

**WOMEN AND THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE IN ZAMBIA: A HISTORICAL STUDY
OF THEIR ROLES AND SIGNIFICANCE 1948 - 1964**

BY

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DECLARATION

I, Christine Chisha, hereby declare that this dissertation represents my own work, and no other exactly work has been submitted before at this or any other University. Where similar works were drawn upon, acknowledgements was duly made.

Sign: **Date:**

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APPROVAL

This dissertation of CHRISTINE CHISHA is approved as fulfilling the partial requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in History by the University of Zambia.

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ABSTRACT

The study examines the significant roles played by women in the liberation struggle of Zambia. It argues that the role of women in the fight for Zambia's independence struggle has been neglected in spite of the oral data from the actual participants and few records which prove their participation in this period. The study further argues that the literature on women participation in this domain is scanty. Many writers suggest that women had no impact or played insignificant roles in pre-colonial societies. The study has revealed that the main reasons for such a notion is that pre-colonial societies were steeped in patriarchal order which discriminated women's roles to domestic spheres. Mainly the platforms of politics were considered as just for men while the women's platform was considered to be private. Hence public platforms such as politics were not considered as places for women but for men. However, women still participated and had great influence and impact in politics. The study reveals that women played significant roles for the fight of Zambia's independence. The inception of women's participation in public politics has been attributed to the civil disturbances which took place in the Copperbelt. The evidence shows that women contributed greatly towards the struggle for better working conditions in the mines of Northern Rhodesia. This was their beginning of active participation in politics of this country. Women were incorporated in the labour strikes and the Welfare Societies that fought colonialism and its discrimination. When political parties were formed to fight colonialism in Zambia, women still continued to work with men to liberate Zambia from colonial masters. The study also shows that most political parties which were formed in Zambia incorporated the women in their activities. In the African National Congress (ANC), Zambia African National Congress (ZANC) and United National Independence Party (UNIP), women played crucial roles in party mobilisation, dissemination of information, provided and cooked food for the men in detention and those who were hiding in the bush from the wrath of colonial authorities. They helped in raising funds which were used for the smooth running of the political activities. The women also played an important role in organising other women who took part in the protests, picketing, rioting and demonstrations as a way to rebel against colonialism and its systems. The study concluded that despite women facing many challenges coming from patriarchal phenomenon, their participation in the struggle for independence contributed to various achievements which are still visible to date. This is because when Zambia gained independence many of the patriarchal norms which suppressed them were relaxed.

DEDICATION

To my father, dad I wish you were here to see the achievements I have made in life. You treasured education and encouraged all your children to do so. You said 'life is a riddle; you don't know what tomorrow brings'. But when you have education, you are safe. It is sad that you answered God's call earlier. You would have witnessed this achievement I have made. **M. Y. S. C. T. R. I.**
E. P.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AMU	African Mines Workers' Union
ANC	African National Congress
FAWS	Federation of African Welfare Societies
MASA	Mines African Staff Association
NAZ	National Archives of Zambia
NRAC	Northern Rhodesia African Congress
NRAMU	Northern Rhodesia African Mine Workers' Union
NRANC	Northern Rhodesia African National Congress
NRC	Northern Rhodesia Congress
UMCB	Ecumenical United Missions in Copperbelt (UMCB)
UMHK	Union Miniere du Haut Katanga
UNIP	United National Independence Party
UNZA	University of Zambia
ZANC	Zambia African National Congress

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Women protesting for their suffrage rights in United States of America (USA) 1912....	2
Figure 2: The 19 th Amendment Bill of 1919	3
Figure 3. Women’s protest at the airport during the arrival of the British colonial secretary Ian Macleod	70
Figure 4. List of women who obtained high positions after independence.....	100

TABLE OF CONTENT

DECLARATION.....	i
COPYRIGHT	ii
APPROVAL	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
DEDICATION	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vi
ABBREVIATIONS	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	1
1.0 Introduction and Historical Background.....	1
1.1 Statement of the Problem	12
1.2 Objectives of the study.....	12
1.3 Rationale of the Study.....	13
1.4 Literature Review	13
1.5 Research Methodology	24
1.6 Organisation of the study	25
CHAPTER TWO: WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE OF ZAMBIA.....	26
2. 0. Introduction	26
2.1 The genesis of women’s participation in the liberation struggle.....	27
2.2 Women as tools for labour stabilisation in the mine companies	29
2.3. The significant roles of women in the Copperbelt strikes	32
2.4. The significance of women in the African Mine Workers Union (AMWU)	36
2.5.0 Factors which galvanised the joining of women in Zambia’s liberation struggle	39

2.5.1 Civil unrest of the mine compounds.....	39
2.5.2. The inclusion of women in the mine workers ‘union.....	41
2.5.3. The Mbeni Society and Kalela Dance	41
2.5.4. The Incorporation Women in the Welfare Association Meetings	42
2.5.5. African National Congress (ANC) and the Women’s League.....	43
2.5.6. United National Independence Party (UNIP) and Women’s Brigade.....	44
2.5.7. Education and Town Exposure	44
2.5. 8. Marriages	46
2.5.9. Living with freedom fighters	48
2.6 Conclusion.....	49
CHAPTER THREE: THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE EARLY NATIONALIST	
MOVEMENTS 1948 – 1964.....	51
3.0. Introduction	51
3.1. Women and the ANC.....	51
3.2. The Split in the African National Congress, 1958-1960.....	60
3.3.0 Women and the United National Independence Party (UNIP), 1960-1964.....	65
3.3.1 Mobilisation	68
3.3.2. Demonstration and Protests	69
3.3.3. Housed Nationalist Leaders	76
3.3.4. Food Providers	77
3.3.5. Fundraising for the party	78
3.3.6. Taking Care of the Family	79
2.7 Conclusion.....	80
CHAPTER FOUR: CHALLENGES AND SUCESSSES OF WOMEN IN ZAMBIA’S	
LIBERATION STRUGGLE.....	81
4.0. Introduction	81

4.1. Challenges faced by women.....	82
4.1.1. Patriarchal Norms.....	82
4.1.2. Patriarchal and Colonialism Norms	88
4.2. Successes.....	96
4.3 Conclusion.....	102
CHAPTER FIVE.....	104
CONCLUSION	104
BIBLIOGRAPHY	109

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

1.0 Introduction and Historical Background

Patriarchal structure of culture significantly contributed to the marginalisation of women in political activities. Women faced a lot of challenges from patriarchal system world over. The word patriarchy originated from the Greek word *patriarkhes* which meant the rule of the father.¹ However, the concept of patriarchy originally referred to the rule of any male elder over younger members of the family regardless of their gender.² But recent studies from feminist scholars define patriarchy in relation to the dominating role of men in subordinating women.³

Women all over the world, were greatly excluded from the global political arena in comparison to their male counterparts due to patriarchal nature of politics in which men were considered bearers of culturally legitimated authority.⁴ Silvia Walby argues that patriarchal systems domesticated set of roles for women. These roles were achieved through developing the dichotomous discourse of public for men and private for women sphere in which women should be restricted to household arrangement.⁵ Due to this arrangement, women were traditionally viewed by patriarchy as the members of private life and therefore a public domain like politics did not favour their presence. Despite of all this, women all over the world took part in the political struggle of their nations. The struggle took place in various forms. Some were involved directly in the fight for the liberation of their nations and while others fought for their suffrage

¹ Fiona J. Green, 'Patriarchal Ideology of Motherhood', in Andrea, O'Reilly, **Encyclopaedia of Motherhood**, Volume 1, SAGE, (2010), p, 969.

² Hamoon Khelghat-Doost and Suzyrman Sibly, The Impact of Patriarchy on Women's Political Participation, **Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Science**, 10, 3, (2020), p, 389.

³ Khelghat-Doost and Sibly, The Impact of Patriarchy on Women's Political Participation, p, 398.

⁴ M. Z. Rosaldo, Women, Culture and society: A Theoretical Overview in M. Z. Rosaldo, L. Lamphere and J. Bamberger (Eds.) **Women, Culture and Society**, (Stanford: Stanford University, 1974), p, 21.

⁵ Silvia Walby, Theorising Patriarchy, **Journal of Sociology**, 23, 2, (1989), p, 220.

right as it was the case of women in France, America and Britain. The fight for suffrage right, was the earliest form of women's fight against state patriarchy in the history of democratic countries. The term women's suffrage refers to a movement that encompasses social – political economic reforms demanded by women through voting rights in an election.⁶

In America, women basically struggled for their suffrage right. Women intensively fought for their rights to vote for decades. It was only after the 19th Amendment which guaranteed American women the right to vote. Before the documentation of America's women suffrage, it shows that, in order to achieve this demand, a lot of women were involved in civil disobedience such as picketing, parades, silent vigils, hunger strike and many more demonstrations. In so doing many of their leaders were heckled, jailed and sometimes physically abused.⁷

Figure 1. Women protesting for their suffrage rights in United States of America (USA) 1912

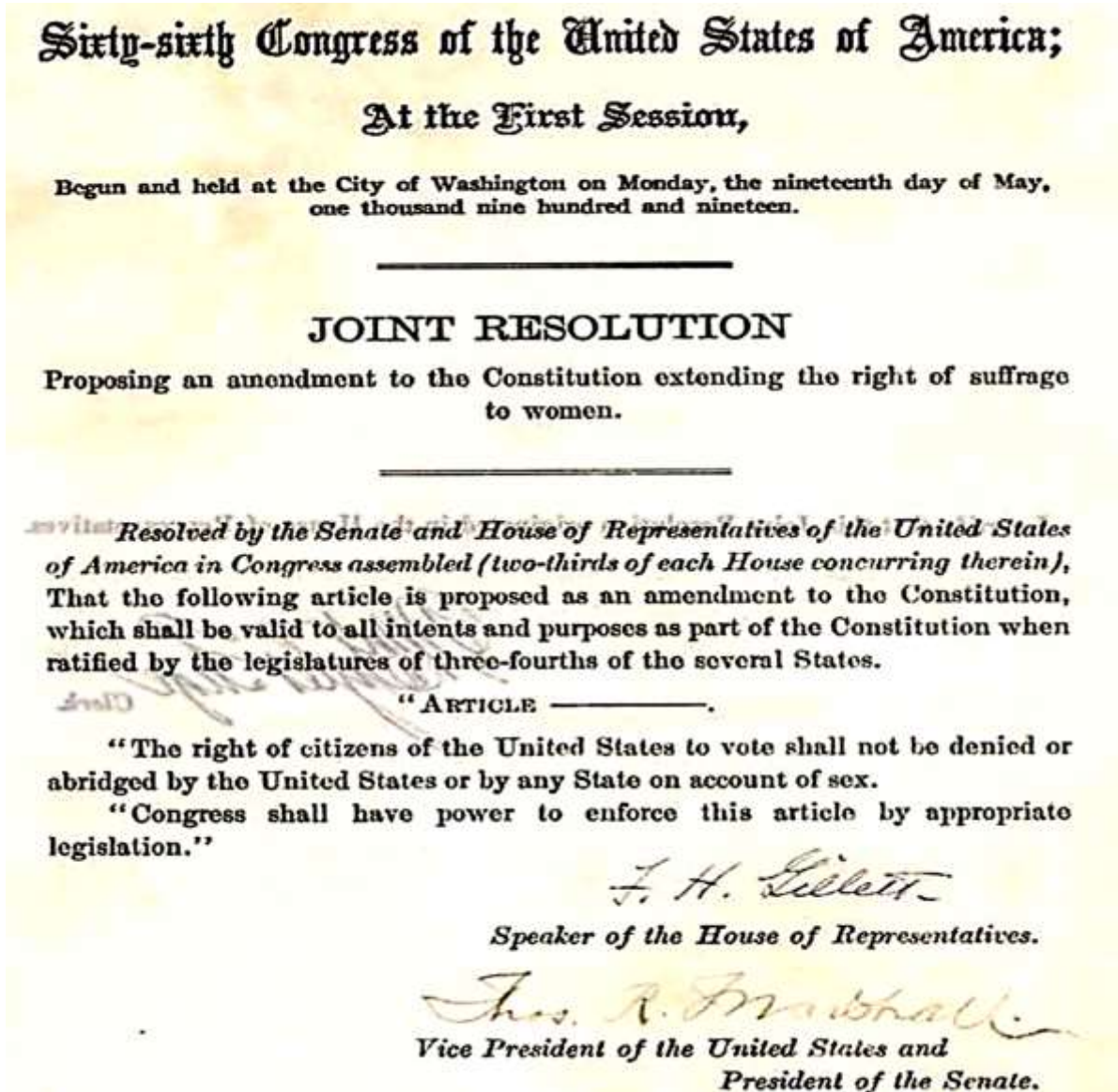


Suffragette Banner catalog.archives.gov/id/533769

⁶ USAID, Patriarchy Barriers to Women's Political Participation in South – East Asia: Lesson from the Philippines, Cambodia, Malaysia, Indonesia and Timor-Leste on Patriarchy and the Rise of Women's Participation in State Politics, Kemitraan Partnership, Jakarta, August, 2014.

⁷ archives.gov/exhibits/featured-document/amendment-19. Date cited, 05.04 2022.

Figure 2: The 19th Amendment Bill of 1919



Amendment-19 catalog.archives.gov/id/596314

The entrenched gender roles and stereotyping served to reinforce discrimination against women through persistence of harmful traditional norms, practices and patriarchal attitudes regarding the roles, responsibilities and identities of women and men in all spheres of life. Women’s caregiver responsibilities, women’s participation in politics and public life was significantly limited by patriarchal culture, where

women were not considered fit to join politics.⁸ This is similar to the case of the Bulgarian women who were also not allowed to take part in politics. The only time they were incorporated in the politics of Bulgaria was when they were deemed useful in raising warriors that would contribute to the nationalist movement of the nation. Women were given this opportunity with consideration that they were caregivers and the one who raised children at home. Because of this notion, women in Bulgaria were joined in politics to play the role of mothers and educators. In order to achieve this, promotion of women's education was supported with an idea that if women were to play vital roles in nationalist movement, they needed to be educated.⁹ The Balkan literature shows that Karavelov assigned women a decisive role as mothers and educators coming to a conclusion that 'a slave will bear slaves and only liberated mothers can bear free individuals'.¹⁰ Hence, from the onset, the tendency of reducing women to their reproductive capacity and maternal roles was presented.

In India, women too participated in India's freedom struggle. Rina Pal articulates that India's history is incomplete without mentioning the sacrifice made by women during the struggle for independence. Pal argues that when most of the men were in prison, women took over the arena of the freedom struggle. They intensively contributed in the freedom struggle of their nation.¹¹ The Indian literature reveals that on 8th November, 1927, British government appointed a commission of only British officials which was called The Simon Commission. The Congress in India also passed a resolution that The Simon Commission should be opposed everywhere.¹² Many Indian women took part in the demonstration against The Simon Commission. Hansa Mehta played a leading role among the demonstrators. In Punjab, Radha

⁸ cliohistory.org/click/politics-social/politics.05.04.2022

⁹ Angelova Penka, 'Women and Nationalism: on the Position of women in the Nationalist Movement of Bulkan Peninsula, UCLA', **Women's Law Journal**, 5, 1, (1994), p, 57.

¹⁰ Penka, 'Women and Nationalism: on the Position of women in the Nationalist Movement of Bulkan Peninsula', p, 56.

¹¹ Rina Pal, 'The Role of Women in the Indian Freedom Struggle 1905 – 1927', **International Journal of Social Science**, 4, 1, (2019), p, 37.

¹² Pal, 'The Role of Women in the Indian Freedom Struggle 1905 – 1927', p, 37.

Devi, Pravati Devi, Lado Rani Zutshi, Atma Devi, Kartar Kaur, Rajkumari, AmritKaur and many more women participated in the boycott of The Simon Commission. The Indians believed that the Simon Commission was a negation of India's right to self-determination.¹³ Therefore both men and women worked together to campaign against The Simon Commission. During this period, a lot of Indian women broke away from various restrictions and got out of their traditional home-oriented roles and responsibilities. However, Pal argues that it was not easy for women to fight as warriors in a patriarchal society.¹⁴ This is because during this period politics were viewed as men's platform by patriarchal cultural society.

In most African countries, women similarly participated in the fight for independence in their nations. They worked alongside the men even though, there is little detailed literature which narrates their participation in the fight for the independence of their nations. Perhaps this is due to the same patriarchal domain. A lot of writers suggest that women had no impact or played insignificant roles in pre-colonial societies. The reason to this omission, is that the production of mainstream historical literature was done by men, it was about men and for the men.¹⁵ Another widely held view is that pre-colonial African societies were steeped in the patriarchal order, diminished women, and consigned them to the domestic sphere. The gender school of historical analysis posits that women's labour was controlled by the males. When the Europeans came to Africa, they too focused more on men than women. This possibly confirms that patriarchy was a global phenomenon.¹⁶ The evidence about women's participation in the liberation struggle is limited because even European men who recorded it were interested in the influential men. The history in this era was viewed as a story of a great man.¹⁷ In addition, there were not enough educated

¹³ Pal, 'The Role of Women in the Indian Freedom Struggle 1905 – 1927', p, 37.

¹⁴ Pal, 'The Role of Women in the Indian Freedom Struggle 1905 – 1927', p, 37.

¹⁵ Anna Lefatshe Moagi and Butholezwe Mtombeni, **Women in Pre-colonial Africa: Southern Africa**, (Pretoria: University of South Africa, 2020), p, 2.

¹⁶ Lefatshe Moagi and Butholezwe Mtombeni, **Women in Pre-colonial Africa: Southern Africa**, p, 2

¹⁷ Anna Lefatshe Moagi and Butholezwe Mtombeni, **Women in Pre-colonial Africa: Southern Africa**, p, 2

African women who would have picked up the challenge to write the history of their participation. When men recorded the events in the liberation struggle, they wrote about themselves. A good example is from the Kapwepwe Diaries from pages 37 to 53, the author wrote about the history of the split of African National Congress (ANC), the formation of Zambia African National Congress (ZANC), how ZANC was banned and the formation of United National Independence Party (UNIP) without mentioning the women's participation, yet oral data and other sources such as newspapers prove their participation.

Despite many challenges and obstacles which women faced in the liberation struggle, Africa women significantly contributed to the achievement for the independence of many nations. In South Africa, women participated in resisting the policies of the European settlers' colonial rule under British and Boer dominations. As early as 1908, African women fought against racist laws that prohibited the brewing and distribution of traditional beverages which was a forbidden act. This was done so that the men could be lured in to beerhalls and be drained of their wage earnings. The women boycotted and picketed at the beerhalls, forcing many of these places to close. They demanded that profits from the establishments be utilised to develop housing and amenities for African people relegated to the townships by the racist colonial system.¹⁸ In the 1950s women staged protests in Pretoria against pass laws. The major demand of women's marching in Pretoria was to abolish the passes which controlled the movement of Africans in their own country.¹⁹ The protests against pass laws were wide spread in South Africa.

In Kenya too, women took part in the liberation struggle of their land. They were incorporated in the Mau Mau because of the great need for it to increase in its membership. Gachihi argues that it is not right to overlook the influence of Kenyan women who played significant roles in the political and military system

¹⁸ Abayomi Azikwe, www.worker.org/2010/world/women-africa-0819, 20.04.2022.

¹⁹ Abayomi Azikwe, www.worker.org/2010/world/women-africa-0819, 20.04.2022.

of pre-colonial Kenya. This is because women played vital roles in the liberation struggle of Kenya.²⁰ A closer look however, reveals that although women did not wield any formal political power and certainly not in any leadership capacity, their influence was undoubtedly felt.

In Algeria, the veteran's affairs report of 1974 shows that a good number of Algerian women fought in the liberation struggle of their nation. The militants took up arms to fight for independence from France. The educated women joined the Maquis (the rebel forces operating from the mountain) when the arrest in the city was imminent. They taught illiterate peasant women about their social roles and explained colonialism, the revolution and the reason to fight for independence.²¹ However, the women who participated in the wars of liberation struggle were not spared by the French police. Hessini narrates that French military and police did not spare women participants who were captured and about 2,200 mujahidat (women combatants) were arrested and tortured.²² Some women were shot and killed while six women were condemned to death.²³

Similarly, women in Malawi played a vital role in the liberation struggle, they rioted, protested and demonstrated against colonialism. Women worked side by side with the men. When the men were imprisoned, it was the women who took up the stage. They protested for the release of the men so that they could take care of their families who suffered during their imprisonment. Vera Chirwa was one of the prominent women in the liberation struggle of Malawi. She endured exile and long years of imprisonment during period.²⁴ Between 1959 –1960, Vera Chirwa and other women fearlessly went to

²⁰ Margret Wangui Gachihi, 'The role of women in the Mau Wangai', MA Dissertation, University of Nairobi, (1986), p86.

²¹ Meredith Turshen, 'Algerian Women in the Liberation Struggle and the Civil War: From Active Participates to Passive Victims', **Journal of Social Research**, 69, 3, (2002), 890 – 891.

²² Leila Hessini, **Living on a Fault Line: Political Violence against Women in Algeria**, (Cairo: Population Council, 1996), p, 9.

²³ Meredith Turshen, 'Algerian Women in the Liberation Struggle and the Civil War: From Active Participates to Passive Victims', p, 891.

²⁴ [Qz.com/Africa/1574284/African-women-have-been-forgotten-its-independencehistory](https://www.Qz.com/Africa/1574284/African-women-have-been-forgotten-its-independencehistory). 28.09.2020.

prisons and forced the guards to release political prisoners. They harassed the prison guards to an extent where some women were imprisoned and some lost their lives through shootings.²⁵ The women also took part in protests or civil obedience to challenge the colonial authorities.

Equally in Zambia, both men and women participated in the liberation struggle of this nation. The scanty literature shows that *Zambian women* played an important role in the struggle for Zambia's independence. The participation of women in Zambia's liberation struggle can be traced back to the period of the mining activities of Northern Rhodesia in the Copperbelt. Women were incorporated in the workers' strikes which took place in the mine compounds. This is because most of the labour issues which took place during this period, did not only affect the mine workers but the whole family and the community at large which included the women and the children. For example, the issues of accommodation, poor sanitation and the ban of grain brewed beer in the compounds affected the women too. Hence women joined and were incorporated in the workers' strikes of the 1935, 1940 and 1952. They participated in the demonstrations and picketed in the streets of the mine compounds to prevent the African mine workers from going to work.²⁶ This was one way in which they demonstrated their grievances to the colonial authorities in the Copperbelt. Their participation in most of the strikes which took place in the Copperbelt contributed to the success which Africans yielded during this period as was the case of 1952 strike.²⁷

Because of their active participation in the strikes which took place in the Copperbelt, this became a forum which galvanised their active participation in politics. The incorporation of women by collective organisation leaders in the Copperbelt, provided a fertile ground for women to join politics. The encouragement of women in the Welfare Association meetings further spurred women's political activism.

²⁵ Qz.com/Africa/1574284/African-women-have-been-forgotten-its-independencehistory. 28.09.2020.

²⁶ SEC, 1/1370, Governor Report to the Secretary of the State, No, 88.

²⁷ Jane L. Parpart, 'The Household and Mine Shaft: Gender and Class struggle on the *Zambian Copperbelt, 1926-64*', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 13, 1, (1986), p, 48.

In order for the Welfare Societies to increase the number of members and supporters, women too were allowed to attend the meetings.²⁸ This became a training ground which motivated women to become politically active and join the nationalists' movement. The Welfare Societies later merged to form one political party by the name of Northern Rhodesia African Congress (NRAC) in 1948. The NRAC later changed to Northern Rhodesia African National Congress (NRANC) in 1951 and again changed to African National Congress (ANC) months later.²⁹ It became naturally easy for the women to actively participate in the fight against colonialism because of their prior experience as active participants in the Welfare Societies.

