

**EXPLORATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS ON WOMEN'S
PARTICIPATION AND APPOINTMENT TO DECISION MAKING POSITIONS IN
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN LUSAKA, ZAMBIA**

BY

SHARON NSANA

**A thesis submitted to the University of Zambia in fulfilment of the requirement for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Development Studies**

**The University of Zambia
Lusaka**

2024

COPYRIGHT

All rights reserved. No part of this Thesis may be reproduced, stored in any retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means - electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise - without prior written permission of the author.

DECLARATION

I, Sharon Nsana (19002149) hereby declare that the thesis for Doctor of Philosophy degree in Development Studies is my own original work and that to the best of my knowledge this work has not been previously submitted for assessment or completion of any postgraduate qualification to another University or for another qualification.

Signature:
 Sharon Nsana

Date: 2024

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

The Thesis by **SHARON NSANA** is approved as fulfilling the requirements for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the University of Zambia.

Name of Examiner 1:

Signature:

Date:

Name of Examiner 2:

Signature:

Date:

Name of Examiner 3:

Signature:

Date:

Chairperson/Board of Examiners:

Signature:

Date:

Principal Supervisor:

Signature:

Date:

ABSTRACT

The success of development efforts depends on making women equal partners in all matters of the economy. Higher education, to be certain, by itself, is not a panacea but a necessary condition for the advancement of women in society. Through higher education, the journey towards participation in decision making power begins. Access to education is considered an important determinant of women's appointment to decision making positions in public administration. This is because women's increased education is positively associated with autonomy of decision making in different sectors of society. As such, women's decision-making power increases when they are empowered with higher education. The main objective of this study was to explore the role that higher education qualification plays on women's appointment to decision making positions in public administration. The sample for the study included 25 participants who were interviewed from various ministries in Lusaka. Both secondary and primary data were gathered for the study. Primary data was gathered using semi-structured interview guides and secondary data was obtained from documents such as journals, reports as well as websites. The research design used was a case study design. Non-probability sampling technique, using purposive and snow ball sampling methods were employed in the study. Data were analysed using thematic analysis by employing reflexive thematic analysis. Findings of the study revealed that despite women acquiring higher education qualification in Zambia, their appointment to decision making positions in public administration has not been achieved fully. Factors such as horizontal and vertical segregation were found to affect women mostly at institutional level and also were the reasons for the low numbers of women in decision making positions. Therefore, the study recommended that various stakeholders need to prioritize the importance of women's participation and appointment by enacting and implementing laws, policies and regulations. Women also should be empowered with training and upgrading skills to better participate in decision making.

Keywords: Women, higher education, decision making, public administration, gender equality

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my children: Ethan, Jaden, Jasmine and Amy for understanding my absence from them during my academic journey. To my mother, Judith Chikomangala, I would have not excelled without your 'push'. Thank you for raising me to be a hard-working person and to be what I am through the values you instilled in me. To my brother, Nathanael Nsana, and sister, Tinei Nsana you were always encouraging me to progress in academics so you can make an example of me. To Dr James Manchisi (my husband), your encouragement and sponsorship was very important to me. To my dad, Mr Wilmington Kasempa, for always asking me when I will finally graduate. Thank you for the wonderful encouragement during this journey. Finally, Mr Augustine Hateba Nsana, (RIP), you were an amazing father always pushing me through your encouragement and always made me know how proud I made you with my academic achievement. Continue resting in God's bosom.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis owes vast contributions from a host of people and institutions whose support academically and personally immensely contributed to the success of this study. My first acknowledgement goes to my Supervisor, Dr Harrison Daka for his exceptional theoretical and empirical guidance. His quick response to my submissions and requests as well as closer support and supervision in the thesis writing enabled me to keep on the right track as per the planned schedule. Your professional guidance and encouragement is greatly appreciated. I would like to thank in a special way my Co-Supervisor, Dr Lydia Mukuka Mulenga-Hagane for the continuous support and immeasurable advice she gave to me. My appreciation also goes to Dr Simeon Mbewe, Programme Coordinator for timeously giving me feedback concerning my academic journey. Professor Francis Simui, always giving counsel and wise encouragement to us students throughout the academic journey.

My appreciation also goes to the various Permanent Secretaries who gave me permission to carry out this study in their ministries. Further gratitude goes to the various Heads of Department who attended to my request to conduct the study. This research would not have been successful had it not been for the cooperation of my informants in all the ministries I visited who both men and women were always keen on providing information relevant to my thesis.

To family and friends, your contribution is worth noting but I would go on and on, may the good Lord richly bless you all, thank you so much. I am indebted to my colleague Maboshe Inambao, for her moral support. Lastly but not the least, I would like to thank the Almighty God for his unending love for me and being the pillar of my strength, through Him all things are possible.

Table of Contents

COPYRIGHT.....	ii
DECLARATION	iii
CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL.....	iv
ABSTRACT.....	v
DEDICATION	vi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	vii
LIST OF TABLES.....	x
LIST OF FIGURES	xi
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS.....	xii
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Overview.....	1
1.2 Background to the Study.....	1
1.3 Conceptualization of the study.....	10
1.4 Problem statement.....	30
1.5 Purpose of the Study	31
1.6 Research Objectives.....	31
1.7 Research questions.....	32
1.8 Study Justification.....	32
1.9 Conceptual Framework.....	33
1.10 Theoretical Framework.....	36
1.11 Motivation.....	42
1.12 Definition of terms.....	42
1.13 Scope of the Study	44
1.14 Outline of the Thesis.....	45
1.15 Chapter summary	45
CHAPTER TWO.....	46
LITERATURE REVIEW	46
2.1 Overview.....	46
2.2 Women in higher education qualification.....	46
2.3 Women’s participation in decision making in Public Administration.....	51
2.4 Factors affecting women’s appointment to decision making positions.....	57
2.5 Gender gaps in decision making in Public Administration.....	63
2.6 Strategies to enhance Women’s Appointment to Decision making Positions.....	70
2.7 Research Gap.....	72
2.8 Chapter Summary	74
CHAPTER THREE.....	75
METHODOLOGY	75
3.1 Overview.....	75

3.2	Research Decisions Influencing the Research Methodology	75
3.3	Research Design.....	81
3.4	Target population and Sample size	81
3.5	Sampling Technique	81
3.6	Data collection Instruments	83
3.7	Data collection Procedure	83
3.8	Data analysis	84
3.10	Credibility and trustworthiness	87
3.11	Ethical issues consideration	89
3.12	Limitations of the study	90
3.13	Chapter summary	91
CHAPTER FOUR.....		92
PRESENTATION OF STUDY FINDINGS.....		92
4.1	Introduction.....	92
4.2	Background information of participants	94
4.3	Decision making	97
4.4	Challenges faced by women in their appointment to decision making.....	100
4.5	Strategies to enhance appointment to women to decision making positions	103
4.6	Chapter summary	105
CHAPTER FIVE		106
DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS		106
5.1	Introduction.....	106
5.2	Influence of higher education on women’s appointment to decision making positions	106
5.3	Gender representation of women in decision making in public administration.....	112
5.4	Challenges faced by women in decision making in public administration	118
5.5	Strategies to enhance women’s appointment to decision making.....	126
5.6	Knowledge contribution.....	135
5.7	Chapter summary	136
CHAPTER SIX.....		137
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....		137
6.1	Overview	137
6.2	Conclusion	137
6.3	Recommendations.....	140
6.4	Future Research.....	141
REFERENCES		142
APPENDICES		167

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Student Population by Level of Study and Gender.....	7
Table 2: Number of graduates by level of qualification and gender in Zambian universities	13
Table 3: Women’s participation in Public Administration in Africa – 2018 to 2020.....	23
Table 4: Distribution of positions in Public Administration – 2019.....	28
Table 5: Distribution of positions in Public Administration 2020.....	28
Table 6: Codes generated during data analysis.....	85
Table 7: Research Question 1	92
Table 8: Research Question 2	93
Table 9: Research Question 3	93
Table 10: Research Question 4	93
Table 11: Biodata of participants	94
Table 12: Gender representation in the public service in Zambia.....	98

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Global gross enrolment ratio in tertiary education, 1970 to 2022 by region	4
Figure 2: Number and regional distribution of Universities in Zambia	6
Figure 3: Gender Inequality Index (GII) Zambia.....	12
Figure 4: Average gender gaps closed worldwide as of 2023, by region	16
Figure 5: Decision making structure in Zambia.....	25
Figure 6: Decision making in a Ministry in Zambia	27
Figure 7: Conceptual framework	34
Figure 8: The Research Paradigm by Bunmi Malau-Aduli and Faith Alele	76
Figure 9: Phases of thematic analysis	86
Figure 10: Data analysis using Reflexive thematic analysis	87
Figure 11: Framework for women in Decision making Positions	132

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BPA	Beijing Platform for Action
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
FAWE	Forum for African Women Educationalist
GEM	Gender Empowerment Measure
GEPA	Gender Equality in Public Administration
GIDD	Gender in Development Division
GII	Gender Inequality Index
GRZ	Government of the Republic of Zambia
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GNI	Gross National Income
HEA	Higher Education Authority
HDI	Human Development Index
IDEA	Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NA	National Assemblé
NGP	National Gender Policy
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PS	Permanent Secretary
PMRC	Policy Monitoring and Research Centre
PSMD	Public Service Management Division
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNPF	United Nations Population Fund

WEF	World Economic Forum
ZARD	Zambia Association of Research and Development
ZNWL	Zambia National Women's Lobby
ZAQA	Zambia Qualifications Authority

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

Attainment of higher education presents itself as a milestone for women to empower themselves to come out of their traditional roles and attain various positions in decision making bodies. Chapter one of this study presents an introduction followed by background to the study where the attainment of higher education qualifications by women will be examined in relation to their appointment to decision making positions in public administration. The chapter also gives gender statistics on higher education and decision-making positions globally and in Zambia, a problem statement and the purpose for this study are also given. The stated objectives and research questions that were used in the study are given and a theoretical framework is presented followed by the motivation to carry out the study and then conclude.

1.2 Background to the Study

Education is an essential requirement for the survival of any nation because it is a form of learning that is transferred from one generation to another through training, teaching, research and other processes. Education is understood to be an overall indicator of women's status and women are an indispensable part of any society. As noted by the Policy Monitoring and Research Centre (PMRC), women play a huge role in providing unique perspectives into various issues that not only impact their socio-economic spheres at an individual level, but also at community and national development levels (PMRC, 2020). Women's education is an important tool in the development of any nation because it is essential for their ability to exercise rights especially since it enables girls and boys, women and men to participate in social, economic and political life. According to Browne and Barret (1991), education contributes to economic development, equalizes opportunities between social classes, reduces disparities in the distribution of income and prepares the labour force for a modern economy. Thus, research has shown that there is a strong association between education and an enhanced life, better nutrition, improved hygiene, low mortality rate, low fertility rate and economic development (Sheikh et al., 2015). In other words, as the World Bank report alludes 'a country with more educated girls and women is not only healthier but wealthier' (Grant, 1993).

In the 21st century, institutions of higher education hold one of the most important roles in shaping the future of our society in their provision of education. As higher education continues to establish its value beyond the private benefits that inure to individual citizens, research indicates that a strong system of higher education is a significant contributor to the country's ability to compete in the global marketplace and is critical to economic strength, social wellbeing and position as a world leader (Skaggs, 2014). Higher education enables women and people of all ages, irrespective of cultural and social background, to face the challenges of development, especially with regard to eradicating poverty both at individual and national levels. It functions to train people to attain specific and self-determining opinions, investigation and problem-solving skills and knowledge needed to make informed decisions on a personal level and broader national level (Matonya, 2016). In short, higher education is particularly important for women in that every additional year of school that a girl completes increases her future earnings, which is good for her family, community and country (Urban, 2017).

Access to higher education is considered an important determinant of women's participation in decision making. Education no doubt widens the mental horizons, and releases people from the ignorance and superstitions and makes a person aware about his or her rights and improves decision making capacity. Many research studies have proven that there is a direct link between education levels with women's decision making power in that women's increased education is positively associated with autonomy in their decision making. Education plays an important role and influences decision making of women which is an important indicator of their empowerment (Khare, 2021). Therefore, across the globe, higher education is considered as a significant instrument and means of social change (Ashraf, 2004; Herz & Sperling, 2004), and also a crucial factor to the emancipation, empowerment and progression of women as it multiplies their abilities and capabilities of decision making (Khalid & Mujahid, 2002). Women's access to education is regarded as an important determinant of their participation in decision making.

Decision making is regarded as an integral part of a person especially women. Bala (2004) observed in his study that the equal participation of women and men in any kind of decision making, free expression of their views and participation in the community life helps them to get distinguished in the society. According to United Nations (1995), without the active participation of women and the incorporation of women's perspectives at all levels of decision making, the goals

of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved. In this vein, participation in decision making is embedded in international law and established in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, that every person has the right to participate in governance issues of his or her country, directly or through chosen representation. Ensuring women's effective participation and equal opportunities for decision making at all levels in political, economic and public life is a fundamental target in order to achieve Sustainable Development Goals on gender equality. Therefore, achieving gender equality requires women's active participation and involvement in decision making at all levels, starting in the home and extending to the highest levels of government (UN, 2015).

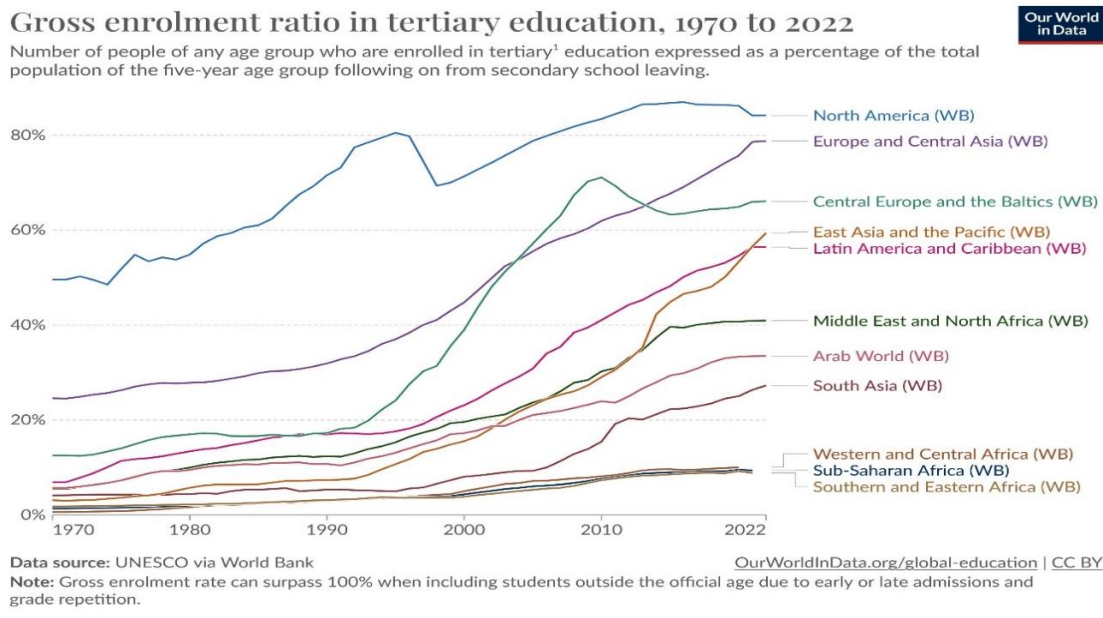
According to the World Economic Forum (2016), women's involvement in decision making processes is the biggest challenge nations are facing currently. Women are underrepresented in most decision-making positions globally and face discrimination. To reduce this inequality, Patel (2004) posits that it is the mandate of nations to enact programmes and plans that advocate for a gender parity decision making framework at all levels of governance for fairness, transparency, accountability, rule of law and efficiency in service delivery to prevail. In Zambia, as stated by Zambia National Women's Lobby (2014) and National Gender Policy (2014), the fact is that if gender inequalities continue to exist in all sectors at all levels has negative implications on national development (Ministry of Gender and Child Development, 2014). Thus, the reason for carrying out this study was to explore the role that higher education qualification has on women's appointment to decision making positions in public administration and try to understand why there are few women occupying decision making positions in public administration despite women achieving higher education qualification over the years.

1.2.1 Higher Education

In today's knowledge-intensive global economy, access to higher education is a priority. It is widely accepted that educating a woman has multiple impacts on a society's development because, as regards higher education attainment, women become empowered to participate in the social, economic and political spheres of their communities and countries (Bhat, 2015). According to Maitra (2007), women's education has also been titled to modify household power relations making women more autonomous and giving them greater control of various dimensions of their lives. As such, women's access to and effective participation in and or engagement in higher

education is a prerequisite for gender equity and equality in society and an important strategy for poverty alleviation and development in African countries (Forum for Women Educationalists, 2015). Women’s participation in higher education as a result of the expansion of both capacity and opportunity has increased six-fold over the last four decades (McDaniel, 2014).

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), higher or tertiary education has a central role in accomplishing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in its three integrated and indivisible dimensions of economic, social and environmental development. A commonly used proxy measure of the degree of participation in tertiary education is the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER). The GER is often used internationally to compare the education levels of people across numerous countries. The GER (also known as the participation rate) for tertiary education is calculated by dividing the number of students enrolled in tertiary education, regardless of age, by the population of the age group, which officially corresponds to tertiary education, and multiplying by 100.3. Thus, the population of the official age for tertiary education is estimated to be the five-year age group immediately following upper secondary education (UNESCO, 2022). Taking a look at the global GER for tertiary education for the years 1970 to 2022 for both sexes, the figure below shows a tremendous increase in various regions (World Bank, 2022).



