Palinkas and Horwitz (2013), purposeful sampling is commonly used in a qualitative study for the identification as well as choosing of rich information linked to the phenomenon of interest. This study adopted purposive sampling technique for both interviews and FGD which involved Church administrators such as the Reverends and their spouses, the Church secretaries, treasurers, women, men and youths.

3.7 Data Collection Instruments

The instruments that were used in the study were interview and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) guides. Masadeh (2012) argued that the FGD guide is highly valued as a qualitative research instrument, which is best known for its capacity to produce in-depth insights into a topic in an effective and appropriate way. Primary data was collected using an interview guide administered to the Church administrators, (the pastor and his spouse, secretaries, treasurers and board members). Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) argued that interviews are

preferred due to their flexibility in data collection and that they provide room for probing which yield in-depth solutions about thoughts, observation, experiences, knowledge, and description of undertakings as well as players involved. The FGD guide was administered to women's fellowship, men's fellowship and the youth fellowship. Secondary data was collected from the Church constitution (Zolamulira) and other Church documents.

3.8 Validation of Research Instruments

The interview and FGD guides were validated through a pilot study at Lilanda RCZ and Garden House Congregations of the RCZ, to ascertain the accuracy and reliability of the qualitative data collected. Ndhlovu (2012) asserted that the validity of an instrument is a measure of how sound an instrument measures what it is supposed to be measured. Similarly, Saunders (2003) argued that validated instruments and the appropriate questions posed to respondents resulted in collection of quality data. This helped to adjust the instruments where need arose.

3.9 Data Collection Procedure

Data was collected from the women, men and youths through FGD involving three groups of 6 participants from each category; data from the pastor and his spouse, the Church treasurers, the secretaries and the board members was collected through interviews. The interviews from individual participants and focus group discussions were audio recorded for easy and accuracy transcription by the researcher.

3.10 Data analysis

As defined by White (2008), data analysis is the climax of the research that involves selecting, categorising, comparing as well as interpreting the information gathered to provide explanations of the single phenomenon of interest. Rice and Ezzy (1999) argued that thematic analysis involves the identification of themes. In this study, data was transcribed and themes were created and coded in line with the research objectives for all categories of participants (the pastor and his spouse, treasurers, secretaries, board members, women, men and youths) to come up with research conclusions.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were part of research which has to do with taking care of issues that guide the Collection of data through respecting respondents in terms of their privacy, from any form of abuse and respecting their right to choose whether to participate in the study or not or which information to give and which one to withhold. Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) define ethics as a branch of philosophy which deals with one's conduct and serves as a guide to one's behaviour. In this study, the researcher first sought permission (informed consent) from the clearance committee at the University of Zambia (UNZA) to conduct a research. The researcher also sought permission from the RCZ Reverends in charge of the Congregations to allow him conduct a research at their Churches. The respondents were also assured of their protection and confidentiality in whatever information they provided.

3.12 Summary

This chapter discussed the research methodology that was used to conduct this study. This chapter has also defined the research design as well as study area. Furthermore, the chapter has described the target population of the study, sample size, and sampling techniques. The chapter has also presented the data collection instruments and validation of the research instruments of the study. Finally, the chapter discussed the data collection procedure as well as data analysis. The next chapter presents the presentation of findings of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Overview

This chapter presents the findings of the study. The findings are presented according to the following research questions: (1) What is the role of the RCZ in promoting gender equality in Lusaka District? (2) What factors influence gender equality in the RCZ? (3) What is the teaching of the RCZ on gender equality? (4) What measures have been taken by the RCZ in order to mitigate gender inequality in the Church?

4.2 The role played by the RCZ in promoting gender equality in Lusaka District

With regard to the role played by the RCZ in promoting gender equality, all the 28 respondents stated that the Church had a major role in promoting gender equality. Most of the respondents stated that the Church had made great strides in promoting the equal treatment of the female members. From the 28 respondents involved in the research, 28 (100%) of the respondents from both the White and Brown Congregation agreed that the RCZ had played a significant role in promoting gender equality. However, it should be noted that though they all agreed to the RCZ playing a role, the respondents gave varying levels of the extent to which the RCZ was involved in promoting gender equality.

The participants who took part in FGDs generally agreed that there was change since they started attending the services at the RCZ. This was because the Church tried to put up programmes that specifically tried to answer to the needs of those who were about to get married to understand marriage and work together as couples. This has improved relations in many homes. One lady from the White Congregation stated the following:

The Reformed Church in Zambia carries out counselling sessions and teachings that address gender based violence and inequality in homes and relationships, this is especially offered to couples and those in courtship, this has helped improve relations among men and women in the Church.

The interviews also showed similar responses on the role played by the RCZ in fighting gender inequality. A female Reverend from the White Congregation stated that:

We have a task as a Church to provide guidance for people to live in harmony and peace. As Reformed Church in Zambia, we have played a big role towards mitigating gender inequality though with many challenges. The Church has been sensitizing its members about gender based violence and asks them to be carriers of such good message to other people in the community. We have also established permanent desks such as women's desk for women to talk and discuss such issues and know that they were not second class members in the Church.

A male Reverend from the Brown Congregation added the following:

The Church has promoted the training of female preachers as a way of promoting gender equality and reducing prejudices that are associated with being female. By so doing, women participate in key decision making processes and this enhances and motivates other women to participate.

Additionally, the deputy treasurer from the Brown Congregation stated that:

The Church has tried to bring men and women together through workshops and trainings to teach them about working together. As a Church we have made sure that women are involved in leadership roles at different levels, this has helped improve gender relations between men and women.

When asked if there was a difference in the way adherents and the general public viewed gender equality now that the RCZ was involved in the fight against gender disparities, all the 28 interviewed members stated that there was a huge difference. One board member of the White Congregation noted the following:

There is a big difference because our Church gets involved in family issues. When we tell our Reverend that we were having problems in our homes, she takes keen interest in counselling us as couples, previously this never used to happen but now since our leaders started showing interest in our general wellbeing, things have changed in the way we now treat each other as couples.

Similarly, the deputy secretary from the White Congregation also stated the following in support of the above view:

There is a very big difference because as a Church we preached about the value of gender equality. We understood that the backbone of the Church was in the family which was strengthened by marriage. The problem was the marriage

foundation. So, before young people get into marriage the Church has to make sure we counselled them without which they would face problems.

This perspective was further supported by the observation of a female Church member from the Brown Congregation who took part in the FGD. She mentioned that there was a difference because long ago men and women never sat together to discuss gender issues. Now women can freely contribute to the affairs of the Church. Similarly, a spouse of the Reverend from the Brown Congregation noted that respect for each other as couples should be promoted so as to increase understanding on gender issues: This is what she said:

Respect for each other as couples is key, this respect is emphasised by the Church in order to promote respect among the Church couples. God demands that we treat each other with respect, therefore we will start treating each other fairly and hence promoting gender equality.

Furthermore, when asked to pin point the specific activities the RCZ had done to improve gender equality in the Church and community or Zambia as a whole, the respondents had varying views as noted by the first secretary from the White Congregation:

So far as a Church we have not done much in terms of promoting gender equality among our members: This is because we only do preachings on Sundays. We do not have seminars or workshops meant to sensitise the members on gender equality. If we are to reach out to a bigger crowd then we need to hold workshops and sensitization trainings both in the Church and community, but so far that has not been happening.

Contrary to this view, a male Reverend from the Brown Congregation stated the following:

The Church conducts activities that helps spread the news about gender equality and gender based violence. As a Church, we sensitise, teach, hold workshops and hold preaching activities. Furthermore, members hold fellowships among couples in which topics on relationships are discussed. This helps to create awareness on gender issues among the members.