When the ANC was formed, it was aimed at undermining colonial rule through sustained processes of political mobilisation, agitation, strike action and boycotts from the European shops. ANC took on more radical roles with mass action being the main tool used against exploitation and racism of the settlers.³⁰ Women played significant roles in various ways. They disseminated information, recruited fellow women, raised funds for the party, cooked for male freedom fighters and participated in boycotts and protested in various places. According to the ANC records, women were the ones who were in charge of door-to-door campaigns.³¹ Within the shortest period of time, the ANC achieved its aim in mass mobilisation as its membership covered all parts of the nation.

Apart from their role in the ANC, women were also instrumental in the formation of most of the political parties which emerged after the ANC. In 1958, there was a split in the ANC due to the misunderstanding and differences which took place in the party.³² When the ANC split some women also left the party and

²⁸ NAZ, SEC, 2/466, Minutes of the Native Welfare Association of Luashya, 13th April, 1948.

²⁹ Ndongwa Noyoo, **Social Welfare in Zambia: The Search for a Transformative Agenda**, (London: Adonis and Abbey Publishers Limited, 2013), 202.

³⁰ Noyoo, **Social Welfare in Zambia: The Search for a Transformative Agenda**, p, 202.

³¹ ANC, 7/5, Constitution of Northern Rhodesia Council of Women, 1962.

³² Giacomo Macola, 'Harry Mwanga Nkumbula UNIP and the Roots of Authoritarianism in Zambia, in Jan-Bart, Geward Marja Hinfelaar and Giacomo Macola, (ed.), **One Zambia Many Histories: Towards a History of Post-Colonial Zambia**. (Brill: Afrika-Studiecentrum Series, 2005), p20.

went to join the newly formed one which was the Zambia African National Congress Party (ZANC). Women who joined the newly formed party, greatly contributed to the mobilisation of funds which were used in the registration of the party. Julia Mulenga Chikamoneka was one of the women who played an effective role of raising resources for the party. Most of the contributions were raised through cash and donations of different items from those who did not have cash. The donated items were then sold to raise funds for the party.³³ Women also played an instrumental role in mobilising the masses for the newly formed party. They organised door-to-door campaigns for the party, a role they played so diligently.

ZANC was born with the aim of mobilising the masses against the Benson Constitution and elections that were to be held under it in 1959. Seeing the effectiveness of these efforts, the Governor and architect of the dreaded constitution, Sir Arthur Benson few months later banned the party and restricted its leaders to remote parts of the country.³⁴ The imprisonment of ZANC leadership did not kill the passion of the women's fight in the liberation struggle of this nation. Women continued to be instrumental in organising and raising funds which were needed to hire and pay for the lawyers to represent incarcerated leaders and also in helping sustaining their families.³⁵ They assumed the responsibility of preparing secret meeting places and informed other members about the venues. Many of these secret meetings were mostly held in women's homes because they were rarely suspected or searched by the colonial authorities. It was mainly the homes of the men which were closely searched.³⁶ This gave an added advantage for the women to host

³³ Zambia Daily Mail, Tuesday, 24th October, 2017.

³⁴ David Mulford, **Zambia: The Politics of Independence 1957-1964**, (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), p, 76. See also Godwin B, Mwangilwa, **The Kapwepwe Diaries**, (Lusaka: Multimedia Publications, 1986), p, 44.

³⁵ Rosemary Mpuku Nyawa, 'UNIP' Julia Mulenga Chikamoneka; The Fearless Mad African Girl', in Mbuyu Nalumango and Monde Sifuniso (ed.) **Women Power in Politics**, (Lusaka: Zambia Women Writers Association, 1988), p, 21.

³⁶ Ireen Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalists Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951-1964: The Case of Lusaka', MA Dissertation, University of Zambia, (1992), p, 50.

the freedom fighters and have an underground meeting of the way forward in terms of preparation for the independence struggle.

When the United National Independence Party (UNIP) was formed, the women continued to play important roles. Just like ANC, UNIP too embarked on a campaign of mass mobilisation. Women were in charge of mobilising the masses, worked as informers who alerted the freedom fighters of the movement of the colonial authorities, continued to prepare venues for the meetings, prepared and provided meals for the freedom fighters who were hiding from the colonial authorities. They also prepared and served the food during campaigns and meetings.³⁷ Women also played a key role in demonstrations and protests against the decisions which were made by the colonial authorities. In most cases it was the women who rebelled against the colonial leaders, they picketed at the butcheries and the shops for colonial masters who segregated the blacks in their premises. An edition in the *Eagle Newspaper*, narrated the protest which was organised by women against the colonial authorities regarding the type of food they gave the male freedom fighters who were imprisoned. They demanded that the African male prisoners should be treated with dignity and be given proper food.³⁸ Their efforts in the struggle for independence cannot be ignored. However, many writers on the history of Zambia's independence have overlooked the valuable roles of female freedom fighters.

Kenneth David Kaunda in his speech at the first women's Brigade conference, acknowledged the vital roles played by women during Zambia's struggle for independence. He said:

Zambian men who were in the thick of independence struggle received constant and invaluable help inspiration from our women folk. Without a crucial role which women played in our crusades against colonialism, the struggle would have been longer and

³⁷ Lubosi Kikamba, 'The Role of Women's Organisation in Political Development of Zambia 1964 – 2001: A Case Study of The UNIP Women's League and The Zambia National Women's Lobby Group', MA Dissertation, University of Zambia, (2012), p, 31. Interview with Rita Chipika, in Lusaka, on 3rd May, 2021.

³⁸ African Eagle, 15th November, 1960.

tougher for us. Their political awareness and foresight, as well as their sense of justice which had been outraged by colonial oppression made them committed revolutionaries.³⁹

Therefore, the history of Zambia's struggle for independence is incomplete without the inclusion of women's participation. Masauso Chirwa and Roy Kalinda also state that Zambia's independence cannot be written without indicating cardinal roles which women played in the independence struggle.⁴⁰ Historical findings on Zambia's liberation struggle suggests that women participated in the fight for independence and yet there is very little detailed literature documented about the efforts and sacrifice of these women. It is from such predicaments, where this study seeks to examine the significant roles played by women during the struggle of Zambia's independence from 1948 to 1964.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Although Zambian women were active participants in the struggle for independence, many authors of Zambia's history have not adequately documented the significance of women's roles in Zambia's liberation struggle. As a result, there has been a continuous gap which has led to the marginalisation of women in the historical development of Zambia's struggle for independence. It is for this reason that this study sought to address the historical gap in the liberation struggle of Zambia. The study examined the significance of the roles played by women, the challenges they faced, and the success achieved by women in Zambia's liberation struggle between 1948 and 1964.

1.2 Objectives of the study

The general aim of the study was to document the roles and significance of women in Zambia' struggle for independence.

³⁹ UNIP, 11/2/4, Report on The First Women's Brigade Conference, 27th – 29th September, 1974, p, 1.

⁴⁰ Roy Kalinda and Masauso Chirwa, 'Women's Participation in Key Decision-Making Institutions in Zambia: A Case Study of Three Arms of Government; Legislature, Executive and the Judiciary, **Journal of Societal Cultural Research**, 1, 3, (2015), p, 130.

The specific objectives were to:

1. Assess the reasons which prompted women to join the liberation struggle of Zambia.
2. Investigate the strategies and roles that women played in the liberation struggle of Zambia from 1948 to 1964.
3. Analyse the challenges women faced during the liberation struggle of Zambia.
4. Examine the impact of women's participation in the liberation struggle in Zambia.

1.3 Rationale of the Study

The history of Zambia's liberation struggle is written from a male perspective. There are very few detailed accounts which focus on the prominent roles women played in the liberation struggle of Zambia. It is from this background that this study sought to bring in new knowledge about the roles and significance of women in the liberation struggle of Zambia. The study will be useful for future researchers who may develop interest to conduct related studies. It will also fill up those gaps that have been observed in the literature of Zambia's liberation struggle by bringing in new knowledge.

1.4 Literature Review

The history of many African nations' liberation struggle is mainly dominated by male perspective. There is very little detailed documentation of the significance of the roles played by women in the liberation struggle of most African nations. Apart from the availability of little detailed literature on the documentation of women's roles in the liberation struggle of Zambia, there are also very few available publications with information that was useful to this study. Some studies focused on women's liberation movement in other countries such as Kenya and Malawi. Nonetheless, such information was useful for the historical background of the study. Other sources provided information on Zambia's liberation struggle, although they were not detailed accounts about the contribution of women in Zambia's

independence struggle. However, such sources were still valuable to this study. This is because they helped to provide valuable information and arguments in which this study was based.

Hamoon Khelghat-Doost and Suzyrman Sibly argues that patriarchal is the main reason for women's less significance in global political roles and participation in comparison with their male counter parts. Women world over, were greatly excluded from the global political arena in comparison to their male counterparts due to patriarchal nature of politics in which men were considered bearers of the culturally legitimated authority.⁴¹ Their study was significant in that it discussed how patriarchal norms affected women's participation during the liberation struggle. This was also useful in discussing what limited women's participation in the struggle for the independence of Zambia.

Angelova Penka's article explains how patriarchal norms affected the roles women played in Bulgaria's liberation struggle. She further states that there were discriminative roles which were assigned to women during the country's nationalist movement. Penka further explains that when women joined in the politics of Bulgaria, they were assigned roles to play as mothers and educators who would raise enlightened sons. In doing so the promotion of women's education was supported with an idea that if women were to play a vital role in the nationalist politics they needed to be educated and enlightened of the prevailing situation.⁴² Her work was significant as it provides useful background information for this study.

Women in India also played vital roles in the struggle for Indian's independence. Rinal Pal articulates that whenever the history of India's freedom is written, the sacrifice which was made by women always finds a prominent place in it. She further argues that women were equal partners in the fight of India's freedom struggle. Women intensively contributed in the freedom of India through protests and boycotts of the

⁴¹ Hamoon Khelghat-Doost and Suzyrman Sibly, 'The Impact of Patriarchy on Women's Political participation', pp, 396 – 409.

⁴² Angelova Penka, 'Women and Nationalism: On the Position of Women in the Nationalist of the Balkan Peninsula', pp, 49 – 61.

Simon Commission. Many women in all parts of India broke the patriarchal norms which limited their roles in private and came out in public to work and support the male freedom fighters.⁴³ Her work was of great use to this study as it provided important background data for this study.

Meredeth Turshen's study explains the vital roles women played in Algeria. She further discusses that women fought in the liberation struggle of Algeria's independence from France. The educated women joined the *maquis* (the rebel forces operating on the mountain). These women taught the illiterate peasant women about their social role and explained colonialism, how whites ill-treated the Africans, revolution and the need for women to come on board and help fight for the struggle of independence.⁴⁴ Her work was essential to this study for it helped to explore the roles women played in other parts of Africa during the liberation struggle of African's independence. Therefore, Turshen's study was cardinal in providing background data for this study.

Margret Gachihi's study focuses on the roles of Kikuyu women in the Mau Mau movement. She explains that women in the Mau Mau played prominent roles in preparing food and providing shelter for the freedom fighters as the tradition was that, only those women who were closely related to the warrior would prepare the meals. Women in the movement also worked as spies who provided valuable information on government's operations. They also played a significant role in the acquisition and smuggling of arms. These arms and ammunition were purloined from Kiganjo police camp.⁴⁵ Data from this article helped to provide background information for this study.

⁴³ Rina Pal, 'The Role of Women in the Indian Freedom Struggle 1905 – 1927', pp, 30 – 38.

⁴⁴ Meredith Turshen, 'Algerian Women in the Liberation Struggle and the Civil War: From Active Participants to Passive Victims', pp, 890 – 911.

⁴⁵ Margret Wangu Gachihi, 'The Role of Women in The Mau Wang', pp, 86 – 139.

Roy Kalinda and Masauso Chirwa argues that Zambia's history for independence cannot be written without indicating the cardinal roles which women played in the liberation struggle. They also explain that the challenges women face in the political arena has to do with patriarchy culture of most the Zambian society. They argue that patriarchy had great influence in silencing women's participation in the political circles of Zambia.⁴⁶ Although their work is based on the participation of women in the three arms of government, their work was useful in this study as it helped in discussing the challenges women faced in the political arena of Zambia's liberation struggle.

Foster Sakala examines the role women played in the stabilisation of African labour force in Mufulira. She also explains factors which led the mine authorities to accept the women in the mine compounds. This is because at first women were denied entry in the mine compound. Sakala further articulates the problems which came with the decision of allowing mine workers to live with their families in the mine compounds. She argues that the decision led to the problems of accommodation as the houses in the mine compound were designed for singles only. The issues of accommodation were some of the factors which contributed to the civil disobedience which took place in the Copperbelt.⁴⁷ Her work was significant as it provided insights into the activities in the mine compounds and how men and women worked together to fight colonial oppression in the mine industry.

George Chauncey in his article explains factors that led the mine authorities to reverse their decision and begin to allow women in the mine compounds. He argues that the decision to allow women in the mine compounds was as a result of competition for mass production in the mine sector. He contended that by the 1920s, Northern Rhodesia mining companies faced challenges of labour migration to the neighbouring

⁴⁶ Roy Kalinda and Masauso Chirwa, 'Women's participation in Key Decision Making Institutions in Zambia: Case Study of Three Arms of Government, Legislature, Executive and Judiciary', pp, 128 – 137.

⁴⁷ Foster Sakala, 'The Role of Women in Labour Stabilisation at Mufulira, 1930 to 1964', MA Dissertation, University of Zambia, (2001), pp, 19 – 97.

countries where there were better working conditions. Hence it was this challenge which forced the Northern Rhodesia mining companies to look for incentives that would attract mine workers. One of the resolutions was to allow women in the mine compounds.⁴⁸ His work was vital to this study for it provided information on the inception of women in the mine compounds.

Ndangwa Nayoo's book explores the history of political parties which challenged the colonial authorities in this nation. He further explains that the first well defined form of resistance to colonial rule emerged with the formation of the Welfare Societies in the mid -1930s mainly in the urban areas. These formations confronted the exploitative nature of colonialism and the manner in which Africans were abused by such a system.⁴⁹ His work was beneficial to this study for it provided information for the history of well-defined form of resistance to colonial rule in Zambia. It also provided data on the formation of political parties which emerged after the Welfare Societies.

In Zambia women's first entry in politics is attributed to their participation in the strike which took place in the mine compounds. Some writers like Jane Parpart argues that the participation of women in the mine strikes activated their quest in the political arena. Parpart further argues that the success of these strikes was mainly dependant on women's participation.⁵⁰ Her work was beneficial to this study as it helped to bring out background information of women's participation in politics and their success.

Bbole Dandule's article focuses on the involvement of women in the mine workers' struggle in the Copperbelt. She argues that women contributed greatly towards the struggle for better living and working conditions in the mine compound. She further explains the contribution of women in the union collective

⁴⁸ George Chauncey, 'The Locus of Production: Women's Labour in the Zambian Copperbelt, 1927 – 1953', **Journal of Southern African Studies**, 7, 2, (1981), pp, 137 – 138.

⁴⁹ Ndangwa Noyoo, **Social Welfare in Zambia: The Search for a Transformative Agenda**, (London: Adonis and Abbey Publishers Ltd, 2013), pp, 200 – 209.

⁵⁰ Jane L. Parpart, 'The Household and the Mine Shaft: Gender and Class Struggle on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926 – 64', **Journal of Southern African Studies**, 13, 1, (1986), pp, 36 – 56.

action.⁵¹ Her work was beneficial to this study as it provided background data on women's activities in the Copperbelt prior to the formation of political parties which fought colonialism.

Ilsa Schuster's article explains the challenges women faced during the liberation struggle of Zambia. She explains why women in Zambia were not considered as partners during the liberation struggle but as mere helpers who helped the men achieve their goals. She further argues that the women's brigade limited its members to supportive roles only. The Women Brigade were not supposed to seek power for themselves but helping men to achieve political power.⁵² Her article was helpful in this study because it provided useful insights into the challenges that women faced in the male dominated communities.

Fredoline Anunobi's article examines the role of women in economic and political development. He argues that although women played very important roles in development, their status in Africa does not reflect their contribution. Anunobi further explains how European colonialists redefined gender roles in Africa. He discusses how Europeans in Northern Rhodesia teamed up with local authority to further oppress the women with their redefined patriarchal norms.⁵³ His work was vital to this study as it provided accounts on the challenges women faced during the liberation struggle.

Giacomo Macola's article focuses on the history of Zambia's political parties. He explains factors which influenced the division in the African National Congress (ANC) and the formation of other political parties which emerged after the split in the ANC.⁵⁴ His work was useful in this study for it provided the insights on the formation of new political parties which emerged after a split in the ANC.

⁵¹ Bbole Dandule, 'Women and Mine Workers Struggle on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926 – 1964', MA Dissertation, University of Zambia, (2012), pp, 71 – 78.

⁵² Ilsa Schuster, 'Constraints and Opportunities in the Political Participation: The Case Study of Zambian', **Geneve – Afrique**, 21, 2, (1983), pp, 17 – 21.

⁵³ Fredoline Anunobi, 'Women and Development in Africa: From Marginalised to Gender Inequality', **African Social Science Review**, 2, 1, (2002), pp, 41 – 63.

⁵⁴ Giacom Macola, 'Harry Mwanga Nkumbula, UNIP and the Roots of Authoritarianism in Nationalist Zambia', in Jan Bart Geward etal (ed.), **One Zambia Many Histories: Towards a History of Post-Colonial Zambia**, pp, 19 – 25.

Manda's dissertation focuses on the role of women in mass mobilisation in Zambian nationalist politics from 1951 to 1964. She argues that the subordinate status accorded to the women in Zambia is a social and cultural phenomenon. This can be traced back to the pre-colonial period when women were exposed to social orientation and education which was different from men. Manda further discusses the emergences and development of nationalist movement by focusing on the activities of the new nationalist movement parties such as the ANC, Zambia African National Congress (ZANC) and the United National Independence Party (UNIP). She argues that women played a significant role in the nationalist movements which emerged leading to Zambia's independence.⁵⁵ Although her study is a case study of Lusaka, her work was of great use in this study for it brought out insights on the role of women, their challenges and successes in the struggle for Zambia's independence.

Lilian Cheelo Siwila examines the challenges women faced in the pre-colonial societies of Zambia. Siwila further argues that African women suffered a double oppression during this period. Firstly, suffered the patriarchal oppression derived from their African culture and secondly the western patriarchal system oppressed them further.⁵⁶ Her study was of great use in this study for it helped in the discussion of challenges women faced during the liberation struggle.

Women played significant roles in major political parties such as the ANC, ZANC, and UNIP which emerged before Zambia gained independence. They were in the fore front of staging protests against the decisions made by colonial authorities. David Mulford argues that it was the women who staged a protest when the British colonial secretaries came in Zambia. Women staged demonstrations and protested when Ian Macleod and Reginald Maudling came in Zambia to discuss the constitution which favoured the whites

⁵⁵ Ireen Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalist Politics in Colonial 1951- 1965: The Case Study of Lusaka', MA Dissertation, University of Zambia, (1992), pp, 32- 42.

⁵⁶ Lilian Cheelo Siwila, 'Reconstructing the Distorted Image of Women as Reproductive Labour on the Copperbelt Mine in Zambia', **Journal for the Study of Religion**, 30, 2, (2017), pp, 75 – 77.

and not the blacks. This was the constitution which would have limited the number of African representatives in the legislature and gave the whites supremacy to dominate the Northern Rhodesia.⁵⁷ His work was useful in this study for it helped to highlight the successes scored by women in the struggle of this nation.

Gisela Geisler's article compares women's political and none participation in three southern African countries; Zambia, Zimbabwe and Botswana. She focuses on the obstacle women politicians experience in the male domain of party politics and government. She further analyses the roles of women in the liberation movements of the mentioned nations.⁵⁸ This article was useful in this study because it brought out insights on the vital roles played by Zambian women in the liberation struggle and challenges encountered during the liberation struggle.

Gisela Geisler's book analyses the role women played during the liberation struggle of Zambia. She explains that in 1954 about 2000 women in Lusaka rioted against the Municipal ban of home brewed beer, and that these protests were often the starting point for women's political activism.⁵⁹ Her work was of great use when it came to discuss women's roles in Zambia's struggle for independence.

Jotham C, Momba and Fay Gadsden examines the participation of women in Zambian politics. They explain how women participated in the mine strikes, union meetings, nationalist movement, and boycotts, and how they joined men in solidarity actions. Momba and Gadsden further discuss some challenges which

⁵⁷ David Mulford, **Zambia: The Politics of Independence 1957 – 1964**, (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), p,234

⁵⁸ Gisela Geisler, 'Troubled Sisterhood and Politics in Southern Africa: Case Studies from Zambia, Zimbabwe and Botswana', **African Affairs**, 94, 377, (1995), p, 546.

⁵⁹ Gisela Geisler, **Women and the Remarking of Politics in Southern Africa: Negotiating Autonomy, Incorporation and Representation**, (Nordiska: Afrikainstitutet, 2004), pp, 21-22.

women faced in the Women's Brigade.⁶⁰ However, even though their work is not detailed about the role of women in Zambia's struggle for independence, this study still contributed greatly in the discussions of women's roles in the struggle for independence.

Bizeck J, Phiri's article explains how traditional societies view women in politics. He explains that women in most African societies are viewed as mere supporters and not equal partners. Arguably Phiri explains that this African tradition of viewing women as mere supporters in the male dominated societies has permeated the literature on and discussion of nationalists' struggle.⁶¹ This work was important to this study as it provided valuable information as to why there is little detailed documentation of the women's participation in Zambia's liberation struggle.

Lubosi Kikamba's dissertation in chapter two examines the significance of women in the liberation movement of Zambia. He further explains the reason which made many African women to be viewed as mere supporters and not as equal partners in Politics. Kikamba narrates that the reason was because women during the liberation struggle played a supportive role and not as equal political partners due to African tradition.⁶² Kikamba's work was useful when discussing the challenges women faced during the liberation struggle of Zambia's independence.

In late colonial period both men and women faced injustice of the system of minority rule and both reacted against repression through nationalist organisations. Erin Accampo Hern argues that both men and women played vital roles during this period. Women were politically conscious and active during the liberation

⁶⁰ Jotham C. Momba and Fay Gadsden, 'Zambia: Nonviolent Strategies against Colonialism, 1900-1960s', in Maciej J, Bartkowski (eds.) **Recovering Nonviolent History: Civil Resistance in Liberation Struggle**, (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998), pp, 82-83.

⁶¹ Bizeck J. Phiri, 'Gender and Politics: The Zambia National Women's Lobby Group in 2001 Tripartite Elections', in Jan-Bart Gewald (eds.) **One Zambia, Many Histories: Towards a History of Post-Colonial Zambia** (Lenden: Koninklijke Brill, NV, 2008), pp, 260-261.

⁶² Lubosi Kikamba, 'The Role of Women's Organisation in the Political Development of Zambia 1964-2001: A Case Study of UNIP Women's League and Zambia National Women's Lobby Group', MA Dissertation, The University of Zambia, 2012, p. 162.

struggle. Women were active in remote areas. For instance, they helped in organising underground meetings of the nationalist movement, hid prominent nationalist leaders such as Kenneth Kaunda during his country wide tour of political mobilisation. They also brewed and sold beer illicitly to fundraise for the nationalist movement.⁶³ However, although Herns' work goes beyond independence, his work was useful in discussing the significant roles played by women in the struggle for Zambia's independence.