Source: World Bank, 2022

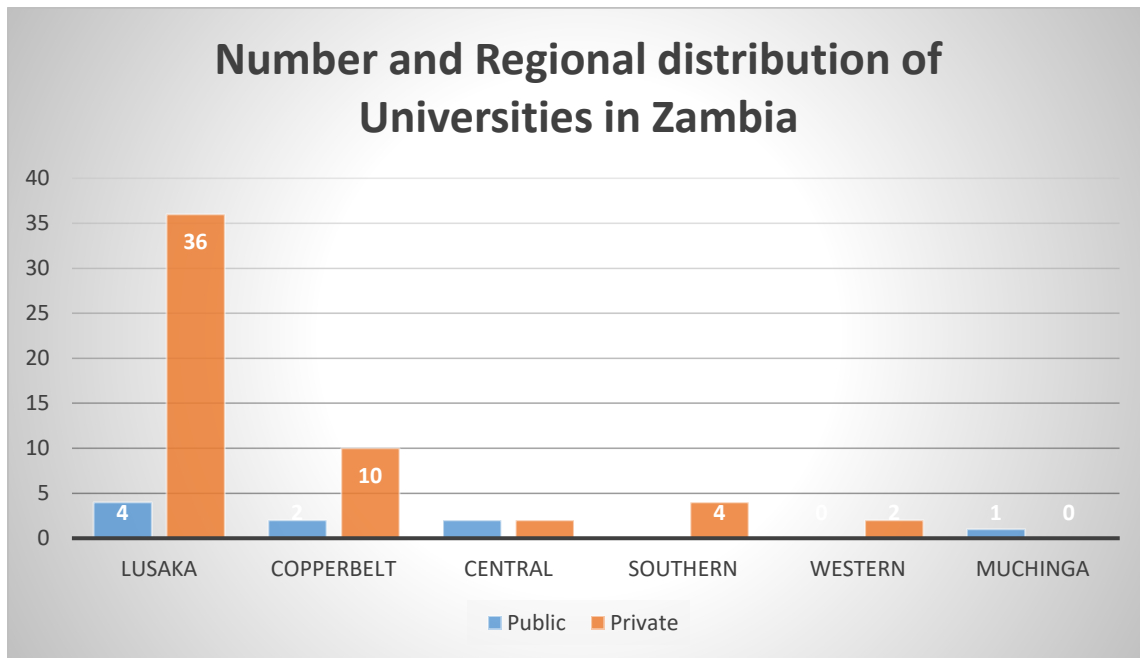
Figure 1: Global gross enrolment ratio in tertiary education, 1970 to 2022 by region

According to the UNESCO UIS database, ‘in the 2000-2020 period, the biggest regional increase in the GER was in Eastern and South-Eastern Asia (up 36% points), and the smallest in Sub-Saharan Africa (up 5% points). In 2020, the GER reached 27% in Central and Southern Asia; between 48% and 54% in Northern Africa and Western Asia, Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean; 75% in Oceania; and 79% in Europe and Northern America. In Sub-Saharan Africa however, despite the significant expansion in access, higher education systems in the region face considerable challenges related to equity, quality, relevance, and efficiency. Access continues to be highly unequal as much of the access gap between high-and-low-income students is due to disparities that arise before attainment of higher education’ (UNESCO UIS, 2018). As a result, women’s participation in higher education institutions is a highly debated topic, particularly taking into account the increasing number of tertiary education institutions.

Looking at Zambia, the government’s vision on gender as is contained in the ‘Vision 2030’ is to achieve gender equity and equality in the socio-economic development process by 2030. The government adopted the NGP in 2000 which addressed the need to build and strengthen national capacity for advocating and mainstreaming gender in the development process. The policy was aimed at ‘achieving full participation of both women and men in the development process at all levels in order to ensure sustainable development and attainment of equity and equality between sexes (Government of the Republic of Zambia, 2014). This was also enhanced by the government’s 2014 NGP and 2015 Gender Equity and Equality Act aimed to end discrimination against women, including access to productive resources, educational opportunities, and quality health-care services (MGCD, 2014; National Assembly of Zambia, 2017). The government continues to seek to provide education to all its citizens.

In Zambia, the higher education sector is divided into two sub-sectors: the universities sub-sector and the sub-sector related to colleges and trade institutions. The increasing demand for quality higher education motivated the Government of Zambia to put in place a legal framework that allowed the private sector to participate in the provision of higher education. In order to effectively manage the mushrooming higher education institutions, the Government established the Zambia Qualifications Authority (ZAQA) and the Higher Education Authority (HEA) which were mandated among other things to regulate and interpret qualification and accredit academic programmes in both public and private higher education institutions, respectively. This is to ensure

that quality of higher education being provided was of the necessary standards. The HEA was created under Higher Education Act No. 4 of 2013 (NA, 2019). From then on, a lot of public and private universities have been registered and as of 2021, there were 52 registered private universities and 9 recognised public universities operating in different provinces of Zambia as shown in the figure below (HEA, 2021, p. 15).



Source: HEA, 2021, p. 15

Figure 2: Number and regional distribution of Universities in Zambia

Furthermore, current statistics show that in Zambia, as of 2022, there was a total number of 156,044 students enrolled in both public and private universities. Public universities enrolled a total of 70,980 and from this, 38,628 were males and 32,352 were females, whereas private universities enrolled a total of 85,064 where 46,011 were males and 39,053 were females (HEA, 2022, p. 5). Also, as seen from the table below, male students were more than female students in all the three levels of study. The number of female students declined at higher levels of masters and doctoral degree levels. It is evident from these statistics that deliberate policy measures are required to facilitate progression of female students to postgraduate levels of study as shown in the table.

Table 1: Student Population by Level of Study and Gender

Level of Qualification	Public		Private		Sub-Total		Total	% Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		
Certificate	69	40	956	875	1,025	915	1,940	1.2
Diploma	1,763	2,463	6,089	6,244	7,852	8,707	16,559	10.6
Bachelor's	34,225	27,881	29,870	24,095	64,095	52,596	116,691	74.8
PG Diploma	96	66	749	602	845	668	1,513	1
Master's	2,335	1,813	7,536	6,204	9,871	8,017	17,888	11.5
Doctoral	140	89	811	413	951	502	1,453	0.9
TOTAL	38,628	32,352	46,011	39,053	84,639	71,405	156,044	100

Source: HEA, 2022, p.5

1.2.2 Decision making

Decision making is regarded as an integral part of one's life. Echoing the words of the then UN Secretary-General:

'Countries with more gender equality have better economic growth. Companies with more women leaders perform better. Peace agreements that include women are more durable. Parliaments with more women enact more legislation on key social issues such as health, education, anti-discrimination and child support. The evidence is clear: equality for women means progress for all' (United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki Moon, 8th March 2014).

Women's participation in decision making has been identified as critical to sustainable development. The extent of their participation, therefore, can be seen as a key indicator of gender equality in society and is, in fact, measured as one of the principal components of empowerment. It has been argued that 'democracy involves popular control over decision making and equality between citizens in the exercise of that control' (Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2013). Similarly, the UN (2016) recognises participation as a fundamental human right principle and a basic condition for a democratic society which allows different categories of groups to play a role in their own development and ensure that their actual needs are taken into account. Thus, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that achieving the goal of equal participation of women and men in decision making will provide a balance that is essential for the achievement of

both transparent and accountable governance and administration and to strengthen democracy and promote its proper functioning (UN, 2015).

Gender issues, stereotypical perceptions and discrimination bring about problematic situations in educational spheres and remain a controversial subject along with women administration. Despite a number of efforts made by the authorities in recent years to empower women, men are still largely privileged to lead most public institutions. Indeed, in Zambian societies, women are generally confined to the lower positions in educational work settings. Sociocultural heritage and organizational barriers are some of the factors that maintain women in inferior steps and affect their management potential (Moreau, 2014). This is obviously not conducive to gender equality. In the Zambian context, the dominant traditional ideology related to patriarchal culture, which is profoundly entrenched amongst the individuals, presupposes subordination of women, often together with the exclusion of the public sphere and in particular, the educational settings. The stereotyping perceptions often lead many women to lack confidence. However, women themselves are building a perception that they sometimes are afraid to engage in some public or private activities because of the social norms and cultural beliefs (Andela et al., 2008).

The argument for women's participation in decision making is based on the recognition that every human being has the right to participate in decisions that define her or his life. Women have been leaders throughout history; from the pharaohs of Egypt to the queens of England, women rulers' are found in nearly every culture and time period. In Africa, according to Geisler (2014), Dr. Inonge Mbikusita-Lewanika started the National Party in Zambia in 1991; Margaret Dongo began the Zimbabwe Union of Democrats in 1999; while in Lesotho, Limakatso Ntakatsane formed the party, Kopanang Basotho. Likewise, in the 1990s Charity Ngilu and Dr. Wangari Maathai headed parties in Kenya; Ruth Rolland-Jeanne-Marie led a party in Central African Republic and Amália de Vitoria Pereira led an Angolan party. In Zambia also, women from NGOs, churches and political parties formed a National Women's Lobby Group (NWLG) in 1991 as a non-partisan organization with the goal of increasing the numbers of women in decision making positions in government, parliament and political parties. The Lobby Group encouraged women to stand for local government elections, worked to repeal discriminatory legislation, and conducted human rights training and civic education seminars for women (Munachonga, 2016).

Inclusive decision making is necessary in terms of both legitimacy and good policy outcomes. In developing countries, as noted by Duflo (2012, p. 1051), gender equality and development are intertwined; more gender equality creates the conditions to boost economic development and this contributes to economic growth while more development leads to more gender equality. Thus, recognising this, closing persistent gender gaps in public life has emerged as a critical policy issue as countries increase their efforts to foster inclusive growth and build trust and confidence in public institutions. Research reveals that women in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) on average represent 87% achievement of the outcomes of masculinity in development which is a significant statistic to implore an increase of women representation (Hakura et al., 2016). The same report indicates that all forms of inequality on gender costs the SSA an estimated US\$95 billion annually. Thus, since women know their situations best, they should participate equally with men at all levels of decision making, from private to the public spheres of their lives, and also regionally (Miranda, 2005).

To ensure sustainable development and attainment of equity and equality between men and women, the Zambian government recognized the need for full participation of women in the developmental process at all levels. The government is member and signatory to many declarations and conventions that have been signed for women's rights. International human rights treaties and conventions such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action (BPA) and the Millennium Development Goals on gender equality, recognize that women have the right to participate equally with men at all levels and in all aspects of public life and decision making whether it is deciding how the household income is spent or deciding how the country is run, and such conventions commit signatories to realizing this goal (Miranda, 2005). Despite these commitments to promoting gender equality in formal structures of representations and decision making, women continue to be underrepresented in all areas of decision making and face significant barriers to their full and equal participation in the structure and institutions that govern, and directly affect their lives. Thus, the women's representation in various decision making bodies continues to be unfavorable.

Yet, not only is women's participation and leadership an essential prerequisite for poverty alleviation and tackling gender inequality, it is also a basic human right. According to the UN (2021) Gender Equality Report, International human-rights treaties and conventions such as the CEDAW, the BPA, and the fifth Sustainable Development Goal on gender equality, recognize that

women have the right to participate equally with men at all levels and in all aspects of public life and decision-making, whether it is deciding how the household income is spent or determining how the country is run, and such conventions commit signatories to realizing this goal. Women have greatly contributed to human civilization despite the difficulties they have faced in many cultures that have considered them to be back benchers when it comes to decision making and in leadership at large. A good number of women today has attended education with many attaining bachelor's degrees, master's degrees as well as PhD degrees. Despite many women attaining higher education, they are not given chance to occupy positions of authority. In many situations women face challenges that deny them to reach their leadership potential, such as; discrimination, prejudice, stereotype and sexual harassment as compared to their male counterpart.

Several studies on women have been offered on the importance of women's appointment to decision making, a huge gap continues to be experienced in this field, with the majority of women visibly placed in the lower echelons in the broader SSA (Bahiru et al., 2018). In Africa, for example, women have made considerable gains in the political, economic and social development of the continent but despite their efforts, they are still widely marginalized within the corridors of power and decision making (Amina & Ibrahim, 2019). With this background, it can be deduced that women still remain underrepresented and excluded from decision making positions and as statistics on Zambia have shown, if this trend continues, the cost of development for Zambia will only mount over time. The importance of this study stems from the fact that women have the potential to change their own status, and that of the communities and countries in which they live, yet more often than not, their contributions and potential go unrecognized, their work has been undervalued and their promises unnourished. In almost all circumstance, men greatly outnumber women when it comes to being appointed to decision making positions.

1.3 Conceptualization of the study

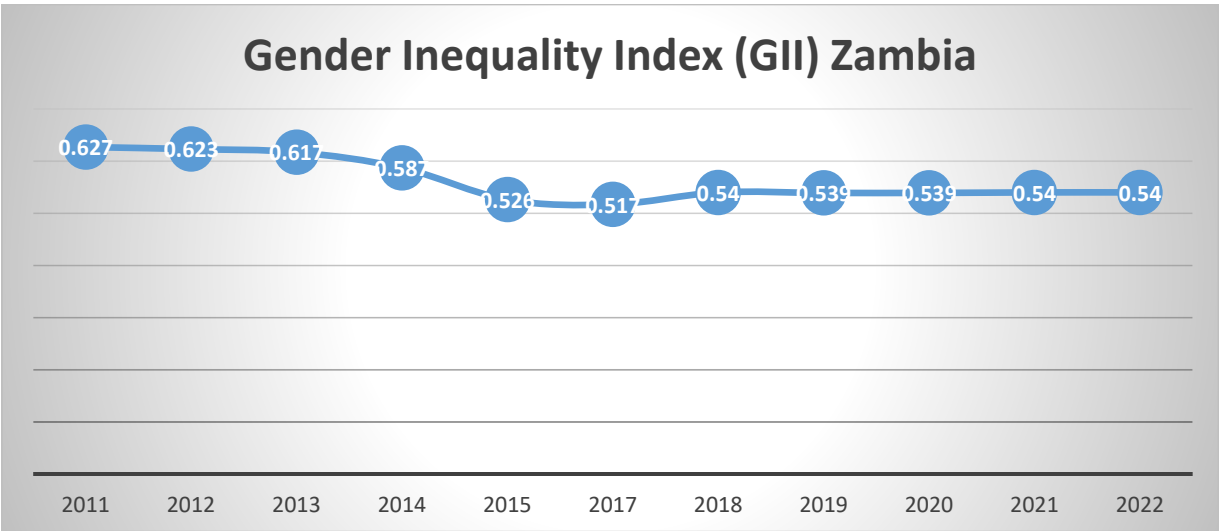
The Human Development Index of a country is measured by three dimensions being average achievement in education (knowledge), health life and decent standard of living. The health life and standard of living are measured in terms of Per Capita Income, Gross Domestic Product and Purchasing Power. The investment in education enhances the level of human capital which plays a vital role in the growth of the economy, and also results in high growth rate, increase in national income and standard of living (United Nations Development Programme, 2000). The UNDP,

Human Development Index (HDI) and Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) are examples of measures of empowerment in broad categories for women. The HDI is a composite index to measure a country's social and economic development. Similar to the HDI, the GEM was developed in 1995 by the UNDP to measure the relative empowerment of women in a specific country. The GEM supports the HDI by adding another measurement index to assess development. The GEM is a single statistic that focuses on three indicators: proportion of parliamentary seats held by women, percentage of women in economic decision making positions and income level (Oxaal & Baden, 1997; Koomson et al., 2012, p. 46).

HDI is a summary measure for assessing long-term progress in three basic dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, access to knowledge and a decent standard of living. A long and healthy life is measured by life expectancy, knowledge level is measured by mean years of schooling among the adult population, which is the average number of years of schooling received in a life-time by people aged 25 years and older. Access to learning and knowledge by expected years of schooling for children of school-entry age, which is the total number of years of schooling a child of school-entry age can expect to receive if prevailing patterns of age-specific enrolment rates stay the same throughout the child's life. The standard of living is measured by Gross National Income (GNI) per capita expressed in constant 2017 international dollars converted using Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) conversion rates (UNDP, 2020).

Therefore, the HDI value for Zambia in the year 2019 was 0.584, which put the country in the medium human development category-positioning it at 146 out of 189 countries and territories. Between 1990 and 2019, Zambia's HDI value increased from 0.421 to 0.584, an increase of 38.7%. However, Zambia had an HDI value reduced to 0.565 in 2021, standing at 154th out of 191 countries and territories (UNDP, 2022, p. 2). According to the UNDP (2020), between 1990 and 2019, Zambia's life expectancy at birth increased by 14.6 years, mean years of schooling increased by 2.5 years and expected years of schooling increased by 4.0 years. The health and survival (98%) evaluate parity in sex ratio at birth and years of health life expectancy. Also 47.1% of adult women have reached at least a secondary level of education, compared to 56.8% of their male counterparts; the figures are slightly higher than the SSA for both women and men (UNDP, 2021). As of December 2023, Zambia's HDI value was 0.565 ranking the country at 154 out of 189 countries (Stiftung, 2024).

Gender equality and women’s empowerment is prioritized in Zambia due to its primacy in the eradication of poverty and attainment of sustainable socio-economic development. To ensure the attainment of gender equality and women’s empowerment, there is progress as can be seen through the reduction in the Gender Inequality Index (GII). The GII is a composite measure reflecting inequality in achievement between women and men in three dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment and the labor market. Thus, the GII for Zambia reduced from 0.627 in 2011 to 0.517 in 2017 (GRZ, 2019). Currently the index stands at 0.540 positioning the country at 138 out of 190 countries and territories (UNDP, 2023). This is shown in the figure below.



Source: UNDP, 2023

Figure 3: Gender Inequality Index (GII) Zambia

It can be observed that Zambia has made significant progress in promoting the rights of girls and women. Despite notable improvements in the GII, Zambia remains among countries with the highest levels of gender inequalities. In this vein, the overall development of any society requires the full and equal participation of both men and women. This study, therefore, used some of the indicators in the HDI to help us understand how the country is progressing in terms of women’s attainment of higher education qualification and how women’s higher education attainment has affected their appointment to decision making positions in public administration.

Globally, women are getting more education than ever before, but are not always catching up with men. The increasing enrolment of female undergraduate students across the world has given false

impression that gender equality has been achieved in higher education. We often hear people say that women are doing well and gender equality is not an issue and also that a 5% to 10% increase in enrolment rate makes women surpass men. However, increased female enrolment in higher education is only one dimension of gender equality, and the unfortunate reality is that equality remains elusive nearly everywhere in the world. According to UNESCO (2022, p. 10), over 235 million students were enrolled in higher education in the world in 2020, more than doubling the 100 million students enrolled in 2000. The gross enrolment ratio reached 40% globally in 2020, yet only 9% in Sub-Saharan Africa. Access to higher education increased at a faster pace among women than among men, between 2000 and 2020. The gross enrolment rate in higher education increased from 19% in 2000 to 43% in 2020 among women, but only from 19% to 37% among men. The gender parity index indicates that at the global level, 113 women were enrolled in higher education for every 100 men in 2020 (UIS database).

Statistics on Zambia show that there was slight increase in the number of female students who graduated in the year 2022. When looking at students who graduated successfully from both public and private universities, in 2022, a total number of 21,198 students graduated from different fields and level of qualification in Zambia. Out of the total number of students who graduated in 2022, 10,548 were males and 10,650 were females. This represents 49.8% and 50.2% of male and female graduates in 2022, respectively (HEA, 2022, p. 9). The gender gap is more visible in public universities that are aimed at encouraging students, especially female students to enroll in various learning programs. The data gathered clearly shows that women still need to benefit fully from a fair participation in higher education owing to the fact that various levels of qualifications show that women enrolment is very low compared to the enrolment of men.

Table 2: Number of graduates by level of qualification and gender in Zambian universities

Level of Qualification	Male	Female	Sub-Total
Certificate	349	309	658
Diploma	1,467	2,039	3,506
Bachelor's	6,849	6,726	13,575
PG-Diploma	107	98	205
Master's	1,744	1,461	3,205
Doctoral	32	17	49
Total	10,548	10,650	21,198

Source: HEA, 2022, p. 9

From the table above, it is evident that women in Zambia are still behind in attainment of higher education as seen from the statistics on the graduation from both public and private universities in Zambia. Clearly, efficient investment in women's higher education can bring huge returns, but these returns will not materialize if the gaps in women's experiences at university and outcomes post-graduation are not addressed (Tilak, 2015). The problem is worsened further when looking at decision making. Though women now earn the university degrees at every level of the higher education tier, as shown above, most of them do not get to participate in decision making. Adams (2016) observes that sustainable development is only achievable if equitable distribution of opportunities, resources and leadership is transformed equally between the genders. This is because equal participation of women and men in governance and decision making is key to achieving sustainable development. Decision making is the basic process around which the functions of the administration revolve and decision making that is based on the participation of all individuals will contribute to the success of that decision (Mustafawi, 2017).