In line with what the male Reverend from the Brown Congregation said, a male deputy secretary from the White Congregation had this to say:

The RCZ has introduced a women's desk at the Synod office to promote the welfare of the women in the Church. However, there are still very few women in leadership positions at the Synod level. For example, there is only one woman at the Synod office as opposed to six men.

In the same vein, from the FGD conducted at the White Congregation it was pointed out that the RCZ had made tremendous improvements in engaging females in key leadership positions in the Church; one female Church member narrated the following:

It is now good to see female Reverends in the Church. This is advantageous for us women as we can share our personal problems with fellow women. We are happy that Justo Mwale University admits and trains a number of females as Reverends, which was not the case in the past.

Though the RCZ has tried to improve gender relations among its members and the community, this effort has had challenges in the fight against gender inequality. When asked if the Church was financially capable of running all the programmes related to gender equality considering that the fight against gender inequality was costly, several respondents from both the White and Brown Congregations gave different views but all the 28 respondent attested to the fact that availability of finances was a big challenge that had hampered the fight against gender inequality both at Church and community level. This was exemplified by one female youth Church member from the Brown Congregation who took part in the FGD when he stated the following:

As a Church we can manage to share information on gender equality and inequality. The Church should source for funds that can be used in the dissemination of information on gender activities. As at now there are no funds reserved for this noble cause. Otherwise, the Synod would have notified all Congregations regarding the issue.

This view was similar to what one male Church member from the Brown Congregation who said that the issue of funds was a challenge since most of the adherents were unemployed and could not afford to contribute any money towards the sensitisation activities. He added that the Church depended on offerings which were not enough.

One male youth Church member from the Brown Congregation who took part in the FGD stated the following:

Masiku yano mukachisi yathu azitsogoleri akazi ayamba kuculuka, Mwachisanzo, amsunga chuma athu ndi azimai komanso oyimbisa wathu oyamba ndi mkazi. Koma vuto ilipa sinodi Chifukwa ngati mupingo wa RCZ tikalibe ku nkhalopo ndi sinodi moderator mukazi kuyambira pomwe mpingo unakhazikitsidwa mu Zambia kufikira lero. Mwa chisanzo, pa bungwe la sinodi tili ndi azitsogoleri okwanila asanu ndi awiri, asanu ndimodzi ndi azibambo ndipo m'modzi ndi muzimai. Ichi chionetsa kuti nkhani ya jenda tili nayo kumbuyo kwa mbili. Kusinthika kufunika kuyambila kumutu.

Literally translated as: Nowadays in our Congregation, a number of women taking up leadership positions are growing. For instance, our first treasurer is a female and our choir chorister is also a female. But the problem is at Synod level because as the RCZ we have never had a female moderator since its establishment in Zambia. For example, the Synod executive is composed of 6 men and 1 woman. This clearly shows that we are still very far from achieving gender equality. Our Church leadership should therefore, acknowledge that change starts from the top leadership.

Similarly, the deputy secretary from the Brown Congregation had this to say:

The major problem that women face in the RCZ is male dominated leadership position where people are elected or appointed into office on the basis of sex and not on merit. This is happening in our Church today because of the discriminatory practices that are born out of the selfishness of some individuals who only want to support their fellow men. No wonder as a Church we have never had a female moderator since the establishment of this Church. The answer to this problem is to ensure that people are elected or appointed into leadership position on merit. Nevertheless, I still believe that one day things will change for the better.

On the issue of support in terms of funds, the first secretary from the Brown Congregation said:

As for now we are not capable of doing more due to lack of funds. We depend on offerings to run our affairs and I think this is not enough to support the fight against gender inequality and gender based violence.

The above views were not similar to what a female Reverend from the White Congregation said about the issue of funding. The following was her response:

We usually have special Sundays set aside. On these days we raise enough money to contribute to all needy areas such as evangelism and helping the vulnerable. We also have partners at the headquarters supporting gender desks. Our learning institution, Justo Mwale University has also received funds previously to train the female Reverends. All this is a way of supporting the gender desk.

The findings gathered from the FGD were similar to what was collected in the interviews. Generally, the members who took part in the FGD agreed that funding was a major issue that had impaired the activities of the Church regarding gender equality. One participant from the Brown Congregation noted that if there were more funding, outreach programmes, workshops and counselling sessions could be held regularly to sensitise the wider population. However, since there was less funding for such activities, it was difficult to sensitise many people.

4.3 Factors that influenced the fight against gender inequality

With regards to the factors that influenced the fight against gender inequality in the RCZ, respondents gave different views as follows:

The FGD indicated that the driving force for the RCZ to introduce gender equality activities was due to the increase in the gender based violence (GBV) cases that were noticed or recorded in the Church. As stated from the FGDs, the factors were varied, for example, one female Church member from the Brown Congregation stated the following:

The preaching of our leaders has greatly enhanced gender equality and the fact that we have women in leadership positions also has positively influenced the fight against gender inequality. Previously, we used to have more reports of physical violence among the Church members; this definitely influenced the action to address gender inequality in the Church by taking deliberate moves such as creation of the women's desk.

Furthermore, the responses gathered from the respondents who took part in the interviews established that different factors gave rise to the introduction of the women's desk that was given the responsibility of addressing issues to do with gender equality. A male Church member from the White Congregation stated that:

The word of God has helped to strengthen gender equality, the Bible is clear about gender; when the Bible says 'God created man,' it was not very specific about gender, therefore, in the eyes of God we are equal.....the other thing that influenced us is leadership positions, women wanted to be involved in the decision making process, this saw to the need to have women leaders in the Church.

To give support to the above view, the same male Church member from White Congregation cited Genesis 1:26 as follows:

Then God said, "And now we will make human beings; they will be like us and resemble us. They will have power over the fish, the birds, and all animals, domestic and wild, large and small. So God created human beings, making them to be like himself. He created them male and female...." (Good News Bible).

Similar to this view point, a female respondent from the Brown Congregation had this to say:

Mau amulungu opezeka mubuku la Chiyambi mutu oyamba ndi makhumi awiri, chisano ndichimodzi atiphunzitsa kuti mwamuna ndi mukazi ali chimozi pamaso pa mulungu. Chifukwa cha ichi na ife azimai timankhala okondwa kuona azimai anzathu apezeka mumi sonkhano yopeleka mupingo wathu pasogolo. Munthawi ya Kolonje muzimai sanali kuloledwa kulalika mumpingo komanso kupezeka mumi sonkhano yopeleka mpingo wathu wa RCZ pasogolo.

Literally translated as: The word of God in the book of Genesis chapter 1: 26, teaches us that both male and female are the same in the sight of God. As such, us as women we become happy when see our fellow women take part in activities meant to uplift our Church. During the time of Cronje, a woman was not allowed to preach in our Congregation and was not equally allowed to take part in meetings meant to uplift the welfare of the Church.

Additionally, the male Reverend from the Brown Congregation stated that:

What propelled us to act are the negative cultural issues. The problem of gender based violence and cultural values also influenced the Church's position to address issues of gender inequality. Some traditions perceived women as unequal to men; some oppressive tendencies have also pushed us to work on issues to do with gender based violence.

Furthermore, the female Reverend from the White Congregation stated that the Church doctrine has influenced how women were treated. She further stated that the Church doctrine supported the involvement and fair treatment of female members

Similarly, the male Reverend from the Brown Congregation stated the following:

The view that women could not do what men were able to do had negatively influenced the fight against gender inequality in the past. But currently we have women doing wonders and working side by side with men and sometimes do the work better than men. This has helped women to get recognised as equal partners in the ministry of teaching and preaching God's word.