Rosemary Mpuku Nyawa's article is about Julia Mulenga Chikamoneka's biography and her contribution in Zambia's nationalist movement. In this article Nyawa explains the reasons which made Julia Mulenga join the fight for independence. She states that one of the reasons which prompted Julia Mulenga's participation in the liberation struggle was because she could not tolerate her boss mistreating Africans.⁶⁴ Her work was of great benefit to this study as it helped to discuss the role and factors which prompted women participation in Zambia's struggle for independence.

Moses Sayela Walubita's article describes Mulena Mukwae Nakatindi Nganga as an extra-ordinary woman who achieved several feats at a time when many women did not dare. She was one of the first women to enter politics which was regarded as men's domain. He further narrates how Mukwae Nakatindi Nganga used her influence as a member of the Lozi royal family to help Kaunda stay in Barotseland in 1962 when the Litunga sir Mwanawina III had ordered him to leave the land immediately as he was not welcomed in the land. Walubita further discusses the contributions of Mukwae Nakatindi Nganga in Zambian politics and how she helped UNIP become popular in Barotseland.⁶⁵ His work was important to

⁶³ Erin Accampo Hern, 'Why Participate? A Policy Feedback Approach to Political Participation in Zambia', Ph.D. Dissertation, Cornell University, (2015), pp, 74 – 78.

⁶⁴ Rosemary Mpuku Nyawa, 'UNIP' Julia Chikamoneka' The Fearless 'Mad African Girl', in Mbuyu Nalumango and Monde Sifuniso (eds.) **Women Power in Politics** (Lusaka: Zambia Women Writers Association, 1998), p, 26.

⁶⁵ Moses Sayela Walubita, 'Nakatindi Yeta Nganga: She Opened Doors for Women', In Mbuyu Nalumango and Monde Sifuniso (eds.) **Women Power in Politics**, p, 38.

this study as it explored the roles that women played in the liberation struggle of Zambia including the scored successes in the liberation struggle of this nation.

Rosemary Nyawa and Moses Walubita's work discuss how Chibesa Kankansa joined politics under UNIP. They also narrate that the seven-points master plan produced during the conference ushered the Cha Cha Cha revolution and this is what activated political activists such as mama Kankasa fight colonialists with renewed vigour. They further narrate the roles Chibesa Kankasa played in Zambia's liberation struggle.⁶⁶ This article was of great benefit to this study as it provided insights on the factors which prompted women to join the liberation movements in Zambia.

Molly Mwafuililwa examines factors which prompted Monica Nanyangwe Chintu to join the liberation movement. Mwafuililwa narrates that segregation which was practised in schools, health institutions, shops and super markets prompted Monica Chintu to join politics and fought the white colonialists. It is argued that Monica Chintu was angered and humiliated by the manner whites and their children mistreated black people.⁶⁷ This work was useful to this study for it gave a background on the reasons which prompted women to join the liberation struggle.

Victoria Chitungu Phiri's article is a biography of women who participated in the liberation struggle of Zambia. She explores their role and highlights some forces which propelled women into the liberation struggle and shaped their experience within it. She further explains that the forces included racial discrimination under the colonial rule, economic injustice and direct influence from friends and family.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Rosemary Mpuku Nyawa and Moses Sayela Walubita, 'The Doyenne of UNIP Women's League', in Mbuyu Nalumango and Monde Sifuniso (eds.), **Women Power in Politics**, P, 57-58.

⁶⁷ Molly Mwafuililwa, 'Monica Nanyangwe Chintu: 'The Battle Almost Won'', in Mbuyu Nalumango and Monde Sifuniso (eds.), **Women Power in Politics**, P, 67.

⁶⁸ Victoria Chitungu Phiri, 'Stand and Sing of Zambia: Voices from Freedom Struggle Heroines', **A Journal of Culture and African Women Studies**, 1, 26, (2015), pp, 104 – 118.

Her work was significant to this study because it contributed to the discussion of the role of women and the factors which galvanised their participation in Zambia's liberation struggle.

1.5 Research Methodology

In order to achieve the objectives of this study, data was collected from both primary and secondary sources. The University of Zambia library was consulted for books, journals, dissertations and newspapers from the special collection. These helped to provide data on the role of women in the liberation struggle, the challenges women faced during the liberation movements and reasons which prompted women to join liberation movements and fight the colonialists. These sources were also useful in comparing data which was obtained from other sources such as oral data used in this study.

The National Archives of Zambia (NAZ) provided both primary and secondary sources from books, Newspapers, articles, correspondences, letters and government reports based on the topic under discussion. The data which was collected from these sources was used in this study to achieve the stated objectives and helped compliment data obtained from other sources.

United National Independence Party (UNIP) archives was also consulted for primary sources such as reports, correspondences, letters and government files. The data collected from these sources helped to provide primary data from original files pertaining women's participation and their roles in Zambia's liberation struggle for independence. It also provided vital information on the Women's Brigade and the duty of Women's Brigade before and after independence.

Lastly the research involved oral interview where women who participated in the liberation struggle of this nation were interviewed from different places. This helped the study to gather first-hand information from the actual participants and get their real experience during this period. The primary data which was

collected from these people helped to compliment secondary data which was collected from other sources and also for new unrecorded information.

However, it must be admitted that it was difficult to interview some people who participated in the liberation struggle due to the outbreak of corona virus. Taking in to consideration their age, permission to conduct interviews was not granted in some cases from their members of the family. Some had lost memory due to old age, this became extremely difficult to collect data from them.

1.6 Organisation of the study

This study is organised thematically and chronologically in five chapters. Chapter one is the introduction. Chapter two explores the inception of women's participation in the liberation struggle and also assess the factors which galvanised them to join the liberation struggle. Chapter three examines the strategies and significant roles played by women in the early nationalist movements from 1948 to 1964. Chapter four analyses the challenges and success of women in the liberation struggle of Zambia's independence and chapter five is the conclusion of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE OF ZAMBIA

2. 0. Introduction

Women participated greatly in the liberation struggle of Zambia even though they have frequently been ignored and excluded from the political life of the nation. Zambia's history has ignored the contribution of women freedom fighters in its liberation struggle for independence. This chapter intends to discuss the inception of the participation of women in Zambia's liberation struggle and analyse factors which galvanised them to join in the struggle for independence.

Previous research has paid little attention on what really motivated women to join men in the fight for liberation of Zambia and the genesis of women's participation in Zambian politics. The analysis in this study reveals that the participation of women in Zambia's liberation struggle can be traced to the period during the mining activities on the Copperbelt of Northern Rhodesia. The findings show that women actively participated in the early strikes of the mining companies of the Copperbelt as early as 1935. Women also participated in the trade union meetings organised by mine worker's leadership. This was the beginning of women's active political participation in Zambia.

The study also argues that there were numerous factors which motivated women to collaborate with men during the liberation of Zambia's struggle for independence. Women joined the liberation struggle because they wanted to fight against colonialist national policies which suppressed the black African population as a whole. The colonialist and traditional African patriarch systems were seen as obstacles to women's freedom. Hence women sought to overcome this impediment through participation in the nationalist movements.

Additionally, some women became part and parcel of the liberation struggle through marriages. Those who got married to freedom fighters automatically worked side by side with their husbands. Women whose parents or those who grew under the care of the freedom fighters also joined the liberation struggle because of the environment they came from. Town exposure and education ignited their participation in the liberation struggle as they became aware and exposed to colonial segregation which was so rampant in the city. However, not all women joined the liberation struggle out of their own volition, some were influenced into joining the national liberation movement due to interactions.

2.1 The genesis of women's participation in the liberation struggle

The participation of women in Zambia's liberation struggle can be traced back to the period of mining activities on the Copperbelt in Northern Rhodesia. Although women participated in the strikes of the mine compounds, at first it was difficult for them to find their way in the mine compounds. This is because women faced double discrimination during this period which prevented their entrance in the Copperbelt. According to Lilian Cheelo Siwila's analysis, women faced a challenge of patriarchal oppression derived from their African culture and also the western patriarchal colonial system which oppressed them further.¹ Women who left their villages and migrated to urban in search of green pastures were traditionally viewed negatively. In most Zambian villages, the most dominant discourse for unskilled work for women was prostitution. It was concluded that the only work which women could perform in the cities was prostitution, hence they were seen as irresponsible citizens by other members of the society.² Traditionally, such

¹ Lilian Cheelo Siwila, 'Reconstructing the Distorted Image of Women as Reproductive Labour on the Copperbelt Mines in Zambia (1920 -54)', **Journal for The Study of Religion**, 30, 2, (2017), p, 76.

² Siwila, 'Reconstructing the Distorted Image of Women as Reproductive Labour on the Copperbelt Mines in Zambia (1920 -54)', p 76.

character affected African tradition where a woman was expected to uphold traditional values and to be morally upright.

The second factor was the patriarchal colonial system which never allowed women to live independently but only under the control of a man. With the coming of the mining companies on the Copperbelt, many Africans were prompted to leave their villages to go and work in the mine companies for wage labour. However, not only men had the desire to go and work in the mines, but there was also a growing desire among women to seek some level of status by finding wage employment so that they could become more independent.³ Despite the growing interest among the women to leave their homestead and migrate into cities, there was resistance from colonial government, missionaries, and traditional leaders especially under the indirect rule system which had emerged during this period. Jane L Parpart explains that:

The Northern Rhodesian government was more sceptical about permitting women and children in the mine compounds. Still uncertain about the industries' future during the financially constrained 1930s, government officials relied heavily on traditional authority structures to maintain order in the rural areas. They sympathised with chiefly complaints about women running off to the Copperbelt, and responded by giving rural leaders (Native Authority after 1930) the right to issue marriage certificates and to grant or refuse permission for urban visit.⁴

From the above statement it is clear that women faced double challenges. Traditional leaders and the colonial government worked hand in hand to prevent women's entrance into the cities. If they did, they were to be under the control of a husband through a marriage certificate (muchato) which was given to married women. Traditional leaders also were given the mandate to permit or refuse

³ Siwila, 'Reconstructing the Distorted Image of Women as Reproductive labour on the Copperbelt Mines in Zambia (1920 -54)', p, 76.

⁴ Jane L. Parpart, 'The Household and the Mine Shaft: Gender and Class struggle on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926 – 64', **Journal of Southern African Studies** 13, 1, (1986), p, 38-39.

the entrance of women in the cities. They mounted roadblocks where vehicles were searched whether they had carried unauthorised women to the cities, especially to the Copperbelt.⁵

2.2 Women as tools for labour stabilisation in the mine companies

Stiff labour competition in Katanga region of Congo DRC forced the neighbouring Northern Rhodesia mining companies to find means and ways of stabilising labour as it was heavily affected by this labour competition. Labour stabilisation was the key to boosting production. The Haut-Katanga *Union Minie're du Haut-Katanga* (UMHK) in Congo DRC was the first mining company which sought to build a stable urban force from the 1920s while across the border in Northern Rhodesia the mine company officials were sceptical to this development.⁶ In Northern Rhodesia urbanisation was avoided and was viewed as expensive. The mine companies did not like a situation where a mine worker should come with his wife in the mine compound and so they promoted casual work where a miner would come and work for a short period of time and return to his homestead. They did not promote permanent jobs where they would employ a mine worker to stay for a longer period in the compound. This was even seen in the type of accommodation which was offered to their workers. Hence stabilisation of labour in the mining companies of Northern Rhodesia was greatly avoided as it was perceived to create unplanned urbanisation which would adversely affect workers' productivity and create social political unrest.⁷ The colonial and mine company officials in Northern Rhodesia saw the UMHK's social provision as a model, but an unachievable one, as they believed that socialising workers and their families into urban

⁵ Interview with Betty Chilombo Chilunga, 22nd March, 2021.

⁶ Miles Lamer and Racheal Taylor, 'Urban and Social Change in Central Africa's Borderland Communities', (ed.) in Miles Lamer, Erid Guene, Harriet Benoit, Iva Pesa, Racheal Taylor (ed.), **The Decolonisation of Community Development in Haut-Katanga and Zambian Copperbelt, 1945 -1990**. (London: Boydell and Brewer 2021), p, 321.

⁷ Lamer and Taylor, 'Urban and Social Change in Central Africa's Borderland Communities', p, 326.

circumstances was a profound challenge which they might not be able to meet.⁸ Somehow their fear came to be true, as mine workers were allowed to stay with their families in the compound, more problems developed such as issues of accommodation for a married mine worker and his children, the need of wage increase to cater for the wife and children's basic needs. The women issues of strikes which took place became the centre in some circumstances. However, even though entangled with the fear of the consequences of urbanisation, the need for labour stabilisation became cardinal. In his analytical observation, James Musonda articulates that even though from inception of mining companies, the Anglo-American Corporation and Roan Selection Trust favoured the employment of male migrant workers, they faced competition from *Union Miniere du Haut-Katanga* in Congo which had implemented a worker's stabilisation policy as early as 1920s. They had no choice but to offer the most experienced workers the opportunity to settle in the mine camps with their wives.⁹ There was a great need for labour stabilisation in the Northern Rhodesia mining companies to ably compete with the neighbouring mine companies in the region. This challenge became the key which enabled women to find their way in the mine compounds.

Women were only allowed to go to the Copperbelt when the mine companies were faced with labour challenges. The mine companies of Northern Rhodesia faced stiff labour competition from the neighbouring mine companies of Katanga Congo DRC which had better labour policies. Women become one of the solutions to curb the issues of unstable labour in the Copperbelt. Siwila's analysis shows that the presence of women in the Copperbelt was acknowledged by the

⁸ Lamer and Taylor, 'Urban and Social Change in Central Africa's Borderland Communities', p, 326

⁹ James Musonda, 'Undermining Gender Women Mine Workers at the Rock Face in a Zambian Underground Mine', **Journal of Anthropology Southern African Studies**, 43, 1, (2021), p, 33.

mine authorities as an incentive for male mine workers who had to rely on women to provide domestic and sexual services. The mine authority acknowledged that this helped to boost production as it prevented men from going back to the villages more often.¹⁰

Bbole Dandule argued that the copper mining companies recognised that women were a big force in the stabilisation of labour more than wages on the Copperbelt.¹¹ From both statements it is clear that women were accepted in the Copperbelt as an incentive that was to help stabilise labour. The mining companies needed an efficient labour force in order to boost their production. One of the solutions to that was to allow women to be married to the mine workers and married women to come and live in the mine compounds. This is because a married man proved to be more stable than the unmarried ones. The analysis by Parpart further explains that by 1943, William Scrivener, an Anglo-American corporation compound manager, recognized the contribution of women in the stabilisation of labour in the mine companies. This was due to the fact that a married employee was undoubtedly more contented than the single one. He was better fed, looked after, clothed and had a rudimentary sense of responsibility which tended to make him a more stable and efficient worker.¹² It was only when the mine authorities began to appreciate the presence of women and their contribution towards labour stabilisation that they began to have access in the mine compound. However, George Chauncey Jr observed that the decision to allow women in the compounds was as a result of competition for mass production which became very stiff during this period within the mine sector. He further stated that by 1920s and 1930s the copper mining

¹⁰ Lilian Cheelo Siwila, 'Reconstructing the Distorted Image of Women as Reproductive labour on the Copperbelt Mines in Zambia (1920 -54)', p, 78.

¹¹ Bbole Dandule, *Women and Mine Worker's Struggles on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926 – 64*. M. A. Dissertation University of Zambia, (2012), P27.

¹² Jane L. Parpart, 'The Household and the Mine Shaft: Gender and Class struggle on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926 – 64', p, 38.

companies in Northern Rhodesia were faced with challenges of labour migration to the neighbouring countries where the conditions of service were better.¹³ The challenge forced the mining companies to look for incentives that would attract the mine workers and one of the resolutions was to allow women to come and live in the mine compound even though they had to strictly adhere to rules which were formulated to restrict their freedom.

Women began to find their way to the mine compounds with strict rules that they were to be under the control of a husband through the marriage certificate (*muchato*). Only married women with a marriage certificate were allowed in the mine compounds while unmarried women were not allowed. Parpart articulates that the court assessors sought to ensure marital stability and to enforce traditional norms on urban couples. They opposed single women on the Copperbelt and encouraged government and mine police to search the compounds for unmarried women, if they were found they were repatriated.¹⁴ However, despite the restrictions, this marked the beginning of the presence of women in the Copperbelt mine compounds. Women used whatever means possible to find their way to the mine compound such as forging the marriage certificates (*muchato*), walking long distances in the bush by passing roadblocks and also went into hiding when compound managers and mine authorities came to search the mine compounds.

2.3. The significant roles of women in the Copperbelt strikes

As women found their way to the mine compounds, they also began to participate in the workers 'strike which took place in the mine compounds. Women began to participate in the more

¹³ George Chauncey, 'The Locus of Production: Women's Labour in the Zambian Copperbelt 1927-53', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 7, 2, (1981), p.137.

¹⁴ Parpart, 'The Household and the Mine Shaft: Gender and Class struggle on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926 – 64', p, 39.

organised strikes which were organised by the union leaders. African leaders at this point might have realised that in order to succeed in the struggle against a white man in the mining companies of the Copperbelt, there was need to incorporate women in the struggle. As a result, women became a key to the success of the strikes which took place in the mine companies of Northern Rhodesia. Women worked side by side with men in the protest against the mine authority and colonial government. They participated in boycotts, picketing, throwing of stones and preventing other men who were loyal to their bosses not to report for work. They were the main food providers during the strikes.¹⁵

In 1935, a strike broke out engulfing one mine after another. The problem started in Mufulira when the compound clerk Mateyo spread the news of an increased tax by the mine officials. Mufulira clerk sent letters to other compound clerks of Nkana and Roan about the increased tax and urged them to join in the stoppage of work.¹⁶ The mine workers were unhappy with an increased tax, low wage and inadequate food.¹⁷ They complained bitterly to the strike commission that they were unable to pay the new tax, and still feed and clothe their families from the little salaries they received. As mine workers went on strike, they did not receive rations hence, women becoming the providers of food through their gardening and beer brewing businesses. Not only that, but also participated in the strike protest. According to the commission of enquiry which was set to investigate the disturbances of 1935 strike which left six men dead and twenty-two injured shows

¹⁵ Parpart, 'The Household and the Mine Shaft: Gender and Class struggle on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926 – 64', p, 41. See also NAZ, SEC 1/1370 Governor Report to the Secretary of the State No 88

¹⁶ Jane L. Parpart, 'Labour and Capital on the Copperbelt' (ed.) in Bruce Laurie and Milton Cantor, **Politicisation of Black Labour: The 1935 Strike**, (Philadelphia: Temple University, 1983), p, 56.

¹⁷NAZ, SEC 1/1359, Labour disturbances in Northern Rhodesia. See also Parpart, 'The Household and the Mine Shaft: Gender and Class struggle on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926 – 64', p, 41.

that women and children were in the crowd at the Roan fateful shooting incidence.¹⁸ This proves that women and children took part in the protest of the 1935 strike.

Gisela Geisler in her analysis explains that women married to mine workers tried to stabilise their marriages and make them more respectable. They colluded with colonial courts to persuade their husbands to give them more housekeeping money and dissuade them using physical violence. This is because the mine workers' wives revealed that the wage increase would potentially raise their standard of living. Hence, they actively supported their husband's struggle for higher wages. Women attended strike meetings, marched in picket lines, and organised food for men during the strike.¹⁹ Women were a key influence in the 1935 strike. Although the mine companies dismissed the strike as a tax riot and not labour strike, refused to alter their labour policies, Parpart posited that the continued labour shortage and the fear that disgruntled women might convince mine workers to change employers, forced them to adopt the significant policy change. The mine management turned to the Ecumenical United Missions in the Copperbelt (UMCB) for help.²⁰ They believed that missionaries would help to resolve industrial matters by engaging women in various programmes that would keep women busy and out of mischief while teaching them how to stretch their husband's insufficient wage.²¹

¹⁸ NAZ, SEC 1/1361, Report of a Commission of inquiry on Copperbelt Disturbances. See also Parpart, 'The Household and the Mine Shaft: Gender and Class struggle on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926 – 64', p, 41.

¹⁹ Gisela Geisler, **Women and the Remarking of Politics in Southern Africa: Negotiating Autonomy, Incorporation and Representation**, (Nordiska: Afrikainstitutet, 2004), p, 21.

²⁰ Parpart, 'The Household and the Mine Shaft: Gender and Class struggle on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926 – 64', p, 42.

²¹ Parpart, 'The Household and the Mine Shaft: Gender and Class struggle on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926 – 64', p, 42

Women continued to take part in more organised strikes which took place in the Copperbelt. The women were among the protesters of the strike which took place in 1940. Bbole Dandulo attests that on 28th March 1940, African mine workers declared another strike demanding 25/6d per shift.²² This strike was ignited by an incident which occurred at Nchanga feeding store where a mine official struck an African woman. Parpart further explains that when the incident happened, an angry mob of men and women attacked him in retaliation. The next day, work stopped and the entire African community demanded an apology. Work only resumed after the offending official was punished and rations reforms secured.²³ However, weeks later a more serious strike broke out where again women took part in the protest. At Nkana, men and women set pickets on all the roads and huts in the compound.²⁴ The mine workers with the women and the children picketed on the streets to prevent any African employees from going to work. Those willing to go to work were intimidated and were prevented from doing so by the men, women and children who picketed on the streets.²⁵ Barnes observed that during the 1940 strikes, the encouragement for the participation of women and children in the collective action had become a common strategy which was used by most strike leaders.²⁶ This was because during this period women participated in more organised strikes as the union leaders began to incorporate the women in their meetings. According to Parpart, the results of cooperation in the compounds no doubt contributed to the success of the strike. Women and children were involved in the strike strategy. Union leaders ordered every

²²Dandule, *Women and Mine Worker's Struggles on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926 – 64*, p, 70.

²³ Parpart, 'The Household and the Mine Shaft: Gender and Class struggle on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926 – 64', p, 42

²⁴ NAZ, SEC, I/142, Report on Native Labour Strike, April 1940. By the Secretary for Native Affairs 16. See also Dandule, *Women and Mine Worker's Struggles on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926 – 64*, p, 68.

²⁵ NAZ, SEC, 1/1370, Governor Report No. 88 to the Secretary of the State.

²⁶ Theresa Barnes, 'So That's Labourer could live with his Family: Overlooked Factors in Social and Economic Strife in Urban Zimbabwe 1945 -1952', *Journal of African Studies*, 21, 1, (1995), p, 97.

African man, woman and children inclusive to sleep *en masse* on the football pitch to build the feeling of solidarity. All were involved and no one was left behind as men, women and children knew the arguments by heart as discussed in the meeting.²⁷ Therefore, women in the compound understood the grievances which drove their case during the strike. They told each other the legends and parables which were used during the strike.

2.4. The significance of women in the African Mine Workers Union (AMWU)

By 1946, the colonial government encouraged African mine workers to form trade unions on a non-political model.²⁸ When the African Mine Workers Union (AMWU) was formed in 1949, women also attended the meetings of the union as this had become a trend of involving women in the past organisations that dealt with mine workers grievances. Parpart articulates that, women went to the trade union meetings and listened to the new leaders, especially their promises of higher wages and better living conditions.²⁹ The promises of higher wages and better living conditions attracted women to support the union. They became the key to the stabilisation of the union and the success of its resolutions. For instance, when the mine company saw the impact and influence of the union, they tried to challenge the mine dominance in the compound by increasing power and dominance of the Tribal Representatives.³⁰ The Tribal Representatives were established to maintain African traditions and customs in the mine compounds and presided over matters of marital issues which were brought before them. When the mine company officials tried to

²⁷ Parpart, 'The Household and the Mine Shaft: Gender and Class struggle on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926 – 64', p, 43. See also J, B, Moore, **These African Copper Miners: A Study of the Industrial Revolution in Northern Rhodesia, with Principal Reference to the Copper Mining Industry.** (London: Livingstone Press, 1948), p, 2.