Decision making is a very important process in any one's life. It is a process of selecting the best course of action from among many alternatives (Jadhav, 2019). Thus, decision making positions entail access to and control over resources in different sectors. Women's participation in decision making is essential for their interests to be incorporated into governance. Their participation in politics and in leadership would help to solve a lot of problems associated with poverty and inequality (Burchard, 2014). It helps to balance decision making concerned with education, reproductive health, agriculture, trade, community needs, political representation and gender equality.

Participation in decision making is firmly imbedded in international law and established in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, that every person has the right to participate in the governance issues of his or her country, directly or through chosen representatives (Guttmann & Thompson, 2004; UN, 2015). Participation in decision making provides a platform where various stakeholders can present their felt and actual needs and decide on the course of action which can address their needs (Chambers, 2008). In order to promote and enhance participation of various stakeholders in decision making processes, professionals working for different institutions are expected to ensure that local people are incorporated in planning and implementation of various development initiatives (Greenwood & Levin, 2007).

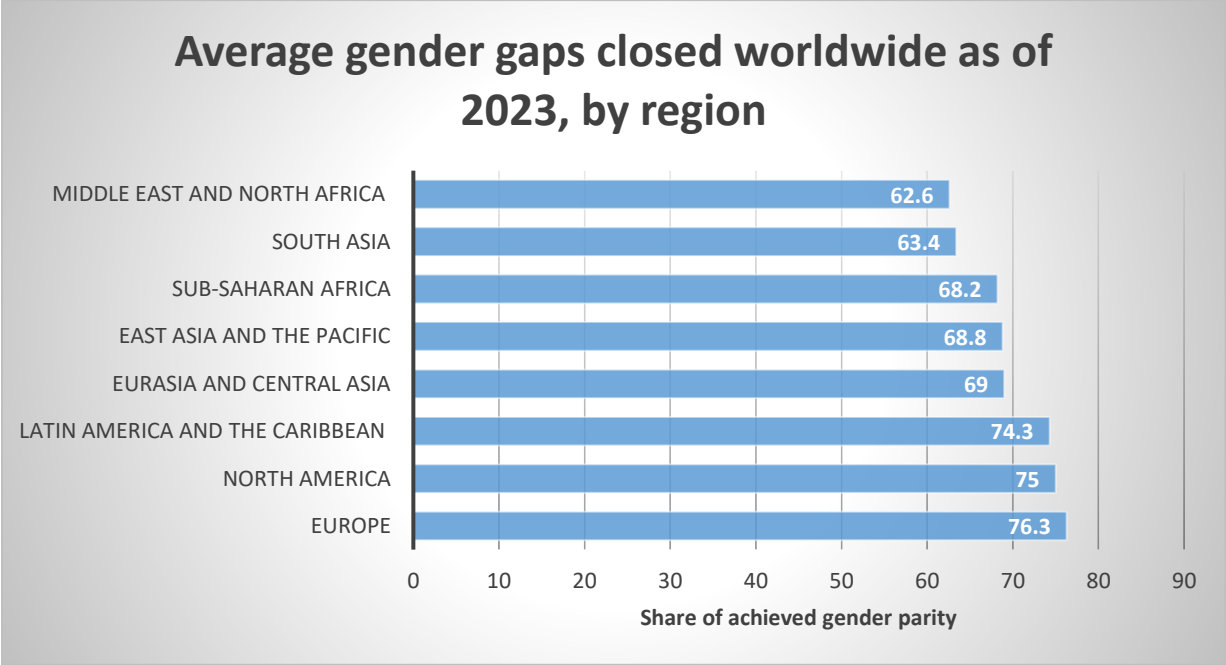
Women as a minority and marginalised group rarely have access to and control over institutional resources at the same level as men. In most cases, women have remained spectators and not participants in the development process of the country in different sectors of the economy. The process of improving women's participation in decision making at local levels is essential to achieve economic and political development of the society. As such, according to the 2015 UN Report, women in power and decision making are required for democratic governance and it was identified as one of the twelve critical areas of concern in the BPA. The Beijing Report stresses that equality in decision making is integral to the advancement of women's rights and that women's equal participation in decision making is not only a question of simple justice or democracy, but also a necessary condition for women's interests to be taken into account (UN, 2015).

Women's increased participation in decision making contributes to positive transformative processes for societies, such as laws, policies, services, institutions and social norms (Council of Europe, 2014 – 2017). For this concern, the BPA recommended two strategies: first; take measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision making and second, increase women's capacity to participate in decision making and leadership. The report further notes that men typically hold most positions of power and decision making, in areas in which gender inequality is often severe and highly visible. Advances over the past two decades are evident in all regions and most countries, but progress has been slow. Women are underrepresented in national parliaments, and also largely excluded from executive branches of government. Only minority of women are appointed as ministers and when they are, they are not usually assigned to core ministries such as cabinet of Prime Minister, or minister of home affairs, finance or defense and justice (UN, 2015).

Globally, women continue to be underrepresented in the formulation of national policies as well as in the political and economic decision making spheres (Domingo et al., 2005). Women's low access to information and media, less employment opportunities, organisational barriers coupled by cultural factors reduce their decision making power in society in general and in organisations in particular (United Nations Population Fund, 2005). The low participation of women in these positions affects the progress in improving the legal and regulatory environment for promoting gender equality since very few women are influencing the legislative process. Hence, the absence

of women’s voices in decisions which affect their lives is not only a problem for women but is usually a sign of unjust power relations.

According to the WEF (2021), across the 156 countries covered by the index, women represent only 26.1% of some 35,500 parliament seats and just 22.6% of over 3,400 ministers worldwide. In 81 countries, there has never been a woman head of state, as of 15th January 2021. The report further goes to indicate that while political empowerment has achieved the least progress to date globally (22%), meaning over 78% of the gap is yet to be closed. There are some countries where women have been in leadership roles for several years or have increased their presence at the highest institutional levels in the past few years. For instance, in Switzerland, a woman has been head-of-state for almost eight of the past 50 years and the Presidency of the Swiss Confederation has been held by a woman in six of the past 10 years (WEF, 2021). There has been progress in the number of women elected or appointed to decision making positions but full gender parity is far from being reached as shown in the figure below.



Source: WEF, 2023

Figure 4: Average gender gaps closed worldwide as of 2023, by region

From the figure above, it can be seen that some regions have attained gender parity and exceeded the 50% target. Gender parity in Europe (76.3%) surpasses the parity level in North America (75%)

this year to rank first of eight geographic regions. Closely behind Europe and North America is Latin America and the Caribbean, with 74.3% parity. Trailing more than 5% points behind Latin America and the Caribbean are Eurasia and Central Asia (69%) as well as East Asia and the Pacific (68.8%). Sub-Saharan Africa ranks 6th (68.2%), slightly below the global weighted average score (68.3%). Southern Asia (63.4%) overtakes the Middle East and North Africa (62.6%), which is, in 2023, the region furthest away from parity (WEF, 2023, p. 6). In this vein, for a country to achieve parity, the level of progress toward gender parity (the parity score) for each indicator is calculated as the ratio of the value of each indicator for women to the value for men. A parity score of 1 indicates full parity. The gender gap is the distance from full parity (Ibid, p. 9).

A glance at Africa on the other hand shows that gender inequality in political leadership and decision making has persisted. In recent years, many African countries have geared their efforts towards improving women's representation in all spheres of governance in both the public and private sectors (Amina & Ibrahim, 2019; Kaimba, 2008). Sub-Saharan Africa's parity score is the sixth-highest among the eight regions at 68.2%, ranking above Southern Asia and the Middle East and North Africa. Progress in the region has been uneven. Namibia, Rwanda and South Africa, along with 13 other countries, have closed more than 70% of the overall gender gap. The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali and Chad are the lowest-performing countries, with scores below 62%. And while there has been progress of 0.5 percentage points or more in 17 out of 36 countries, scores for 17 countries have seen decline of 0.5 percentage points or more since the last edition. Based on the constant sample, this marks a marginal improvement of 0.1 percentage points. At the current rate of progress, it will take 102 years to close the gender gap in Sub-Saharan Africa (WEF, 2023, p. 6). Sub-Saharan countries have tried to introduce more women at leadership and decision-making levels, particularly in their public sectors. Though situations vary from country to country, there are some universal trends in the barriers and challenges to women's equal participation and representation in politics (IDEA, 2013). However, women are still widely marginalised within the corridors of power and decision-making roles compared to their male counterparts (Ilesanmi, 2018; UNESCO, 2017).

The Zambian society on the other hand is slowly changing in terms of the perceptions of people towards gender issues. People are beginning to realise the importance of inclusion of women in various areas of development which includes skills training, employment, and education among

many others. Despite many positive changes in terms of gender equality in recent decades, Ryan (2018), indicated that women remain underrepresented in positions of power and prestige, and continue to shoulder disproportionate amounts of unpaid domestic labour. In Zambia, although women (8,779,056) representing 50.5% outnumber men (8,602,112) representing 49.5%, they are mostly on the side-lines when it comes to participation in all forms of decision making, including political office, constitutional bodies, public administration, the judiciary, and the private sector, even in regional and global development fora (Ministry of Gender, 2021).

Gender disparities in decision making have continued to remain pervasive in Zambia due to various factors and the reasons behind the lack of progress are nuanced and multifaceted. The focus of discussion about discrimination during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s centred on acts of blatant and overt sexism and prejudice. Today's barriers are more likely to result from gender-based preferences in recruitment, hiring decisions and work assignments, lack of leadership development and experience (Baltodano et al., 2012). Often gender-based preferences are not intentional but are a result of unconscious biases-preferences that result from one's previous experiences and natural tendencies and comfort level that a person has when in the presence of someone who is more like them. For some women, their self-doubts and past treatment cause them to believe they are less deserving than men for recognition and they see themselves as less qualified for key decision making positions (Rhode & Kellerman, 2007). Still family issues remain a big barrier for women all the way through the pipeline (June, 2005). Moreover, customs and laws against female leadership can be found through history, most notably in every major religion (Christ, 2014). In all circumstance, women form the majority of victims who are vulnerable to irresponsible masculine leadership (World Bank, 2017).

1.3.1 Women's participation in decision making in the Public Service/Administration

Women have the right to participate in decision making, to engage in society, vote in elections, be elected to government office, serve on boards, and make their voices heard in any process that will ultimately affect them, their families and communities. Without the active participation of women and the incorporation of women's perspectives at all levels of decision making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved (Beijing Platform for Action, Cultural Area G para 181) (UN, 1995). This is because women's full and effective political participation is a matter of human rights, inclusive growth and sustainable development (OECD, 2018a). Therefore,

women's employment in public administration is largely determined by social factors through which societies shape their welfare state.

According to Waldo (1983), as cited in Ezeani (2006:3), public administration refers to both the activities of bureaucrats concerned with the management or administration of government organizations as well as the study of these activities. Currently, the term "public administration" is applied rather broadly. The absence of standardised definitions of employment in public administration makes it impossible to monitor and compare the available data on gender equality. For example, national legislation recognizes several types of employees including 'state employees,' 'civil servants,' 'officials,' and 'executives,' but their responsibilities vary across the regions. The varying categorization of posts makes it difficult to identify the levels at which employees have decision making abilities. In some systems, executives have decision making power, while in others they are technical staff without such responsibilities (UNDP, 2017). Lungu (1997, p.1) believes that, 'in some cases, public administration is used synonymously with public policy, public service and government administration'.

Shafritz (2005), said that 'public administration is what the government does. It is the totality of the working day activities of all the world's bureaucrats – whether those activities are performed legally or illegally, competently or incompetently, decently or despicably. Public administration is both direct and indirect. It is direct when government employees provide services to the public as varied as mortgage insurance, mail delivery and electricity. It is indirect when government pays private contractors to provide goods or services to citizens'. In other words, public administration is a phase in the public policy making such that public policy and public administration can be said to be two sides of the same coin. This is because while one decides the other does. In this vein, public policy and public administration cannot be separated because one side cannot exist without the other.

1.3.2 Importance of public administration

The importance of public administration to the efficient and effective functioning of modern democracies around the world cannot be overstated. This is because public administration has become an essential part of democracy and a dominant factor in the modern era, which has seen the emergence of a welfare state and is extremely important and necessary for democracies to

function. Hans Rosenberg (quoted in Krygier, 1979, p. 1) correctly observed that, ‘for better or worse, modern societies are completely reliant on an essential component of the current governance structure, namely it’s dispersed system of professionalized administration and its officials’. Public administration is governmental administration concerned with achieving state purposes, determined by the state.

According to UNDP (2022), public administration is the bedrock of government and the central instrument through which national policies and programs are implemented. Therefore, it is a crucial venue to seek and establish gender equality for at least three reasons. First, public administration is the primary institution responsible for implementing national policies, programs and tasks in which women should be included equally (UNDP, 2015). Second, in many countries, it is the single largest employer. Therefore, ensuring gender balance in participation and leadership, adopting and implementing legal and policy frameworks that support gender equality, and building inclusive institutional cultures has potential to transform the lives and livelihoods of millions of workers worldwide. Third, public administration can ‘walk the talk’ setting a standard for other work places such as corporations, small businesses, non-profit organisations, schools, colleges and universities (UNDP, 2014). Without public administration, the government cannot operate and manage its own activities efficiently and effectively; as it plays a vital role for delivering and distributing the public services to all areas of the country.

According to Sapru (2013), the state, through the instrument of public administration, ensures equality of opportunity and protects the weak in the areas of health, education, and housing, as well as a variety of other social welfare programs. In times of crisis, it is the state, through administrators, that can put in place the necessary measures to significantly reduce unemployment and eliminate the explosive situation caused by the exclusion of certain groups of the population and the development of abject poverty. In other words, public administration implements public interest and employs people of almost every profession such as teachers, technical, crafts, office skills and many other professions. It includes military as well as civil affairs, much of the work of courts, and all the special fields of government activity-police, education, health, construction of public works, conservation, social security, and many others. Therefore, since public administration mainly focuses on social responsibility and civic engagement, it is a perfect area of study if you want to know the experiences of people in organizations.

Public administration emphasize ethical behavior and decision-making, preparing you to confront the challenges facing our diverse communities. Thus public administration is an important institution where women can participate in decision making. Echoing the words of the UN Secretary General:

*‘Increasing the proportion of women in public institutions makes them more representative, increases innovation, improves decision making and benefits whole societies’. -
António Guterres, International Women’s Day 2017.*

In an ideal world, public administration is guided by principles of fairness, accountability, justice, equality and non-discrimination, and the public service should serve as a model where women and men equally participate and lead, including in decision making (UNDP, 2022). ‘A critical component of gender equality in public administration is parity-equal number of women and men working and leading in all levels and sectors of public administration’ (Council of Europe, 2017, p. 16). However, globally, this is not yet the reality and, despite the fact that the internationally agreed target of a minimum 30% women in leadership positions applies equally to public administration as it does to politics; women remain underrepresented in decision making in public administration (UNDP, 2022). Public administration in both developed and developing countries often remains a patriarchal institution that perpetuates gender based traditions, attitudes and practices. Women remain concentrated in lower positions in public administration in most countries and remain significantly outnumbered by men in leadership and decision making positions. A few are found in some policy areas but are starkly underrepresented in others. While women’s numbers are highest in ministries focused on women’s issues, health and education, they are underrepresented in policy areas such as finance and transportation (UNDP, 2021).

Taking a look at data available (2015-2020) around the world, the global average of women’s participation in public administration was 46% in 139 countries. Women’s average share of Public Administrators increased from 44% in 2010 to 49% in 2020 (Cuberes & Teignier, 2016). Statistics world over, for example, in the civil service, show that very few regions have actually managed to have gender parity met as of December 2020. Even with the adoption of the 1995 Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action, which set the international target for reaching gender balance in political decision making, women are underrepresented across all levels of power (UN

Women, 2020). Women's leadership and representation in public and private sector decision making bodies is still low. On average, only 7% to 30% of the firms in 38 African countries have a female top manager, while only 2 out of a sample of 11 African countries have more than 30% women at decision making level in public administration. The representation of women in public administration leadership varies across countries ranging from a low representation of 12-15% in Burundi and Mali to a high representation of 35% and 45% in South Africa and Botswana respectively (UNDP, 2016, p. 5).

A look at public administration in Africa shows that women are underrepresented at all levels of decision making in public administration. The gender disparity is most noticeable at the highest levels of decision making. In these top leadership positions, women make up only 21% of public administrators across 8 countries with available data. Women fare slightly better at the next highest decision making level of senior managers (UNDP, 2016, p. 6). Across the 11 countries with available data, women make up 28% of senior management positions in public administration. Women are best represented in Lesotho, accounting for 38% of civil servants at the top two decision making levels. At the lowest level of decision making monitored, managers within the civil service, women make up 30% of members across 13 countries with available data. At the managerial level, women reach parity in Lesotho (53%) and Namibia (54%). Women remain underrepresented among managers in the remaining 11 countries (UNDP, 2022, p. 3). The table below shows an extract from the available data which reflects women's participation in public administration in Africa between 2018 and 2020 from selected countries where we see that Botswana and Seychelles have achieved 50% threshold for women in public administration overall with 60% and 54% respectively. Zambia has a long way to go with a mere 25%, having the same parity as Guinea Bissau (Ibid, p. 5).

Table 3: Women’s participation in Public Administration in Africa – 2018 to 2020

Country	Year achieved	Percentage % of women in public administration overall
Angola	2018	42
Botswana	2019	60
Cabo Verde	2019	47
Guinea	2018	26
Guinea Bissau	2019	25
Kenya	2019	46
Mauritius	2019	29
Rwanda	2019	34
Sao Tome & Principe	2020	38
Seychelles	2018	54
South Africa	2019	49
Zambia	2018	25

Source: UNDP, 2022, p. 5

Gender equality in Public Administration is a key step towards women’s empowerment in public life and building representatives for just and effective institutions. Women have been under-represented at all levels of administrative positions and decision making processes, especially in the government and parliament sectors. For example, a memorandum submitted to Parliament by the Zambia Association for Research and Development (ZARD) in 2011 on the status of women in decision making established that gender inequalities were noticed by the low representation of women in political and administrative governance, in that out of 35 Permanent Secretaries, only 7 were female. Women are mostly recruited and concentrated in the lower echelons of institutions and are in occupations with low remunerations such as nursing, secretarial and clearing services (Gender in Development Division, 2000). In Zambia, like many other SSA countries, gender imbalances which do not favor women exist in the socio-economic, cultural, and political spheres. These imbalances have prevented women from effectively contributing to and benefiting from the development process (GIDD, 2004).