Additionally, when asked what posed a challenge to the promotion of gender equality policies in the RCZ, the respondents from both the White and Brown Congregations gave different views to this regard. For example, a deputy treasurer from the White Congregation had this to say:

People are still ignorant about gender equality and therefore there is no one who seems to be interested in coming up with a policy on gender which the RCZ can adopt. However, we need to treat women as equals if we are to reduce the disagreements amongst men and women. The tradition of keeping women under a man's leadership is not a good tradition.

Furthermore, the female deputy secretary from the White Congregation added that the RCZ fuelled challenges related to couples not worshipping in the same Church. When there were marital disputes, it was difficult to counsel them because of different beliefs and fellowships. "You will find the wife congregates with the RCZ whereas the husband belongs to a totally different Church or he doesn't even fellowship anywhere, this is a challenge," she said.

Additionally, the female Reverend from the White Congregation stated the following:

We have a lot of challenges because some of our members still believe in cultural beliefs such as the man is supposed to be the head of the woman and this makes men feel they are in control of their wives. Secondly, the issue of funds to be used in the fight against gender inequality has been a major challenge. There are also some scriptures that are misinterpreted to support gender inequality, for example, that a man is the first creation and is the head of the family, this makes some men think that they can treat their wives as mere members of the family (Ephesians 5:23).

Similarly, a male first treasurer from the White Congregation stated:

Mainly women refuse to confidently take up leadership roles in the Church; this has been a challenge to the promotion of gender equality. Traditionally, women were treated as helpers and if a woman is chosen to take up a leadership role some do not accept because their husbands do not allow them.

The above observation was also made by the first female treasurer from the Brown Congregation. She stated that women were not willing to participate in the leadership of the Church. She further indicated that when asked to be part of the leadership team most women would say they were busy with house chores.

Despite the challenges noted by the respondents above, the same respondents expressed confidence in the Church's ability to transform people's minds and behaviour in bringing about gender equality among the members and the Zambian community, though most of them observed that the RCZ did not have a clear policy on the issues of gender equality. The Church was well able to do more, as noted by one male Church member from the White Congregation:

I'm very confident that in the future the RCZ will be able to transform and change people's minds, for example, even the old traditions are slowly disappearing in the Church. The attitude by some members of the RCZ of seeing women as incapable members should be discouraged.

Similarly, a male respondent from the White Congregation had this to say:

Azibusa afunika kumalimbikisa azimai kumatengako mbali kuzochita mu Mpingo. Chifukwa azimai ambili akali ndi mantha Chifukwa cha malamulo yakale yomwe yanabwela ndi azungu. Ine kukhala umozi wanzika za Mpingo wathu wa RCZ, ndithokoza Yehovah kwambiri, Chifukwa pali ku sinthika kwaku kulu kwambiri Chifukwa lelo tili nao azitsogoleri acizimai mumpingo. Azungu anali kunena kuti azimai safunika kukhala azitsogoleri mu Mpingo, koma kuma phikila azimuna ao, kuyanganila ana ndi nchito zina zapa nyumba. Mwachisanzo, m'busa wathu ife ndi muzimai ndipo akugunda uthenga wa Yehova kupotsa azibusa amuna ena. Azibambo tifunika tiphunzile kuzichepetsa komanso kumalemekeka azimai pa nchito yayikulu yomwe akugwira. Komanso tisaiwalire kuti tonse tinalengedwa mu chifanizilo cha Yehova.

Literally translated as: Reverends need to encourage women to take part in Church activities. This follows that many women are still afraid as a result of the old rules brought by the DRCM. Being one of the members of the RCZ, I am grateful to God because there is a great change. Currently, the Church has women in leadership positions. During the time of the DRCM women were not supposed to take up leadership positions in the Church but that they were supposed to perform domestic chores in their homes. For example, our Reverend is a woman but preaches better than some of the male Reverends. As men, we should learn to humble ourselves and appreciate the good work that our female counterparts do. Additionally, men should not forget that both men and women were created in the image of God.

4.4 The Church doctrine on gender equality in the Reformed Church in Zambia

With regard to the Church's doctrine on the issue of gender equality, the participants who took part in the FGD agreed that the doctrine supported men and women. The participants also viewed the respect of women to be biblically oriented. Some members also stated that the Bible was clear on the issue of gender; the Bible commanded men to love their wives and wives were supposed to be submissive to their husbands as they were the heads of the families (Ephesians 5:21-25). However, some respondents, especially women were quick to mention that the submission should be out of love for God. One of the participants indicated that if the husband proposed wrong ideas, the wife was not obliged to obey him because that was wrong even if the Bible commands her to be submissive to the husband. Though the common Church's doctrine supported submission, it was not in all things that wives were supposed to submit. For example, the female Reverend from the White Congregation mentioned the following:

Our doctrine has actually supported and created an atmosphere where men and women can work together and achieve a common goal, that of winning souls to Christ. The Bible commands men to love their wives and wives to submit to their husbands, this is a clear verse. Submission is more effective when it is done out of love and not threats. If a man treats a woman well, she will submit to his wishes and this is what the Bible teaches.

Furthermore, the female Reverend from the same Congregation indicated that the Church's doctrine was supportive of gender equality. Both men and women were encouraged to treat each other with respect. This is what she said:

I am very confident that the doctrine of the RCZ supports gender equality because the Bible encourages family unity. Men and women were created by God and equality was ordained by God. Genesis 1 verse 27 says that we were created in the image of God. We do not despise women in our Church. We may differ in principles and body make up but in terms of enjoying opportunities and contributing to the welfare of the society we are equal. For example, I have seen women striving to make a difference in society more than men. God has created us with the same freedom and conscience. As men and women, we are partners. Ephesians 5 verse 22-25 encourages women to be submissive to men, but if we read further the Bible commands men to love their wives and if this principle is followed we will have no cases of gender based violence and gender inequalities.

The male Reverend from the Brown Congregation further added the following:

In the past there were misconceptions on the position of women in the Church. Women were perceived as people who could not run the affairs of the Church the way men did. When we read the Bible, we see God teaching us to treat all humans equally. This has helped us to fight the gender inequality prevailing in the Church. Bearing in mind that we are still maturing as a Church, we have the top most positions being held by men.

In wanting to support his viewpoint, the same male Reverend from the Brown Congregation cited 2 Corinthians 8:13 as follows:

Our desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard pressed, but that there might be equality. At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. Then there will be equality, as it is written (New International Version).

Additionally, one male participant from the White Congregation who took part in the FGD indicated that the Bible actually was not very clear on the position of women being equal to men because in some books women were less important than men. Another male participant

from the White Congregation cited some verses in the Bible that did not actually allow women to speak in the meetings conducted by men and this is what he said:

The Bible has two perspectives on the topic of gender; some sections say women are equal whereas others prohibit women from preaching. For example, 1 Timothy 2:11-12 says a woman shall not speak in the Church. This leaves the Church members with divided opinions regarding what is to be followed.

In the same vein, one of the women who participated in the FGD conducted at the Brown Congregation had this to say:

The RCZ doctrine was not clear about the role of women in the Church. I think the doctrine should be revised to cater for both sexes because so far we have not had a female Moderator at the Synod level. It has always been men holding high positions.

To the contrary, the other male Church member from the White Congregation indicated that though the Church accepted the fact that there was no female Moderator, the Bible allowed women to hold such positions. The board member from the Brown Congregation narrated that only the selection criteria was what needed to be checked to make sure it was not biased towards men. He added that there were more men than women in the selection team. This resulted in the men being biased in their selection. He said:

The RCZ has taken a firm stance by enshrining that the Church constitution coupled with the gender equality policy promoted equality between men and women within the Church and the community. The gender policy strengthens marriage and family ties. Any member who abuses such policies is counselled and if he or she does not change, disciplinary action is taken.