²⁸ James Fry, **Employment and Income Distribution in the African Economy.** (London: Croom Helm, 1979), p, 101.

²⁹ Parpart, 'The Household and the Mine Shaft: Gender and Class Struggle on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926 – 64', p, 47.

³⁰ Dandule, Women and Mine Worker's Struggles on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926 – 64, p, 69.

undermine the union's dominance in the mine compounds, women helped the union to destabilise the existence of the Tribal Representatives by stopping to take their problems to them but taking them to the union.³¹ Women helped in making the Tribal Representatives irrelevant which eventually became dysfunctional as their clientele stopped taking their matters to them. Parpart further explains that after the elimination of the Tribal Representatives, the union officials became even more important in the compound affairs.³² Meanwhile, when the mine tried to circumvent the union by introducing the Township Advisory Board, it failed because most of the African mine workers together with their wives never supported it.³³ Dandule's analysis stipulates that any organisation which failed to win the favour of the women as a reliable representation for all inhabitants of the mine compound could not stand or gain popularity.³⁴ Therefore, with the support of the women in the stabilisation of the union, the union's popularity grew and became successful in its resolutions.

Women also played an important role in the strike which occurred after the formation of AMWU. In 1952, the union demanded an across-the board wage hike of 2s/d per shift. Both the union and the mine company authority sat to negotiate on the issues and demands of the union. However, this failed as the companies made a number of counter offers which did not please the union and rejected them.³⁵ Before the commencement of the strike in October 1952, the union had well

³¹ Dandule, *Women and Mine Worker's Struggle on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926-64*, p, 69. See also Parpart, 'The Household and the Mine Shaft: Gender and Class Struggle on the Zambian Copperbelt', p, 47.

³² Parpart, 'The Household and the Mine Shaft: Gender and Class Struggle on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926 – 64', p, 47.

³³ Parpart, 'The Household and the Mine Shaft: Gender and Class Struggle on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926 – 64', p, 50.

³⁴ Dandule, *Women and Mine Workers Struggle on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926-64*, p, 70.

³⁵ A. Lee Epstein, **Politics in an Urban African Community**, (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1958), p, 94. See also Parpart, 'The Household and the Mine Shaft: Gender and Class Struggle on the Zambian Copperbelt 1926-64', p, 47.

calculated their move and put everything in place to avoid setbacks. Women were again well incorporated in this strike strategy as the union told the women in advance to stock up food stuff and extend their gardens.³⁶ In 1952, the general strike began as scheduled by the union leaders in all the mine companies, Nkana, Roan, Mufulira, Nchanga and Chibuluma.³⁷ Women became instrumental in the success of the strike as Parpart narrates that:

Since strikers received no wage nor food, food became an essential issue, and both women's gardening skill and their ability to stretch limited food supplies underpinned the strike's success. The women had heeded the union warnings, stocking up on food and enlarging gardens for two months before the strike.³⁸

From this analysis of Parpart, women were the key figures of the success of the strike. Even when miners did not receive the rations during the strike, it was not worrisome or an issue as food was not a problem because women had already sorted it out in advance. Dandule also explains that during the strike even when the mine workers were not given food, no one complained of hunger openly and the demand for food through the ticket system remained small.³⁹

The strike was a communal effort as the organisers called upon men, women and children in the strike effort whose response was overwhelming. Women had been essential in the success of the strikes which took place after the formation of the union. Women as food producers, union supporters and neighbourhood organisers, continued to play a crucial role in the collective labour action, the pattern which was to continue throughout the 1950s.⁴⁰ By the end of the 1950s, women

³⁶ Dandule, *Women and Mine Workers Struggle on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926-64*, p, 71. See also Parpart, 'The Household and the Mine Shaft: Gender and Class Struggle on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926-64', p, 48.

³⁷ Northern News, 22nd October 1952.

³⁸ Parpart, 'The Household and the Mine Shaft: Gender and Class Struggle on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926-64', p, 48.

³⁹ Dandule, *Women and Mine Worker's Struggle on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926-64*, p, 71

⁴⁰ Hortense Powdermaker, **Coppertown: Changing African, the Human Situation on the Rhodesian Copperbelt**. (New York: Oxford University Press 1963), p, 116.

in the mine compounds displayed a remarkable commitment to political actions. The mine wives became actively involved in the political movements whilst their husbands, fear of corporate displeasure inhibited their political activities. The women linked up their demands for better condition in the mine compounds to the dissolution of colonial rule. Women understood that if the nationalist movement achieved its goals of independence, then the problem faced in the mine compounds would come to an end since the poor conditions for an African mine worker were the sum total of colonial rule and corporate regime. The active participation of women in the civil unrest of the mine compounds and the inclusion of women in the union strategies provided the foundation for women's active participation in the national politics of Zambia. As Dandule indicates that even the commissioner understood that labour issues had affected the entire community which included the women. This made them political.⁴¹ The union members were among the most active participants in the nationalist struggle and were able to influence other members in their community.

2.5.0 Factors which galvanised the joining of women in Zambia's liberation struggle

There are many factors which prompted women to join the fight for independence. Some of the factors which galvanised the women in Zambia into joining the struggle for independence are discussed below.

2.5.1 Civil unrest of the mine compounds

From the previous discussion, it was highlighted that the active participation of women in the civil unrest of the mine compound and their inclusion in the union strategies provided the foundation for active participation of women in Zambia's politics. Most of the labour issues which took place

⁴¹ Dandule, *Women and Mine Workers Struggle on the Zambian Copperbelt*, p, 79.

in the mine compound of the Copperbelt did not only affect the mine workers but affected all families and the community at large which included women and the children. For instance, the issue of low wage, accommodation, poor sanitation and the ban of beer brewing in the mine compounds, made the women to be more political. Women joined in and were incorporated in the protest against mine companies. This was one way of showing grievances to the colonial authority and retaliating to colonial oppression during this period. Women were free to join the political movement as they linked their demands for better conditions in the mine compounds to dissolution of colonial rule.⁴² They realised the importance of combining industrial and political struggle.

This also came into the mind of the labour commissioner in 1957 who articulated that:

If strikes were made illegal in Northern Rhodesia and proceedings instituted against the leaders of strike action, it is not unlikely that the union members or the mass supporters would strike in protest in government action and whereas the dispute started over an industrial matter, it might now become a dispute in protest against government action.⁴³

Women on the Copperbelt joined the nationalist movement because they believed that if the nationalist leaders achieved their intended goals of independence, then even their problems would be solved as they were aware of the poor conditions of service for most African workers were as a result of colonial oppression and its corporate regime.⁴⁴ Hence, joining hands with men to fight the colonial masters and achieve the common good.

⁴² Parpart, 'The Household and the Mine Shaft: Gender and Class Struggle on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926-64.', p, 55.

⁴³ NAZ, LSS 1/1017, Correspondence from Labour Commissioner to the Chief Secretary, 14th January 1957. Also see Dandule, Women and Mine Workers Struggle on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926-64, p, 78- 79.

⁴⁴ Dandule, Women and Mine Workers Struggle on the Zambian Copperbelt, p, 79.

2.5.2. The inclusion of women in the mine workers 'union

The inclusion of women in the mine workers 'union provided the platform for women to become active in politics. Their incorporation in the strike strategy by union leaders provided a fertile ground for women to join politics. Most of the strikes which took place in the Copperbelt succeeded because of the participation of women. Barnes articulates that during the 1940 strike, encouraging women and children in the collective action had become a common strategy which was used by strike leaders.⁴⁵ It was a common strategy by strike leaders to involve women in their planning of the strike. This became a training ground which motivated women to later join the nationalist struggle for independence. Union actions, strategies and involvement of the women in their meetings provided an opportunity for women to become active in politics and join liberation struggles. The participation of women in the union actions exposed them and made them be aware of their power to shift things as the success of most of the strategies of the union involved the contribution of women as key people. Hence their involvement in the nationalist struggle.

2.5.3. The Mbeni Society and Kalela Dance

The Mbeni Society and Kalela dance was another organisation which influenced the participation of women in the liberation struggle. The fight against colonialism in the Copperbelt was characterised by music and other forms of popular cultural dances of which an example is the influence of Mbeni and Kalela music and dances in Copperbelt between 1930s and 1950s. These songs, music and dances did not only play an instrumental role in sensitising the urban population of the injustice of colonial rule, but also developed an effective medium of nationalist agitation

⁴⁵ Theresa Barnes, 'So that a Labourer Could Live with His Family: Overlooked Factors in Social and Economic Strife in Urban Zimbabwe 1945- 1952', **Journal Southern African Studies**, 21, 1, (1995), p, 97

against colonialism.⁴⁶ Music is used to sell political party manifestos and the corresponding findings of Namuyamba posits that:

Various genres and styles of popular music are employed in strategies of political propaganda not only to promulgate a political message and make it sound persuasive but also to bring people from various strata of society together in support of an ideological or propagandistic objective. Music is used to influence people's action and achieve organisational cohesion for both ideological and propagandistic purposes at all levels.⁴⁷

Women in the Mbeni Association and Kalela dance composed songs and performed dances which were used as entertainment during the strike. Some of the songs composed were songs which exposed the racism and evils of colonialism in the Copperbelt.⁴⁸ Albert Matongo also attests that the language used in the songs was sophisticated, meant to send a message to the African workers while deceiving the whites. It was the duty of the women members to compose songs through which seditious messages were communicated.⁴⁹

It is from this analysis that the study concludes that some women were influenced to join the nationalist politics through the Mbeni and Kalela dance as these were other avenues which Africans used in the Copperbelt to fight colonialism.

2.5.4. The Incorporation Women in the Welfare Association Meetings

The encouragement of women to participate in the Welfare Association meetings was another factor which spurred women's political activism. For instance, in order to increase the number of

⁴⁶ Mubita Namuyamba, Chakanika W. Wanga, Friday Nyimbili, Chisenga Kabwe, Conrad Munkombwe, and Davies Phiri, 'Music and its Role in the Electoral Process of Zambia', **International Journal of Humanities Social Science and Education**, 5, 6, (2018), P, 40-41.

⁴⁷ Mubita Namuyamba, et al, 'Music and its Role in the Electoral Process of Zambia', P, 44.

⁴⁸ Albert B. K. Matongo, 'Popular Culture in a colonial society: Another Look at Mbeni and Kalela Dances on the Copperbelt, 1930 – 64, in Samuel N. Chipunga (eds.) Guardians in their Times: Experiences of Zambian under Colonial 1890-1992, (London: Macmillan Press, 1992), p,194.

⁴⁹ Matongo, 'Popular Culture in a Colonial Society: Another Look at Mbeni and Kalela Dances on the Copperbelt, P, 194.

supporters to achieve a common goal, the Welfare Association thought of incorporating women in their meetings. This was to allow women to come and listen to their meetings and train them in politics. According to the Welfare minutes, there was a need to allow women to join the Welfare Society meetings. The leaders of the Welfare Association suggested and recommended that the female Welfare officers be asked to organise African Women Welfare meetings and that after a certain period of training then they would join the men. The reason for this action was because African women at that time were shy to speak in meetings where men were present.⁵⁰ It was observed that women were nervous to stand and speak in public in the presence of men, hence the proposed training which enabled women to become active participants. This move created an opportunity for women to become active participants and join the nationalist movement struggle.

2.5.5. African National Congress (ANC) and the Women's League

The ANC was another organisation which motivated women to join the fight for independence through the Women's League. The African National Congress had the desire to increase its membership across the entire Northern Rhodesia.⁵¹ In order to encourage women to take greater part in politics and therefore develop a national spirit, the Women's League was formed.⁵² This provided the platform for active women's participation in Zambia's liberation struggle. The Women's League provided a good opportunity for women to become active politicians and encourage others to join the struggle. Through the Women's League, it was reported that the response of the women was so far very good such that in local congress meetings, half of the

⁵⁰ NAZ, SEC 2/446, Minutes of the Native Welfare Association Luanshya 13th April, 1948. See also Ireen Manda, *Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalist Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951- 1964: The Case of Lusaka*. MA. Dissertation, The University of Zambia, P, 28.

⁵¹ African Eagle, Tuesday 17th November, 1953. P. 1.

⁵² African Eagle, Tuesday 17th November, 1953. P. 1.

attendees were women.⁵³ The male nationalists realised that if the nationalist movement was to be successful, there was need to include women.⁵⁴ Hence the Women's League became an avenue where women were recruited and participated in the fight for independence.

2.5.6. United National Independence Party (UNIP) and Women's Brigade.

The Women's Brigade under UNIP was another forum that gave women an opportunity to join the struggle for independence. When UNIP was established in 1959, it was mandated to mobilise women for anti-colonial struggle. The political organisations such as the women's Brigade and the ANC Women's League were other avenues which influenced women to join politics and fight colonialism in Zambia.⁵⁵ Through such organisations, women were able to mobilise other women to join the fight against colonialism in Zambia.

2.5.7. Education and Town Exposure

Many women who got educated and exposed to town life became aware of colonial oppression and joined the anti-colonial movement. Many of these women sought their inspiration in their role as mothers, intended working towards the betterment of society for their children in future. Women after encountering oppression from colonialism, they sought to fight for their future generation. As mothers they fought for the betterment of their children.⁵⁶

Urban life and exposure to education helped women to increase their self-confidence and sharpened their skills identifying aspects of their own oppression. Geisler's analysis shows that

⁵³ African Eagle, Tuesday 17th November, 1953. P. 1.

⁵⁴ Manda, *Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalist Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951- 1964*: P, 26.

⁵⁵ Kikamba 'The Role of Women's Organisation in the Political Development of Zambia 1964 – 2001: A Case Study of UNIP Women's League and Zambia National Women's Lobby Group', P, 89.

⁵⁶ Gisela Geisler, **Women and the Remarking of Politics in Southern African: Negotiating Autonomy, Incorporation and Representation**, (Nordiska: Afrikainstituet, 2004), p, 39.

many women who joined the nationalist movement in the 1950s were part of a new generation of urban African population who developed a lifestyle that was no longer strict to tradition, even though traditional values remained ideal.

However, it was city life exposure which prompted Mama Julia Mulenga Chikamoneka to join the fight for independence. Being exposed to town life and experiences of colonial oppression which she encountered when she worked as a maid, stimulated her to join the freedom struggle. Whilst in town she could not tolerate the segregation where blacks were subjected to buy meat through the window while whites were served inside the butchery.⁵⁷ An edition carried in *Sunday Times Newspaper 1973*, explains an incident which Chikamoneka witnessed and prompted her to join politics. Mama Chikamoneka recalled an incident in which one of her masters repeatedly struck her workmate with a broom for failing to stand up as a sign of respect.⁵⁸ This was a situation where a man knelt down as a sign of respect in the African tradition while it was the opposite with western tradition. Another incident was when her white boss repeatedly told her that Africans were no better than baboons despite the fact that she was the same perceived baboon who prepared his meals and took care of his children.⁵⁹ Mama Chikamoneka witnessed so many incidents of colonial oppression as she worked for the whites and when she learnt about freedom fighters who wanted to remove colonial masters, she joined politics and became actively involved in the liberation struggle of Zambia.⁶⁰ Another edition in the *African Eagle Newspaper 1953* shows that among the reasons which made women join politics, boycotts and demonstrations was because women

⁵⁷ Rosemary Mpuku Nyawa, 'UNIP' Julia Chikamoneka', *The Fearless Mad African Girl*, in Mbuyu Nalumango and Sifuniso Monde (ed.) **Women Power in Politics** (Lusaka: Zambia Women Writers Association, 1998), p. 21.

⁵⁸ *Sunday Times Newspaper*, 23rd February, 1973, p. 1.

⁵⁹ *Sunday Times Newspaper*, 23rd February, 1973, p. 1.

⁶⁰ *Times of Zambia*, 24th October, 2017, p. 8. see also Nyawa, 'UNIP' Julia Chikamoneka', *The Fearless Mad African Girl*, p. 20.

were the ones who were mostly subjected to mistreatment in the white owned shops and butcheries. Hence, women became active anti-colonialists because they wanted to make the owners of the shops and butcheries begin to respect black women too. They wanted to be accorded the same treatment as the white women in those premises.⁶¹ Such kind of oppression and discrimination experienced in the city was not taken frivolously by many women who came in the city and hence joined in the struggle for independence.

However, city life did not only expose women but men too. Geisler posits that those younger urban men who formed and joined the nationalist movements turned to modernity, where they were no longer glued to their tradition to oppress the participation of women outright.⁶² The educated men and those who were exposed to city life became modern and were no longer strictly attached to tradition. The modernity and flexibility of these men provided a platform for women to join the liberation movement.

2.5. 8. Marriages

Some studies show that some women became part and parcel of the liberation movement through marriages. The women who were married to freedom fighters automatically worked side by side with their husbands. This was the case of Mama Betty Muthinke Kaunda. She was married to Kenneth David Kaunda, a man who later became Zambia's first president. Mama Betty Kaunda automatically became a freedom fighter by marriage. She worked side by side with her husband to fight colonialism.⁶³

⁶¹ African Eagle, 16th June, 1951, p. 1.

⁶² Geisler, **Women and the Remarking of Politics in Southern African**: p, 40.

⁶³ Edith Dahlschem, **Women in Zambia**, (Lusaka: NECZAM 1970), p, 45.

Mama Chibesakunda Kankasa was married to Timothy Jiranda Kankasa. She too was another woman whose husband was so anxious in seeing her join the liberation movement. Even though at first, she had no interest in joining active politics, she indirectly worked hand in hand with her husband as she would host meetings of the freedom fighters in her home. Though she managed to resist her husband's constant appeals to join the freedom struggle, the defining moment came when she was belittled, insulted and denied a chance to buy beef in one of the white owned butcheries in Kitwe. She and her husband were ordered to leave the butchery because women were outlawed from entering such facilities but Mr and Mrs Kankasa resisted, a situation which led both of them to a police cell for six hours after an altercation with the owner of the shop who later called the police. This situation angered Mama Kankasa so much that she made a decision that she was ready to fight colonialism with immediate effect.⁶⁴ The act of discrimination experienced during this period and the constant appeals from the husband chiselled a character of strength for Mama Kankasa to join active politics. Another figure that joined the liberation movement by marriage was Mama Inonge Mutukwa Wina. She indirectly and automatically joined politics at the age of eighteen when she married the late Arthur Wina in the early 1960s.⁶⁵ Through marriage, though playing a low profile, Mama Inonge Wina worked side by side with her husband to fight British colonialism in Zambia. She would prepare food for male freedom fighters who came to hold meetings in her house at night.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Shapi Shachinda, 'Mama Chibesa Kunda Kankasa's Lingering Mothering Attribute, KCM News Issue No 73, December, 2017, p, 8. See also Gisela Geisler, **Women and the Remarking of Politics in Southern African**: p, 43.

⁶⁵ Franklin Tembo, **Inonge Wina: The First Woman Vice President in Zambia**. (Chingola: Lambert Publishers, 2016), p, 16.

⁶⁶ Franklin Tembo, **Inonge Wina: The First Woman Vice President in Zambia**, (Chingola: Lambert, 2016), p, 80.

2.5.9. Living with freedom fighters

The findings of this study shows that some women joined the liberation struggle because they lived with freedom fighters. A good example of such women is Mama Eunice Kalichini Sebele, Mama Bessie Nyoni Chanda, Elizabeth Mumba, Rita Chipika, Malawo Nkumbula and Esther Kakumbi. These were among the women who joined the fight against colonialism in Zambia simply because they lived with the freedom fighters.

During an oral interview, Bessie Nyoni Chanda explained that she joined the fight against colonialism in Zambia because of her father who was Zambia's freedom fighter from Wankie in Zimbabwe. Her father used her as an informer or messenger at a tender age as colonial authorities would not suspect her of anything. She used to cook food and wash clothes for the freedom fighters who were hidden by her father.⁶⁷ Because of this experience, she continued to work and fought colonialism under the youth wing of UNIP.

Eunice Kalinchini Sebele was kept by her brother Paul James Kalinchini who was a staunch member of the African National Congress (ANC), African National Independent Party (ANIP) and later the United National Independent Party (UNIP).⁶⁸ Living under the care of a freedom fighter, Sebele also became active and joined the liberation struggle to fight oppression and discrimination during colonialism in Kabwe.

Those whose parents were freedom fighters or lived under the care of the freedom fighters automatically joined Zambia's liberation struggle because of the environment they came from. Wherever they went, they also were able to influence other friends because of the experiences they had at home. This was the case of Malawo Nkumbula and Esther Kakumbi. Malawo Nkumbula

⁶⁷ Interview with Mama Bessie Nyoni Chanda, 12th April, 2021. Chilenje Lusaka.

⁶⁸ Interview with Eunice Kalinchini Sebele. 25th February, 2021. Solwezi

was the daughter of the ANC leader Harry Mwanga Nkumbula and Esther Kakumbi was the daughter of Mateyo Kakumbi an African Representative Council Committee Chairman and ANC General Treasurer.⁶⁹ These two were able to influence Mama Betty Chilombo Chilunga to develop interest in Zambia's liberation struggle because of the interaction they had at school at Chipembi Girls. Betty Chilombo Chilunga explained in an interview that Malawo Nkumbula and Esther Kakumbi used to hold meetings at night while at boarding house no 4, when the school authorities expected them to be asleep.⁷⁰ This was not the case with Malawo and Esther who organised meetings where they discussed the necessity to end colonialism because of the racial segregation where Europeans were given privileged positions over Africans.⁷¹ The two daughters of the freedom fighters brought to light the racial segregation where Europeans had privileged position over Africans in terms of school, health facilities, jobs and discrimination Africans experienced in the white owned stores. It was from such night meetings which impacted and transformed Chilunga's perception as she was just a village girl who had less knowledge about the happenings of colonial discrimination in the urban area.⁷² These interactions with Malawo and Esther the daughters of the freedom fighters equipped and ignited Mama Betty Chilombo Chilunga's passion to join and became an activist of Zambia's liberation struggle.

2.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, the chapter has discussed the genesis of women's entry in the fight for colonialism. The first entry of women's participation in the fight for colonialism has roots from the Copperbelt

⁶⁹ Victoria Chitunga Phiri, 'Stand and Sing of Zambia': Voices from Freedom Struggle Heroines', **Journal of Culture and African Women Studies**, 26, (2015), p, 105- 106.

⁷⁰ Interview with Betty Chilombo Chilunga, Lusaka, 22nd March, 2021.

⁷¹ Interview with Betty Chilombo Chilunga, Lusaka, 22nd March, 2021.

⁷² Interview with Betty Chilombo Chilunga, Lusaka, 22nd March, 2021. See also Victoria Chitunga Phiri, 'Stand and Sing of Zambia': Voices from Freedom Struggle Heroines. **Journal of Culture and African Women Studies**, p, 107.

mine compound. Men and women joined hands to fight the mine colonial authorities and their racism policies. The findings in this study revealed that women's active participation in the welfare association meetings and their participation in the strikes of the Copperbelt galvanised their active participation in politics. Most of the successes of the strikes which took place in the Copperbelt were attained with the help of the women. The chapter has further discussed other several factors which influenced women to join active politics. Among the factors were women's wings which were created by different political organisations such as ANC and UNIP. The women's League under ANC and Women's Brigade were platforms which influenced the participation of women through recruitment. Living under the care of a freedom fighter and marriage were other factors which motivated women to join the fight for independence. This was because of the environment they were coming from as it was the case of Malawo Nkumbula and Esther Kakumbi. Lastly, many African men and women joined the African nationalism due to the growth of white settler colonialism and capitalist exploitation of the black people. The Africans began to feel that they were oppressed and exploited simply because of their skin colour. They therefore formed organisations where they worked in collaboration with women to fight for the end of colonialism in Zambia.