1.3.3 History of Public Administration in Zambia

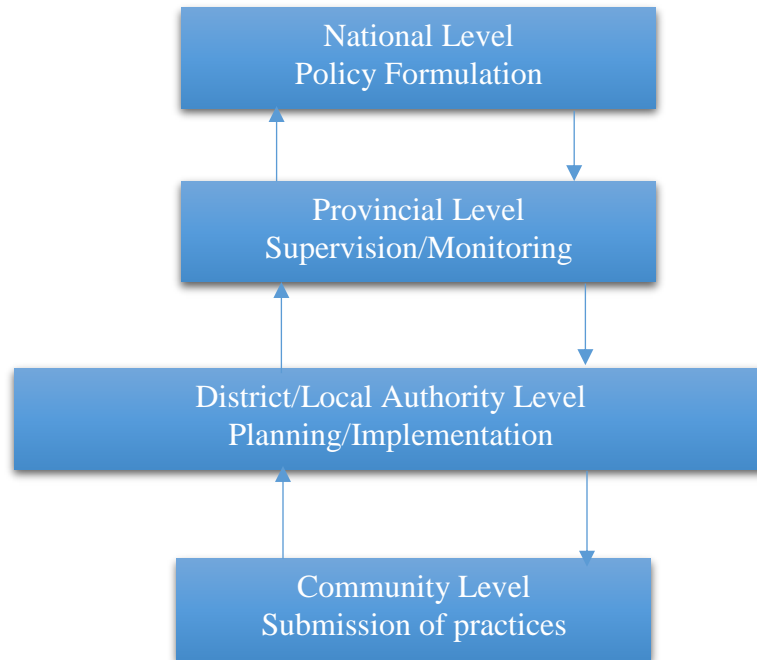
The Zambian governance structure is comprised of the three branch system of governance as shown in the figure below. For decades, Zambia has had lower numbers of women in all the three branches of governance, which is the Legislative, Executive and Judiciary. Women are few in Parliament which makes the laws; they are fewer in the executive which carries out the laws as

well as less in number in the judiciary which enforces the laws. Women's representation is only at the lower level of governance. Majority of the higher level positions are represented by men. Thus, for a country to achieve gender parity, gender equality and women's participation in decision making are two measures to enhance sustainable development by applying a gender-inclusive approach (Dar & Shargojri, 2022).

According to Samanga (2019), Zambia has made slight progress and over the past decade, the country has witnessed an unprecedented rise in female leaders serving in influential national positions. Among the notable women are Inonge Wina and Mutale Nalumango, the first and second female Republican Vice Presidents, respectively; Nelly Mutti, the first female Parliament Speaker; Justice Ireen Mambilima, the first female Chief Justice; Stella Libongani, the first female Inspector General of the Zambia Police and Professor Hildah Ngambi, the first female vice-chancellor at a public University. While this development is heralded as a big step in promoting female involvement in governance, history shows that their influence in leadership is not limited to the contemporary period. In Zambia, though there seems to be a fair percentage of women MPs and also those women participating in political life, decision making bodies as well, this has not yet translated into a more equal position of women in general within the society nor has it strengthened gender equality in the social-economic life. Representation has remained below the desired 30% and is inadequate in other critical areas of public service and decision making roles in public administration.

The Zambian government introduced decentralisation policy in 2002 in its quest to promote participation of citizens in decision making and improve service delivery. Introduction of decentralisation in service delivery empowers local authorities to plan and implement various development programmes, projects and activities (Local Government Act, 2019). Thus, the Zambian decision making structure follows a 4 tier structure. At the top level, or National level, that is where policies are formulated, followed by provincial level, where supervision and monitoring of policies is done. Next is the district and local level where planning and implementation is done and finally the community level where the policies are practiced as shown in the diagram below.

Decision making structure in Zambia



Source: Local Government Act, 2019

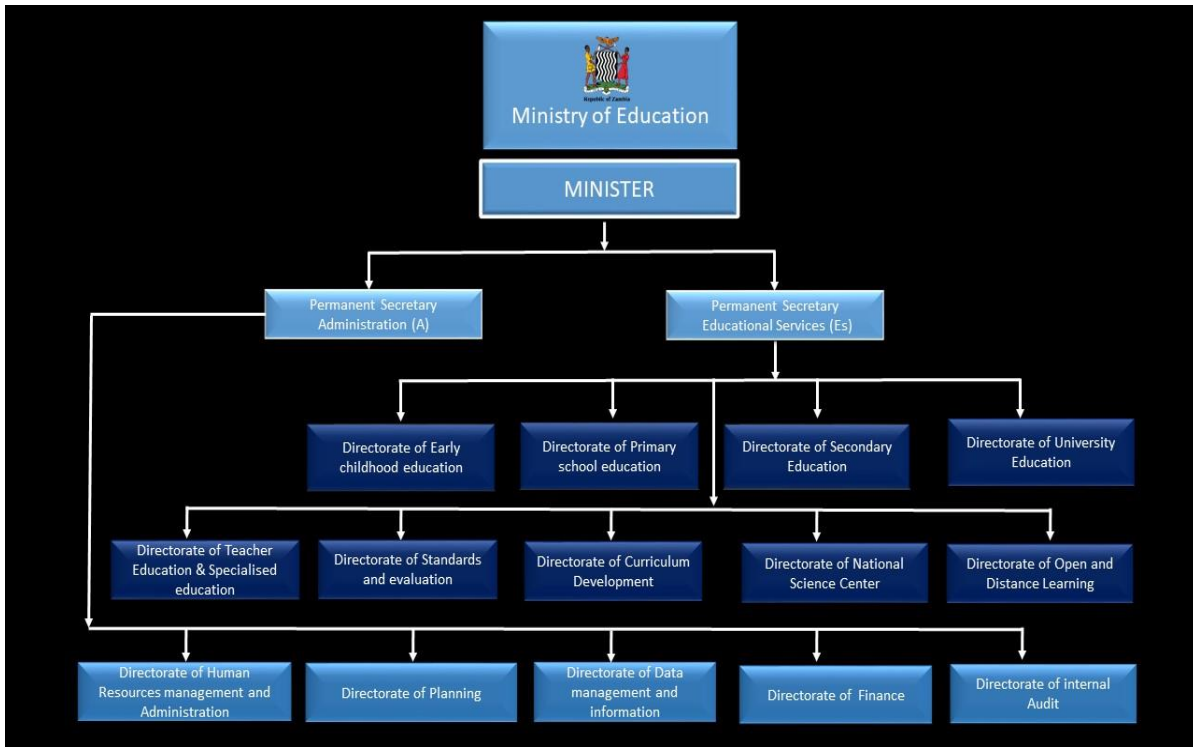
Figure 5: Decision making structure in Zambia

In Zambia, 1972 heralded the birth of the Second Republic and further administrative reforms were introduced. The important changes that took place during that period were that there was a fusion of various administrative organs. The most significance of these changes were; fusion of the state bureaucracy and the party bureaucracy, fusion of the state bureaucracy and the parastatals bureaucracy and the introduction of political education for all state functionaries. Zambian public administration institutional arrangement structure from the national, provincial, district and sub-district level comprising different heads of people and appointment. At national level the Cabinet office is responsible for management and coordinating of Public Service. The Secretary to the Cabinet is the head of Government Administration, which comprises sector ministries and statutory bodies, Provincial and District administration (Chikulo, 2011).

At the Provincial level, there is the Provincial Administration which is headed by the Provincial Minister who is assisted by the Permanent Secretary who is responsible for the coordination of Government activities in the Province. Functions of Sector Ministries are carried out by Provincial

Heads of Department and they are answerable to their respective sectors on technical matters but administratively supervised by Permanent Secretaries for the Province on day-to-day administration. At district level, there is District Administration headed by a District Commissioner who is responsible for coordinating developmental activities. District Administration comprises various sector Ministerial departments performing specified Government functions and responsible for implementing programmes and report to their respective Provincial Heads of Departments. At Local Government level, there are three types of councils, namely city, municipal and district. The Mayor or Council Chairperson is a political head of the council and performs ceremonial functions. There are wards, which are sub-structures of the councils at sub-district level (Sichone & Chikulo, 1996). Thus, the main reasons why public administration needed reforms in Zambia was because Civil Servants are the major contact between government and its people.

According to Osei and Nwasike (2010), 'in Zambia, the level of administration is headed by a Permanent Secretary or chief director, and this in a way explains the high number of them recorded in the country. The eligibility for one to be Permanent Secretary is career public servant, academician and private sector manager. Permanent Secretaries are appointed by the President of the Republic acting through the Cabinet Secretary'. Thus, a typical ministry with various public officers having different roles and how decision making flows is as shown in an extract of ministry of education in the figure below.



Source: <https://www.edu.gov.zm>

Figure 6: Decision making in a Ministry in Zambia

Public administration in most developing countries has been said to be the administrative machinery and the major agency for development. When discussing public administration, one is discussing the structures of government especially its' ministries and forms of administration, mechanisms for policy making, coordination and implementation of programmes (Sapru, 2002, p. 301). The term generally refers to administrators paid for implementing the policies of national governments. The central government agencies are usually responsible for the administration of public service delivery to the citizenry on behalf of the state government (Nasser, 2018). It includes all government agencies such as civil service, the judiciary, executive, and protective services such as law enforcement agencies. Therefore, the public service is responsible for public administration and the Permanent Secretary is effectively the chief executive of the ministry/department or administrative region.

Statistics in public administration in Zambia show an analysis of the composition of decision makers in the public service and reveals that more men occupy decision making positions. In 2002, women represented 19% at Permanent Secretary Level, compared to 29% in 2011. The distribution of leadership in public administration by title and sex in 2014 showed that out of a total of 1,422

leadership positions, only 383 were females representing less than 30% of the total. A situation that does not reflect the gender parity expected. At the level of Deputy Ministers and Permanent Secretaries, female representation still remains low at 8.9% and 19% respectively while Directors are 23%, Deputy Directors are 18% and Assistant Directors are 21% (Public Service Management Division, 2014).

Statistics for the year 2019 shows that figures on various positions in public administration are a situation that raises much concern. The data shows an extreme variance at this level of management which suggests that either there is bias towards having men in senior decision making positions or there are cascaded inequalities in education (where fewer women are educated to higher levels of education and therefore unable to take up senior roles) (Ministry of Gender, 2021). It can be noted also that despite the contribution and crucial role of women in development (Sepulchre et al, 2018), they have a limited voice in development discourse and barely participate in decision making processes (Kalonde & Chirwa, 2015).

Table 4: Distribution of positions in Public Administration – 2019

Position	No. of Women	% of women	No. of men	% of men	Total
Permanent Secretary	13	22.8	44	77.2	57
Directors	85	32.1	180	67.9	265
Management positions	110	21.0	413	79.0	523

Source: Cabinet Policy Analysis and Coordination Division, 2019

For the year 2020, statistics highlight the need for radical reforms to increase the number of positions women hold in various decision making portfolios in the public administration to reduce the gender disparities at management level (PMRC, 2020). Statistics show that at the close of 2020, the numbers were still low for women in decision making as shown in the table below.

Table 5: Distribution of positions in Public Administration 2020

Position	No. of Women	% of women	No. of men	% of men	Total
Permanent Secretary	13	23.2	43	76.8	56
Deputy Permanent Secretary	2	16.67	10	83.33	12
Directors	103	29	241	71	344
Heads of Department	722	31.1	1597	68.9	2319

Source: PMRC, 2020

It can be deduced from the above statistics that the overall state of women's participation in decision making, especially in public administration is concerning. Although women make up 50.5% of Zambia's population as well as the majority of voters, they remain systematically underrepresented especially when it comes to being appointed to decision making positions in public administration. Despite the country signing up to regional and international conventions, the situation of women remains unchanged. There has been a growing concern in the recent past among all key stakeholders in the country on the lower levels and number of women's participation (Ministry of Gender, 2018). Evidence shows that women's academic achievement and roles in society are hardly acknowledged or recognised and in public administration, women in top positions are very few as compared to men. As such, the UN posits that:

“Good governance and democracy require inclusive leadership and representation. While men and women are equally responsible for achieving gender equality, a larger number of women in office can influence gender responsive public policies and institutional policies. Women have a right to be equally represented and consulted in decision making (Report of the Sec-Gender, 65th Commission of status of women, 2021).

From the above, gender parity in public administration is a matter of importance to all citizens. Participation at this level of decision making is ‘a matter of the full enjoyment of human rights and social justice, and a necessary condition for the better functioning of a democratic society (Council of Europe, 2017, p. 16). According to Paola (2017), evidence shows that there are efficiency gains from promoting gender equality in decision making in that first, promoting women into top positions would represent a dramatic change to the status quo dominated by men; second, that women contribute to better outcomes and improved performance of institutions and organisations; and third, the women in decision making positions may contribute to the definition of a new agenda for the organisation including items which are typically neglected by men. Thus, the fewer numbers of women in decision making positions in Zambia especially in public administration, has necessitated this study with the aim of investigating the role that higher education qualification has on women's appointment to decision making positions in public administration.

1.4 Problem statement

Access to and attainment of higher education in particular, is considered an important determinant to women's participation in decision making. Women's access to and effective participation in and or engagement in higher education is a prerequisite for gender equity and equality in society and is an important strategy for poverty alleviation and development in African countries. The participation of women in decision making has been identified as critical to sustainable development. However, research shows that in Zambia, although women representing 50.5% of the national population, outnumbering men (49.5%), they are mostly on the side-lines when it comes to participation in all forms of decision making, including political office, constitutional bodies, public administration, the judiciary, and the private sector, as well as local, regional and global development fora (Ministry of Gender, 2021).

Research around the world shows that higher education has expanded remarkably though there are different degrees of this expansion. The attainment of higher education of 25-34 year-olds with a university degree is forecast to grow to 300 million by 2030 (OECD, 2019). However, in Zambia, women are still underrepresented in higher education as seen from the statistics presented above where, out of the total number of students who graduated in 2021, 31,116 were males while 14,937 were females, representing 67.6% and 32.4% of males and females, respectively (HEA, 2021). This has been happening despite the largely agreed upon concept that higher education qualification is important for women because it leads to improvement in human capital. According to Yousefy and Baratali (2011), 'higher education qualification is important for women in that university graduates receive greater civic participation and social status in society'. Thus, a relationship exists between attainment of higher education qualification and participation in decision making as education promotes women's entry into lucrative occupations especially in the public sector where they are able to make decisions that bring about development. Women's attainment of higher education renders them capable of participating and be appointed to various decision-making positions in public administration.

It is a known fact that opportunities for improving one's position in society are sometimes greatly assisted by a person's educational attainment (Hout, 2012), but for women, despite getting highly educated, they have remained underrepresented. Uneven access to education in Zambia has led to the fewer women represented in public administration. An analysis of the composition of decision

makers in public administration in Zambia reveals that more men occupy decision making positions. Statistics for 2020 reveal that in public administration, Permanent Secretaries had 23.2% as women and 76.8% as men. Deputy Permanent Secretaries represented 16.7% and 83.3% for women and men respectively. For the position of Directors, women represented 29% and men 71% whereas for Heads of Department, 31.1% and 68.9% represented women and men respectively (PMRC, 2020). As such, the low participation of women in any aspect of life has become an issue of concern in Zambia. Women's academic achievement and roles in society are hardly acknowledged or recognised especially in public administration. Thus, women in Zambia continue to be underrepresented at top levels of public administration and this has negatively affected them in economic, social and psychological spheres. This underrepresentation has further resulted in poor contribution and unequal development of the country.

Literature available on women's representation in decision making mainly focusses on women in politics in particular and not public administration. There is no significant study done so far that focuses on the role of women's higher education and how it affects their appointment in public administration. Because of the prevailing and glaring inequality currently seen as evidenced from the statistics given in this paper, as well as the scant information from literature, this study added to the knowledge gap the importance of increasing women's access to higher education as well as increasing the appointment of women to decision making positions with emphasis on public administration.

1.5 Purpose of the Study

The extent of women's participation in decision making can be seen as one of the key indicators of gender equality in a society. The main purpose of this study was to explore the role that higher education qualification has on women's participation and appointment to decision making positions in public administration.

1.6 Research Objectives

From the purpose of the study, the following specific objectives were framed to answer the purpose, namely:-

- (i) To explore the influence that higher education has on women's appointment to decision making positions in public administration.

- (ii) To establish the level of representation of women with positions they occupy in decision making in public administration.
- (iii) To identify the challenges that women face and how these affect their appointment to decision making positions in public administration.
- (iv) To explore participant's views on how to enhance women's participation in decision making positions in public administration.
- (v) To propose a framework that may enhance the participation and appointment of women to decision making positions in public administration.

1.7 Research questions

- (i) To what extent does higher education qualification influence women's participation and appointment to decision making positions in public administration?
- (ii) What decision making positions do women occupy in public administration?
- (iii) What challenges do women face and how do these affect their appointment to decision making positions in public administration?
- (iv) Which strategies have been proposed to enhance women's appointment to decision making positions in Public Administration?
- (v) How can participation and appointment of women to decision making positions in public administration be achieved?

1.8 Study Justification

Higher education assists women in two ways: first it empowers them to become leaders in society and permits them to be role models for younger girls. Secondly, it helps women to choose domains of expertise, whether as decision makers through influence on policy issues related to social, economic and cultural development or by their participation in family and community life (Shaukat & Siddiquah, 2013). Public administration is a crucial venue to seek and establish gender equality and an important institution that needs to have women fully represented. As such, this study may make a theoretical contribution to the body of knowledge related to higher education and decision making in Zambia by highlighting the gender gaps that exist in public administration. A major contribution may lie in its ability to explain benefits that higher education gives to women and how this facilitates their appointment to decision making positions in public administration. The

information obtained maybe useful in addressing the imbalances that exist between men and women in public administration so that the gaps can be reduced at all levels, socially, politically as well as economically.

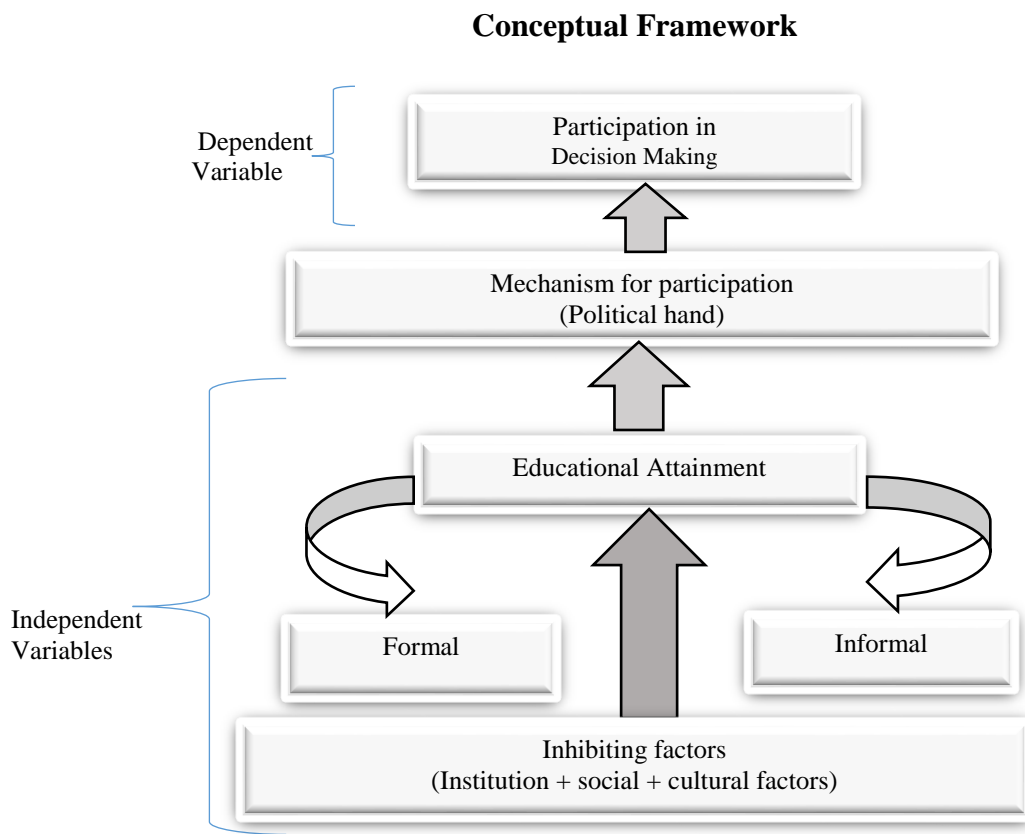
The study could be of great assistance to the future researchers, not only in Zambia but world over, because it may help them with more information related to this topic and help them conduct more detailed study in the area of their undertaking. In this regard, the importance of this study might increase to the academic field where sharing of findings may help future researchers interested in examining further the impact of higher education on women's participation in decision making positions.