Furthermore, one female member of the FGD conducted at the White Congregation noted the following:

In this Church, we have been told to obey our husbands because we are one and especially that men are the heads of the families. If my husband says I should not be in the committee at Church I am not going to disobey him because if I do it will bring conflict in the home and I don't want that to happen.

4.5 Measures put in place by the RCZ in order to mitigate gender inequality in the Church

On the measures taken in order to mitigate gender inequality in the RCZ, the two Church treasurers indicated that the Church had done several things in terms of policy and action that were meant to create an environment that would encourage women to get involved in Church activities and contribute to the effective running of the Church. Additionally, one of the board members responded that leadership positions were open to all those who had the ability to lead others in a godly way. The other board member from the White Congregation responded that women were not marginalised in terms of the way they interacted with their male counterparts. He said, “Women can take part in decision making processes and this helps them to contribute to the running of the Church.” Furthermore, two of the women participants from the Brown Congregation agreed that the RCZ tried to mitigate gender inequality by ensuring that men and women worked together in the different projects initiated by the Church. For example, another woman from Brown Congregation said the following:

Even though some of us are not Reverends, we still have opportunities to hold leadership positions during meetings and workshops. In these meetings, women can be assigned to chair a group discussion. This is a form of preparation for higher positions.

Similarly, one of the men from the White Congregation responded by narrating what happened in the past:

When I was young no woman could go for theological training because women were regarded as weak vessels who should not be allowed to participate in Church matters. Currently, it is pleasing to mention that many women have been trained as Reverends.

Two of the respondents from both the White and Brown Congregations narrated that the Church had established the women’s desk that was in charge of women’s affairs in the Church. Among the main duties of women at the desk was to see to it that the welfare of women was maintained. However, the desk was just at the Synod level and not at the Congregation level. Though not fully in operation, the women’s desk was a step in the right direction for the promotion of gender equality within the Church and the community. The male Reverend for the Brown Congregation further added the following:

As a Church we have made sure that there is a woman in every committee. This is to ensure that women are included and represented at every level. We have actually found that women are performing well in their positions.

The wife to the Reverend from the Brown Congregation indicated that as a Church they did not treat women differently because the doctrine required them to support women who were committed to the work of the Lord and of the Church. Furthermore, on the issue of being submissive; she indicated that:

Submission should be accompanied with love without which it is impossible. Therefore, if a husband loves his wife, he is not going to stand in her way if she wants to work for God; he is supposed to be supportive and show love, then, the wife will submit to him.

In trying to justify her point of view, the wife to the Reverend from the Brown Congregation cited Ephesian 5:22:

Wives submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the Church, his body, of which he is the saviour. Now as the Church submit to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands love your wives just as Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word (New International Version).

However, when asked what her opinion was considering that the RCZ had not yet had a female overall leader, she noted the following:

I am not saying everything is fine in the Church; there is still a lot that needs to be done. That is why we are promoting and fighting for more women to take up leadership roles so that they have the capacity to handle the entire governance of the Church. If women develop this capacity, they will be chosen to such positions.

The deputy secretary from the White Congregation noted the following:

As a Church we have not been holding seminars to address gender inequality issues. It will be helpful if we started discussing such issues with the general Congregation.

Contrary to the above view, one male youth Church member from the Brown Congregation narrated as follows:

At our Congregation, the Reverend introduced a counselling committee which is responsible for helping those who are experiencing marital disputes and also those who about to get married. This works well if both partners congregate in our Church but the situation becomes difficult if one goes to a different denomination. We also conduct seminars at Congregation level where issues of gender inequality and GBV are discussed.

Similarly, the female Reverend from the White Congregation said:

We usually conduct Bible studies every Sunday in the afternoons at our various sections (dela) where we discuss topics related to gender. We sometimes conduct seminars in which marriage issues are discussed in detail. Since we started these programmes, many people have positively changed their life style and a number of GBV cases have reduced.

4.6 Summary

In summary, this chapter has presented the findings gathered from the responses by different participants. The RCZ has made an improvement in mitigating gender inequality in the Church by preaching, meeting, counselling and having women trained as Reverends. The next chapter discusses the findings of the study and their implications.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Overview

This chapter discusses the findings of the study. The discussion is presented according to the objectives of the study. These were: (1) To investigate the role played by the RCZ in promoting gender equality in Lusaka District (2) To examine the factors that influence gender equality in the RCZ (3) To examine the teaching of the RCZ on gender equality. (4) To analyse the measures taken by the RCZ in order to mitigate gender inequality in the Church.

5.2 The role played by the RCZ in promoting gender equality

The results of the study established that the RCZ played a role in promoting gender equality in the Church and the community. This was done through the teachings which were conducted by the Reverends mostly on Sunday services. The RCZ required the Reverends to preach the importance of family ties as it was a backbone of the Church and the society. This move by RCZ to promote gender equality through the preaching and teaching of God's word is in line with the findings of Townshed (2008) who argued that the word of God was a basis of power in the Church. It had a positive influence in the lives of numerous people and it was so powerful to such an extent that it was able to control how people behaved. It is very interesting to note that RCZ was able to promote gender equality in the Church and the society through the word of God which is the power of God (Matthew 22:29; Romans 1:16; 1 Corinthians 2:4). In addition, the findings gathered from the Brown and White Congregation's top leadership showed that the RCZ played a significant role in mitigating gender inequality through seminars and counselling among couples who faced marital problems and those who were about to get married.

On the other hand, data collected from the deputy secretary from the White Congregation established that though the RCZ has made an improvement in the fight against gender inequality in the Church and the community, most of the adherent were too shy to approach the elders for counselling services because they thought that if they did so, their marital issues would be disclosed to other members of the Church. However, the findings gathered from both the White and Brown Congregations established that there were no measures put in

place by the RCZ to help shy members to use the counselling services. This negated this group of people from making use of the services offered by the Church. From the responses of the women who took part in the FGD discussion, it was established that a lot more needs to be done in order to help such shy Church members to have confidence in our leaders and that includes the Reverends and their spouses.

The findings gathered from the White and Brown Congregations further established that women were still lagging behind their male counterparts due to some patriarchal structures which were introduced in the Church by some self-centred leaders. The above argument is in line with the findings of Casimire, Chukwuelobe and Ugwu (2014) who argued that gender discrimination against women emanated from some selfish traditional rulers who wanted to stick to power for their own advantages and selfish motives. In wanting to achieve their goals, they came up with some rules which blocked women from getting involved in the management of the society. As the result, the Church and the society have been negatively affected.

On the major role the RCZ undertook to mitigate gender inequality, the study established that the Church allowed women to occupy key leadership positions such as being Reverends. In order to achieve this move by the RCZ, women were offered training at the institutions of learning such as Justo Mwale University. The number of women in leadership positions was a good example to other women, and indeed, men. It could be argued that apart from the theological training women received while at the theological institutions, they also interacted with their fellow students socially. During their interactions, ideas were shared, some of which included promotion of gender equality.

The above arguments are similar to the findings of Phiri (2008) who defended the position of educating women globally by African Churches and Theological institutions, with the view to promote the attitude of working together between men and women in religious institutions. This demonstrates that the Church acknowledges the gifts from God to His children to develop the Church. However, the training should be viewed as empowering Christ's servants for the people who were willing to build a community of women and men.

Additionally, the study established that the RCZ leadership conducted meetings, seminars and other training to discuss the challenges that affected the Church, such as gender

inequality and GBV. Numerically, 8 of the respondents showed that the RCZ conducted seminars where they discussed gender inequality while 20 of the respondents who took part in the FGD conducted both at the White and Brown Congregations expressed ignorance on whether the Church held seminars at which gender inequality was discussed. This showed that the seminars were not conducted for the benefit of all the Church members. The selection criteria might be biased to certain individuals, groups or Congregations. However, the findings of the study established that the RCZ endeavoured to disseminate information on gender inequality through the preaching done in the Congregations.