CHAPTER THREE

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE EARLY NATIONALIST MOVEMENTS 1948 – 1964

3.0. Introduction

Women in Zambia played a vital role in the early nationalist movements. However, most writers of Zambia's history of independence have not adequately documented the significant roles played by women during this period. It is for this reason that this chapter discusses the significant roles played by women in the early nationalist movements from 1948-1964. The chapter argues that from inception women played a significant role in the liberation struggle. They contributed greatly to the growth and sustainability of the political parties which emerged in Zambia. In the ANC, ZANC and UNIP, women played crucial roles in party mobilisation, dissemination of information, fundraising for the political parties, organising other women to take part in the protests and demonstrations as a way of rebelling against colonialism and its system. To some extent women went beyond what men could do, taking advantage of the lenience of the colonial authority towards them. Available evidence shows that women used different strategies and approaches to rebel against colonialism in Zambia. For instance, women were involved in picketing, protests and demonstrations, riots, boycotts and blocking of roads. They also burned and destroyed bridges to prevent the colonial police from reaching their villages or premises and attack the male freedom fighters. Thus, Zambia's history for independence is incomplete without acknowledging the significance of women in the nationalist struggle.

3.1. Women and the ANC

The resistance to colonial rule in Northern Rhodesia began with the formation of welfare societies. As time progressed welfare societies were transformed into different political parties. By the end of the 1940s and the early 1950s, new mass based political parties were formed in many African

colonies, including Northern Rhodesia. In Northern Rhodesia, the movement towards independence was raised to another level in May 1946 when Dauti Yamba (the founder of Luanshya Welfare Association, together with representatives from other thirteen welfare organisations in the country from both the urban and rural areas) called for uniting of welfare organisations under one body.¹ All these formations were amalgamated into the Federation of African Welfare Societies, with Dauti Yamba as president, Joseph J. Mumba as assistant secretary and George W. Kaluwa as the organising secretary. The aim of the Federation of African Welfare Societies was to create co-operation and mutual understanding between constituent societies of Northern Rhodesia in both rural and urban areas.²

Two years later in 1948, this movement was reconstituted into a political party known as the Northern Rhodesia African Congress (NRAC) under the leadership of Godwin Mbikusita Lewanika. Other office bearers were two vice presidents of the congress; L. Mufana Lipalile and Robinson M. Nabulyato; Mateyo Kakumbi - Treasurer; John Richmond -Secretary; and George Kaluwa as Assistant Treasurer. According to the constitution that it adopted, the NRAC was expected to promote the education, political, economic and social advancement of Africans. Apart from the government, the congress would 'be a mouthpiece of the Africans'.³ Later on, the party changed its name to Northern Rhodesia African National Congress (NRANC) in 1951 with Harry Mwanga Nkumbula succeeding Lewanika as a president. In due season NRANC also changed its name to African National Congress (ANC).⁴

¹ Ndangwa Noyoo, **Social Welfare in Zambia: The Search for a Transformative Agenda** (London: Adonis and Abbey Publishers Limited, 2013). P. 201.

² Noyoo, **Social Welfare in Zambia: The Search for a Transformative Agenda**, P. 201.

³ Noyoo, **Social Welfare in Zambia: The Search for a Transformative Agenda**, p, 201 – 202.

⁴ Noyoo, **Social Welfare in Zambia: The Search for a Transformative Agenda**, p, 202. See also Zambia Daily Mail, Tuesday 24th October, 2017, p, VII.

Henceforth, the ANC's concerted effort was aimed at destabilising colonial rule through a sustained process of political mobilisation, agitation, strike action and boycotts of European shops. The ANC took on more radical roles with mass action being the main tool used against the exploitation and racism of settlers.⁵ Unlike earlier political organisations such as Welfare societies the new African National Congress party grew into a large organisation covering large parts of Northern Rhodesia and commanding great support. It was not only restricted to the educated elite, but it needed mass support for their political cause. The cause went beyond the demand for more opportunities and an end of discrimination against the Africans. Its central demand was the end of colonial rule and political freedom.⁶

The African National Congress incorporated Women in their fight against colonialism and they played significant roles in numerous ways. They disseminated information, recruited fellow women, raised funds for the party, cooked for male freedom fighters and participated in boycotts and protests in various places.

Julia Mulenga Chikamoneka was one of the prominent women who got involved in politics in the early 1950s. When she learnt about the new political movement which wanted to remove the colonial government, she got interested and joined the women's wing of the African National Congress party. She was among the women who worked side by side with the male freedom fighters. She worked towards recruiting more women members by sensitising them on the discrimination and cruel treatment which Africans were subjected to.⁷

⁵ Noyoo, **Social Welfare in Zambia: The Search for a Transformative Agenda**, P. 202.

⁶ Noyoo, **Social Welfare in Zambia: The Search for a Transformative Agenda**, P. 202.

⁷ Zambia Daily Mail, Tuesday 24th October, 2017, p, VII. See also Rosemary Mpuku Nyawa, 'UNIP' Julia Mulenga Chikamoneka', *The Fearless Mad African Girl*, (eds.) in Mbuyu Nalumango and Monde Sifuniso, **Women in Power Politics**, (Lusaka: Zambian Women Writers Association, 1998), p, 20.

According to the ANC records women were the ones who were in charge of the door-to-door campaigns.⁸ They went door-to-door mobilising and recruiting more members for the party. Women were mass mobilisers who helped the ANC achieve its aim in mass mobilisation as it was to increase in numbers in the shortest possible time and reach out to many areas of the country.

Mama Chikamoneka and other women came up with strategies on how to fight injustice during this period. They planned and mapped out protest matches, boycotts of shops and butcheries. Barely three months after joining politics, she was arrested with a charge of public incitement and leading a protest match without a police permit. The protest included over two hundred (200) Africans in Lusaka who were protesting against racial discrimination in public places.⁹

Manda also states that women participated in the boycotts, protests and demonstrations which were organised by the Congress throughout 1953-1954. The demonstrations lasted about ten weeks. The protests were organised to retaliate against the colour bar in hotels, restaurants, shops, butcheries, churches, post offices, and public lavatories.¹⁰ These demonstrations and protests were aimed at forcing colonial authorities to allow Africans to enter the white owned shops, butcheries and other public spaces reserved for the Europeans.

An edition in the *African Eagle Newspaper* narrated that, following a large meeting held at Mapoloto in Lusaka at which the Congress decided to stage demonstrations against the colour bar, Africans were reported to have demanded services in shops, banks, post offices and a bar counter where Europeans were normally served from. The demonstration started at a grocery and a butcher

⁸ ANC, 7/5, Constitution of the Northern Rhodesia Council of women 1962.

⁹ Sunday Times, 23rd February, 1973. See also Nyawa, 'UNIP' Julia Mulenga Chikamoneka', *The Fearless Mad African Girl*, p, 21.

¹⁰ Ireen Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalists Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951 – 1964: The Case of Lusaka', MA. Dissertation, University of Zambia, (1992), p, 37. See also A. Lee Epstein, **Politics in an urban Community**, (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1958), p, 62.

shop where Africans were usually served from the side window and the Post Office which had separate entrances for whites and Africans.¹¹ During this period the women were organised to stand in pickets, refrain from buying from the shops and butcheries which practised racism. Some women were instructed to stand on strategic points where they could see those going into the butcheries and shops to turn the Africans away who wanted to buy from such shops. In some cases, goods from those Africans who tried to be difficult were confiscated.¹² All this was to enforce the campaign to rebel against racial segregation practiced by the Europeans.

The women in most cases took the lead in the demonstrations and boycotts because they were the ones who were subjected to ill-treatment in most shops and butcheries. A good example is an incident which happened to Mama Kankasa, who explained an incident which happened to her in Kitwe. She stated that at one point she was belittled and denied access to one of the white owned butcheries in Kitwe. She and her husband were ordered to leave the butchery because women were forbidden from entering such premises. This situation landed them in a police cell after an argument with the owner of the shop.¹³

Because of such mistreatment which women endured from the white owned premises, women participated in the boycotts and demonstrations to make the owners of the shops and butcheries begin to respect black women and accord them the same treatment they gave the European women in their premises. The effect of these boycotts and demonstrations was that they forced the owners of the butcheries and the shops to initiate talks between the ANC and the Lusaka Chamber of

¹¹ African Eagle 8th August, 1953, p, 1

¹² Ireen Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalists Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951 – 1964, P, 38.

¹³ Shapi Shachinda, 'Mama Kankasa's Lingerling Mothering Attribute', KCM News Issue No 73, 2017. See also Gisela Geisler, **Women and the Remaking of Politics in Southern Africa: Negotiating Autonomy, Incorporation and Representation**, (Nordiska: Afrikainstitutet, 2004), p, 43.

Commerce to discuss the alleged discrimination which took place in various forms. As a result of these discussions, the Chamber of Commerce persuaded those Europeans and Asians who discriminated against the Africans in their premises to stop and start accommodating them.¹⁴

In 1954, African women made a number of protests and demonstrations against the colonial government's discriminatory policy over the sale of beer. The colonial government had enacted a policy of municipal control over the production and the sale of grain beer in town.¹⁵ The brewing and the sale of the grain beer was one of the avenues women used to generate income and this policy frustrated the efforts of women's economic ventures. This move forced some women in Lusaka to march in protest at the District Commissioner's office and demanded that Africans should be allowed to brew beer and also run their own pubs.¹⁶ According to Hansen, about two thousand (2000) women in Lusaka rioted against the Municipal ban of home brewed beer in 1954.¹⁷

Women in both rural and urban areas took part in the protests and demonstrations against the colonial discrimination. Parpart explains that the women branch of ANC was involved in both rural and urban protests. The women were involved in the ferrying of trees to block the roads as a way of preventing the colonial police from arresting men engaged in sabotage in different areas.¹⁸

¹⁴ African Eagle, Tuesday 23rd June 1953, p. 1. See also Epstein, **Politics in an urban Community**, p. 171.

¹⁵ Charles Ambler, 'Alcohol, Racial Segregation and Popular Politics in Northern Rhodesia', **Journal of African History**, 31, (1990), p. 296. See also Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalists Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951 – 1964', p. 40.

¹⁶ Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalists Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951-1964', p. 40. See also David Mulford, **Zambia: The Politics of Independence 1957-1964**, (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 234.

¹⁷ Karen Tranberg Hansen, 'Negotiating Sex in Urban Zambia', **Journal of Southern Studies**, 10, 2, (1984), p. 228.

¹⁸ Jane L. Parpart, 'Women and the State of Africa', Working Paper No: 117, May, 1986.

Teresah Chanda explained that she participated in the nationalist politics under the youth wing in Chinsali in chief Chikasa's area. As a youth and other youths in the village, they participated in cutting down trees, blocking the roads, destroying the bridges to prevent the colonial police from reaching their villages to arrest their parents who protested against whites' discrimination and mistreatment of the blacks.¹⁹ Mama Eunice Kalinchini, Fredah Neba and other women in Kabwe protested against racism in Post Offices and Butcheries. As youths and other women, they too blocked roads to prevent the colonial police from reaching the male freedom fighters in Bwacha-Kabwe.²⁰

The ANC women's wing was mandated to raise funds for the party. In 1951 there was a need of sending the delegates to England to go and express their views concerning African opposition to the federation scheme, which would have betrayed the Africans national aspiration and robbed them of their legitimate claims to ownership of land. When Africans appealed to the colonial government for financial assistance, they were turned down, which meant that Africans were to find means and ways of sourcing funds to finance the trip.²¹ This trip was financed by the funds which came from the contributions and fundraising ventures of the party.

Women were instrumental in mobilising funds which sponsored the trip. Manda articulates that three quarters of the funds which were raised for this trip came from the women and this was acknowledged by Mr Mataka who was a leader and a member of the congress at that time.²² The fundraising ventures were not done for the delegates only, but also for party use. The ANC members also carried out some communal work to raise the funds. This was done through working

¹⁹ Interview with Teresah Chanda, 3rd May, 2021, Lusaka.

²⁰ Interview with Eunice Kalinchini Sebele, 22nd March, 2021, Solwezi

²¹ Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalists Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951 – 1964, pp 35-36. See also A. Lee Epstein, **Politics in an urban Community**, p, 160.

²² Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalists Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951 – 1964, p, 36

for either an individual or a company. The funds which were raised were used for the smooth running of the party. During the fundraising communal work, women were tasked to provide refreshments for those who were working.²³ Similar works were done in many other parts of Northern Rhodesia for the same purpose. Manda also explained that among the Bembas, members raised funds through labour mobilisation, for instance the members did some work for people who were unable to do the task as a way of fundraising. They carried out tasks such as building and cutting of trees for ploughing the fields. To this effect, women were available during such tasks and provided food for those who did the work.²⁴

Women also played a vital role in the dissemination of information, provision of shelter and meeting places for political activities as well as preparing meals for male politicians.²⁵ Titamenji was a chairperson of the youth in ANC. As a youth chairperson, she participated in organising rallies whenever the leaders of the party were in the area to give public addresses.²⁶ It was the duty of the youth and women to clean and prepare venues for the rallies. In most places, an ant hill was used as a stage where the political leaders would stand and address the people. The youth and the women ensured that the places were clean and set for the meetings. They were also involved in circulating information about the meeting and the venues whenever the nationalist leaders planned to address the people in a particular area.

Rita Chipika whose father was Joe Kapapa Chipika was a freedom fighter under ANC. Rita Chipika and Florence Musonda worked as informers in Lusaka, particularly in Chilenje area before

²³ Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalists Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951 – 1964, p, 37.

²⁴ Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalists Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951 – 1964, p, 37.

²⁵ Lubosi Kikamba, 'The Role of Women's Organisation in the Political Development of Zambia 1964 – 2001: A Case Study of UNIP Women's league and Zambia National Women 's Lobby Group', M. A. Dissertation, University of Zambia, (2012), p, 33.

²⁶ Victoria Chitunga Phiri, 'Stand and Sing Zambia: Voices from Freedom Struggle Heroines', **JENDA: Journal of Culture and African Women Studies**, 26, (2015), p, 111.

crossing over to UNIP. They were the ones who disseminated information about colonial police to those freedom fighters in hiding. As youths they were so vigilant that whenever they heard that the colonial police were going in an area to search for the freedom fighters involved in the sabotage, they would quickly inform them so that they could go and hide in other places. According to Chipika, most of the youth wings worked as informers, spread the messages from one place to another about the meetings and prepared the meeting places in readiness of the scheduled meeting.

She recounted that:

It was the duty of the youth to clear and clean the meeting places. Those days we used ant hills as a stage. So, the youth made sure that the stage was cleaned. Stairs on the ant hill were designed and the male youth were employed as guards to safeguard the parents when addressing the meeting.²⁷

It was the duty of the women and the youth to see to it that all was set and ready for the meeting. Messages about the scheduled meeting were sent to all places to ensure that people were aware of the meeting and attended it.

Dandule posits that women in Luapula Province of Northern Rhodesia organised political meetings and helped to hide nationalist leaders in the 1950s.²⁸ Throughout the liberation struggle, women's homes were viewed as safer places where male freedom fighters would hide. This was because women were rarely suspected and their homes were rarely searched unless informers working for colonial police informed them about the activities going on in that house.²⁹

A good example of the places where freedom fighters would hide during this period was Christina Musenge Malila Muludika's parent's home. Muludika in Victoria Chitungu Phiri's journal explained an incident which occurred at her home one day when her mother was doing some house

²⁷ Interview Rita Chipika, 3rd May, 2021, Lusaka.

²⁸ Dandule, 'Women and Mine Workers Struggle on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926 – 1964', p, 40

²⁹ Interview with Fredah Neba, 5th June, 2021. Kabwe.

chores outside the house. She explained that on this day she saw two men running towards their yard and entered the house. She noticed that her mother had seen the two men entering their house but she pretended not to have seen anything and continued with her house chores. Shortly the two policemen in pursuit of the two men appeared and asked her mother of the whereabouts of the two men. Her mother denied having seen anybody passing through her yard. Christina Musenge Malila Muludika further explained that their home was one of the houses recognised as ‘safe’ homes used by freedom fighters as hideouts.³⁰ Women’s homes become shelters where men would seek refuge during this period.

The discussion from this segment shows that women played a significant role in the ANC. They participated in protests, demonstrations, pickets, riots, blocking of the roads, boycotts and prepared the venues for meetings. They housed freedom fighters and prepared their meals. Their homes were seen as safer places where male freedom fighters would hide. Without the input from women, the battle would have been tougher than it was with the women.

3.2. The Split in the African National Congress, 1958-1960

In 1958, there was a split in the ANC. The split was due to the misunderstanding and the differences between the party leaders over a number of issues. Giacomo Macola articulates that:

It had all turned sour in 1958, when, as a result of Nkumbula’s increasingly autocratic running of the party, refractoriness to criticism and grudging acceptance of the gradualist approach to African political advancement enshrined in the constitution promulgated by Governor Benson in that same year, a group of younger radicals led by Kenneth Kaunda and Simon Kapwepwe – Congress’s erstwhile secretary general and treasurer, respectively had broken away and given birth to the Zambia African National Congress (ZANC).³¹

³⁰ Phiri, ‘Stand and Sing Zambia: Voices from Freedom Struggle Heroines’, pp, 108-109.

³¹ Giacomo Macola, ‘Harry Mwanga Nkumbula UNIP and the Roots of Authoritarianism in Zambia, in Jan-Bart Geward, Marja Hinfelaar and Giacomo Macola, (ed.), **One Zambia Many Histories: Towards a History Post-Colonial Zambia**. (Brill: Afrika-Studiecentrum Series), p, 20.

Some influential members became disconcerted with Nkumbula's leadership styles. The radical leaders within the party were against Nkumbula's compromised behaviour with the whites and poor leadership which was coupled with his bad drinking habits.³² Nkumbula was in favour of taking part in the elections that would form a new constitution for Northern Rhodesia and allow about twenty-five thousand (25, 000) Africans to vote, while the radicals sought to boycott the election. This division fuelled the split in the ANC and led to the formation of ZANC. However, this party was short lived, unlike the ANC, ZANC resorted to boycotts and was more violent. Barely five months from its inception, it was banned by the colonial authorities in March 1959 and its leaders were sent to prison.³³

However, women were instrumental in the formation of new parties which emerged in Zambia before independence. For instance, when the ANC split a number of influential women also left the ANC and joined the newly formed ZANC. As women who had influence in the ANC such as Julia Mulenga Chikamoneka, Emelia Saidi, Esnat Sakala, Lister Chula, Sophie Mulenshi, Marias Mulenga, Esther Siame, Margret Mumba, Veronica Mutale, and Betty Kaunda left the ANC and went to join ZANC, this became an added advantage to the newly formed political party. The influential position of these women helped to mobilise more members for the party.³⁴

The women who joined the newly formed party (ZANC), made individual and collective efforts to help raise funds for the registration of ZANC as a political party as well as for its running. Julia Mulenga Chikamoneka was one of the women who stood out to organise other women to raise the required amount of money which was needed for the registration of the newly formed party. Most

³² Andrew Roberts, **A History of Zambia**, (Lusaka: Heinemann, 1976), p, 220.

³³ Giacomo Macola, 'Harry Mwanga Nkumbula UNIP and the Roots of Authoritarianism in Zambia', p, 20. See also Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalists Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951 – 1964', p, 46.

³⁴ Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalists Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951 – 1964', p, 47.

of the contributions were raised through cash donations. Those without cash donated items and food stuff which were sold for cash.³⁵ Women played a very important role in the raising of the needed funds for the newly formed party.

Women continued with their mass mobilisation campaign. They diligently carried out door-to-door campaigns for the party. Women whose husbands had remained in the ANC were influenced to convince their husbands to join ZANC. Citing Mrs G, Muna in Manda explained that:

Some of us received a lot of beating from our husbands for joining the new party, but we did not give up. We worked hard to persuade and convince our husbands to join the new party.³⁶

Women became key partners in the newly formed party when it came to mobilising the masses. Not only did they convince their husbands to join ZANC, but they were also able to influence other women who had remained in ANC to join the newly formed party.

However, the ZANC did not live long. This was because of the rumours which had spread during this period. There were stories about Nyasaland African Congress (NAC) plotting a murder case against Europeans.³⁷ When the rumour reached Northern Rhodesia, the whites in Northern Rhodesia were frightened that a similar conspiracy may be made by ZANC, a party which was more militant unlike ANC. As a result, ZANC was banned in March 1959 and its leaders were detained in different remote areas far from their homes.³⁸

After the arrest and detention of prominent ZANC leaders in various remote areas, women mobilised themselves and raised the funds to pay the lawyers and also to help sustain the families

³⁵ Zambia Daily Mail, Tuesday, 24th October, 2017. P. VIII. See also Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalists Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951 – 1964', p, 48.

³⁶ Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalists Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951 – 1964', p, 49.

³⁷ Andrew Roberts, **A History of Zambia**, p, 220.

³⁸ David Mulford, **Zambia: The Politics of Independence 1957-1964**, p, 76. See also Giacomo Macola, 'Harry Mwanga Nkumbula UNIP and the Roots of Authoritarianism in Zambia', p, 20.

of their detained colleagues. Julia Mulenga Chikamoneka and Betty Kaunda took a leading role to organise other women to go round homes of the ZANC members to get donations.³⁹ Manda argued that this was not an easy task as many people were afraid to associate themselves with the ZANC for fear of being victimised by the colonial police. Nonetheless, these women never relented, they went on and fulfilled the task at hand which was mass mobilisation and fundraising for the party.⁴⁰ Nyawa also articulates that, as the leaders of the ZANC were in restricted areas, the women became very strong as a number of them had been recruited. They were involved in the fundraising ventures whose proceeds were used to buy food which they prepared for the freedom fighters. The other money was used as legal fees for a lawyer Collin Cunningham who represented Kaunda during his court appearance.⁴¹ Thus, the women were important partners as they worked tirelessly to ensure that Zambia become a free nation from the evils of colonialism.

While the prominent leaders of the ZANC were in prison, an underground movement emerged. This movement was known as the 'Panshi Movement'. Its main purpose was to come up with a party which would succeed the party which was banned.⁴² Women once more played a vital role during this transition. They were the ones in the forefront to organise and recruit new members of the party. They also had a responsibility to prepare places where secret meetings would be held and inform other members about the venue. Mama Chikamoneka's home was one of the homes

³⁹ Sauti Ntinda, 'An Assessment of the Role of Women in Nationalist Movement in Zambia 1953-1963, undergraduate research paper, University of Zambia, (1986), p, 40.

⁴⁰ Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalists Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951 – 1964', p, 49.

⁴¹ Rosemary Mpuku Nyawa, 'UNIP' Julia Chikamoneka; The Fearless Mad African Girl', in Nalumango Mbuyu and Sifuniso Monde (ed.) **Women Power in Politics**, (Lusaka: Zambia Women Writers Association, 1988), p, 21.

⁴² Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalists Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951 – 1964', p, 49 – 50.

which was used as a meeting place for other leaders of the nationalist movement who were in hiding. Mr Mataka was cited by Manda explaining that:

We usually held our meetings in the homes of the women because the police rarely suspected them or searched their homes. It was the home of us men which were closely searched.⁴³

Women had an advantage because they were not suspected by the colonial police. On the other hand, the colonial police were more lenient to women than the men.⁴⁴ Hence taking this opportunity to house nationalist leaders, hide them, and open up their homes for secret meetings which helped the male freedom fighters to be successful in their plans.