The study can also be of great help in enhancing women's lives in Zambia since it may give clarity about how higher education betters women's lives and enables them participate in decisions that may affect them. It might make great significance to the government who are policy makers and appointing bodies by formulating policies that may favor women to participate in decision making in public administration. The study may trigger a change in policy to address the historical imbalances in public administration towards opening up more decision-making positions for women. Further, the study may be provide useful information for stakeholders and policy makers to assist them in redefining policies that could facilitate equal treatment of both men and women at the institutional level where various issues which emerge as overarching factors need to be looked at closely.

1.9 Conceptual Framework

This study used both conceptual and theoretical frameworks in that both helped allow readers to better understand the researcher's assumptions, orientation and understanding of concepts being investigated. The main purpose of formulating a conceptual framework was to help formulate research objectives and questions for this study. The main purpose of the conceptual framework was to assist the researcher in identifying and constructing his/her worldview on the phenomenon to be investigated (Grant & Osanloo, 2014). According to Daka et al., (2020) a conceptual framework is a narrative outline presentation of variables to be studied and relationships between variables. It is a structure which the researcher believes can best explain the natural progression of the phenomenon to be studied (Camp, 2001). A conceptual framework is a researcher's

explanation of how the research problem will be explored and is linked with the concepts, empirical research and important theories used in promoting and systemizing the knowledge espoused by the researcher (Peshkin, 1993). Therefore, this conceptual framework helped the study to have a clear understanding of the problem. In other words, formulating a conceptual framework helped the researcher accentuate the reasons why the research topic was worth studying, the assumptions of a researcher, the scholars agreed and disagreed with and how to conceptually ground the research approach. The diagram below shows the formulated conceptual framework.



Source: Researcher's concept

Figure 7: Conceptual framework

From the diagram above, we see that there are factors that may inhibit women from attaining either formal or informal education. Participation in decision making is the dependent variable in this case, whereas educational attainment and other inhibiting factors are the independent variables. Hillygus (2005), alludes that 'education has consistently been found to increase political participation, electoral turnout, civic engagement, political knowledge, and democratic attitudes

and opinions'. The role of higher education assumes more importance today as attainment of literacy is not adequate to cope with the changing world. For instance, when an individual is given chance to acquire higher education, there are high chances of them qualifying for the positions which exist in various institutions. Further, in order for an individual who has attained higher education to get appointed to decision making positions, they have to overcome barriers such as the mechanisms that enables them to participate or qualify for a position and these may be political parties, social and institutional factors. From the diagram, the ability of women to make a difference may also be a function of what factors propelled them to public office as various circumstances such as institutional, societal and cultural factors, will determine whether they will be politically marginalised or become key players in public administration.

It has already been alluded to above that all-round decision-making processes involving both women and men promote fairness, transparency and rule of law in governance, such that without equal numbers of women in decision making, decisive and sustainable decisions in service delivery to the citizenry are unattainable. Women's involvement in decision making processes is the biggest challenge nations are facing and to stop these challenges, Patel (2004) posits that it is the mandate of nations to enact policies, programs and plans that advocate for a gender parity decision making framework at all levels of governance for fairness, transparency, accountability, rule of law and efficiency in service delivery to prevail. It is important to make sure women's voices about decisions affecting their lives, the lives of their families and the wider community are heard.

The conceptual framework was critical in data analysis also in that the relationships in the conceptual framework guided the researcher's methods of approaching the study and inform both the data to be collected and how those data were analysed (Miles et al., 2014). It also helped the researcher to clearly describe the emergent ideas so that connections among ideas in the study and the significance of the study were apparent to readers. In other words, because conceptual frameworks possess ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions, conceptual frameworks should be drawn bearing in mind the nature of nature of knowledge, how the knowledge will be studied and the process of studying the knowledge (Rocco & Plakhotnik, 2009).

1.10 Theoretical Framework

This study used a theoretical framework to guide the study further. The theoretical framework guides and should resonate with every aspect of the research process from the definition of the problem, literature survey, methodology, presentation and discussion of the findings as well as the conclusions that are drawn. It guides a researcher's choice of research design and data analysis plan. The theoretical framework also guides the kind of data to be accrued for a particular study (Lester, 2005). When a theoretical framework is selected, it should clearly connect to all parts of the study. The framework should augment the study by adding a perspective that provides greater insights into the phenomenon. Therefore, this study used the Gendered Organisational Theory and also Liberal Feminist Theory for the study. These were used to complement each other in that while the gendered organizational theory mainly focused on how organisations assign roles to individuals in work places, the liberal feminist theory emphasised equal individual rights and liberties for men and women in society. Thus, while the gendered organisational theory brought out the factors affecting women at an institutional level, the liberal feminist looked at society and how women are affected.

1.10.1 Gendered Organizational Theory

The gendered organizational theory Acker was used in this study. Mary Parker Follett (1926) reflected early feminist writings on integration and democracy by pushing for freedom, equality, and equitable relationships in organizations and communities, rather than the existing dominance and subordination model. She conducted seminal research on organizational theory by promoting management and organizational concepts through women's knowledge and ability to direct the social world (Follett, 1926). Therefore, Follett's work was vital in laying the foundation for Acker's (1990) theory of gendered organization used in this study.

Acker's (1990) theory emphasized how organizations assign roles to individuals in work places. She posited that overtime, the masculine organizational structure continuously provides certain advantages to men and forced women to take the subordinate role. This study used Acker's (1990) theory of gendered organization to understand why various organizations operate the way they do. This helped the study understand why there are various roles given to women and those specifically assigned to men only. Thus, a combination of feminist organizational theorists' work helped develop the theoretical foundation for this study and provide a lens through which to analyse the

data. Acker (1990) reviewed the studies about women and work, including the inequalities women face in organizations and society in general, such as differentiated roles, wage gaps, and segregation so as to understand the impact of gender on organizations, emphasizing gendered roles and how organizations assigned roles to individuals in the workplace. In short, this study was focused specifically on the assignment of roles based on gender in public administration.

In 1992, Acker critiqued the work of feminist researchers on gender/women and work including the gendered organization theory. In the critique, Acker attempted to address the organizational theory to explain the persistent male dominance at work. She also defined gender in an attempt to highlight its significance to the organization and society. The critique pointed to gendered processes as activities individuals engage in and how they feel about them. Gendered processes create advantages and disadvantages based on sex, with males reaping the benefits of power, dominance, and other advantages, while women face challenges such as subordination, barriers, and stereotypes (Acker, 1992). Thus, as indicated above, public administration as a gendered organisation has persistent dominance of men over women and this has led to fewer women occupying decision making positions.

Acker (1992) defined gender as the difference society produces between men and women, which involves empowering men and discrimination against women. By defining the word 'gender', the theorist emphasised to the organization and society the importance of gender equality and the role of the organization in removing barriers, women's disadvantages, exclusion, stereotypes and being gender neutral. In line with public administration, this was important to help us understand the relationship between gender, leadership, and the organization. Acker (2009) posited that over time, the masculine organizational structure continuously provided certain advantages to the male leaders and forced women to take a subordinate role. Acker purported that it may be necessary for government legislature to change and to transform the organizations' goals and cultures, allow more women to take up top leadership positions, and foster organizational change to a more gender-neutral setting (Acker, 2012). Thus, this theory provided an ideal theoretical framework to understand the role of women in public administration from the perception of the appointing authorities and also those in charge of recruitment.

The theory of gendered organizations by Acker gave the study more perspective on women's access to decision making in public administration and the historical happenings around this. Acker (2009) posited that though organizations have changed over time, inequality regimes still exist. The gendering process increased the number of women on the job and leadership positions; however, theorizing gender is now more complex due to intersectionality. Hence, inequality based on gender, race, and class is present in organizations.

1.10.2 Liberal Feminist Theory

Liberal feminists promoted individual rights to develop women's full potential. This theory was used in this study to explain the importance of educational attainment in decision making. Feminist's literature extensively discusses how women have been excluded from formal politics and decision-making processes in liberal theory, based on assumptions that women lack the rationality required for democratic deliberation (Paterman, 1988; Okin, 1979).

Giddens (2001) defines liberal theory as a 'feminist theory that believes gender inequality is created by lowering access for women and girls to civil rights and allocation of social resources such as education and employment'. This situation is mainly centred on the socially constructed ideology of patriarchy that perpetuates inequality between the two sexes. The pioneers of Liberal Feminism are Mary Wollstonecraft, John Stuart Mill and Helen Taylor. According to Rosamarie (1989), liberal feminism emerged as a theoretical background to foster feminism movements and its roots go back to liberalism and its ideals which dominated Western thought in 18th and 19th centuries. Proponents of liberal feminism like Peters (2006) cite that women's exclusion in governance structures is a failure in legal mechanism. Such legal remedies range from constitutional provisions like the one-third rule for the underrepresented groups like women, youth and the physically challenged. In other words, liberal feminism is derived from the liberal political philosophy in the enlightenment period, and centres on the core ideas of autonomy, universal rights, equal citizenship, and democracy (Tong, 2009) and is characterized by an individualistic emphasis on equality (Khattak, 2011).

Liberal feminists argue that society holds the false belief that women are, by nature, less intellectually and physically capable than men. As Rosemarie (1989) posits, 'female subordination is rooted in a set of customary and legal constraints that blocks women's entrance to and success

in the so-called public world. They strive for sexual equality via down-to-earth political and legal reform' (Tong, 1989). This then makes education to be seen as a variable that can be used to improve the situation of women. The theory is depicted as focusing on individual rights and on the concepts of equality, justice and equal opportunities, where legal and social policy changes are seen as tools for engineering women's equality with men (Maynard, 1995). Gender disparities are therefore attributed to a number of factors which include culture and the way men and women are socialised within that culture. The other factors are closely related to the attitudes of the individual. All these can be changed through empowerment and education. In essence, liberal feminism is for gradual reforms through advocacy for equal rights for all, and laws and policies that promote equality (Rosemarie, 1989).

This study used liberal feminism because as a philosophy, it emphasizes equity and fair representation of both men and women in all public spheres. The theory was relevant to the study as it recognizes the legality of inclusion of women in governance to fill gaps of unfairness and inequity in governance which forms the basis of the study. The theory is based on the assumption that schooling is positive and improves women's welfare and that the state is perceived as a benevolent actor which provides services and goods for the benefit of the people (Stromquist, 1990a). In its central assumption, liberal feminism maintains that differences between women and men are not based on biology, which basically represents reproduction differences. Hence, women should have the same rights as men, including the same education as well as employment opportunities (Nienaber & Moraka, 2016). In other words, according to liberal feminists, female subordination is rooted in a set of customary and legal constraints that block women's entrance to success in the public sphere such that lack of opportunities in life chances and outcomes of women inspired liberal feminists to overcome the problem through education and law (Tong, 2009). The theory was important and relevant to our study because it highlighted that increased women's presence in public office was identified as a major pathway for promotion of gender equity concerns in policy making in both feminist and development literature. Therefore, the two theories were important in this study and complemented each other in that just like Acker shifted her focus from structural and cultural analysis to individuals' experiences as females, liberal feminism also supported Acker's gendered organization theory and theorized the discrimination against women.

1.10.3 Rationale for using the Gendered Organizational and Liberal Feminist Theory

There are several reasons why this study selected the gendered organization theory and Liberal Feminist theory. According to the gendering organization theory, gender equality is essential, and the role of the organization is to remove barriers, women's disadvantages, exclusion, stereotypes and be gender-neutral (Acker, 1992). The theory was important in helping the study understand the relationship between gender, leadership, and the organization, including the role of women in public administration. Public Administration in Zambia, is characterized by a hierarchical structure, and the chain of command and processes that are considered masculine. The study also used it to examine stereotypes, barriers and discrimination (including glass cliffs, glass fences and glass ceilings women face in the public sector organization (Acker, 2009). Similarly, liberal feminists posit and defend the equal rationality of the sexes and emphasize the importance of structuring social, familial and sexual roles in ways that promote women's autonomous self-fulfilment. They emphasize the similarities between men and women rather than the average differences between them, attribute most of the personality and character differences between the sexes to the social construction of gender, and tend to promote a single set of androgynous virtues for both women and men (Rosamarie, 1989). This then helped the study understand that though men and women may be different, their differences should not affect the way they are treated in public administration. Supporting this argument, the liberal feminists as seen above, work within the structure of mainstream society to integrate women into that structure.

Another reason for using the liberal feminist theory was that just like public administration, it is characterized by a desire to integrate women into pre-existing public institutions and to guarantee women the same legal, political, and social rights that men enjoy. Using individual men and the institutions and systems erected by a male-dominated society as the standards for equality assumes that the system is only flawed insofar as it is absent of women. To achieve true equality, therefore, women must infiltrate the public spheres from which they have traditionally been excluded. Similarly, the reason for the gendered organization theory was that it described the organization as not gender-neutral but instead characterized by masculinity and male dominance, gendered processes, divisions, symbols and images. Public administration, just like Acker's gendered organization, have shown that males once dominated and women face gender-related challenges which are present even today. Acker saw the organization as a reflection of society as what was

obtained in social norms, individuals practiced values, customs, perceptions and beliefs therein. This study used a qualitative approach to obtain data on participants' perceptions of gendered processes in public administration as well as how these affected women's appointment to decision making positions. Similarly, Acker used a qualitative study, in which she engaged participants based on their lived experiences to collect data via interviews.

1.10.4 Relationship of research questions to the theories

The study aimed to explore the role of higher education qualification on women's appointment to decision making positions in public administration. The study hoped to answer the research question; to what extent does higher education qualification influence women's appointment to decision making in public administration by using interviews of both male and female participants in ministries to gather their perceptions based on their experience in these institutions. The research question helped expand existing literature on women in public administration by examining how higher education has impacted on women's lives. Liberal feminists places great emphasis on the public world, especially laws, political institutions, education and working life, and considers the denial of equal legal and political rights as the main obstacle to equality.

This study also used both theories to answer the question on: what challenges women face in their appointment to decision making positions in public administration. Acker's (1992) posited that women face gender-based roles, income and status inequality between gender, symbols, images, and other components to justify gender division, including creating and circulating cultural ideas on gender. As a result, organizational culture defines and demands gender-appropriate behaviour and attitudes among both men and women. Since gender identity is part of the administrative processes with individual interactions that foster male dominance and female subordination in public administration, Acker's theory helped us understand how public administration uses these processes to work collaboratively so as to replicate and strengthen the gendered organization's various components.

The study provided information on the relevance of the gendered organization theory in public administration and revealed the existence of government legislature formulated to foster the change in the organization's goals and culture, encouraging more women to take up top leadership positions and a more gender-neutral organization setting. Therefore, the study added to the

literature by identifying strategies that led to women's appointment to decision making in public administration. From this, the study results may then be compared with other future studies to understand women's appointment to decision making positions in public administration in other geographical locations.

1.11 Motivation

This study as highlighted above, could be an important one and a couple of many reasons exist as to what motivated the researcher to undertake it. Firstly, the researcher is a passionate woman who at the time of conducting the study was pursuing studies to set an example to other women that higher education is a necessity and is beneficial to women. Various researchers referred to in this study highlighted that, traditional concepts acknowledge higher education as an instrument of personal development, by expanding an individual's intellectual horizons, interests and potential for empowerment and a better quality of life. Thus, higher education and its importance motivated the researcher to carry out this study.

The second reason was that despite women accessing and attaining higher education in Zambia, the numbers of women being appointed to decision making positions remains low. The situation has continued to persist even with international declarations and conventions of which Zambia has been signatory to. As such, to explore why the numbers of women in decision making positions in public administration were not increasing at the same footing as men, the study was necessary to understand the role that higher education qualification plays in the appointment of women to decision making positions in public administration in Zambia.

1.12 Definition of terms

Decision making

According to Griffin (2016, p. 11), 'decision-making is the act of choosing one alternative from a set of alternatives'. Therefore, decision making may be viewed as the process of selecting a course of action from among several alternatives in order to accomplish a desired result. The purpose of decision making is to direct human behaviour and commitment towards a future goal.

Gender discrimination

According to Reeves and Baden (2000, p. 8), ‘gender discrimination refers to the systematic, unfavourable treatment of individuals on the basis of their gender, which denies them rights, opportunities or resources’. Gender discrimination entails the exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on the basis of equality of men and women.

Gender equality

According to the UNCEF (2017, p. 3) ‘gender equality is, therefore, the equal valuing by society of the similarities and the differences of men and women, and the roles they play’. Gender equality means an equal visibility, empowerment and participation of both sexes in all spheres of public and private life. Gender equality is the opposite of gender inequality, not of gender difference, and aims to promote the full participation of women and men in society.

Gender Gap

The gender gap is the difference in any area between women and men in terms of their levels of participation, access to resources, rights, power and influence, remuneration and benefits. Of particular relevance related to women’s work is the ‘gender pay gap’, describing the difference between the average earnings of men and women (ILO, 2007). In other words, gender gap focuses on the differences between men and women at the national level, seeing both groups as a homogenous.

Gender parity

UNICEF (2017, p. 4) defines gender parity as ‘a numerical concept concerning relative equality in terms of numbers and proportions of men and women, girls’ and boys’. Gender parity addresses the ratio of female-to-male values (or males-to-females, in certain cases) of a given indicator of for example income or education. For example, if there are equal number of girls and boys who completed primary education in a specific country, the gender parity ratio for that indicator is one. The greater the difference between girls and boys, the lower is the gender parity value. Gender parity is a useful tool for assessing gender inequality in specific areas, in setting goals, and in assessing change and progress under specific indicators of gender equality.

Higher Education

According to the HEA (2020), ‘the concept of higher education as used in this paper means tertiary education leading to the qualification of a diploma, bachelor’s degree, master’s degree, or doctorate degree’. Higher education consists of teaching, research, applied work, training, social services of universities, and imparted as undergraduates, postgraduates, and research and diploma programs. It also includes trade schools, vocational institutions, career colleges and institutions offering professional courses.