With regard to the specific role the RCZ played in order to mitigate gender inequality in the Church, the study established that since the Church witnessed a number of women Reverends and this number kept increasing each year, the acceptance of women to train in theological universities was an indication that the fight against gender inequality the RCZ endeavoured to achieve, bore fruitful results. This move by the RCZ to have female preachers is supported by the findings of Kasomo (2010) who stated that the role of women was highly recognised and appreciated in the early Church. Kasomo further argued that women participated as deacons, companions of Paul and other apostles and as apostles themselves (Romans 16:7); as Church leaders (Romans 16: 3-5) and Church rulers (Romans 16:1).

However, the findings of the study established that the highest positions in the RCZ were held by men, as was the case during the time of the early Christians. This argument is in line with Nell (2014) who argued that women in Africa, like all women world over have experienced a long history of patriarchal leadership not only in the area of politics, economics and culture but also in the area of religion. In addition, several women targeting for spiritual leadership encounter several hindrances for them to achieve their intended goals. In this regard, men continue to take advantage of women in order to gratify their own selfish goals. Although Churches like the RCZ have now started ordaining women to ministerial positions such as Reverends and evangelists, the Church structure has continued to be patriarchal as well as male-dominated.

5.2.1 Financial challenges

With regard to financial challenges affecting the fight against gender inequality in the RCZ, the findings of the study established that lack of finances was a big challenge in

implementing the programmes meant for the promotion of gender equality and eradication of gender disparities. Financial constraints could limit the Church's plans and activities meant to strengthen gender equality among the members and, indeed, community members at large. The Church members could work towards helping the leadership by involving themselves in income generating activities in which they could raise funds to be used at different Church activities, seminars and workshops inclusive. From the views by the participant who took part in the FGDs at the Brown Congregation, other ways of raising funds included the Church owning a guest house, running a school and clubs in which women and men could be encouraged to produce different items which they could sell to the general public. The Church offerings received were not enough as most of the members were poor and could not contribute much in the form of offering. However, an alternative way was to hold meetings with key stakeholders so as to source for funds to be used in the implementation of different Church activities. Where there was not enough funding the fight against gender inequality was likely to be futile.

5.3 Factors that influence gender inequality in the RCZ

On the factors that influenced the fight against gender inequality in the RCZ, the study established that the teachings from the Bible compelled the Church to enhance gender equality and eradicate gender inequality among all Church members and the society at large. One of the teachings was that the Bible taught that men and women were created equal in the eyes of God, as indicated at Genesis 1:26. Another teaching was that the Bible required both men and women to preach the gospel to everyone as stated in the book of Matthews 28:19. This was the stance taken by the RCZ. The responses by the RCZ leaders showed that though some Churches have not yet started allowing women to preach, the RCZ has done so. The RCZ did not want to segregate anyone or come up with a policy that was going to disadvantage either male or female adherents.

The above argument is similar to the findings of Köstenberger (2012) who argued that both men and women were created in the image and likeness of their God who invested in them with inestimable worth, dignity, and importance. He further stated that human dignity was, therefore, embedded in creation and this implies that both women and men were intrinsically worthy of respect in the Church or any other institution. This respect is derived from being part of God's creation and particularly being made in God's image.

Another factor that influenced the Church to fight the vice was because of the issues that happened in the society, such as traditional practices that marginalised women. It was noted that in some families violence against women was prevalent, as well as verbal abuse. Violence against women and men could have detrimental effects to the families especially if the woman is injured physically. She might spend time meant for the development of the family in hospital nursing wounds resulting from her husband's uncaring attitude. This is not to say that men cannot be injured by their wives. The point is, in Zambia there are more women afflicted by men in relation to GBV. Women were afflicted by verbal and physical abuse they received from their husbands resulting in physical and psychological harm.

The above view is in line with the findings of Fraser (1995) who asserted that for women to enjoy equality, the status hierarchy devaluing women and privileging men must be dismantled. This showed that the battle of gender inequality and GBV can only come to an end upon destroying the source of its problem. It has also been noted that the government and the Church are the voices for the voiceless, the poor women and young girls who have been denied access to education, land, sound jobs and equal power and authority.

The findings of the study established that the major factor of all social evils in the RCZ is the sin of disobedience that Adam and Eve committed in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:24). This came as the result of the deception of Satan who appeared to Eve in form of a serpent. He deceived Eve by telling her that once they eat the fruit they will be like God in wisdom and knowledge. This argument is similar to the findings of Haydnlaan (2014) who affirmed that the manifestations of inequality and of oppression between man and woman does not emanate from creation but from sin. The conflicts that are in the world today, gender discrimination, gender injustice, poverty and the labour pains that a woman experiences are as the result of the sin of disobedience. In its endeavour to fight gender inequality, the RCZ puts into consideration all these factors.

5.3.1 Challenges

On the challenges the RCZ faced, the study established that the fight against gender inequality was challenging because many members of the Church were still ignorant about the issue as they lacked formal education and were not sensitised enough on the importance of gender equality among couples within the Church and the community at large. This was

compounded by the traditional ways of preaching and worshiping that were deemed to be segregative in nature. As much as the RCZ tried to fight gender inequality among the members, the Church also faced internal conflicts between religious leaders who supported the rulership of women and those who did not.

The above views are in line with the findings of Sundkler and Steed (2000) who asserted that women are models of the Church and the general public not only in times of conflicts, but also in times of peace. With or without education, women continue to show allegiance to Christ and His Church. The habit of male dominance has ensured that women remain observers in the Church and the society in general. Sundkler and Steed further stated that patriarchal systems that support male dominance in African societies have influenced gender imbalances in the society and Africa in general. The traditional practices describe women as weak, home caretakers and children nurturers.

The study also established that one of the challenges faced by the RCZ was that it was difficult to engage couples because they attended different Churches and had different doctrines that were not in line with the teachings of the RCZ. It would be easy to teach about gender equality if both spouses belonged to the same denomination believing and sharing the same beliefs. To the contrary, in the RCZ, it was common to find a wife who was the RCZ member while the husband attended a totally different Church denomination with different doctrines. If either spouse did not belong to any Church, it was easier to convince him or her to attend the sessions on gender equality. This is a problem the Church leadership should try to solve at the initial stage of the marriage relationship. Since the doctrine of the RCZ puts emphasis on biblical teachings, members who wish to marry should be advised to select partners from their Church. As the newly married couples worship together, their marriage relationship is strengthened. This should, however, not be part of the Church policy but it should be left to individuals, who want to marry to choose.

The study established that women in the RCZ did not want to actively participate in the top Church leadership because the leadership roles came with a lot of responsibilities that would require them to spend more time in prolonged meetings or at seminars as facilitators. Some husbands did not allow their wives to take up leadership positions and the wives listened to their husbands. This was worse if the husband was not a member of the Church.

Another challenge which was noted was that the RCZ has no clear policy on the issues of gender inequality. This made it rather challenging for the Church to put measures to reform members who practiced gender inequality. It was difficult to push for an agenda that was not supported by the Church's policy. Furthermore, the financial constraints were also a hindrance to the fight against gender inequality in the RCZ. Without funds, it was difficult to hold sensitisation workshops on the importance of practicing gender equality in the Church and the society in general. The respondents who took part in the study expressed confidence in the Church's ability to fight gender inequality in the community and in Zambian society in general. However, without funds they would fail to do this.