In some cases, women were recorded to have brewed beer as a way to provide a venue of the meeting. Elina Musonda was cited by Manda stating that:

You see it was very rare for the police to suspect beer drinking groups to be discussing anything serious. We also helped in attracting more members for the movement. There were times when we gave those that came to attend the meeting free beer The money raised from the sale of beer was used for promoting the movement.⁴⁵

Beer drinking places became avenues for the recruitment and mobilisation of new members. The Europeans had no idea that drinking places were meeting places where resolutions and strategies of nationalist leaders were planned. In beer drinking places campaigns and recruitment of new members was done and free beer was given to those they enticed to join the liberation movement.

The 'Pashi Movement' emerged alongside other political parties which were formed after several break aways from the ANC. These were the African National Freedom Movement (ANFM), a party which was formed on the Copperbelt by Rupiah Banda and Dauti Yamba. The United

⁴³ Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalists Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951 – 1964', p, 50.

⁴⁴ Molly Mwafuliwa, 'Monica Nyangwe Chintu: The Battle Almost Won', in Nalumango Mbuyu and Sifuniso Monde (ed.) **Women Power in Politics**, (Lusaka: Zambia Women Writers Association, 1988), p, 68.

⁴⁵ Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalists Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951 – 1964', p, 50.

National Congress (UNC) was formed also by Dixon Konkola. The two parties later merged and formed the United Freedom Party (UFP). There was also the African National Independence Party (ANIP) under the leadership of Paul Kalichini and Pual Chitambala. However, at a later stage all these political parties merged with the 'Panshi Movement' and formed UNIP in August 1959.⁴⁶ Women also played an important part during the 'Panshi Movement' through the emergence of a new political party which came to be known as UNIP.

According to Manda, Julia Mulenga Chikamoneka played a significant role in the formation of a new party which emerged after the ban of the ZANC. It was Mama Chikamoneka who contacted Paul Kalichini in Kabwe and asked him to meet in Lusaka. They managed to meet at her home in Chilenje where they discussed the need of launching a new political party, according to the instruction given by the teacher (Kenneth Kaunda).⁴⁷ An edition in *Zambia Daily Mail 2017*, also explains that in fact it was at her home where the UNIP was born, a party which later led Zambia to independence.⁴⁸ At the birth of UNIP, Paul Kalichini was a leader. However, when Kenneth Kaunda was released from prison, he was unanimously elected as a president of UNIP in 1960.⁴⁹

3.3.0 Women and the United National Independence Party (UNIP), 1960-1964

When UNIP was formed, it embarked on a campaign to mobilise the masses. The party organised itself to strengthen party membership through three wings. These were the main body, women's wing and the youth wing. The youth wing was regarded as the soldiers of the party. Youths and the women's wings were the ones which were in charge of mobilising the masses, worked as

⁴⁶ Richard Hall, **Zambia Background to Independence: A Brief Outline of Zambia's Struggle for Independence** (Lusaka: Freedom House, 1984), p, 135.

⁴⁷ Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalists Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951 – 1964', p, 51 also Interview with Eunice Kalichini on 22nd March, 2021.

⁴⁸ *Zambia Daily Mail*, 24th October, 2017, p, VIII.

⁴⁹ David Mulford, **Zambia: The Politics of Independence 1957-1964**, P. 76. See also Andrew Roberts, **History of Zambia**, p, 220.

informers, prepared venues for the meetings and cooked for the leaders.⁵⁰ Under the women's wing, the women's brigade was formed. The women's brigade under UNIP was mandated to mobilise the women for the anti-colonialist struggle.⁵¹ Each district had women and youth leaders. The main task of these women in all the districts was to mobilise other women for participation in various political activities. It must be noted that during the UNIP era, women played vital roles which helped the men attain the independence goals.

Among the women who played vital roles and had an impact in UNIP was Princess Mulena Mukwae Nakatindi. She was the second youngest daughter of Litunga Yeta III. Nakatindi and her husband Mr Yuyi Nganga were the first people to support UNIP publicly in Western Province when most of the people were not in favour of it.⁵²

At the time when people were scared to lose their jobs by associating themselves with UNIP, she openly announced her membership and vowed to work with UNIP even when she was a member of the Lealui Education Authority.⁵³ Princess Nakatindi went against the royal tradition as her family members were against her involvement in politics. Some of her members even accused her of selling them to UNIP. The traditional rulers of Barotseland headed by the Litunga viewed the efforts of the UNIP leadership to make Barotseland as an integral part of Zambia with profound

⁵⁰ Lubosi Kikamba, 'The Role of Women's Organisation in the Political Development of Zambia 1964 – 2001', A Case Study of The UNIP Women's League and the Zambia National Women's Lobby Group. M. A. Dissertation University of Zambia, (2012), p. 31. Interview Rita Chipika, 3rd May, 2021. Chilenje.

⁵¹ Geisler, **Women and the Remaking of Politics in Southern Africa: Negotiating Autonomy, Incorporation and Representation**, p, 89.

⁵² Zambia Daily Mail, Tuesday 22nd November, 1972, p, 1.

⁵³ Geisler, **Women and the Remaking of Politics in Southern Africa: Negotiating Autonomy, Incorporation and Representation**, p, 42.

suspicion, interpreting the move as diabolical and aimed at destroying the area's autonomy and privileged position. This was during the period when UNIP was unpopular in Western Province.⁵⁴

In 1960, Kenneth Kaunda, Nalumino Mundia, Sikota Wina and Arthur Wina went to Mongu to host UNIP's meeting. Many people were scared to receive them, but Princess Nakatindi stood out in the open and met them. She welcomed Kaunda and his colleagues at her home and the meeting took place there. Although Nakandi was a Princess, she sacrificed to organise UNIP meetings which was against the tradition of the Lozis.⁵⁵ Princess Nakatindi was very instrumental in organising nationalist movements in Western Province. She played a key role in mobilising the masses to support UNIP in the province. Her home was often the centre for the party mobilisation and meetings while she coordinated the party activities between Lusaka and Mongu. She campaigned for the party tirelessly. It was through her enthusiasm that enabled the party to penetrate into the Western Province. She helped to build an impact on UNIP's penetration into Barotseland where the party had a difficult time to convince the people of Barotseland on the need to fight colonialism.⁵⁶

Princess Nakatindi was very influential in helping Kaunda and the party achieve their goal in Barotseland. In 1962, Kaunda visited Barotseland and the Litunga Sir Mwana Wina III served Kaunda a notice, informing him to vacate the area with immediate effect as they did not want to associate their area with anything that had to do with UNIP. Again, Princess Nakatindi was able

⁵⁴ Zambia Daily Mail, Tuesday, 21st November, 1972, p. 1. See also Moses Sayela Walubita, 'Nakatindi Yeta Nganga: She Opened Doors for Women', (ed.) in Nalumanga Mbuyu and Sifuniso Monde, **Women Power in Politics**, (Lusaka: Zambian Women Writers Association, 1998), Pp, 40-41.

⁵⁵ Zambia Daily Mail, Tuesday, 21st November, 1972, p. 1.

⁵⁶ Kamini Krishna and Friday Mulenga, African Renewal, African Renaissance: New Perspective on African Past and Present', Contribution of Zambian Women and Indian Women to the Struggle of Freedom: Legend of Courage and Compassion, The African Studies Association of Australia and the Pacific (AFSAAP), p, 10. See also Moses Sayela Walubita, 'Nakatindi Yeta Nganga: She Opened Doors for Women', p, 38.

to intervene and assisted Kaunda. Not only did she help him to stay in Barotseland, but also provided him with accommodation in her home while waiting for the response from the Litunga.⁵⁷ UNIP was able to penetrate Western Province and Barotseland due to her effort, and thus Kaunda described Nakatindi as a “bridge against our rich past and the future”.⁵⁸

3.3.1 Mobilisation

Many women who were already in politics from different districts encouraged other women to join the politics and fight a common enemy who was a colonialist. The female organisers in different places encouraged other women to stop taking politics as a game for men only. Women were influenced to act like men where there was need. For instance, the Regional Secretary Rosemary Lungu instructed the women to behave like men in politics. She stated that “we are now in the hard times that even women should turn into men. Let’s show the world that women in Zambia want freedom in January... never sit down doing nothing”.⁵⁹ Women were mobilised in most parts of the country to take politics seriously and actively get involved to serve Zambia from the hands of the colonial authorities. Lubasi Kikamba pointed out that Mrs Miriam Banda who joined UNIP as a youth also recalled that during the freedom struggle, the fight for independence brought the women out of the kitchen.⁶⁰ Fredah Neba in Kabwe also narrated that:

During this period all what we wanted was independence and chase the whites away in our nation. We mobilised many women to take party in the protests and demonstrations so that the whites can know that we need freedom and self-governance. This happened in parts of the country because we used to communicate and plan in advance.⁶¹

⁵⁷ Moses Sayela Walubita, ‘Nakatindi Yeta Nganga: She Opened Doors for Women’, p, 39.

⁵⁸ Zambia Daily Mail, Tuesday, 22nd November, 1972, p, 15.

⁵⁹ UNIP 5/8/12/15, Letter to Mama Shamputa Women Constituents.

⁶⁰ Lubasi Kikamba, ‘The Role of Women’s Organisation in the Political Development of Zambia 1964 – 2001’, A Case Study of The UNIP Women’s League and the Zambia National Women’s Lobby Group, p, 77.

⁶¹ Interview with Fredah Neba in Kabwe 7th August, 2021.

Women in rural areas also became active and took part in the politics of the nation. They helped to mobilise more women to attend the meetings and join the struggle for independence. Elizabeth Mumba was one of the youth who was mobilised by the women to take part in the blocking of the roads and burning bridges in Chinsali at Kasumo village. Elizabeth Mumba at Kasumo village, Theresa Chanda of Chikasa village in Chinsali District and Mandalena Mulenga of shimwalota village in Mbala were some of the women in rural areas who took part in the burning of the bridges and cutting down of trees to block the roads to prevent the colonial police from arresting men engaged in sabotage.⁶²

Mama Betty Chilunga was another woman who took up the role of mobilising other women to take part in the liberation struggle in Chavuma North Western Province. After she graduated from her studies, she was posted to go and work in her home area in Chavuma. She mobilised other women and sensitised them on the need to become active in politics. She asked the women to join the struggle and fight colonialism until the blacks had the chance to rule themselves. Chilunga also formed two women groups known as the Kapwepwe women's club and the Kaunda women's club. The two women groups became instrumental in mobilising the party in the Chavuma.⁶³

3.3.2. Demonstration and Protests

In UNIP's time before independence, women were the ones involved in most of the demonstrations and protests. Mama Chikamoneka was known for organising other women in the demonstrations and the protests. Dahlschen in her edition posits that Mama Chikamoneka could walk through the streets at night, rattling an empty tin with a stone to call the women to their secret meeting place.

⁶² Interview with Elizabeth Mumba, Teresah Chanda on 3rd May, 2021. Lusaka. And Mandalena Mulenga on 3rd June, 2023.

⁶³ Interview with Betty Chilunga, 31st March, 2021.

She was always in the front role during demonstrations, setting the tune for freedom songs and slogans.⁶⁴

Chikamoneka, Emilia Saidi, Mandalena Mumba and other women staged a bare breast demonstration at Lusaka Airport in 1960 on the arrival of the Colonial Secretary Iain Macleod when he visited the country to hold negotiations concerning the 15-15-15 constitution.⁶⁵ The 15-15-15 constitution was designed to accelerate progress towards self-rule while simultaneously defending the privileged political representation of the white settlers. The women courageously confronted Macleod and Sir Evelyn Hone, the Northern Rhodesia Governor with placards reading ‘UNIP says Kaunda knows Democracy, Welensky and Hone means Nazism. Support Kaunda with one man vote’.⁶⁶

Figure 3. Women’s protest at the airport during the arrival of the British colonial secretary Ian Macleod



SOURCE: *Zambia Daily Mail*, Tuesday, 24th October, 2017.

⁶⁴ Edith Dahlschen, **Women in Zambia**, (Lusaka: Neczam, 1970), p, 52.

⁶⁵ African Eagle Newspaper, 6th April, 1960, p, 1, 12. See also UNIP 11/2/3 Republic of Zambia, Report on the Development of the Status of Zambian women, 1974. P. 3. See also Rosemary Mpuku Nyawa, ‘UNIP’ Julia Chikamoneka; The Fearless Mad African Girl’, in Nalumango Mbuyu and Sifuniso Monde (ed.) **Women Power in Politics**, p, 25.

⁶⁶ African Eagle Newspaper, 6th April, 1960, p, 1, 12. See also *Zambia Daily Mail*, Tuesday 24th October, 2017, p, VIII.

These women were followed by a crowd of three thousand people (3000) a combination of UNIP and ANC members who chanted slogans of 'kwacha Kwacha ngwee' (Dawn it's day time) and also carried placards which read freedom before October 1960.⁶⁷

The demonstration by these women did not only end at the airport, but they continued and sat half-dressed under the flag post in front of the secretariat building and ate nothing the whole day.⁶⁸

These demonstrations and protests staged by women had a great impact on the establishment of UNIP as a party. Manda also posits that these demonstrations occurred at a time when UNIP was trying to establish itself as a party in Lusaka in competition with ANC. The militancy of Mama Chikamoneka and other women helped to confirm UNIP as a more radical and popular party of Northern Rhodesia.⁶⁹

Similar demonstrations were also held in 1961 at Ndola airport when Reginald Maudling (Macleod's successor) visited the nation with a similar mission as that of Macleod. Women demonstrators sat and lay on the road causing the Colonial Secretary and delegates to take almost four hours to cover the distance of 65 kilometres from the Airport.⁷⁰ The demonstration gave a clear picture of the desire of the Africans to attain self-rule. This demonstration again did not only end at the Airport as the women went on and continued with their demonstration on the Copperbelt and in Lusaka. In Lusaka, women demonstrated at the Government House while the delegation talked to Maudling. An edition of the *African mail* 5th December 1961 reports that:

There was an emotional moment outside Government House this morning where about 100 UNIP supporters demonstrated while the delegation talked to Mr Maudling. A woman organiser by the name of Mrs Julia Mulenga Chikamoneka

⁶⁷ African Eagle Newspaper, 6th April, 1960, p, 12.

⁶⁸ African Eagle Newspaper, 6th April, 1960, p, 12.

⁶⁹ Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalists Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951 – 1964', p, 55.

⁷⁰ UNIP 11/2/3 Republic of Zambia, Report on the Development of the States. See also Lubasi Kikamba, 'The Role of Women's Organisation in the Political Development of Zambia 1964 – 2001', p, 33.

threw a packet of spent cartridge on the ground and broke down in wailing about people killed in the recent disturbances.⁷¹

These demonstrations had great impact such that they influenced the decision of the colonial rulers. This is because when Reginald Maudling left the nation, he gave hope of making changes in the constitution which would enable all parties to take part in the elections which were to be held the following year. He also planned to hold urgent talks in London primarily with Duncan Sandys who was the Secretary of the State for Commonwealth Relations.⁷² The outcome of all this was that the constitution was revised and accepted by all parties in Northern Rhodesia.⁷³

Women took a key role in the demonstrations and protests to revolt against the decisions which were made by the colonial authorities. In most cases women were the ones in the forefront to rebel against the colonial leaders. For instance, the *Eagle Newspaper* carried a story on 15th November, 1960 about women protesting against the colonial authority on the type of food they gave the male freedom fighters who were imprisoned. It was stated that:

About five thousand (5000) Africans mostly women demonstrated outside the District Commissioner's office on Monday to protest against the type of food the prison officials gave Chimba a UNIP official who was sentenced to three years imprisonment after he was found guilty on charges arising out of his political activities and was transferred to Lusaka prisons.⁷⁴

The women protested at the prison and demanded that the African male prisoners be treated with dignity and be given proper food. This was after discovering that the food which was given to African prisoners was not healthy and prisoners starved while serving their jail sentences. Women supported the male folk in many ways. They went against the colonial decision by protesting and

⁷¹ African Mail, 5th December, 1961.

⁷² Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalists Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951 – 1964', p, 59. See also African Mail, 12th December, 1961.

⁷³ Mulford, **Zambia: The Politics of Independence 1957 – 1964**, p, 234.

⁷⁴ African Eagle 15th November, 1960.

demonstrating against them. The protests and demonstrations were aimed at making the colonial authorities reverse their decisions which in most cases was successful.

Women also petitioned the colonial authority to release the male freedom fighters they detained.

The *Times of Zambia* 24th October, 2017, states that:

Julia Mulenga Chikamoneka along with other activists like Betty Kaunda who later became the first lady of Zambia after independence petitioned colonial authorities for the release of detained political party leaders so that they could provide food for their starving families.⁷⁵

Women worked hard to fight for the freedom of the detained male folk. They staged demonstrations and petitions to make the colonial authority reconsider their decisions. When the male freedom fighters were incarcerated, it was the women who fought for their release through protesting and engaging lawyers to fight for their release.

Women protested against the racial discrimination, Mama Eunice Kalichini narrated that woman protested and fought racism in Kabwe at the Post Office and the famous Henzrops butchery. In these two premises Africans were forbidden entry, and meat was bought through a small pigeon hole. The women organised themselves to protest against Henzrops butchery which had words such as ‘No dogs’ at the door post.⁷⁶ Kabwe women picketed at the butchery with placards written ‘Lesawatupele ichalo chesu, naimwe mwalikwata ichalo ichenu mubwekele kumyenu mutushile ichalo chesu’, meaning ‘God has given us this country, you also have your own, go back to your own country and leave this one for us’.⁷⁷ With songs and slogans, women protested against racism. During the protest, Africans who wanted to enter these premises were blocked and chased. The colonial police even arrested some women for a few hours. Mama Fredah Neba and Eunice

⁷⁵ Times of Zambia 24th October, 2017, p, VIII.

⁷⁶ Interview with Mama Eunice Kalinchini, 22nd March 2021.

⁷⁷ Interview with Mama Fredah Neba in Kabwe, 7th August, 2021.

Kalinchini were among the women who were arrested for a few hours, and when released, they never stopped but went on and continued the protests and demonstrations using the other routes. This was a trend until Zambia gained independence.⁷⁸

The Cha Cha Cha movement was another countrywide protest and demonstration which Africans used to protest against colonial rule in Zambia. This came about due to the dissatisfaction of the Africans on the government proposal in 1961 which favoured more whites than the blacks in the constitution which was yet to be approved. The Africans came up with a plan to totally reject the June proposal and wage a practical non-violent war against the colonial government. Although the UNIP leaders thought of coming up with a non-violent campaign, its members took up the plan differently as it ended up to be the most violent protest. There was a widespread disorder in the nation especially from July to October 1961.⁷⁹

What came to be associated with the Cha Cha Cha campaign was that the disorder consisted mainly of arson and damage by explosives to unattended buildings and properties which belonged to the whites. Men and women made what came to be known as petrol bombs which were used to destroy the buildings and properties owned by the Europeans.⁸⁰

During the Cha Cha Cha campaign, men and women in Lusaka blocked the railway line passing through Ngwerere. Manda cited Christine Mbewe who narrated that, on the same fateful day, a train passing through Ngwerere was derailed as a result of the objects they had put on the railway line. This incident led to the imprisonment of some men and women. Maria Mulenga was one of

⁷⁸ Interview with Mama Fredah Neba in Kabwe, on 7th August, 2021.

⁷⁹ Northern Rhodesia Government: An Account of the Disturbances in Northern Rhodesia July to October, 1961, p. 1.

⁸⁰ Interview with Mama Bessy Nyoni Chanda, on 12th April, 2021.

the women who were imprisoned for this act.⁸¹ Rita Chipika also confirms that Amai Chibovu, Amai Lombe and many other women she could not remember at the time of the interview were detained for blocking the rail line in Ngwerere in 1961.⁸²

During the Cha Cha Cha movement, men and women showed their civil disobedience by burning their passes (*vitupa*) while women burned their marriage certificates (*michato*) to show resentment and displeasure with the pass laws. The burning of *vitupa* and *michato* became a widespread activity which took place nearly in every part of the nation. In Lusaka Rita Chipika narrates that the women collected the *michato* and went to burn them at night at an anti-hill at the place where Woodlands stadium stands today.⁸³

In North Western Province Mama Betty Chilunga also noted that they collected *vitupa* and *michato* which they burnt in the same vein, a situation which left her with no marriage certificate even when she was still married.⁸⁴ In Kabwe Mama Freda Neba and Eunice Kalichini explained that women collected marriage certificates and men collected passes which they went to burn at an anti-hill in Kabwe. They went door-to-door informing the women and the men that the leaders wanted *vitupa* and *michato* which when collected were burnt in the bush. When this act came to the knowledge of the colonial authorities, they sent mobile police to arrest the people involved. However, women and youths again united to block the roads to prevent the policemen from arresting those involved in this sabotage. They went on to burn and destroy the bridges as well. Those who were caught were arrested and sent to prison.⁸⁵

⁸¹ Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalists Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951 – 1964', p, 56.

⁸² Interview with Rita Chipika in Lusaka, 03. 05. 2021.

⁸³ Interview with Rita Chipika in Lusaka, 03. 05. 2021.

⁸⁴ Interview with Mama Betty Chilunga, 31st March, 2021.

⁸⁵ Interview with Fredah Neba and Eunice Kalichini.

The Cha Cha Cha campaign became so violent that roads, bridges, buildings and properties were destroyed. It only ended when Kaunda returned from London where he had gone to negotiate with the British government to reconsider the proposal of June 1961. His trip was considered a success as the British government expressed willingness to reconsider its decision provided that the disturbances ended immediately. When Kaunda returned to Northern Rhodesia, he appealed to the members to end the violence.⁸⁶

Without the combined efforts of the women, these demonstrations and protests would have not been possible. Molly Mwafuililwa explained that the women's strength lay in the fact that the colonial government was more lenient with the women than the men. Hence women were in the forefront staging protests, demonstrations and held meetings in the compounds to mobilise and recruit more people to join the party.⁸⁷ Women took advantage of the lenience from the colonial government towards them to enhance the party campaigns through demonstrations and protests.

Women played a crucial role in the demonstrations and protests of the most civil unrest which occurred in the nation to enhance the struggle for independence. Unlike the men, they were readily available and could easily escape stiff punishment from the colonial authorities.

3.3.3. Housed Nationalist Leaders

Throughout the liberation struggle, women's homes were considered safest places for the nationalist leaders. Their homes became safer places where the male freedom fighters would hide from colonial police. The *Zambia Daily Mail of 2017* reports that, the home for Julia Mulenga Chikamoneka was used as a meeting place for the nationalist leaders who were hiding from the colonial police. She provided shelter and food for people politically involved and risked being

⁸⁶ Mulford, **Zambia: The Politics of Independence 1957 – 1964**, p, 200.

⁸⁷ Molly Mwafuililwa, **Women in Power**, p, 68.

arrested for opening her home for political meetings.⁸⁸ In most cases men found refuge in the homes of the women because their homes were rarely searched, unless in cases where an informer informed the colonial police about the activities which took place at that particular residence, otherwise their homes remained safer places for hiding.⁸⁹

Ruth Nakalingila's home was another one which was considered as a safe place for the freedom fighters. She was married to Spoint Simuchenja, a war veteran who came back from the Second World War in 1945. Since the colonial government respected war veterans and would not unnecessarily disturb them, Simuchenja and Nakalingila opened their home for the freedom fighters in Niamukolo Village in Mpulungu. Nakalingila used this opportunity to host and hide the freedom fighters from the colonial authorities.⁹⁰

3.3.4. Food Providers

Women were the main food providers during the liberation struggle. They provided food to the men who were in hiding, in prisons and during the fundraising activities. The women provided food during campaign meetings which took place countrywide. Elizabeth Mumba explained that the women cooked food for the nationalist leaders when they came to their area to hold campaign meetings. The women also prepared the meals for those in the bush hiding from the colonial police.⁹¹ In Lusaka Rita Chipika also articulates that women cooked food for men and women who were hiding from the colonial police, those in detention or in prison and during the campaign meetings.⁹²

⁸⁸ Zambia Daily Mail, 24th October, 2017, p, VIII

⁸⁹ Interview with Fredah Neba 7th August 2021, Kabwe.