Public Administration

Public administration refers to ‘the implementation of pronouncements made by recognized public authorities, the organization of enforcement machinery to ensure public conformity and relations between the public and public officials appointed to further collective interests’ (Golembiewski, 1996, p. 247). Public Administration is concerned with the pursuit of the public good and the enhancement of civil society by ensuring that the public service is well-run, fair, and that the services are effective in meeting the goals of the state. In this vein, it includes the organization of public affairs, social purposes and collective decision-making, the management of public institutions, public offices and public property, and the administration of the public by officials, covering attitudes and behaviour as well as actions.

1.13 Scope of the Study

In spite of the fact that women are subjected to several factors that hinder their participation in decision making in public administration, this study sought to explore the role that higher education qualification has on women’s appointment to decision making positions in public administration. There appears to be fewer women occupying decision making positions in public administration compared to men in Zambia. Hence, this study emphasised the role that higher education qualification plays in women’s lives with regards to them being appointed to decision making positions in public administration. The study was carried out within the domains of Lusaka where various ministries and government offices were visited and various officers interviewed to obtain the needed information on the topic. The study focused on women decision makers as well as both men and women who had information important to the study.

1.14 Outline of the Thesis

This study is organised into six chapters. Chapter 1 gives a brief introduction and background to the study by giving a general idea of higher education and decision making and backs this with some current statistics available. A problem statement, purpose of the study as well as research objectives will be given. A theoretical framework to guide the study was used and lastly a chapter summary given.

Chapter 2 presents the review of related literature which includes both theoretical and empirical reviews. This is where the link between higher education and decision making is given to show the gap that exists in literature. As such various research documents were consulted to give an idea of what has and has not been researched on. Various empirical evidence was also given to better understand which ideas we can implement as a nation.

Chapter 3 deals with the methodology the study used to carry out the research and also revealed how data were collected and analysed. This section presents the research design, sample size and target population as well as the instruments that used to collect data. The procedure for data analysis was given and also ethical issues considered in this chapter.

Chapter 4 presents results from the study as well as their various interpretations. Here, data collected from the field was interpreted and presented.

Chapter 5, comprises discussion of the results for the study where the findings and answers to the various research questions is discussed.

Chapter 6, includes conclusion and policy recommendations for the study are also given and policy measures that can help future researchers will be highlighted.

1.15 Chapter summary

Access to education is considered an important determinant of women's participation in decision making. This chapter looked at the background to the study on women's appointment to decision making and also looked at trends in gender over the years. The conceptual and theoretical frameworks were presented. Objectives and research questions were also presented as well as the justification and conceptualization of the study. The problem statement was stated and also the motivations for carrying out this study was given as well as the outline of the thesis.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview

This chapter presents the review of literature related to the study. An essential aspect of any research is the review of related literature because it gives an insight into the problem and helps the study in deciding the techniques and methodology followed by earlier investigators to find an answer to the current problem under investigation. Thus, this review facilitated a multidimensional, relational and processional understanding of women's higher education and their appointment to decision making positions in public administration in Zambia.

The chapter reviewed literature in a systematic way starting from global (looking at countries around the world) to local (looking at Africa and Zambia also). What researchers have done was compared and then some answers drawn from there to fill the gap that exists in literature. As highlighted by McGrath (2010) a fully and impartial scheme of higher education endorses the quality of knowledge, education and teaching and exploration that is integral for achievement in the emerging economic development. Reviewing literature on higher education as well as decision making was beneficial for the study to know how higher education qualifications affects women's participation in public administration. Based on the objectives set in this study, various literature was reviewed to guide and answer the research problem.

2.2 Women in higher education qualification

Higher education has long been regarded as an important tool for women's better life and access to various opportunities especially decision making. It is a capital investment for any nation and is recognised as an important tool for social and economic development. Research indicates a direct relationship between a country's world standing and its education system in that a strong system of higher education is critical to its economic strength, social well-being, and position as a world leader (Oketch et al., 2017). A nation's educational attainment – most importantly, the proportion of the workforce with secondary credentials – is a significant contributor to the country's ability to compete in the global marketplace (Skaggs, 2014).

Research has proved that there is a direct link between education levels with women's decision-making power in that women's increased education is positively associated with autonomy in their decision making. According to the UN (2015), participation in decision making is embedded in international law and established in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, that every person has the right to participate in the governance issues of his or her country, directly or through chosen representation. Globally, women are getting more education than ever before, but they are not always catching up with men. The increased enrolment of female undergraduate students for example, across most of the world has given false impression that gender equality has been achieved in higher education.

Over the past years, the enrolment number of students in higher education has increased globally and universities have moved from elite to mass and then to higher education in most developed countries (Taylor, 2003, p. 813). Studies done in Pakistan reveal that higher education is considered as the significant instrument and means of social change (Ashraf, 2004; Herz & Sperling, 2004), and also a crucial factor to the emancipation, empowerment and progression of women as it multiplies their abilities and capabilities of decision making (Khalid & Mujahid, 2002). Another study in Pakistan by Ghazala and Khalid (2012, p. 55), based on interviews with 10 women holding senior management positions in a local women university found association between higher education and women's established position within family matters. Moreover, the study found that higher education created awareness amongst women, abridged their dependency, boosted their physical and social mobility, unlocked job opportunities, and boosted self-confidence and self-reliance.

Among OECD countries, empirical research tends to proceed from an idea of higher education as benefiting the individual woman through (a) the potential earning power and greater labour force participation of women (Mok, 2016; Woodd, 2013), (b) changes in fertility behaviour and family arrangements (Gilbert, 2014; Gottard et al., 2015), and (c) shifts in individual beliefs and values (Gilbert, 2014; Moghadam, 2015). Research done in Pakistan on the impact of higher education has shown that it has a positive impact on economies. For example, formal sector employment increases with higher education. Higher education can develop sectors including education, health and public administration. Thus, education has been supported to escalate the chances of employability, enables women to boost their self-esteem, self-reliance, decision making

confidence and makes them aware of their rights (Heaton et al., 2005; Khan & Awan, 2011; Nayak & Mahanta, 2009; Sridevi, 2005).

Higher education's contribution goes beyond the economic sphere. Nations with high levels of educational attainment also enjoy important social benefits. OECD (2007) alludes that studies indicate that people with higher education are much less dependent on welfare programmes (Bowles & Gintis, 2000; Eccles, 1994). A Department For International Development (DFID)-commissioned literature review of 99 studies worldwide about the impact of higher education concluded: 'a number of studies showed a positive impact of tertiary-level study on graduates' capabilities, that is in Rwanda, study by Lassibile & Tan (2005); Collins (2012) and in Kenya by Manda et al., (2002). Impact was shown in areas of health, nutrition, political participation and women's empowerment' (Oketch et al., 2014). Also, in the same vein, according to Ngcobo (2016), while the education of a man often benefits only one person, educating a woman is usually for the benefit of the nation of South Africa.

In their cross-national analysis of the link between women's education and economic performance in Pakistan, Knowles et al., (2002, p. 118) cite Psacharopoulos' (1994, p. 119) and findings show that the 'rate of return due to female education is positive, and marginally higher than that of male education'. Looking at long-term effects of educational gender gaps, Knowles et al., (2002, p. 143) indicate that such gaps are an impediment to economic development. Doepke and Terlilt (2009) study found 'a robust negative correlation...between the lack of (women's) rights (including education) and GDP per capita' (Duflo, 2012, p. 1059).

In the study 'Does higher education really matter in improving women's social status?' empirical evidence from Balochistan, examined that there is highly significant relationship between women's education and women's social status which is measured by decision making participation. In Quetta, they found that women's education enables them to foster in multiple dimensions of the socio-economic processes that guarantee gender equality in Parkinson especially in Balochistan. The researchers recommended that there should be commitment on the part of both government and societal networks such as parents, NGOs and other Civil Society agents to work on how to empower and make efficient girls from an early age in educational institutions as well as at household level (Shah et al., 2016).

Gantaloo (2016) found that in India, women's education has played a vital role in the development of the family, society and nation by helping to overcome gender discrimination. Her study investigated the role of women in higher education suggesting that women's education is the only way to create awareness and promote gender equality in society. Gender inequality can be reduced by providing equal job opportunities in every sector within equitable economic institutions. She also found that some higher education institutions specifically recruited women to reduce gender inequality. In other words, higher education enables women to have an impact on a number of discriminatory practices simultaneously (Shang, 2022).

Women's higher education qualification is a necessity also in that with the increase of women's education, women and also the people around them are able to add onto their knowledge by cooperating, sharing, and learning from each other. A study done on educating women in Turkey showed that 'education does not only give women access to knowledge but it allows them 'to become important individuals in society' (Demiray, 2014, p. 332). According to Demiray, 'research reveals that women benefit from education at least as much as-and often more-than men and the investments in education of women have produced more efficient output than the ones in education of men' (p. 333).

In India, Namdeo and Puspha (2017), studied the impact of education on decision making ability of women. They found in their work, that decision making ability of educated women is more than uneducated ones thus making the decision making ability of educated working women better than the ability of uneducated and non-working women. Thus, the decision making ability of women is largely affected by education which plays a major role in women as it makes them to make decisions in an effective way. It can be concluded that a person can be shaped in thinking, behaviour and interaction in line with the expectation of the society through undergoing the process of education. The higher the qualification in education, the higher the chances of being involved in decision making (ILO, 1995).

Education opens doors, and provides a better understanding of concepts, objects, and people. While SSA has a poor and erratic record of economic growth over the long 20th century, its sustained expansion of education is beyond dispute. Thus, in the past few decades, African countries have attached great importance to the role of education in the process of nation-state

construction and development where education has been placed on the policy priorities, and the rapid expansion of the number of educational institutions at all levels has greatly increased women's educational opportunities. In particular, after the World Conference on Education for All, women's education received special attention in Africa and achieved rapid development (Leslie, 1994).

Further, several studies have indicated that investment in higher education and GDP were positively related in African countries (Bloom et al., 2006; World Bank, 2009) and that higher education had broad benefits for individuals and societies (Bloom et al., 2014; Fasih et al., 2012; Oketch et al., 2014; McCowan & Schendel, 2016; Teal, 2011). Barouni et al., (2014) in one of the broadest studies focusing on returns from education in Africa, show that returns from higher education are larger than returns from primary education.

Eritobor (2017) employed qualitative research methodology to examine if higher education level enhances women's empowerment and foster economic development in Nigeria. A total of 26 Nigerian women were interviewed and it was revealed that higher level of education for women neither empowers them nor enhance national economic development in Nigeria. The study further stated that this could be because women are still subdued under men regardless of their education attainment. The study further revealed that culture and religion deepens patriarchy practice in the country and this prevents educated women from contributing significantly on economic activities.

On the contrary, Baba and Anumaka (2019) investigated the significance of women's education on the socio economic development in Yobe state, Nigeria. The research revealed that women's education has a very significant and positive relationship with their household income level, standard of living, and economic development. On the other hand using longitudinal cross-country data covering 30 countries on education (the Barro-Lee dataset) and growth (update of OECD data), points out that increase in women's education enrolment positively and significantly impacts on output per capita growth unlike men educational enrolment (Klasen & Pieters, 2015; Thevenon & Del-pero, 2015). Klasen and Pieters (2015) also observed that women's education significantly increase the social development of a nation in areas such as decrease in maternal mortality rates, and fertility and infant mortality rates. The work of King and Winthrop (2015) supports this finding. Their study indicates that increase in female education leads to an increase in women

earning and their children's standard of living because women invest greater proportion of their income in their families than men do.

Higher education enables youth and people of all ages irrespective of cultural and social background to face the challenges of development, especially with regard to eradicating poverty both at individual and national levels (Rule & Modipa, 2011; Matonya, 2016). Matonya in her work pointed out that it is not a questionable fact that tertiary education plays a vital role in the alleviation of poverty especially in developing countries such as Zambia and Tanzania (Toumi, et al., 2015). Matonya (2016), indicated that higher education functions first to train people to attain specific and self-determining opinions, investigative and problem-solving skills and knowledge needed to make informed decisions on a personal level as well as broader national level.

From the above review of related literature, it can be evidenced that the educational level of both men and women matters so much. Most countries under review show that educational level of a woman especially, is an important aspect. Women around the world are developing themselves through education and are almost at par with men in most countries under review though in some countries in Africa, women are still lagging. Despite women attaining higher education in most parts of the world, they are underrepresented in decision making. The related literature reviewed has a knowledge gap in that there is a paucity of research exploring the role that higher education qualification has on women's appointment to decision making positions in public administration. Most of these researches focused on the general impact that higher education qualification has on the welfare of women and none on what higher education qualification actually impacts on women in terms of them being appointed to decision making positions in public administration, which is the core objective of this study.

2.3 Women's participation in decision making in Public Administration

The UNDP considers public administration to be the bedrock of government and the central instrument through which national policies and programmes are implemented. A fundamental argument for increased representation of women in public administration is that when the composition of the public sector reflects the composition of the society it serves, government will be more responsive and effective (UNDP, 2021). The under-representation of women also reflects

the paucity in female careers to leadership and senior decision making positions. In other words, the exclusion of women from decision making bodies not only limits the possibilities for entrenching the principles of democracy in a society but hinders economic development and discourages the attainment of gender equality.

Women's education on a global perspective has been an issue of debate for long, within which it is now necessary to shift the focus from women's intellectual development to women's autonomy to participate in decision making. Women have always aspired to leadership and decision making positions as opportunities are increasingly presenting themselves but they continue to face discrimination and are in the minority when it comes to assuming leadership positions and performing their roles in the public and private domain (Evans et al., 2014). Women around the world are far removed from decision making positions and the factors that hamper or facilitate their participation vary with the level of socio-economic development, geography, culture, and the type of political systems that are in place. Thus, in the public and private sectors, women continue to address multiple hurdles despite diversity and equity initiatives.

Several studies around the world have examined how women impact legislation differently from men (Carroll, 1994; Stivers, 1993; Tamerius, 1995; Saidel & Loscocco, 2005; Volden, et al., 2013); others have investigated women's representation in government positions and the impact women make at the top levels of state (Bowling & Wright, 1998; Fox & Schuhmann, 1999; Miller, et al., 1999). Several studies have examined the difference women and even specific women make to the field of public administration (Schacter, 2008; Shields, 2008).

The imbalance in the distribution of power and decision making positions between women and men is a consequence of complex processes and of the interplay between multiple factors that are deeply embedded in social structures. Gender roles and stereotypes, gendered perceptions of leadership and the phenomena of the 'glass ceiling' and the 'glass cliff' are some of the underlying factors. In addition, institutional factors such as the design of electoral systems, internal policies and practices of political parties may either hinder or facilitate women's representation in decision making positions (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2015). However, there appears to be a stronger focus on women's access to elected positions as an indicator of access to decision making and very little attention is given to gender equality in public

administration. Gender equality in public administration is crucial since public administration determines the manner in which political and economic decisions are implemented and how budgets are planned and spent. Additionally, a gender sensitized public administration is bound to convert policies into outcomes differently (Nasser, 2018).

In public administration the prevalence of gender as a topic is limited. Schachter (2017) quotes Stivers's argument that 'Public administration is structurally male despite its gender neutrality'. Public administration has slowly evolved in the past few decades to focus on gender differences and disparities found in social roles (Bishu & Alkadry, 2017). The think-manager-think-male framework is a concept originally put forward by Schein (1975). However, it is discussed in literature by Sabharwal (2015), who states that the traits associated with men are the same traits associated with leaders. Therefore, men seem to possess the qualities that make an effective leader, and this male bias does not allow others to see women's leadership potential.

Traditionally, women in many societies found themselves below males and dominant sets of male values in the hierarchy. These dominant male values create gender-biased practises that limit women's progression in structures and positions perceived to be patriarchal (Rusaw, 2011). Consequently, there is an unequal transference of power relations and gender transformation between men and women encouraged by gender-biased values and naturalised in daily practises. According to Women Watch (2007) and Maseko (2013), there is still an underrepresentation of women in both developing and developed countries in several areas of leadership and decision-making structures.

According to Schreiber (2013), despite women forming 50% of the world's population, only a paltry 2-3% have managed to break the glass ceiling in top leadership. This disparity has continued despite the fact that women are equally, if not, more qualified than some men, they possess the required technical know-how and are more than willing to serve in the top corporate leadership. This gender imbalance has continued to exist despite the passing of several legislations by governments to provide for gender balancing (Qian, 2016). Several international declarations have also been made to address this disparity over the years but very little change if any has been achieved to this end (Crosby-Hillier, 2012).

A look around the world shows that only four countries track women's access to decision making positions in public administration. Women only represent approximately 14.55% women in national public administration leadership in Iraq, 11.8% in Kuwait, 11.15% in Palestine and 30% in UAE (Nasser, 2017). Various factors affect women's participation in decision making in public administration. King (1995) has identified four ways in which masculine power manifests in public administrations: (1) organizations are the domain of men because men are more likely to be leaders; (2) organizations are the masculine domain, since expectations about gender is embedded in culture which leads to a preference for the masculine over the feminine; (3) the state is a masculine domain and therefore governance, politics and the administrative state reflect the cultural preference for masculine over feminine; and (4) leadership and management is a masculine domain, since society's cultural preference for masculine can be seen in such definitions of leadership as being assertive and aggressive.

In spite of these challenges, in recent years, there has been a marginal increase in women's participation within senior administrative positions within the local government sphere. SADC Gender Protocol (2010) and Patel (2013) note that, although women's access to decision making positions has increased women are still predominantly clustered in traditional social service areas, such as health, education and hospitality. Because of the imbalanced gender and labour market distribution, communities do not necessarily capitalise on the full potential of society as a whole (Women Watch, 2007).

Various literature around the world indicate that in Mexico, for example, 'more women than men complete their Bachelor Degrees, yet women's participation in Mexico's Federal Public Administration leadership scheme has still not reached 30%' (UNDP, 2012, p. 2). The situation is similar in other parts of the world. Looking at Ukraine, there may have been 75% representation of women within the ranks of its public administration, only 13% of women are represented in senior leadership levels and, similarly in Russia, where 71% of women are employed only 13% of women have reached leadership positions within its public administration (Ernst & Young, 2013).

In the United States women represent 60% of bachelor's degrees earned at universities and outpace men in master's and doctoral programs. However, a significant body of research illustrates that women's upward mobility has been concentrated in middle management positions. Women

hold 52% of all management and professional roles in the U.S. job market, including physicians and attorneys. Yet women fall behind in representation in senior level positions. In the legal profession, for example, women represent 45% of associates but only 22.7% are partners. Most women continue to suffer from occupational segregation in the workplace and rarely break through the so-called glass ceiling in public life which separates them from top-level management and professional positions (Smith & Squires, 2016). Again, even the few that push through to occupy top leadership/management positions face serious challenges that can and do limit their performance in these positions (Snyder, 2013). This is a serious concern as it reinforces existing stereotypes of women's ability to perform at the top level of public life and thus perpetuates a fierce cycle of marginalization and disempowerment of women.