5.4 Church Doctrine on Gender Equality

On whether the RCZ supported gender equality, the results of the study established that the RCZ doctrine supported gender equality as it empowered women to be part of the Church leadership. The responses gathered from the Reverends from the Brown and White Congregations established that the doctrine of the RCZ was based on the teachings that men and women were created equal by God; they were both endowed with different abilities. When it came to the work of God they were equal and could both contribute effectively to the growth of the Church and the spread of the word of God. The Church teaching supported the full participation of women in all Church activities. To the contrary, the teaching of the RCZ is different from the findings of Green (2003) who argued that the Church doctrine had actually played a role in advancing gender inequality in the Church. This is because most Church doctrines were made and implemented by men. It was therefore, difficult to have equal opportunities with a group that was seemingly oppressed.

This fight against gender inequality could only end if only the RCZ could implement the current doctrine which supports women in taking up the leadership positions in the Church. As long as the RCZ shows inertia in implementing the doctrine, the fight against gender inequality will be far from being achieved. So, the RCZ endeavoured not to discriminate against any of its members based on gender. Both men and women could contribute to the smooth running of the Church as much as possible. The Bible gives examples of women who worked for God such as Deborah, the prophetess who led Israel to victory over the Canaanites as recorded in the book of Judges Chapter 4 to 5. Another example is Priscilla

together with her husband, who explained to Paul the way of the Lord in accordance to what is recorded in the book of Acts 18:26.

Therefore, women in the RCZ should try to emulate these examples from the Bible. The findings from the treasurers for both the White and Brown Congregations established that the RCZ did not adequately apply the Church's teachings as there were more female members than males but the top leadership was composed of men. If the RCZ followed its doctrine, there could be one moderator at the top leadership; to the contrary, the Church had only men so far.

The above argument is in line with the findings of Beratt (1968) who observed that during the period of missionaries, indigenous families were under attack by the male dominant ideology. To avoid losing many things, women stood up and strongly safeguarded their traditional customs and way of life. Beratt further stated that as the influence of the gospel spread throughout the continent of Africa, the missionary's rigidity started phasing out and the New Testament's vision of freedom of women in Christ was slowly getting rooted in the Church.

As noted in 1 Corinthians 14:34, women are not supposed to be speak or made leaders of the Church but they should be a supporting frame for the Christian home, this makes some members of the RCZ segregate women basing on the depiction of the Bible. As stated in Ephesians 5:22, wives are supposed to be submissive to their husbands and follow the lead of men. This on its own may have negative effects on the right of women in the RCZ and the society. The study established that one of the reasons why there were few women in leadership positions was that some male members adhered to biblical principles strictly and without compromise.

Furthermore, some male Church members followed biblical principles that did not permit women to preach. Other male members were influenced by the biblical principles that women should be submissive to their husbands. This made some husbands refuse to allow their wives to take up leadership positions in the Church. Furthermore, the findings gathered from the deputy secretary of the White and Brown Congregations showed that the RCZ doctrines had influence on how women were treated and viewed in the Church. For example, at 1 Corinthians 11:5-9 women are not allowed to stand in the council of men; they are not supposed to preach to them. Women are therefore, supposed to cover their heads especially

in the presence of men. Such Bible teachings can have influence on the way the religious treat their female counterparts.

The above findings are in agreement with what Essien and Ukpong (2012) pointed out that there was gender bias in the Church. This was even evident in the depiction not only of women but God himself. According to the Bible, God, Jesus and the Spirit are depicted to be male super beings. This depiction made it difficult for some Churches to allow women to serve God because it was believed that only men could represent and serve God well. Due to such teachings it was difficult for women to participate fully in the governance of the RCZ. To the contrary, the RCZ was generally founded on the spirit of oneness and women were part of the Church body.

With regards to Leadership, Matthew 20:26 says, “Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave.” A leader is a servant and slave to his or her people. Another passage from John 10:11, says, “I am a good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.” These Bible passages exemplify that leaders both male and female should be willing to sacrifice their lives, time, energy and finances for their Church members and God’s Kingdom. Similarly, a person chosen to hold a leadership position should be willing and capable of handling issues related to the entire governance of the Church. Women also needed to be qualified in order for them to be appointed as leaders in the Church and the society.

Nevertheless, the Church’s teaching that wives should submit to their husbands has contributed to the marginalisation of women as potential leaders in the RCZ. This argument is in line with the findings of the Arce-Valentin (2017) who argued that the cruelty of the treatment of women in the entire world today reveals an ancient view in certain cultures that women in the natural perspectives are considered to be weaker than men, deserve neither respect nor dignity, formed to serve and to be submissive to men. Arce-Valentin further argued that women are forbidden to leave their homes and participate in the broader life of society.

5.5 Mitigation Measures

With regard to the mitigation measures put in place by the RCZ in its fight against gender inequality, the study established that there were counselling officers responsible for counselling young couples and those who were about to get married. Through the counselling sessions, the RCZ was able to unite families and reduce violence among its members. Apart from the counselling services, seminars were held at Synod level. The information that was received in these seminars was to be shared at grassroots level. The study also established that the RCZ ensured that the number of women admitted in theological learning institutions increased.

The above findings are in line with the findings of Mhango (2004) who argued that counselling and teaching of God's word in the Church widened people's understanding and allowed them to deal with issues that affected women in the fight against gender disparities in the Church and the community. Furthermore, the above argument are also in line with the findings of Susan (2006) who argued that many institutions and organisations in Zambia are being encouraged to practice gender equality and ensure that the rights of women are supported; women participation and gender based violence are at the center of the debate. The RCZ has not been spared from the reach of the fight for women's rights and gender equality, therefore, this study was aimed at finding out the role played by the RCZ in promoting gender equality and measures which were put in place in order to mitigate gender inequality.

5.6 Summary

This chapter discussed the findings of the study and research questions. Besides, it has interpreted the results of the study. The next chapter presents the summary, conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Overview

This chapter summarises the findings of the study, which sought to analyse the role that the RCZ played in promoting gender equality in Lusaka District; it sought to examine the factors that influence gender inequality in the RCZ; it also sought to examine the teaching of the RCZ on gender equality and finally the measures taken by the RCZ in order to mitigate gender inequality in the Church.

6.2 Conclusion

It is worth noting that the RCZ has continued to play a significant role in promoting gender equality and in the fight against gender inequality in the Church and Zambian society at large. The study established that the RCZ has continued to play a role in the fight against gender inequality mainly at the Congregational level rather than the community or country level. The study further established that the RCZ has done this through their Sunday preachings, counsellings and seminars that were mostly held at the Synod level to discuss ways of mitigating gender inequality. The RCZ has also continued to include topics related to gender equality in their preaching programmes.

The study established that the RCZ established a desk at the Synod level that is meant to be responsive to the needs of the women in the Church; this desk is specifically meant to strengthen the rights of the women. The study further established that the RCZ has female Reverends in some of the Congregations in the country. In order to have representation in the leadership of the Church, Justo Mwale University increased the number of women who were trained to become Reverends. The female Reverends have acted as role models to other women and, as such, more female members of the RCZ are now involved in the leadership of the Church.

The study further established the challenges that the RCZ faced in the fight against gender inequality. Financial challenges were top on the list. The RCZ did not have enough funds that could be used for the purposes of conducting seminars or meetings meant to share information on gender equality. Due to lack of funds, the RCZ could not organise

Congregations to meet together and share information on the importance of gender equality. In addition, cultural practices such as the man is the head of the woman continue to pose a challenge in the fight against gender inequality as some cultural practices hindered women from contesting the leadership positions promoted in the RCZ.

Women are not up to the challenge to contest the positions at the same level as men. Most women did not want to be part of the Church leadership because of the other responsibilities they hold at home. Some declined to take up the responsibility because of their husbands who are not willing to allow them to take up leadership positions in the RCZ. Furthermore, couples who did not congregate together posed a challenge to the Church as information was shared with only one member as opposed to when the couple attended services together. The RCZ needed to counsel both the husband and the wife so that they can acquire knowledge on how to live as a couple free from violence.