⁹⁰ Victoria Chitungu Phiri 'Stand and Sing of Zambia: Voices from the Freedom Strangle Heroines', **Journal of Culture and African Women Studies**, 26,1,(2015), p,112

⁹¹ Interview with Elizabeth Mumba, 3rd May, 2021.

⁹² Interview with Rita Chipika, 3rd May, 2021.

In Zambezi district, Betty Chilunga in collaboration with other women, organised the supply and distribution of food for the freedom fighters. They prepared meals for those attending the meetings, those hiding in her home and also in the bush. She further narrated that the supply of food for those hiding in the bush was problematic as the police could easily arrest them. Thus, to avoid the police, she had to work with Sam Snepper, a foreman for the road works from Mongu. Snepper worked on the road between Kalabo and Zambezi, a stretch that covered an area of the bush in which freedom fighters used to hide. They prepared food and gave Snepper who helped to deliver it to the freedom fighters hiding in the bush along the stretch he used to work from. She further narrated that it was convenient to work with Snepper because he was a coloured (mixed race) and the colonial police could not easily suspect him as it would have been with the blacks.⁹³

It was the duty of the Women's Brigade to provide food during the campaign meetings and any political gathering. The catering was part of the women's core business in the women's brigade. Geisler narrates that women's brigade members did the catering at all functions.⁹⁴ The women were the food providers in all occasion country wide.

3.3.5. Fundraising for the party

Women were also vital in fundraising for the party. The Women's Brigade were key in the mobilisation of funds for the party. Women brewed and sold illicit beer to fund the nationalist movement.⁹⁵ They participated in many fundraising ventures which helped the party to raise funds for its use. Rita Chipika explained that the fundraising ventures were done both monetary and the

⁹³ Interview with Betty Chilunga, 31st March, 2021. Also see Victoria Chitungu Phiri, *Journal of Culture and African Women Studies*, p, 107.

⁹⁴ Gisela Giesler, **Women and the Remaking of Politics in Southern Africa**, P. 43. See also Peter Harnes-Jones, *Freedom and labour: Mobilisation and Political control on the Zambian Copperbelt*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1975), p, 100.

⁹⁵ Poewe Karla, **Matrilineal Ideology: Male Female Dynamics in Luapula, Zambia**, (London: Academic Press, 1981), P. 200.

donation of goods. For those who had cash donated money, but those without money donated items which could be sold to raise the cash needed for use in party activities.⁹⁶ The money collected was used in so many ways which helped to sustain the party.

Mama Inonge Wina who was the secretary and the treasurer at the same time in 1962, wrote a letter to the main UNIP branch stating that:

I trust you have by now received the sum of £210. 00, which I sent to Lusaka last week. I'm sending here with me a sum of £800.00 that we have been able to collect in the past few weeks. We sincerely hope that we would distribute more but the task has proved to be difficult and a trying one. We however hope this little collection will indirectly help U.N.I.P to smash the united imperialist from that which uses our country's money and wealth to suppress our own people.⁹⁷

The women managed to raise the funds which the party used during its liberation campaign. Some of the money raised was used to hire the lawyer for those who were imprisoned. According to the *Daily Mail of 24th October, 1974*, Julia Mulenga Chikamoneka was one of the women who raised funds to pay the lawyer who fought for the release of Kaunda when he was imprisoned by the Northern Rhodesia Authorities.⁹⁸ The Women's Brigade was used to mobilise the masses as well as raising funds for the party.

3.3.6. Taking Care of the Family

Women were very vital in taking care of the family during the liberation struggle. As already alluded to, the men were the ones who were frequently arrested by the colonial government for a longer period than the women. In the absence of the men, the women took care of the families. While the men were busy with the campaigns for the liberation struggle, it was their wives who took care of the family and provided for them under difficult circumstances. Edith Dahlschen

⁹⁶ Interview with Rita Chipika, 3rd May, 2021.

⁹⁷ UNIP 9/1/73, 14th October 1962, p, 8.

⁹⁸ Daily Mail, 24th October, 1974, p, 4.

articulates that Betty Muthinke Kaunda worked side by side with her husband. She took care of her children many times under difficult conditions when her husband was away on political campaigns or detentions.⁹⁹ In most cases, Kaunda was always away for campaigns for the party and in some cases was imprisoned. It was his wife who took care of the family and fended for it.

Indeed, wives of politicians played crucial roles during the liberation struggle. Without the help and the effort from their wives, the battle would have not been won, this is because the burden in the battle would have been so heavy for the men alone. But the participation of women during this period made the burden in the battle manageable. This was also recognised by Kenneth Kaunda who said that during the independence struggle, had women not given their fullest support, the struggle would have been longer and tougher for the men.¹⁰⁰ The help and support women rendered during this period tremendously helped to ease the burden for the struggle for independence and helped the men to emerge victorious.

2.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, the women played a significant role during the liberation struggle. They worked side by side with the men. It was the majority of the ordinary women who staged protests and demonstrations against the decisions of the colonial authorities. It was the women who risked their lives to hide the nationalist leaders, mobilised the party, raised the funds for the daily activities of the party and bailed out the freedom fighters who were imprisoned. Their work and effort contributed significantly towards Zambia's independence. Zambia's history for independence would be incomplete without acknowledging the role women played during the liberation struggle.

⁹⁹ Edith Dahlschen, **Women in Zambia**, (Lusaka: Neczam, 1974), p, 47.

¹⁰⁰ Zambia Daily Mail, 30th September, 1974, p, 4.

CHAPTER FOUR
CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSES OF WOMEN IN ZAMBIA'S LIBERATION
STRUGGLE

4.0. Introduction

This chapter discusses the challenges encountered by women and the successes they scored during the struggle for independence in Zambia. From inception, women faced numerous challenges from both the colonialists and African traditionalists. African women, both from rural and urban areas, were exposed to colonial and traditional injustices which took various forms. From the traditional point of view, a woman was subjected to numerous forms of discrimination. Traditional laws and norms barred women from playing an active role in society and were often placed under the control of men. In several ways colonialism also worsened the situation. The colonial authorities worked closely with traditional rulers to suppress the women. From the early times of colonialism, women were subjected to various forms of legislative laws and values which infringed on their social and economic interests.

However, despite the challenges encountered by women during the country's liberation struggle, their participation in the struggle led to various achievements. Some of these achievements are still visible today. Women managed to penetrate through traditional norms and laws which infringed on their rights and suppressed them. They faced colonialism and courageously fought against it. As a result of their participation in the country's liberation struggle, it was easier for the men to fight and win the struggle for independence. Thus, without the effort of women in the liberation struggle, the attainment of Zambia's independence would have taken much longer.

4.1. Challenges faced by women

Women faced various challenges from African traditional norms and customs. Politics were considered as a public domain for the men. Thus, African traditional beliefs and values hindered women's active participation in politics. This is why from the start women have not been seen as partners in the country's fight for independence but generally as mere supporters. Up to now, some people think that it was only the men who played a major role in the struggle for independence. They forget that even the women played significant roles during the fight for independence. For instance, the colonial government was tolerant towards women when it came to punishment as compared to men. Hence, women took advantage of this scenario and confronted colonial authorities and protested against their discriminatory policies. However, such perception where men were assumed to be the only players in the struggle for independence, were based on patriarchal stereotypes. Most societies in Zambia are male dominated, where a man is in control of power and influence. A man is considered to be the head of the family and in control of a woman. Patriarchal traditional norms were among the obstacles that women encountered during the liberation struggle and the women who managed to survive it however, do not have their literature adequately recorded. Even their role as important partners in the struggle for independence has been overlooked.

4.1.1. Patriarchal Norms

Patriarchal norms can be best understood from structural functionalism theory which explains how societies function. It explains how society functions in the way it does by focusing on the relationships among various social institutions that form a society. Rules and norms are created to

control the relations in the society.¹ In many African societies including Zambia, patriarchal norms have dominated the control of behaviour of people in the society and how they relate to each other. In Zambia, the patriarchy system adversely affected women's participation in politics while men dominated everything including the political arena. African traditional values speak more when it comes to women's participation in politics and everyone sees politics as a man's game.² In most traditional Zambian societies, women were not allowed to participate in politics because that was regarded as a man's domain. This was the case with Princess Nakatindi Yeta III. Gisela Geisler explains that Nakantindi had to fight prejudice in her family when she joined politics. This was because at the time it was inappropriate for a woman to be involved in politics, hence the family members strongly disapproved her participation in politics.³ Thus, Princess Nakatindi had to face many oppositions from her chiefdom because habitually politics were perceived as male's field. It was worse for her as the Litunga did not want to associate his kingdom with anything that had to do with UNIP.⁴

Customarily, women were expected to concentrate on taking care of their families. This was taught from the inception of their childhood. Societies trained male and female children differently. Girls were taught feminine roles and to always be submissive to men, while boys were trained in masculine roles in preparation for becoming heads of their families. This is how societies have been functioning in most parts of Zambia. The roles which were assigned to women were linked to domestic chores and they were to take up the responsibility of managing the household, bearing

¹ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/structural-functionalism>, Date cited 9th November, 2021.

² Sharon Nsana and Marvin Kabubi, 'Factors Affecting Women's Political Participation in Lusaka: A Case Study of Kabwata and Munali Constituencies', **Journal of Multi-Disciplinary Research**, 1, (2017), p, 4.

³ Gisela Geisler, **Women and Remaking of Politics in Southern Africa: Negotiating Autonomy, Incorporating and Representation**, (Nordiska: Afrikainstitutet, 2004), p, 43.

⁴ Moses Sayela Walubita, 'Nakatindi Yeta Nganga: She Opened Doors for Women', In Nalumango Mbuyu and Sifuniso Monde (ed.) **Women Power in Politics**, (Lusaka: Zambian Women Writers Association, 1998), p, 39.

and raising children. The girls were socialised differently in order to prepare them to assume their gender roles as adults. There were clear divisions of roles between men and women. The men mostly undertook instrumental roles while women undertook expressive nurturing roles.⁵ Because of such notions inculcated in the women's minds as they grew up, it was difficult to convince the women to join the fight for Zambia's independence by those who had broken traditional barriers. Catherine Phiri whose brother-in-law was a staunch member of UNIP explained that she never took part in the fight for independence because she was a mother of five children. Although her sister in marriage tried to convince her, still she could not join them. As a mother she was expected to take care of the family and the children.⁶ She recalled that:

Moreover, we perceived women who involved themselves in politics as useless ones, as women without wisdom. Because a woman with wisdom was supposed to be loyal to her husband and also take care of her family and children. Not whereby she spends the whole day in protests, demonstrations and campaigns, what time will she prepare meals for her family and husband? Politics was perceived as a game for men not women. Thus, women were expected to stay in their lane.⁷

Some women feared to take part in the liberation struggle because they thought that they would not find enough time to do the house chores as well as look after families.⁸ Thus, even if they wanted to, they still faced challenges of societal expectations. Sharon Nsana and Marvin Kabubi also articulate that women found it hard to participate in politics due to insufficient time. This is because their multiple roles as mothers, wives, competing domestic responsibilities and care of the family left them with little time to participate in politics.⁹ Traditional norms and customs acted as

⁵ Nsana and Kabubi, 'Factors Affecting Women's Political Participation in Lusaka: A Case Study of Kabwata and Munali Constituencies, p, 4.

⁶ Interview with Catherine Phiri, 20th June, 2021 in Chisamba.

⁷ Interview with Catherine Phiri, 20th June, 2021 in Chisamba.

⁸ Giesler, **Women and the Remaking of Politics in Southern Africa: Negotiating Autonomy, Incorporation and Representation**, p, 40

⁹ Nsana and Kabubi, 'Factors Affecting Women's Political Participation in Lusaka: A Case Study of Kabwata and Munali Constituencies, 8.

a threat to women's participation. This is because they excluded women in the political circles due to multiple roles they were assigned to.

Because of women being submissive to men and the man's control over a woman in society, it was difficult for women to freely join politics. Male dominance was reinforced in Zambian cultural values and customs which stressed father and husband as heads or power holders in the family, with women being subservient to them.¹⁰ Marriage rendered women to be under the full control of a husband. Hence, women on their own could not freely volunteer to join the nationalist movements as they would have wanted. This was a case of many women during this period as alluded to by Geisler in her article citing one UNIP organiser on the Copperbelt by the name of Foster Mubanga. Mubanga explained that women were not coming forward to be volunteers because even if they were willing, their husbands could not allow them to work with men.¹¹ Patriarchal norms had adverse effects on women. Men had total control over women such that even when they decided to join politics, the husband had to give consent. Where the man was not willing for his wife or a girl child to get involved in politics, it meant that a woman could not join even when she had the desire.

Women joining political ventures needed the approval not only of their husbands but also of the party authorities. The party leadership needed to be convinced that the woman who wanted to join politics secured approval from the husband. This was the case with Foster Mubanga when she volunteered to become a full-time party official in 1957. Her male colleagues in the party had to follow tradition. They had to seek permission from Mubanga's husband before they could approve her request. The party leadership informed her husband of what was expected of his wife if he

¹⁰ J. Little, *Gender Planning and Policy Process*, (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1994), p, 20.

¹¹ Geisler, *Women and the Remaking of Politics in Southern Africa: Negotiating Autonomy, Incorporation and Representation*, p, 40

granted her the request to join full time politics. They further told the husband that at times his wife would be required to sleep away from home during the periods they would be away for campaign activities. Mubanga's husband was warned further that people in the community would sometimes ridicule him for allowing his wife to sleep away and work along with men.¹² Men too valued African tradition and custom that is why before they could approve her request, they had to seek endorsement from her husband. In case the party officials failed to get her husband's consent, they would not have allowed Mubanga to join full-time politics because the traditional customs were well respected in the Zambian society.

Due to patriarchal ideology, some women could not freely join the political party of their choice when there was a break away in the ANC. Even when the other party had better policies which would have enticed one to either remain or join it, as long as the husband did not approve of it, the woman was forced to support what the husband supported. Some women could not join UNIP as long as their husbands still supported ANC and those whose husbands left and joined UNIP also followed suit. This is because traditionally, men had power and control over their wives. Manda cited Mrs G Muna who narrated that:

Some of us received a lot of beating from our husbands for joining a new party, but we did not give up. We worked hard to persuade and convince our husbands to join the new party.¹³

Husbands could sometimes instil discipline through beating their wives especially those who did not adhere to their commands as heads of the households. However, in some instances they were

¹² Gisela Geisler, 'Troubled Sisterhood: Women and Politics in Southern Africa: Case Studies from Zambia, Zimbabwe and Botswana. **Journal of African Studies**, 94, 377, (1995), p, 549

¹³ Ireen Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalist Politics in Colonial Zambia, 1951 – 1964: A Cases Study of Lusaka', MA. Dissertation, University of Zambia, (1992), p, 49.

able to convince them. Traditionally, women were made to obey and follow the commands of their husbands and where they could not, it was considered as disrespectful.

The patriarchal creed had an adverse effect in the society. Even the women themselves were made to believe that men should lead and have control over them. This ideology constrained women's political role during the country's liberation struggle. Women were made to believe that they were mere supporters rather than partners. Bizeck J. Phiri posits that women in national Zambian politics have played an essential, but largely supportive role. There is a belief in the African Tradition of viewing women as mere supporters in the male dominated societies.¹⁴ It is from such a perspective which proves the reasons why women were side-lined to be considered as partners in the liberation struggle of this nation, but rather as supporters who supported the men to gain Zambia's independence.

Women themselves did not see anything wrong in cultural norms which suppressed them. Mama Betty Chilunga narrated that women joined the struggle for independence because they did not want the colonialists to rule Africans. What the women wanted this period was to see African men rule the nation.¹⁵ Women had no problems being subjected to the control of the African men. All they wanted was to see African men rule this nation. This was the reason why they participated in Zambia's independence struggle. Their participation in the liberation struggle had nothing much to do with their own freedom from male dominance.

Women could not aspire for leadership because they were considered subjective to men and they could not rule over men because of the pervasive influence of gender social life. Geisler articulates

¹⁴ Bizeck J. Phiri, 'Gender and Politics: The Zambian National Women's Lobby Group in 2001 Tripartite Elections', p, 255-256.

¹⁵ Interview with Mama Betty Chilunga, 31st March, 2021.

that one leader of the Women's League said that their involvement in the liberation struggle of Zambia was not intended to overthrow male authority and male defined traditions, but their vision of a new woman was the one who served both her husband and the nation.¹⁶ From this perception, it is clear that, even when a woman wanted to challenge the men, she would have not gotten any support from the fellow women. This trend still exists to date. Women who have attempted to stand for presidential elections in this nation have received little support from both men and women.

As already alluded to by Nsana and Kabubi, dominant societal cultural norms guide the behaviour of the groups, and in some cultures, traditions denied women the same access to public office as men. The proper behaviour of women did not include political activism. Women's role was often held in the private sphere which discouraged them from entering the political environment.¹⁷ This perception contributed to the challenges women encountered during the struggle for independence. It was not easy for women to find space in the male dominated political arena. This contributed to the hostile environment they met.

4.1.2. Patriarchal and Colonialism Norms

Women faced various forms of discrimination since the inception of liberation struggle. Lilian Cheelo Siwila pointed out that women faced challenges from patriarchal oppression derived from their African cultural norms and also the western patriarchal colonial system which oppressed them further.¹⁸ This is because during this period there were some women who sought to go to

¹⁶ Geisler, 'Troubled Sisterhood: Women and Politics in Southern Africa: Case Studies from Zambia, Zimbabwe and Botswana', p, 548.

¹⁷ Nsana and Kabubi, 'Factors Affecting Women's Political Participation in Lusaka: A Case Study of Kabwata and Munali Constituencies', p, 5.

¹⁸ Lilian Cheelo Siwila, 'Reconstructing the Distorted Image of Women as Reproductive Labour on the Copperbelt Mine in Zambia 1920-54', **Journal for the Study of Religion**, 30, 2, (2017), p, 76.

urban areas in search of green pastures. But traditionally these women were not granted this opportunity instead they were perceived as immoral. Traditionally it was viewed that no woman can live independently without the care of a man. It was also allegedly felt that there were no jobs for women in urban areas because the only job that a woman would engage was prostitution. Thus, women were prevented to go to urban areas in fear of breaking the African traditional moral values as prostitution and cohabiting was highly condemned during this period.

Patriarchal colonial system suppressed the women even further. The colonial authorities never wanted the women to live an independent life. Thus, the colonial authorities joined hands with the traditional leaders through the indirect rule system to prevent the women from living in urban areas. Siwila's analysis shows that not only the men had the growing interest to go and work in the mines, but women also had the desire to seek status by finding wage labour so as to become independent.¹⁹ However, traditional leaders and the mine authorities killed this desire with their discriminative laws.

The mine authorities never wanted women in the mine compounds. They collaborated with the African traditional authorities and prevented the women from settling in urban areas. Road blocks were mounted where vehicles going to town were thoroughly searched. Betty Chilombo Chilunga posits that:

...road blocks were mounted at Kacholola Eastern Province to block women from entering the urban areas. In North Western Province there was a road block at Mushishima. In almost every part of the country with roads which led to urban areas there was a road block which prevented the women from having access to town and many African women's dreams ended at these checkpoints.²⁰

¹⁹ Lilian Cheelo Siwila, 'Reconstructing the Distorted Image of Women as Reproductive Labour on the Copperbelt Mine in Zambia 1920-54', p. 76.

²⁰ Interviews with Betty Chilombo Chilunga, 31st March, 2021. See also Victoria, Chitungu Phiri, 'Stand and Sing of Zambia: Voices from Freedom Struggle Heroines', **A Journal of Culture and African Women Studies**, 26, (2015), p. 108.

The border controls that were set up by the colonial government became the empirical points of gender discrimination and the systematic oppression of women. It also systematically killed the desire for women to find a job and live an independent life in the urban areas.

Fredoline Anunobi also narrates that:

Colonial officials and male elders often worked together to get better control of women. Frequently colonial officials did not want women in towns; they only wanted the labour of men. Therefore, many restrictions were placed on the movement of women. Zambia then, Northern Rhodesia is a good example of colonial regulations of migratory labour laws in Southern Africa. In this part rural tribal authorities were given the right to prevent unmarried women and children from moving to towns, and urban authorities had to send those who defied such restrictions back to the villages.²¹

Those who managed to find their way in urban areas were supposed to be under the control of a husband through marriage certificates (*muchato*). Only married women at a certain period were allowed to settle in the urban area of which most of them settled in the Copperbelt following their husbands who worked in the mines. As for the single women, the laws continuously forbade their entry in the mine compounds. Parpart explained that the colonial police went to an extent where they went round the compounds in search of unmarried women. Those found wanting were repatriated back to the village.²² This was a greatest obstacle to women's independence as they were made to be always under the control of the men.

The colonial authorities discriminated women with their biased laws Anunobi posits that:

Men were taught to grow new cash crops such as cocoa and coffee for export while women continued to grow food crops for family and local consumption. Men were forced into the wage economy to work in the mines, on the plantation or in town; most women remained in rural areas. Schooling and teaching of new skills were made available primarily to males. All in all, although both men and women were

²¹ Fredoline Anunobi, 'Women and Development in Africa: From Marginalisation to Gender Inequality', *African Social Science Review*, 2, 1, (2002), p, 50.

²² Parpart, 'The Household and Mine Shaft', p, 39.

exploited within the colonial economy, men gained some access to important resources such as money, skills, land and education less available to women.²³

From Anunobi's analysis, it is clear that women were oppressed further by colonial laws. The education of a woman was not seen as important compared to men. Education was perceived to be valuable for a man whom they needed to work in their industries. Men gained better education and skills compared to the women. That is why at the time Zambia gained independence, there were very few educated women compared to men. This is the reason why a lot of women who fought in the struggle for independence failed to get positions in the newly formed government. Those who managed to get some education, what they learnt was totally different from the men. While the men learnt new skills, women learnt social work and home management in order to provide a balanced diet for the family. A healthy man was an important human resource in the colonial government's economy. As a result, women were trained more on family health issues rather than skills which would help them become independent. Due to such perceptions, it gave men more political advantage over women. The Europeans further imposed laws about proper authority of men over women by dealing only with male leaders.²⁴ This enhanced the headship of a man over a woman. Women were viewed as people who could not lead a man. Their roles were to follow men while they led them. Geisler states that, in many African societies a man was expected to rule and not a woman. Even in Zambia there is an African saying which states that, "Mwanakazi ozenga munzi yayi" (women do not build villages).²⁵ The deep meaning of this proverb is that only men can lead and not women.

²³ Fredoline Anunobi, 'Women and Development in Africa: From Marginalisation to Gender Inequality', p, 49.

²⁴ Fredoline Anunobi, 'Women and Development in Africa: From Marginalisation to Gender Inequality', p, 49.

²⁵ Gisela Geisler, 'Troubled Sisterhood: Women and Politics in Southern Africa: A Case Studies from Zambia, Zimbabwe and Botswana', **Journal of African Affairs**, 94, 377, (1995), p, 547.