A study on women in the UK and Greece showed that some women choose not to seek leadership positions because of the perceived stress caused by a conflict of roles (Mitroussi & Mitroussi, 2009). Thus, women are found to meet more resistance and isolation as they move up the ranks and research in psychology has shown over and over that one key obstacle to women's leadership is unconscious or implicit bias (Akram, 2018). Biases affect how we process information, make decisions, and construct strategies. Implicit gender bias is present in all individuals, regardless of gender, due to exposure to stereotypes through common socialization experiences (Rogus-Pulia, et al., 2018). There is some public administration literature on stereotypes, stigma, and discrimination (Bishu & Alkadry, 2017; Sabharwal, 2015; Schachter, 2017), but it misses the mark on understanding barriers like second-generation gender bias and how it bleeds into workplace inequity, education, and women's advancement.

Women in Africa have continued to make considerable progress in their stride to be part of the social, political and economic governance issues of the continent. However, despite their efforts, women are still underrepresented in the senior leadership levels of the public sector in SSA countries. According to Jones and Palmer (2011, p. 190), 'women still struggle to find their voices and positions within male-dominated professional cultures'. Even though South Africa occupies the second position in Africa in terms of women's representation and participation in politics, they still represent only 24% of decision-making positions in both the public and private sectors (Maseko, 2013). In Kenya, Patel (2004) divulges that the involvement of women has never been cut short. They are represented widely in other structures of governance like Non-State Actors

(NSA) and other grassroots groups. Governance entails a participatory approach of all institutions working towards the well-being of societies in regard to service delivery. Such organizations play peripheral roles in the protection of the marginalized and self-interest groups. The study examined how women are involved in decision making on governance in Shinyalu Sub-County, Kenya.

Similarly, in Kenya, the study by Flöttmann (2021) has substantiated that, gender inequalities and the underrepresentation of women in senior management positions in companies still dominate Kenya. In Kenya, women face substantial prejudice regarding their skills and leadership abilities. The few women who are at the top are left out of decision-making, either because of exclusion from situations where informal decision-making takes place or because women experience dismissal in senior-level meetings.

World over, gender gaps persist in education, employment, entrepreneurship and public life opportunities and outcomes (OECD, 2017b). As such gender disparities in decision making have continued to remain pervasive in Zambia due to various factors which are multifaceted. It is clear from the evidence presented in the study that two silences exist in public administration concerning gender. The first silence is the place of women and gender equity within the public service workforce. There are many gender gaps seen in public administration and studies to show why the situation is as is. The second silence is the role that feminists' theories could play in tackling contemporary public management challenges. In a review of articles published in the Australian Journal of Public Administration (AJPA) between 1970 and 2015, Athaus (2015) noted a distinct lack of attention paid to the issue of gender in public administration. Therefore, if the situation is left unchecked, many women will not see the need for and appreciate higher education and the need to participate in decision making in Zambia and also it is unlikely that the interests of women can be fully taken into account.

From the literature reviewed above, we have noted that women's participation in decision making is an important factor of development. But due to reasons highlighted above, women have remained underrepresented in decision making especially in public administration. Most literature reviewed showed that women need to be part and parcel of decision making, however, there was a gap in knowledge in that most studies have been done in other countries and nothing on Zambia yet to highlight the importance of women in decision making especially in public administration.

And to fill this gap, the current study was undertaken to highlight the importance of women's participation in decision making positions in public administration.

2.4 Factors affecting women's appointment to decision making positions

Women's participation in civic and outdoor activities are the basic factors that link them to higher education qualification attainment and it becomes a cause for their improvement in social, economic and political status. Women have suffered underrepresentation in decision making and various reasons are said to be behind this. Firstly, women themselves are not a homogeneous group; there are major differences between them, based on class, race, ethnicity, cultural background and education. But these, are also factors that bind them together, such as the triple roles, which is reproduction, production and community managing role (UNDP, 2014). The factors that affect their participation are also known as 'Glass Ceiling' factors. These 'glass ceilings' mean that they have limited opportunities for upward progression in the hierarchy and hold lower-ranked positions than men. Women tend to be more present in 'support' functions as well as in 'traditional sectors' such as education, health and social care, where they generally earn less than their male colleagues. Women therefore face the problem of 'glass walls' which limits their opportunities to work in sectors in which the political and economic power is concentrated such as military, police, infrastructure, economics, finance and others (Ibid).

The lack of female representation in many countries can be partly explained by a number of factors. In many of these countries there is a significant pay differential between public and private sectors. For example, in Germany, women in the public sector can expect to earn 23% less than their male colleagues (Ernst & Young, 2013; Eurostat, 2018). Other factors which affect female paid employment and labour market participation are the relatively high level of childcare costs (Ernst & Young, 2013); poor policy implementation of equality policy (Stratigaki, 2005); and extant masculine organizational cultures reinforced by Anglo-Saxon Public Administration reforms of New Public Management (NPM) (Stivers, 2002).

Women leadership under-representation occurs in a hostile environment where women experience an over-burdened workload in the home and little room for exercising authority and decision making in the workplace (World Bank, 2017). These combine to create challenges for women leadership, resulting in conflict due to inequitable distribution of resources and further building up

barriers to women leadership. Eagly and Heilman (2016), acknowledged the notion that organisations that consistently recognise women representation in leadership roles are likely to achieve sustainable competitive advantage through good governance thus leading to innovative, creative and intellectual thinking in boosting the bottom-line. The introduction of equal opportunity and equal treatment laws in the labour market indicates the commitment to reduced gender inequalities, yet the gender gap in accessing high-ranking positions still remains visible (Beckwith et al., 2016).

Women in most parts of the world today are no longer compelled to be under the garb of veils and are coming out in the open, shouldering responsibilities in various kinds of decision making and standing with men (Titus et al., 2017). It has been said in this study that public administration, at both central and local levels generally reflects the orientation and character of domestic politics. In patriarchal and exclusionary societies, women, youth and minorities are often excluded from public administration. For instance, it is common in many countries to observe a higher proportion of women in lower-levels of public administration. The inclusive decision making is necessary in terms of both legitimacy and good policy outcomes (Nasser, 2018). As such, some observers argue that public life is considered the domain of men, with women excluded or regarded as ‘other’ (Mazur & Pollock, 2009). Public administrations like other organizations are gendered, since the organizational dominance of men and control of power is to the disadvantage of women (Kelly & Newman, 2001).

Adichie (2017) views the conundrum facing women in securing leadership roles as more pronounced in Sub-Saharan Africa than in the Western economies. Sadie advanced the argument that at the bottom of the constraints that women face is the patriarchal system where decision making powers are in the hands of males. In Africa, traditional beliefs and cultural attitudes regarding the role and status of women in society are still prevalent and many women are part of this system finding it difficult to dislocate from this culture and tradition lest they be ostracized. Despite women’s education and entry into the job market, the woman’s role is typically one of homemaker. The man, on the other hand, is bread winner, head of household and has a right to public life (Sadie, 2005). Similarly, Shimels shares the same view that in Ethiopia, even though the legal frame work and some institutions promote women’s empowerment, women participation in decision making is still heinous. The culture, the patriarchal hierarchy and the community have

played a role in the suppression of women's decision making activities. The culture never appreciates women's participation in decision making equal with man and the patriarchal structure always considers man as superior (Shimels, 2015).

Supporting the same view, Diehl et al., (2016) admit that the lack of qualifications forms part of the causes for the glass ceiling presenting at varied degrees. Other barriers relate to family commitments where women are expected to serve their matrimonial partners as a priority in the home, while in the workplace, executives expect them to handle the clerical and administrative responsibilities believing these are similar to domestic functions they are capable of handling. Adichie (2017) believes that supporting women who seek to ascend to leadership positions extends beyond gaining the mere qualifications where mentorship is likely to play a major role. Although the role of women mentorship has been widely documented, its impact remains largely insignificant. Executives and husbands hold weird perceptions used to block women participation in obtaining leadership skills (Douglas & Leite, 2017).

Despite women holding administrative positions, there is still a large portion of society that believes that women cannot be leaders because they believe their presence in an organization's work force lowers professionalism and performance standards (Banda, 2002). Globally, researchers have focused on the topic of women in educational leadership and barriers to their potential achievement of effective leadership at various levels (Celikten, 2005; Sperandio & Kagonda, 2010; UNESCO, 2011). Managers are faced with challenges ranging from gender discrimination to discipline issues amongst pupils and staff among others in the execution of their administrative duties, (Sperandio & Kagonda, 2010). Both the males and female managers may face these challenges. However, there are some challenges that are unique to the women folk. For instance, Celikten (2005), in a study in Turkey on principal leadership and gender found out that those female leaders often faced with societal demands and traditions that men do not; these include discrimination, stereotyping, family demands and prejudice among other challenges.

Negative stereotypes about women make people judge female school administrators lowly as compared to their male counterparts in terms of school management effectiveness. Chonya (2012) in her comparative study of effectiveness of female school head teachers with their male counterparts in case of Lusaka province of Zambia found out that stakeholders such as teachers,

pupils and parents perceive male head teachers more favourably than female head teachers. Among the reasons for favouring males were that male administrators were believed to be cool and level headed; had less domestic complaints/excuses and were understanding.

A study by Brian et al., (2007) done in South Africa also revealed that gender dynamics when it comes to the reference of male and female principals established that male principals are rated higher than females when it comes to effectiveness. Similarly, in his study Carson (2001), found out that male principals were readily accepted, given respect and believed to be intellectually credible while female principals had to work extra hard to prove their credibility before being accepted by the society. On the contrary, in reality, some studies done in Zambia revealed that female head teachers were more effective in management of schools as compared to their male counterparts (Muchelemba, 2004; Mwanza, 2004; Halyoonda, 2008).

The challenges women must overcome or mediate in order to achieve positions of management have been a thread running throughout scholarly research and they remain as relevant today as they did in the 1970s. Researchers notes the under-representation of women in leadership, power, and decision- making positions in public institutions. Despite gains made regarding the inclusion of women in management, they continue to be under-represented, particularly in senior management positions in African public institutions (Mabokela & Mlambo, 2017; Moodly & Toni, 2017). Cultural norms and the persistent nature of gender inequalities within institutions exacerbate the problem of under-representation (Johnson, 2014; Odhiambo, 2011). Despite the fact that at the end of colonial rule, African schools continue to be plagued by colonial vestiges, neo-colonialism, and patriarchal norms, the effect of which is perhaps most evident in the biasness in the appointments and promotion of women in management positions (Odhiambo, 2011).

Subtle discrimination, bias, and stereotyping of women affect the inclusion of women in management positions in all sectors of society (Kele & Pietersen, 2015). This results in women having to work twice as hard to prove themselves and to be recognized and respected. Participants in Johnson's (2014) study, for instance, noted the role that hard work and diligence played in becoming successful and earning respect and recognition from both male and female colleagues as leaders (Mabokela & Mlambo, 2017). Mabokela's (2003, p. 129) study of six female administrators at universities in South Africa also highlighted "donkeys of the university" as a

common theme in the women's experiences, as they often expected to work hard but were not recognized; rather their effort is met with resistance (Mabokela & Mawila, 2004).

The problem of gender bias and stereotyping provides one explanation for the lack of women's participation in decision-making roles and ensures the exclusion and under-representation of women in leadership both within and outside education. In these settings, it is very difficult for a woman to recover from a mistake as bias and stereotypes often lead to criticism and resistance from male and female colleagues (Johnson & Thomas, 2012). This is because they internalize the normalization of male power and readily accept men in management positions and is linked to the Pull Her Down (PHD) syndrome highlighted in the literature, where there is a general lack of support from female and male colleagues (Shober, 2014).

Cuberes and Teignier (2012), suggest that companies with gender imbalance are lack of innovations, from their employees. That is because having a majority of gender at a company is like promoting the same kind of thinking at the company. For instance, if the majority of the employees at a company are men, then the majority of the ideas will be originating from men. Consequently, the ideas from females will be overshadowed a situation which results in the limited kind of thinking or solving problems. Besides, Tzannatos (2016), argues that this is worsened by the principles of democracy where only the ideas of the majority are being considered. For instance, if the majority of the men do not recognize the need to give a bed rest to females who are experiencing menstrual pains and other problems, then such initiatives cannot come into existence. However, the World Bank (2015), claims that this situation, can be avoided if the females are given the same level of empowerment in many organizations. That is because females would be able to continue providing the basic needs of the family without resorting to street vending or other illicit activities that disturb the peace of most family members.

In addition, Davidson and Burke (2016), stated that 'structural barriers to female advancement in organizations have their roots in the fact that most organizations have been created by and for males and are based on male experiences of management, which leads to the existence of a particular form of masculinity in organizational management'. Amondi (2011), declares that management values in society have been formulated by males to favour males over females. A case in point is that many organizations still define the competence of an administrator in terms of

traits that are associated with males, such as the availability to work all the time, strength and firmness (Davidson & Burke, 2016). This is supported by Gaus (2011), who reported that female under-representation in leadership is due to recruitment procedures dictated by corruption, ethnicity, nepotism and discrimination. In relation to this, Onsongo (2004), observed that qualified women were not appointed to top management positions in Kenya due to gender bias, nepotism, ethnicity and political affiliation, among others.

Research on Zambia shows that despite improvements in educational attainments of women in Zambia, women have continued to lag behind their male counterparts in roles of decision making due to the traditional beliefs and customs that have been held by the country for many years. These beliefs are strongly illustrated in the oral traditions of many Zambian tribes seen through sayings such as this Bemba proverb which says, '*Kwapa tacila kubeya*' The armpit (woman/child) can never be higher than the shoulder (man/adult). Implying that women can never be higher than men in status, hence, leadership and decision making are seen as the preserve of men. As a result, men usually dominate women in the political, religious, economic, academic and domestic spheres, (World Bank, 2004). The Zambian society has confined the role of women to procreation of future generations and care giving to their husbands and families. This confinement has been perpetuated by the cultural norms, customs and beliefs that the country has upheld before independence and even colonial rule (Cheelo, 2002). Women in ancient tradition in Zambia, were only recognised as wives and mothers rising from as far back as the settlement of migrating tribes from the Luba-Lunda kingdom and even those escaping the wars of Shaka (Haantobolo & Ng'andu, 1998). Because of this, there has been a pre-existing gender imbalance in the Zambian labour system.

The literature reviewed above mainly shows that various factors affect women's participation in decision making in public administration. However, the present global scenario is not the same because instead of being the pushing force towards the implementation of internationally agreed goals on women's empowerment, gender equality and many other human rights standards, in many developing and developed countries, public administration is often looked as a patriarchal institution where the tradition of gender biases, attitudes and practices are followed to ensure minimal participation of women. Women are marginalised and lowly represented especially in the leadership and influential decision making roles in public administration. The data reviewed showed that major factors that affect women are culture, patriarchy and discrimination. The

knowledge gap that exist from this review is that in public administration mainly, and in Zambia, we have not seen laid out and clear reasons why women are few and the reasons that can be pointed to be behind their underrepresentation in decision making in public administration. The few reasons we have seen from literature point out to decision making especially in politics and private sector mostly. Therefore, this study was important to fill the knowledge gap that exists and bring out the reasons that have led to the low numbers of women in decision making in public administration specifically.

2.5 Gender gaps in decision making in Public Administration

The equal participation of women and men, especially at decision making levels, is a necessary condition for inclusive and gender-responsive public administration systems. However, gender equality has not always been a guiding principle of Public Administration Reforms. Closing gender gaps in public administration remains crucial for inclusive development and democratic governance, restoring confidence in public institutions, and enhancing the sustainability and responsiveness of public policies, conditions that are now fundamental to the achievement of the global Agenda 2030. In 2013, UNDP launched the global Gender Equality in Public Administration (GEPA) initiative with the objectives of: (1) supporting women's empowerment and expanding their participation and leadership in the executive branches of the state; and (2) contributing to up-to-date evidence of gender equality in Public Administration to facilitate informed policy and decision making (UNDP, 2014). However, with the above GEPA, out of the 41 countries that submitted comprehensive reports for the Asia-Pacific Regional Beijing +25 Conference, 15 had indicated that they encouraged the participation of minority and young women through sensitization and mentorship programmes; 20 responded that they had provided opportunities for mentorship, training in leadership, decision making, public speaking, self-assertion and/or political campaigning (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, 2019).

The UNDP Report (2017) presents an overview of the available data on gender equality in public administration in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Countries and territories in the region face challenges similar to those in other regions when it comes to addressing gender equality in public administration. Women are absent at decision making levels in public administration systems, which tends to perpetuate gender-biased policies, practices and

attitudes. There is also a critical lack of data necessary to advocate for change, set policy and monitor progress towards gender equality goals. These data gaps need to be addressed to establish a global tracking mechanism for women in public administration (UNDP, 2017). This is because the implicit bias contributes to negatively attributing the same behaviour differently depending on whether a man or woman engages in it. For instance, if a woman takes on a leadership role there is a greater likelihood that she will be perceived more negatively and less effective than a man taking on the same role (Alkadry & Tower, 2014) simply because women's gender roles are incongruent with leadership roles (Stivers, 1993). Overtime such perceptions contribute to the underrating of women's performance and the overrating of men's performance (Alkadry & Tower 2014).

The male-dominated work has often been surrounded by masculine cultures that are not friendly to women. Several studies have been conducted covering gender issues in the workplace, the academia, and many other settings (Banchefsky & Park, 2018). Questions are being asked as to why the workplace remains stubbornly masculine and how progress could notably be achieved towards gender parity and women leadership representation. A major obstacle dominating the gender debate involves the influence of culture extended to include the workplace male-structured philosophies that pervade the male-dominant environment (Mundy, 2017). Longman et al., (2018) report that there is an inverse representation of women in senior positions compared to an increasingly higher number of women at entry levels. Women obtain admittance to leadership positions but few make it to the middle and top positions. Recent research shows that women continue to suffer impediments as a result of their cultural vulnerability and are therefore less likely to achieve sustainable leadership breakthrough than their male counterparts who command long term professional leadership experience (Gehlert & Mozersky, 2018).

A further aspect of contentious argument on gender involves unequitable pay. Pham et al., (2018) found that capitalist and patriarchal societies experience widespread gender pay gap exacerbated by policies formulated from these economic perspectives. This entails a re-orientation of policy that seeks to analyse the gender pay gap. The disparity in pay provides a clear indication that women are generally discriminated against and are therefore unlikely to be considered for major promotions. The Institute for Women's Policy Research (2018), reports that in contrast to men, women seem to occupy lower-paying jobs in less lucrative industries and mostly employed in the

informal sector. These findings suggest that women are not visibly active in strategic positions of influence leaving the under-representation of women leadership as a workplace concern.

Wollack (2010), affirms that during the early 1990s, women in governance worldwide accounted for only 10% before the launch of the United Nations Beijing Platform for Action (BPA) in 1995. After the launch of the BPA, the rate of women in governance rose from an average of 13% in 1999 to 19% by the year 2009 in most countries within Europe. A report indicates that the global average of female parliamentary representation stood at 19.8% in 2011 up from 19% in 2010 (IPU, 2012). Similarly, Nalis (2012), affirms that women development and maturity into governance was traced back in the mid-19th century in Finland. However, the male gender still dominated in majority of administrative policy and decision making organs or governance (World Bank, 2010). Latest data however shows that worldwide, currently, 24.9% members of parliament are women. Regionally, the Nordic countries still have a high average at 42.4%, on comparison to the over European average at 29.7%. In Sub-Saharan Africa, the average for women's representation is 22% (IPU Parline, 2020).