The study also examined the doctrine and how it had influenced the gender equality issue. The doctrine of the RCZ does not negatively influence the fight against gender inequality in the Church; the doctrine supports the inclusion of women in the leadership of the Church. However, the RCZ does not have a clear policy on the fight against gender inequality. It was due to this lack of policy that the RCZ did not allocate funds to the fight against gender inequality.

6.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings and objectives of this research the following are the recommendations:

- The RCZ needs to provide funding to the women's desk as it is the one responsible for women agendas.
- The RCZ should formulate a clear policy on gender equality.
- The RCZ should have seminars and workshops on gender equality even at Congregational level so that everyone is involved.
- The RCZ should consider introducing capacity building workshops for women in order to build in them the confidence to lead as this can help them take up top most positions in the Church.

6.4 Recommendation for future research

For future research, the following is being recommended. There is need to find out if there is a difference in terms of performance between the Churches led by male Reverends and those led by female Reverends.

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APPENDICES

Appendix i: Consent Form

My name is Njobvu Dickson, a post graduate student at the University of Zambia pursuing Masters of Religious Studies. I am doing a research on the role of the Reformed Church in Zambia in Promoting Gender Equality: A Case of Lilanda and Garden House Congregations in Lusaka District. I am hereby requesting for your participation in this study. Kindly read the following information before you decide to or not to take part in the study.

1. Your participation in this study is absolutely voluntary. If you are willing to take part, then you are also free to withdraw any time you want to.
2. Confidentiality and trustworthy shall be observed on every information collected which shall only be used for academic purposes.
3. Each and every response on the topic under study shall greatly be valued since you will have contributed discovering solutions to the research under study.
4. If you agree to take part in this study, may you kindly write your name and signature in the spaces provided below.

Participant's Name: **Signature:**

Date:

Appendix ii: Focus Group Discussion Guide For Men

To analyse the role of the RCZ in promoting gender equality.		
	FGD QUESTIONS:	RESPONSES:
1	How does the Church help in the alleviation of the gender inequality in the RCZ?	
2	What specific role does the RCZ play in the promotion of gender equality?	
3	How active is the RCZ involvement in advocating for gender equality? What activities has the Church put up to ensure gender equality?	
4	How can the RCZ ensure that its programs promote gender equality? Mention some programs that the Church has put to promote gender equality?	
5	Has the RCZ allocated enough resources to promote the policy and works that involve gender equality?	
6	How can the RCZ active involvement in gender equality issues reduce the cases of gender based violence? Do you think the Church has so far helped to promote gender equality? Explain.	
To examine the factors that Influence gender equality in the RCZ.		

7	What things or circumstances influence gender equality in the RCZ?	
8	Do you feel confident that the RCZ stands for the rights of women? Mention the things that have been put in place by the RCZ.	
9	How is social status likely to affect gender equality in the RCZ?	
10	How are the decisions making powers in the Church likely to influence women involvement in the Church activities in the RCZ? Are decisions making powers well distributed between men and women?	
11	How can relationships or marriage affect the involvement of one gender in the Church activities?	
12	What measures can the Church put in place to reduce the things that hamper active women participation in the Church activities?	
To examine the teaching or doctrine of the RCZ on gender equality.		

13	How does the Church doctrines help promote gender equality in the RCZ?	
14	Does the depiction of women in the Bible influence how they are treated in the RCZ? For example, the Bible depicts women as helpers to men and background players in the company of men, how does such portrayal of women affect the Church's doctrine with regards to gender equality? Reference	
15	Does the Church doctrine influence the leadership roles in terms of numbers of women elders, pastors and deacons in the RCZ?	
16	How does the Church doctrine influence the inclusion of women in the strategic planning, policy formulation and allocation of responsibilities in the RCZ?	
17	What doctrine and approach do you feel should be used to promote gender equality in the RCZ? Why?	
18	What is the position of the Church's doctrine on the promotion of gender equality in the RCZ?	
To analyse the measures taken by the RCZ to mitigate gender inequality in the Church.		

19	What specific measures is the RCZ taking to increase the participation of women in decision making?	
20	What measures are being put to increase the number of women in decision making positions in the RCZ?	

Appendix iii: Focus Group Discussion Guide For Women

To analyse the role of the RCZ in promoting gender equality.		
	FGD QUESTIONS:	RESPONSES:
1	How does the Church help in the alleviation of the gender inequality in the RCZ?	
2	What specific role does the RCZ play in the promotion of gender equality?	
3	How active is the RCZ involvement in advocating for gender equality? What activities has the Church put up to ensure gender equality?	
4	How can the RCZ ensure that its programs promote gender equality? Mention some programs that the Church has put to promote gender equality?	
5	Has the RCZ allocated enough resources to promote the policy and works that involve gender equality?	
6	How can the RCZ active involvement in gender equality issues reduce the cases of gender based violence? Do you think the Church has so far helped to promote gender equality? Explain.	
To examine the factors that Influence gender equality in the RCZ.		

7	What things or circumstances influence gender equality in the RCZ?	
8	Do you feel confident that the RCZ stands for the rights of women? Mention the things that have been put in place by the RCZ.	
9	How is social status likely to affect gender equality in the RCZ?	
10	How are the decisions making powers in the Church likely to influence women involvement in the Church activities in the RCZ? Are decisions making powers well distributed between men and women?	
11	How can relationships or marriage affect the involvement of one gender in the Church activities?	
12	What measures can the Church put in place to reduce the things that hamper active women participation in the Church activities?	
To examine the teaching or doctrine of the RCZ on gender equality.		

13	How does the Church doctrines help promote gender equality in the RCZ?	
14	Does the depiction of women in the Bible influence how they are treated in the RCZ? For example, the Bible depicts women as helpers to men and background players in the company of men, how does such portrayal of women affect the Church's doctrine with regards to gender equality? Reference	
15	Does the Church doctrine influence the leadership roles in terms of numbers of women elders, pastors and deacons in the RCZ?	
16	How does the Church doctrine influence the inclusion of women in the strategic planning, policy formulation and allocation of responsibilities in the RCZ?	
17	What doctrine and approach do you feel should be used to promote gender equality in the RCZ? Why?	
18	What is the position of the Church's doctrine on the promotion of gender equality in the RCZ?	
To analyse the measures taken by the RCZ to mitigate gender inequality in the Church.		

19	What specific measures is the RCZ taking to increase the participation of women in decision making?	
20	What measures are being put to increase the number of women in decision making positions in the RCZ?	

Appendix iv: Focus Group Discussion Guide For The Youths

To analyse the role of the RCZ in promoting gender equality.		
	FGD QUESTIONS:	RESPONSES:
1	How does the Church help in the alleviation of the gender inequality in the RCZ?	
2	What specific role does the RCZ play in the promotion of gender equality?	
3	How active is the RCZ involvement in advocating for gender equality? What activities has the Church put up to ensure gender equality?	
4	How can the RCZ ensure that its programs promote gender equality? Mention some programs that the Church has put to promote gender equality?	
5	Has the RCZ allocated enough resources to promote the policy and works that involve gender equality?	
6	How can the RCZ active involvement in gender equality issues reduce the cases of gender based violence? Do you think the Church has so far helped to promote gender equality? Explain.	
To examine the factors that Influence gender equality in the RCZ.		

7	What things or circumstances influence gender equality in the RCZ?	
8	Do you feel confident that the RCZ stands for the rights of women? Mention the things that have been put in place by the RCZ.	
9	How is social status likely to affect gender equality in the RCZ?	
10	How are the decisions making powers in the Church likely to influence women involvement in the Church activities in the RCZ? Are decisions making powers well distributed between men and women?	
11	How can relationships or marriage affect the involvement of one gender in the Church activities?	
12	What measures can the Church put in place to reduce the things that hamper active women participation in the Church activities?	
To examine the teaching or doctrine of the RCZ on gender equality.		