Such were ideologies which prescribed the private domestic sphere as a female domain, while the public political domain as a male prerogative which was deeply ingrained in the people's mind. These were backed by tradition, customs and laws which created barriers for women in an African set up. That is why the women's roles in politics were often understood to be limited to a particular female space, such as a party's women wing where its members were given little or no scope to influence policy formulation, not even policy directly relevant to them.²⁶ A good example is the Women's Brigade which had no independent leadership structure, but on the contrary it was the men who appointed its officials and dictated its policies and activities. By independence time the women's Brigade was an "all men affair" where the men decided the agenda for its meeting.²⁷

Though the women's wing was created to provide the platform for women's participation, men still controlled the affairs of the brigade. The programmes were formulated by the men who were the leaders of the main party and women were to implement the activities which were programmed for them. The women's brigade limited its members to only a supportive role. The brigade members were not supposed to seek power for themselves, but to help men to achieve political power.²⁸

²⁶ Geisler, 'Troubled Sisterhood: Women and Politics in Southern Africa: A Case Studies from Zambia, Zimbabwe and Botswana', p, 546.

²⁷ Gisela Geisler, **Women and the Remaking of Politics in Southern Africa: Negotiating Autonomy, Incorporation and Representation**. P.89. See also I, Schuster, 'Constraints and Opportunities in Political Participation: The Case Study of Zambian women, **Geneva-Afrique**, 21, 2, (1983), p, 17.

²⁸ Geisler, **Women and the Remaking of Politics in Southern Africa: Negotiating Autonomy, Incorporation and Representation**, p, 43. See also Ilsa Schuster, 'Constraints and Opportunities in Political Participation: The Case Study of Zambian women', p, 18.

The positions in the women's brigade were approved by men. Mrs Chula was cited in Manda's dissertation stating that:

The names of those that were to become leaders in the women's brigade had to be submitted to, and approved by the men. If one did not have a lot of support from these men, then chances of her being chosen were almost nil.²⁹

Even when it came to positions and choosing of leadership of the women's brigade, it was done by men as it was them who had the final say on all matters concerning the Women's Brigade. No wonder Geisler posits that the women's brigade was an all-men affair. Geisler further states that women depended on the appointing authority and would be disciplined, or worse demoted, if they did not toe the line. If women wanted to join in whatever little part they were given in politics, men had to be pleased, and equitable policies had to be begged for.³⁰

However, the people who took up leadership positions in most cases were financially independent and did not have husbands. If they did, their husbands would not allow them to stay away from their homes for a prolonged period of time in campaigns. The job was also voluntary, as they were not paid anything, they had their own means and ways of earning income.³¹ So those who longed to take up positions were supposed to have the financial muscle as most of the trips for campaigns were self-sponsored. Some rather stayed single to avoid a husband hindering their political will.

While working with the male leaders, women were expected to take the second place from the male leaders in the organisation of every meeting. Mrs Nakalongo in Manda's dissertation explained that whenever they went out for the meetings in the villages, she could not speak before the men. She could only speak after the men had spoken. Women were not allowed to speak before

²⁹ Irene Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalist Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951 – 1964: The Case of Lusaka', MA Dissertation, University of Zambia, (1992), p, 52.

³⁰ Geisler, 'Troubled Sisterhood: Women and Politics in Southern Africa: A Case Studies from Zambia, Zimbabwe and Botswana', p, 548.

³¹ Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalist Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951-1964', p, 54.

men simply because they were regarded as subordinate to the men. They had to work within the framework of the male domination.³²

The women who joined full time politics were mocked and called all sorts of bad names. They were called 'amahule' (meaning prostitutes), marriage breakers simply because they were found and travelled to other places with male leaders for campaigns.³³ Foster Mubanga in Geisler's article explained that she was despised by her fellow women who told her that she liked to mingle with men to make adultery easier. Women further ridiculed her that she behaved as if she was the only one who was going to reap the benefit of independence for her to go to an extent of breaking her home.³⁴ Women in politics faced numerous challenges which came from African traditional norms and customs. Some of these challenges came from their fellow women and family members who did not see it fit for a woman to involve herself in the activities perceived to be for the male domain.

Those women whose husbands were in full time politics and leadership like Betty Mutinke Kaunda took care of her children under difficult conditions, when her husband was away on a political mission or detention.³⁵ In the absence of her husband, Betty took the responsibility of looking after the family and provided all the necessities required at home. This was not an easy task although she had a job. She had to resort to selling charcoal to be able to meet the family demands. During this period, women mainly depended on their husbands' income. Those who had no jobs or stable businesses and entirely depended on their husbands' income languished in poverty in the absence of their husbands.

³² Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalist Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951 – 1964, p, 54.

³³ Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalist Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951 – 1964, p, 52.

³⁴ Geisler, 'Troubled Sisterhood, p, 549.

³⁵ Edith Datschem, *Women in Zambia*, (Lusaka: Naczam, 1970), p, 47.

Fredah Neba also explained that the period when her husband was imprisoned for five years the family suffered extreme poverty.³⁶ This affected even her participation in politics as the entire family had to depend on her.

Mama Kankasa as cited in Geisler's article posits that:

Pass-laws and the lack of female employment in urban areas meant for women that the class positions of their husbands were the key to improvement, prosperity or even the only possibility of continued urban life: 'even if we had a strong organisation of women, I do not see how this can last because our strength is vested in our husbands, the men.'³⁷

African traditional culture and colonial laws had a great impact on the livelihood of the women in urban areas. Women's livelihood in urban areas was so much vested in the hands of men and their absence meant poverty. This was because the same women who had no jobs and proper income were the ones to take up the responsibility of headship.

Some families did not support their family members to take part in politics. For instance, Bessy Nyoni Chanda recalled that she was disowned by her mother for participating in politics. Since her mother never liked to involve herself in politics and never supported anything that had to do with the liberation struggle, she chased the daughter from her home because she wanted to take part in Zambia's liberation struggle. Chanda became vulnerable and homeless such that she went to live with neighbours who were actively involved in politics. Due to this kind of life, it was not easy for her to be educated since her father who was to sponsor her was working in Zimbabwe whilst fighting for Zambia's liberation from that area.³⁸

³⁶ Interview with Fredah Neba, on 7th August, 2021

³⁷ Geisler, 'Troubled Sisterhood, p, 549.

³⁸ Interview with Bessy Nyoni, Chanda, on 12th April, 2021.

4.2. Successes

Despite facing numerous challenges during the liberation struggle, the efforts of women were not in vain, as they yielded a lot of achievements which are still visible today. Although women faced restrictions from both African and colonial patriarchal norms, they still managed to find their way into urban areas. To some extent this was the beginning of their political freedom and liberation.

Geisler explains that:

Despite the restrictions, both imposed within the nationalist movement and in society at large, women were able to move into a public political terrain, where they were able to act in ways previously impossible. Women were able to work with men to see it that Zambia received its liberation. Women would move and work with men which in the past was not possible.³⁹

Women were able to break the barriers which were set for them from both African tradition and colonial authorities. As soon as they managed to penetrate the barriers which were set before them, they began to work with men to liberate the nation. The participation of women in the liberation struggle contributed to many great achievements. Traditionally women could not work with men in the political arena, but as time passed this tradition was ignored and women were incorporated. Women were able to move and work with men in politics which in the past was not possible.

As women found their way to the Copperbelt mine compounds, they began to participate in the political unrest which took place during this time in the mines. Their participation in the 1940 strike made the colonial authorities bend to the African demands. The 1940 Commission of Inquiry made a number of recommendations which were meant to improve the welfare for women's work. The colonial authorities also agreed to a small wage hike and minimal improvement in rations and housing for married workers.⁴⁰ The ticket for surface and underground workers was raised by

³⁹ Geisler, 'Women and Remaking of Politics in Southern Africa', p, 45.

⁴⁰ Parpart, 'The Mine Shaft', p, 44.

2s/6d. Adequate accommodation for married employees was to be provided in the mine compounds.⁴¹ This was as a result of women's participation in the 1940 strike, they prominently featured together with their families. It was insisted that 12s/d a month was not enough for a married worker with children.⁴²

Women helped to make the strikes which took place on the Copperbelt successful. For instance, women were the major contributors of the success of the 1952 strike. Parpart posits that since the strikers received neither wage nor food, food became an essential issue, and both women's gardening and their ability to stretch limited food supplies, underpinned the strike success.⁴³ Many women who participated in the political unrest on the Copperbelt were able to participate in the political activities when political parties were established.

This was the beginning of women's active involvement in politics. When political parties were established, women participated in numerous protests which compelled the colonial authorities to rethink their laws which discriminated against the Africans. Women joined in big numbers during the protests against the colour bar. This is where Africans were denied access in the premises owned by the whites. Women's participation in the protests and demonstrations contributed to the yielded success. The colonial authorities were able to bend to the demands of the Africans. As the Chamber of Commerce was able to persuade those Europeans and Asians who practiced discrimination against Africans to stop and begin to allow them in their premises.⁴⁴ Though not every European or Asian adhered to this command, the greatest achievement was that the

⁴¹ NAZ SEC 1/1371, From the Secretary of the State London, to Lusaka 28th July, 1940.

⁴² Bbole Dandule, 'Women and Mine Workers Struggle on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926 – 1964', MA Dissertation, University of Zambia, (2012), p, 57,

⁴³ Parpart, 'The Mine Shaft', p, 48.

⁴⁴ African Eagle, Tuesday, 23rd June 1953, p, 1. See also, David Mulford, **Zambia: The Politics of Independence 1957 – 1964**. (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), p, 200.

demonstration led to a marked improvement on how Africans were treated in the white owned shops and butcheries. In some ways the 1953 – 1954 boycotts and demonstrations had an impact on the raising of popular consciousness.

In 1956, women were organised to demonstrate against the colonial ban of brewing and selling of grain beer. They were mobilised to stand in pickets at the entrances of the beer halls so that they could stop the Africans who tried to enter the beer halls and shops to run at a loss, and so as to pressurise the colonial government to relax its policies.⁴⁵ This was achieved and the colonial authority reduced the stiff punishment they had introduced for those found wanting. As time went on, the Africans became free to brew and sell grain beer with minimal restrictions unlike it was in the past. Women also made an impact when they demonstrated against the Monckton Commission, the arrival of Ian MacLeod and his predecessor Reginald Maudling. The demonstration influenced the decision of a colonial ruler Reginald Maudling who later left the nation with the hope of making changes to the constitution which would enable all parties to take part in the elections which were to be held in the following year which was 1962. Maudling also planned to hold urgent talks in London with Duncan Sandys who was the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations.⁴⁶ The outcome of this action was that the constitution was revised and accepted by all parties in Northern Rhodesia.⁴⁷ Manda argued that without the involvement of women in the boycotts, protests and demonstrations, the success of the activities and the intended goals in the liberation struggle would have not been realised. This is because women were more used in protests and demonstrations in this period. It was easy to mobilise the women because they were readily available unlike the men

⁴⁵ Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalist Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951-1964, p, 41.

⁴⁶ African Mail, 5th December, 1961.

⁴⁷ Mulford, **Zambia: The Politics of Independence 1957 – 1964**, p, 234.

who were at work most of the time and reached home late evening.⁴⁸ However, some men would not participate or engage themselves in such activities in fear of losing their jobs. This is because they were working for the same colonial authorities unlike the women who had nothing to be afraid of.

Finally, the greatest achievement was the independence of Zambia. As Zambia was liberated from colonial authorities, laws which suppressed both men and women were abolished. Although some patriarchal norms were still in existence to some extent, many of the laws which suppressed the women were relaxed.

Women began to enjoy their freedom and assumed positions as members of parliament and other positions within Zambia and outside the country. This was not possible before independence as women were expected to be supporters, who helped men to gain political ambition and also the colonial authority suppressed them further with their laws and regulations which confined a woman to the Kitchen and that of motherhood. A good example of women who assumed positions after independence includes Malina Chilila. Chilila was nominated as a member of parliament in 1964. During her stay in parliament she was chosen secretary for UNIP parliamentary Caucus. Three years later in 1968, she was sent to the Zambian Embassy at the United Nations as Second Secretary. However later in the 1970 she was recalled and appointed as a District Governor in the Ministry of National Guidance.⁴⁹

Princess Nakatindi also occupied several positions, including the position of Member of Parliament, first director of UNIP Women's Brigade, Chairperson of all African women's conference of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), Zambia's representative to the United

⁴⁸ Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalist Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951-1964, p, 39.

⁴⁹ Times of Zambia, 24th October, 1974, p, 12.

Nations in New York and leader of the delegations to Russia and Britain in 1971. She also assumed the position of governor in Sesheke District.⁵⁰

Other women who became members of parliament were; Margrete Mbeba representing Kazimule Constituency, Mary Kaluluma Mwango who before occupying the seat of a member of parliament was also Kabwata Constituency Councillor, Monica Chintu, Zeniah Ndhlovu and Elizabeth Mulenje (Chieftainess Nkomeshya). Esther Banda was appointed the District Governor of Eastern Province, Lily Monze was appointed minister of state in the Ministry of Finance and Planning, Lombe Chibesakunda became Africa's first woman Solicitor General and Zambia's first woman Minister of State in the Ministry of Legal Affairs. Chibesakunda was also a member of parliament for Matero Constituency. Dr Mutumba Mainga Bull became Zambia's first woman Minister of Health. She was also a member of parliament for Nalolo Constituency in Western Province. Dr Bull was also the first Zambian woman to lecture and to head the Department of History at the University of Zambia.⁵¹

Figure 4. List of women who obtained high positions after independence.



SOURCE: *Zambia Daily Mail*, 24th October, 1974. P13.

⁵⁰ Moses Sayela Walubita, 'Nakatindi Yeta Nganga: She Opened Door for Women,' p, 39.

⁵¹ Times of Zambia, 24th October, 1974, p, 12 - 13.

All these positions were not possible to attain before independence but after independence, the men of this era began to appreciate the efforts of these women during the struggle. Subsequently, men gained confidence that women had the ability to take leadership positions. In so doing, the educated elite were given the mandate to take part in the leadership role of the welfare of the nation both inside and outside Zambia.

Mama Kankasa once articulated that:

The ex-rulers of this country did not give a woman a chance to contribute something towards the welfare of the society. To them she was best placed in a home to look after the welfare of the family. All the good things were denied to the women during the colonial era but when the revolution finally came, the rulers of this country thought it fit to give the mothers a try and here we are, we have made the grade.⁵²

Indeed, this was a greatest achievement among the women, as they were able to penetrate through the patriarchal barriers from both African traditional culture and colonial authority's policies. This was so impossible before independence. A woman had no opportunity to hold the highest position among the men or to lead the men, this only became possible after gaining independence. This was the only period when the educated elite managed to convince those who were steeped into patriarchal and colonial mentality.

Betty Chilombo Chilunga also explained that when Zambia gained independence, women received their freedom where they were suppressed for a longer period of time. Many laws which discriminated them were revised and abolished. Before independence women's salaries were always lower than the men. No woman could get the same or higher salary than a man. Women had no opportunity to hold leadership positions at places of work. They were always treated as subordinates to the men. The colonial government was characterised by job discrimination, where

⁵² Times of Zambia, 24th October, 1974, p, 13.

there were certain careers perceived as for men and women. For example, home craft, social work and nursing were considered to be careers for women.⁵³ But when Zambia gained independence women were given opportunities to compete with men for higher positions such as District Governor and Members of Parliament.

Chilunga further explained that:

Before independence women had no maternity leave, if a woman became pregnant, she had to resign. When the baby grows and a woman wants to continue working, she has to make fresh applications. This was not easy because sometimes women found that their vacancies were taken and had to look for another job somewhere else.⁵⁴

This changed when Zambia gained its independence, such laws were abolished. Women would freely go on maternity leave, a thing which is enjoyed up today by every working mother. Today there is no career distinction between men and women. Everyone now is at liberty to choose to take up a career of their choice. There is now equal pay for the same job and no discrimination in terms of salary based on gender.

4.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, women faced a lot of discrimination and challenges imposed from traditional African culture and laws enacted by the colonial authorities. The African tradition suppressed women in such a way that they remained dependant on men. On the other hand, the colonial authorities joined hands with the traditional leaders to suppress women further. The colonial administration did not allow women and the children to live in urban areas. They preferred they remained in the villages to take care of their families. Women had to fight hard to find their way

⁵³ Interview with Mama Betty Chilunga

⁵⁴ Interview with Mama Betty Chilunga

to urban areas. However, despite the challenges women faced from stereotypes of the patriarchal system of discrimination, they still were able to live in urban areas.

As soon as they migrated to towns, women joined organisations which fought colonial discrimination. They participated in the political unrest which took place on the Copperbelt. Most of the success of these political unrests were dependent on the contribution and the efforts of the women. They also began to participate in more organised political parties which emerged with the aim of fighting colonialism. The result of their participation was that Zambia gained independence, a development which ultimately brought liberation for both men and women.

Many barriers which prevented women from holding high positions were abolished. Women began to hold high positions such as members of parliament, district governors and they were also able to hold high positions even outside the country. For instance, Lombe Chibesakunda who became Africa's first woman Solicitor General. The laws and norms which discriminated against and suppressed women were removed. The results are visible even up today as the nation witnessed many women occupying senior positions in government such as directors, judges, lawyers, vice presidents and many more.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

The study discussed the role and significance of women in the struggle for Zambia's independence. In the historical background, this study explored how women in other nations toiled in politics. It was concluded that patriarchy controlled the participation of women in public domain worldwide.

This study has shown that there is wide margin of literature on pre-colonial Zambia and Africa at large. There is little detailed information about women who were involved in the social, economic and political spheres. The literature on their participation in these domains is scanty. As a result, many writers concluded that woman had no impact or played insignificant roles in pre-colonial societies. The main reason for such a notion is that pre-colonial societies were steeped in patriarchal stereotypes which confined women's roles to the domestic sphere. The sphere of politics was considered to be only for men while the women's space was to be private. Thus, public platforms such as politics were not regarded as places for women but for men only. However, women still participated and had great influence and impact in politics. Furthermore, women's contribution in the liberation struggle has not been recognised as partners but as helpers who helped their men to achieve their goals in politics. Even the women themselves were steeped in patriarchal stereotyping. Chibesakunda Kankasa once said; "whatever we did was not to gain power to ourselves but was to help our men gain political power so that they could govern this nation and not the whites who were foreigners and mistreated us in our land".

Thus, this study has argued that women played a significant role in Zambia's independence struggle. It also examined the significance of these roles played by women in the struggle for independence, the factors which prompted women to join the liberation struggle, the challenges

they faced and the achievement attained. It has been concluded that women's participation in the liberation struggle is attributed to their involvement in the civil disobedience which took place on the Copperbelt of Northern Rhodesia. Furthermore, it has revealed that the colonial oppression which took place on the Copperbelt did not only affect the men but women too. Therefore, the women worked side by side with men to fight colonial oppression and injustices. Most of the successes of the strike actions on the Copperbelt was also due to women's participation and the contribution they rendered during this period. This was the case especially during the 1935, 1940 and 1956 strikes. On the other hand, most of the men were scared to take part in the protests and demonstrations which took place as a way to retaliate against colonial oppression, but the women took the arena. The men were scared to lose their jobs as the same colonial authorities were their employers but the women had nothing to be scared of as they were not directly employed by the colonial masters.

This study has also examined several factors which prompted women to join the liberation struggle. Its findings were that there were several factors which prompted the women to join the liberation struggle. The civil disobedience which took place on the Copperbelt activated women's passion to fight colonialism. They witnessed the ruthlessness of the colonial authorities in the mine compounds. Most of the issues which took place during this period in the mines and mine compounds did not affect the men but women and children too. A good example of this was the rations and the issue of accommodation, hence their active participation in the fight against the colonial authorities. The incorporation of women in the strikes by the union leaders provided fertile grounds for women to join politics. The Mbeni and Kalela dancing groups were another platform which influenced the participation of women in the liberation struggle. A number of leaders who organised the strikes on the Copperbelt were also part of these groups. Women in Mbeni and Kalela

dance composed songs and performed dances which were used as entertainment during strikes. Some of the songs which were composed were songs which exposed racism and evils of colonialism on the Copperbelt.

The incorporation of women in the welfare societies was another foundation for women's political activism. The Welfare societies incorporated women in their meetings to increase the number of their supporters. The female Welfare Society officers were asked to organise meetings for African women which was a training platform. It was also agreed that after a certain period of training they would join the men. This proposed training enabled the women to become active participants and later joined the nationalist movement. The Women's League of the ANC and the Women's Brigade of the UNIP were other platforms which activated women's participation in the fight against colonialism in Zambia. Most of the political parties which were formed in Zambia created women's wing groups which motivated women's active participation in the fight for independence.

The other factors were education and urban life exposure. Many people who got educated and exposed to urban life became aware of colonial oppression and joined organisations which fought colonialism in Zambia. For those who were married to freedom fighters and those raised up by freedom fighters automatically joined the liberation struggle due to the environment they lived in. This was the case of Betty Muthinke Kaunda, Chibesakunda Kankasa, Betty Nyoni Chanda Fredah Neba and Eunice Kalichini Sebele. The study however, concluded that above all, the evils of colonial discrimination was the major factor which prompted men and women to join the struggle for the country's independence.

The study also explored the roles played by women in early nationalist movement from 1948 to 1964. It argued that women greatly contributed to the growth and sustainability of the political parties which emerged in Zambia. In both ANC, ZANC and UNIP, women played crucial roles in

mobilising the party, disseminating information and provision of and cooked food for the men in detention and those who were hiding in the bush from the wrath of colonial authorities. They were also actively involved in fundraising for the political parties. In the ANC, the women's group was mandated to raise funds for the party, a job which they did so diligently through donations and other fundraising ventures such as beer brewing. In 1951, they played a key role in raising the money which was needed to send the African delegates to England to express their views concerning opposition of the federation scheme. When the ANC split, some members left and formed ZANC. Here evidence shows, that women also raised the funds which were used to register ZANC. In UNIP, the women's wing also played a vital role in raising party funds which were used for the smooth running of the party activities. Available evidence shows that women raised funds which were used to pay a lawyer who fought for the release of Kaunda. The women also played an important role in organising other women to take part in the protests and demonstrations as a way of rebelling against colonialism and its systems.

The study has further shown that women used different strategies and approaches to rebel against colonialism in Zambia. For instance, they protested against the arrival of the colonial secretary, Iain Macleod and Reginald Maudling as a way of expressing displeasure with the British colonial system. Demonstrations, picketing, protesting, rioting, boycotts, blocking the roads, burning and destroying bridges were some of the strategies and approaches which women used to fight the colonial system in Zambia.

The study therefore, concluded that despite women facing many challenges, coming from patriarchal phenomenon, their participation still contributed to various achievements which are still visible up to date. They managed to penetrate through African traditional cultures and its norms which infringed on their rights and suppressed them. They faced colonialism and fought

against it. To some extent this was the beginning of their political freedom and liberation. This is because when Zambia gained its independence, many of the patriarchal norms which suppressed them were relaxed. Women began to enjoy their freedom and assumed positions within Zambia and outside which was impossible before independence. Women began to assume positions of District governors, members of parliament, Councillors, Ministers and Solicitor Generals. All these positions were not possible to attain before independence. But when Zambia gained its independence, men of this era began to appreciate the efforts which women offered during the liberation struggle and incorporated them in their leadership positions. Both men and women greatly contributed in the liberation struggle of Zambia's independence. Without the contribution and efforts of women in the liberation struggle, Zambia's independence would have taken longer than it did as recognised by Zambia's first republican president David Kenneth Kaunda. Indeed, Zambia's history for independence is incomplete without acknowledging the significant roles played by women during this period.

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