13	How does the Church doctrines help promote gender equality in the RCZ?	
14	Does the depiction of women in the Bible influence how they are treated in the RCZ? For example, the Bible depicts women as helpers to men and background players in the company of men, how does such portrayal of women affect the Church's doctrine with regards to gender equality? Reference	
15	Does the Church doctrine influence the leadership roles in terms of numbers of women elders, pastors and deacons in the RCZ?	
16	How does the Church doctrine influence the inclusion of women in the strategic planning, policy formulation and allocation of responsibilities in the RCZ?	
17	What doctrine and approach do you feel should be used to promote gender equality in the RCZ? Why?	
18	What is the position of the Church's doctrine on the promotion of gender equality in the RCZ?	
To analyse the measures taken by the RCZ to mitigate gender inequality in the Church.		

19	What specific measures is the RCZ taking to increase the participation of women in decision making?	
20	What measures are being put to increase the number of women in decision making positions in the RCZ?	

Appendix v: Interviews Guide for the Reverends and their Spouses

To analyse the role played by the RCZ in promoting gender equality.

- a. What part has the RCZ played in promoting gender equality in Zambia?

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- b. Do you feel there is a difference in the fight against gender inequality or gender based violence when the RCZ is involved? Explain.

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- c. What specific action has the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) taken to promote gender equality in Zambia?

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- d. The fight against gender inequality can be costly, it may require funds and time to implement. How capable is the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) to tackle such an endeavor?

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- e. Are there things you can point at that the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) has done to promote gender equality in Zambia?

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To examine the factors that influence gender inequality in the RCZ.

- a. What things have influenced gender equality in the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ)?

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b. What things pose a challenge to the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) promotion of gender equality policies?

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c. Do you feel confident about the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) capacity to successfully transform people’s minds and behaviour towards gender equality in Zambia?

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d. How can a good social status of women influence their role in decision making in the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ)?

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e. What measures can the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) take to promote gender equality among its members and Zambian society?

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To examine the teaching or doctrine of the RCZ on gender equality.

a. Do you feel the Church doctrine has supported or promoted gender equality in the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ)?

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b. How is the depiction of women in the Bible as “being submissive to men” influenced the doctrine on gender equality in the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ)?

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- c. How has the Church’s functional doctrine helped shaped the perception of the female members in the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ)?
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- d. What stance has the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) taken on gender equality? Is there a policy that specifically supports gender equality in the Church?
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To analyse the measures taken by the RCZ to mitigate gender inequality in the Church.

- a. What specific measures is the RCZ taking to increase the participation of women in decision making?
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- b. What measures are being put to increase the number of women in decision making positions in the RCZ?
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Appendix vi: Interviews Guide For The Church Treasurers

To analyse the role played by the RCZ in promoting gender equality.

- a. What part has the RCZ played in promoting gender equality in Zambia?

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- b. Do you feel there is a difference in the fight against gender inequality or gender based violence when the RCZ is involved? Explain.

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- c. What specific action has the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) taken to promote gender equality in Zambia?

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- d. The fight against gender inequality can be costly, it may require funds and time to implement. How capable is the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) to tackle such an endeavor?

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- e. Are there things you can point at that the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) has done to promote gender equality in Zambia?

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To examine the factors that influence gender inequality in the RCZ.

- a. What things have influenced gender equality in the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ)?

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- b. What things pose a challenge to the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) promotion of gender equality policies?

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- c. Do you feel confident about the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) capacity to successfully transform people's minds and behaviour towards gender equality in Zambia?

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- d. How can a good social status of women influence their role in decision making in the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ)?

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- e. What measures can the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) take to promote gender equality among its members and Zambian society?

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To examine the teaching or doctrine of the RCZ on gender equality.

- a. Do you feel the Church doctrine has supported or promoted gender equality in the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ)?

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b. How is the depiction of women in the Bible as “being submissive to men” influenced the doctrine on gender equality in the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ)?

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c. How has the Church’s functional doctrine helped shaped the perception of the female members in the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ)?

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d. What stance has the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) taken on gender equality? Is there a policy that specifically supports gender equality in the Church?

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To analyse the measures taken by the RCZ to mitigate gender inequality in the Church.

a. What specific measures is the RCZ taking to increase the participation of women in decision making?

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b. What measures are being put to increase the number of women in decision making positions in the RCZ?

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Appendix vii: Interviews Guide for the Church Secretaries

To analyse the role played by the RCZ in promoting gender equality.

- a. What part has the RCZ played in promoting gender equality in Zambia?

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- b. Do you feel there is a difference in the fight against gender inequality or gender based violence when the RCZ is involved? Explain.

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- c. What specific action has the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) taken to promote gender equality in Zambia?

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- d. The fight against gender inequality can be costly, it may require funds and time to implement. How capable is the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) to tackle such an endeavor?

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- e. Are there things you can point at that the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) has done to promote gender equality in Zambia?

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To examine the factors that influence gender inequality in the RCZ.

- a. What things have influenced gender equality in the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ)?

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b. What things pose a challenge to the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) promotion of gender equality policies?

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c. Do you feel confident about the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) capacity to successfully transform people's minds and behaviour towards gender equality in Zambia?

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d. How can a good social status of women influence their role in decision making in the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ)?

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e. What measures can the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) take to promote gender equality among its members and Zambian society?

To examine the teaching or doctrine of the RCZ on gender equality.

a. Do you feel the Church doctrine has supported or promoted gender equality in the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ)?

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b. How is the depiction of women in the Bible as "being submissive to men" influenced the doctrine on gender equality in the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ)?

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- c. How has the Church's functional doctrine helped shaped the perception of the female members in the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ)?

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- d. What stance has the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) taken on gender equality? Is there a policy that specifically supports gender equality in the Church?

To analyse the measures taken by the RCZ to mitigate gender inequality in the Church.

- a. What specific measures is the RCZ taking to increase the participation of women in decision making?

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- b. What measures are being put to increase the number of women in decision making positions in the RCZ?

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Appendix viii: Interviews Guide for the Four Board Members

To analyse the role played by the RCZ in promoting gender equality.

- a. What part has the RCZ played in promoting gender equality in Zambia?

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- b. Do you feel there is a difference in the fight against gender inequality or gender based violence when the RCZ is involved? Explain.

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- c. What specific action has the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) taken to promote gender equality in Zambia?

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- d. The fight against gender inequality can be costly, it may require funds and time to implement. How capable is the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) to tackle such an endeavor?

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- e. Are there things you can point at that the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) has done to promote gender equality in Zambia?

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To examine the factors that influence gender inequality in the RCZ.

a. What things have influenced gender equality in the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ)?

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b. What things pose a challenge to the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) promotion of gender equality policies?

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c. Do you feel confident about the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) capacity to successfully transform people's minds and behaviour towards gender equality in Zambia?

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d. How can a good social status of women influence their role in decision making in the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ)?

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e. What measures can the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) take to promote gender equality among its members and Zambian society?

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To examine the teaching or doctrine of the RCZ on gender equality.

a. Do you feel the Church doctrine has supported or promoted gender equality in the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ)?

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b. How is the depiction of women in the Bible as “being submissive to men” influenced the doctrine on gender equality in the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ)?

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c. How has the Church’s functional doctrine helped shaped the perception of the female members in the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ)?

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d. What stance has the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ) taken on gender equality? Is there a policy that specifically supports gender equality in the Church?

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To analyse the measures taken by the RCZ to mitigate gender inequality in the Church.

a. What specific measures is the RCZ taking to increase the participation of women in decision making?

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b. What measures are being put to increase the number of women in decision making positions in the RCZ?

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