There is persistent under-representation of women in public administration as secondary data reveals that across the globe, there is variance in the representation of women within public sector organizations. According to ILO/UNDP (2012), at the global level, the distribution between the two genders in decision making positions and administrative positions tends to favour men. However, looking at some parts of the world, Central and Eastern Europe have relatively high rates of female representation in public administration institutions. This is explained by the communist legacy of the feminization of the workforce, women's higher educational attainment, state support for childcare and an egalitarian approach to female labour force participation (Pollert, 2005).

Women's representation in political decision making shows that from 2003 to 2014, there was an overall discernible increase in women's share of top leadership positions in legislative and executive political institutions and Public Administration. However, the persistence of gender-based stereotypes in the allocation of roles, both within political institutions and political culture in general, nevertheless continues to hinder progress towards equal representation. This is particularly apparent in the distribution of cabinet portfolios and senior administrative (non-political) positions in ministries. Men dominate portfolios relating to basic state functions such as

defence, justice and foreign policy. Women are concentrated in ministries with socio-cultural functions, such as education, health and culture (EIGE, 2015).

The implementation of policies at the national and local levels lies under the purview of civil servants in public administration (UNDP, 2014). Women are by and large well-represented in the public sector, exceeding 50% of employees in at least 22 countries of the region in 2017 (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Gender Statistics, 2019). However, their presence decreases in the upper levels of decision making. In 2017, among the 11 countries with available data, the proportion of women exceeded 30% in 10 and 50% in only 4 countries. Only 4 countries track women's access to decision making positions in the public administration. Women only represent approximately 14.55% women in national Public Administration leadership in Iraq, 11.8% in Kuwait, 11.15% in Palestine and 30% in UAE (Nasser, 2017). Further the highest rate of women's employment in the Public Administration was recorded in UAE (66%) (FAHR, 2017) and Kuwait (52%) (CSB, 2017) and the lowest in Gaza (6%) (UNDP, 2016) and Egypt (20.1%) (CAPMAS, 2017). However, public administration is the primary employer of women in this region. The rate of women's employment in the public administration almost consistently surpasses women's total participation in the labour force – indicating that the civil service is a major source of employment for women in this region.

A case in point is UK Public Administration. In terms of vertical occupational gender segregation, women constitute 31% of civil service permanent secretaries, 40% of the senior civil service, 33% of local government chief executives, 28% of university vice chancellors, 38% of secondary head teachers and 43% of National Health Service (NHS) chief executives. The data reveals paucity of female career progression to leadership positions, despite the fact that the overall number of female employees in UK Public Administration since 2001 has exceeded men. Despite the headcount number of female employees accounting for 68% of the UK public sector workforce, women face barriers to attaining leadership positions (Fawcett Society, 2018).

The representation of African women in all spheres of life and at all levels, especially in political decision making bodies is still low although they represent 52% of the African population. African countries are also lagging behind in terms of gender equality in public service, executive positions, the judiciary and private sector leadership. In Ethiopia women's participation in decision making

at regional administrations, city administrations and district governances is also very low when it compares with men (Medhanit & Sofanit, 2009). Available statistics by the SADC Gender Monitor Review (2013), clearly illustrate the limited participation of women in structures of power and decision making at all levels of society. Statistics show that, the percentage of women in Parliament in the region is 24.5%, which is well above the global average of 19.5%, but falls short of the desired target of 50%. Only five SADC Member States were significantly close to the target of parity in Parliament, that is, Angola, Mozambique, Seychelles, South Africa and Tanzania. The review indicated that at management level, women are seen only concentrated in middle and lower positions, with very few women in top management of the public service, parastatal and private sector as earlier indicated in the ILO and Harvard Business review (SADC Gender Monitor Review, 2013).

Further data on Africa, shows that women's leadership and representation in public and private sector decision making bodies is still low. On average, only 7% to 30% of the firms in 38 African countries have a female top manager, while only 2 out of a sample of 11 African countries have more than 30% women at decision making level in public administration. The representation of women in public administration leadership varies across countries ranging from a low representation of 12-15% in Burundi and Mali to a high representation of 35% and 45% in South Africa and Botswana respectively (UNDP, 2016).

Looking at the Zambian case, on tracking the progress on women in decision making, statistics revealed that, in 2020, Zambian women held 17.1% of the seats in parliament (National Assembly, 2020). Therefore, Zambia has still not reached the benchmark of 30% women's political representation in parliament even when it is a signatory of the Beijing Platform for Action as well as a member state of the SADC Declaration of Gender and Development (1997) and also the SADC Gender and Development Protocol (2008) among others aiming for 50% representation of women (IPU Parline, 2020).

The importance of achieving gender equality extends beyond the lives of individual women and girls. Closing the gender gap remains one of our greatest challenges. Various countries have come up with measures to reduce the gender gap that exists in their countries. For instance, establishing equal rights in institutions, laws and policies is a first step towards improving outcomes for women

and girls. Enacting various laws and policies lead to change by shaping public policies, encouraging government follow-through with regulation and implementation and enabling the public to hold government accountable through court action. Also, constitutional rights can provide a foundation for challenging discriminatory legislation or introducing new laws that protect equality (Waisath et al., 2014). These measures when followed can lead to closure of the gender gap.

As alluded to already by many, equality between men and women was a core tenet enshrined in the UN Charter in 1945. Yet 75 years later, women and girls live in a world of widespread gender inequality. “Women’s ability to make an impact in male-dominated institutions will be limited until they are represented in numbers large enough to have a collective voice, until they reach a ‘critical mass’ (Powley, 2006, p. 2). The past decades have seen important progress for women and girls. Overall, however, change has been uneven and incremental. At the current rate of change, the global gender gap will not close for another 100 years. As the Secretary-general warned, ‘Change is coming at a pace that is too slow for the women and girls whose lives depend on it’.

Recognising the importance and contribution of women in society and nation building, Bangladesh since its independence has taken legal and policy measures for advancement of women in the country. According to the Gender Gap Index 2020 by the World Economic Forum, Bangladesh stands the 50th out of 153 countries and the 1st on South Asia Association for Regional Countries (SAARC). Bangladesh has been a signatory to several important international conventions and agreements on women’s rights and development and has adopted several legal and policy measures to promote and protect the rights of women in the country. A notable action of the government was the adoption of National Women Development Policy 2011 and the Action Plan to implement the policy. And in order to ensure the participation of women in all spheres of life, the present government has started gender responsive budgeting since 2009. The National Women Development Policy 2011 emphasises political empowerment and women’s participation in decision making process. The Speaker of the National Parliament, the Prime Minister and Leader of the House, the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the House are women. Female officers are being appointed to senior positions of civil service and armed forces (UN Women, 2020). In other countries such as in India and post-apartheid South Africa, affirmative

action in the context of a broader agenda for political and social inclusion appears to have had a genuinely transformative effect (Rao & Kelleher, 2005).

Across Africa, decentralisation has been embraced in recent decades as a medium for delivering more inclusive and participatory governance. This is a departure from the more highly centralised and personalised mode of governance that had characterised the history of modern public administration (Kauzya, 2014). On the other hand, the Africa Gender Index scores shows marked differences between the number of men and women in senior and representational positions. Countries such as Rwanda, South Africa, Lesotho, Namibia and Uganda have taken deliberate steps through legislation and quotas to increase the number of women in political positions. Rwanda has for many years showed the world that women can hold more seats in Parliament than men. Liberia and Malawi have both had female presidents in the recent past, and Cabo Verde has equal numbers of men and women in Cabinet posts. Countries including Senegal, Ethiopia, South Africa and Burundi have increased the number of women in parliament. Various systems are in place such as equality under the law and in practice where African countries have passed gender equality legislation to ensure women are treated as men before the law. Also putting in place measures to enable women to participate in decision making and support women's groups and movements (Africa Development Bank and United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, 2020). In these countries, the gender gap has been seen to reduce.

From the review above, it is clear that Public Administration has still not accepted the full potential and talents of women. The explanation of why women are still underrepresented in the decision making process is still based on certain assumptions which lack a rational basis. Both men and women have their capacities as well as competencies which drive them toward life goals and their willingness to take responsibility in their professional sphere of life. The literature on women's appointment to decision making positions in public administration is sparse, but what does exist indicates that women face extraordinary challenges in reaching management and leadership positions in most countries (Omar & Ogenyi, 2007). However, most studies reviewed show old statistics and most of the countries did not even have statistics to show the gender gap in public administration, thus creating a knowledge gap.

Therefore, with the above review, it is clear that women experience various challenges when trying to enter and participate in decision making. Factors such as unequal pay are dominant in most countries under review. Therefore, for public administration to be successful and reduce the gender disparities seen above, there is need to uphold the agreements made by international organisations concerning the participation of women in decision making. Since public administration is the primary employer of women in many countries, gender equality is crucial. The review fell short and created a knowledge gap in that most of these studies reviewed concentrated on the labour market and limited and updated information exists in public administration.

2.6 Strategies to enhance Women’s Appointment to Decision making Positions

As part of the strategies that can be employed in promoting women leadership into decision making positions in the world today, John and Brad (2020), point out that Legislative reform in the political sphere is vital. Lack of knowledge, lack of access to patronage networks, lack of financial support, and active or perceived prejudice against women candidates all act as structural barriers to women participating in elections for public office at all levels of representation. For instance, in Sierra Leone, women candidates who were vying for political positions reported that political parties would often remove women from candidate lists at the last minute, replacing them with male candidates who, they felt, were more likely to win the seat. In light of this, electoral reform can provide new opportunities for women seeking to become leaders in the political arena. The implementation of quotas and reservation of seats have been the key instruments in increasing women’s political representation, and over 40 countries have adopted quota laws to regulate the selection or election of women to political office.

Policies of decentralisation have been of particular significance in increasing women’s representation at the local level. These give local and regional governments (rather than central government) the power to make decisions about local services, such as health, education, and sanitation. Because it is often easier for women to get elected at local level than at national level, decentralisation can give women real influence over decisions which will have a direct impact on the lives of members of their communities. In recognition of this, the introduction of decentralisation policies in Cambodia and Sierra Leone prompted Oxfam and its partners to give support to women standing for election to local government (OXFAM report, 2018).

Another strategy to point to for increasing women participation in decision making positions is increasing visibility in the economic sector. Women's under-representation in leadership roles in the economic sphere contributes to many other things like: the undervaluing and lack of recognition their contribution to the paid and unpaid economy; lack of access to and control of economic resources; and their concentration at the lower end of the economic value chain, meaning they enjoy lower economic returns.

According to Musa (2009), changing attitudes to women's leadership and participation is another strategy that can be employed. Musa posits that traditional attitudes and beliefs about women's role in society continue to prejudice both men's and women's preconceptions regarding women's ability to participate fully in public life. These attitudes include stereotypes about women being dependent, unskilled, and not suitable for institutional leadership and strategic decision-making. People may even question the 'morality' of women seeking leadership positions. In Sierra Leone, many women candidates reported experiencing hostility from female voters who told them to 'go back home where they belong'. Elsewhere, in many conservative contexts' women are actively prohibited from engagement in activities outside the home.

In the UK, women participating in training to encourage economic and political participation and empowerment did not really have any sense of shared solidarity as women. It was only through meeting women from other parts of the country, and identifying and discussing common problems that they faced, that the participants came to realise that in fact, as women, they did face many of the same issues, and that many of these were the result of gender inequality, and stereotypes regarding acceptable masculine and feminine behaviour. These examples underline how important it is to remember that any work in this field must include activities that challenge women's own perceptions about their suitability for leadership.

Working to encourage men to be more receptive to the idea of women occupying positions of power is also critical in challenging the inequality and discrimination that women face. Gambia, as well as providing gender training to male politicians and leaders, the African Union partner the 50/50 Group is seeking to identify male 'champions' in positions of authority, who will be prepared to speak out in support of women's right to political leadership and participation. Such champions are crucial, the 50/50 Group argue, in changing other men's attitudes, as well as encouraging those

men who reject male dominance and support more equal participation and leadership in development processes to speak out. It is also true that ‘actions speak louder than words.

Furthermore, as a strategy, addressing inequalities of wealth and power at every level to attain positions of leadership is vital. There is also need of encouraging and supporting women to take up, and be effective in leadership roles. Thus, providing targeted training to women who want to assume positions of leadership is one way of enabling more women to influence decision making processes.

For instance, some of the women community leaders who took part in training in Zambia were not even aware that they had the right to vote, let alone stand for election. Another challenge is making sure that women from a diverse range of backgrounds – ethnicity, age, level of education, (disability, socio-economic status – are included in training activities. This is something which has been achieved with varying levels of success in these programmes. While training and support is important for women as they seek to attain positions of power, all too often, once they have been elected, or have attained a position of leadership, women find that they are left to ‘fend for themselves’ in what can be a very hostile environment.

In the Women in Leadership Project (WIL), the first stage is on promoting women’s political participation and leadership in Sierra Leone, emphasis was placed on preparing women (most of whom came from poor backgrounds and had no experience of formal leadership positions) for election. Once elected, many women councillors felt overwhelmed by and ill-equipped for the duties that they were now expected to undertake, often as a result of poor literacy skills, particularly when it came to working in English. So, in the second stage of this work, the Promoting a Culture of Equal Representation (PACER) project, ongoing mentoring support is being offered to women councillors and members of Parliament, to help them to be more effective in their roles. Most of the strategies highlighted by many scholars have been in other sectors and not in the public sector especially the Ministry of Education which this study will focus on.

2.7 Research Gap

From the literature reviewed, it is apparent that governments around the world have yet to fully utilise the abilities and potential of women. Women must be able to occupy leadership positions

at all levels and in all sectors on an equal footing with men if Public Administration is to be representative of society and inclusive of women. A growing proportion of women aspire to leadership on the same terms as men and have made the same decisions as men, but they continue to face challenges. Increased representation in Public Administration, particularly in decision making positions, is not always guaranteed, even in nations where women have equal access to education. The impact of systemic gender-based discrimination is not taken into account in these popular assumptions and this has made many nations not to reach the target on gender parity. A fundamental argument for increased representation of women in public service is that when the composition of the public sector reflects the composition of the society it serves, government will be more responsive and effective. Thus, closing gender gaps in Public Administration is important to ensuring truly inclusive development and democratic governance and helps to restore trust and confidence in public institutions and enhance the sustainability and responsiveness of public policies (UNDP, 2014).

From the literature reviewed, therefore, no research focused on the role that higher education qualifications have on the appointment of women to decision making positions in public administration. There is less collated information globally on public sector than the growing sources on private sector boards and executives and also insufficient data on the proportion of women in decision making positions in public administration overall and in different branches of public administration. Thus, this research sought to contribute to this knowledge gap seen from the literature reviewed. According to the Ministry of Gender (2018), despite the country signing up to regional and international conventions, the situation of women in Zambia remains unchanged. There has been a growing concern in the recent past among all key stakeholders in the country on the lower levels and numbers of women's participation in decision making in comparison to the participation of their male counterparts. This has seen Zambia being ranked the 4th lowest performing in the region with a paltry 9% women representation in the local government and 18% in Parliament as at the August 2016 General Elections. There is also lack of data and analysis of the existence and impact of measures taken to advance women's equal participation and decision making in public administration locally, nationally, regionally and globally, in most countries, sex and age disaggregated data is not readily available, and what can be accessed (often raw data) is not regularly analysed.

Goetz (2001), suggests two main reasons for this gap in the literature. The first is the scarcity of women in public administration, especially in the senior levels of sectoral departments. This condition is compounded by the lack of gender sensitivity in public management education of both men and women in some regions. The second reason is that gender biases have prevented some analysts of policy implementation processes from noting the gender-differential impact of the work of development administrators. In particular, the well noted dearth of gender-disaggregated data at every point in the chain of service delivery-demand, expenditure, benefit incidence, impact, among others-severely hinders gender-sensitive policy analysis, monitoring, and evaluation. Therefore, additional research and data on the role of higher education on women's appointment to decision making positions in public administration is needed to ensure that women in their full diversity are equally represented especially in public administration. Since little is known about the role of education in the ascension of women to decision making positions in public administration, this study examined the role of higher education as well as the educational experiences of women and how it affected or contributed to their appointment in decision making positions in public administration.

2.8 Chapter Summary

In summary, the status of women in decision making positions compared in almost the whole world except for a few countries like Sweden, recently South-Africa and Uganda can be termed by ILO (1999), that over the last few decades, women have attained educational levels comparable to those of men in many countries and have been increasingly hired in jobs previously reserved for men. The chapter looked at various studies done on higher education and decision making around the world. These studies were compared and the research gap was drawn. Therefore, the next chapter presents the methodology for the study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

Chapter three of this study presents a discussion of the research methodology and data collection strategies that were used and these are explained and justified. The chapter presents broad approaches which were used to answer the research questions identified in the study. The sample was described, sampling procedures and research methods are outlined. Each research approach has its own advantages and disadvantages; hence these are summarised here and the important role they play in research is also explained. Starting from defining the type of research and the general methods that were used, chapter three also included how data was collected as well as analysed.

3.2 Research Decisions Influencing the Research Methodology

Research philosophy is associated with assumption, knowledge and nature of the study. It deals with the explicit means of developing knowledge. This matter needs to be addressed because researchers may have different assumptions about the nature of truth and so knowledge and philosophy helps us to understand their assumptions (Cresswell, 2009; Maxcy, 2003). Myers (2000, p. 1) further states that, ‘all research ... is based on some underlying assumptions about what constitutes ‘valid’ research and which research methods are appropriate’.

The definitions, classification, assumptions, methodology and implications about research are well documented in literature. ‘Researchers’ approaches are influenced by their worldviews which comprise their beliefs and philosophical assumptions about the nature of the world and how it can be understood’ (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 163). Simply put, research collects data using particular methods which are based on a methodology which is based on a paradigm. According to Kivunja and Kuyuni (2017, p. 26) ‘a paradigm constitutes a set of theories, assumptions and ideas that contribute to one’s worldview and approach to engaging with other people or things’. It is a lens through which a researcher views the world and examines the methodological components of their research to make a decision on which methods to use for data gathering as well as analysis. Thus, according to Cresswell et al., (2007, p. 236), ‘research paradigms consist of four philosophical elements: axiology, ontology, epistemology and methodology’. This is as shown in figure 8 below.



Source: Alele & Bunmi, 2023

Figure 8: The Research Paradigm by Bunmi Malau-Aduli and Faith Alele

From the figure above, as Al-Ababneh (2020) alluded, the differences amongst research methodologies are based on a philosophical and theoretical view of research that guides researchers in their social science research. Furthermore, researchers can select the research methodology in social science and that depends on philosophical issues, which are related to ontology (the nature of reality) and epistemology (the nature of knowledge). Therefore, ontology and epistemology are to research what ‘footings’ are to a house: they form the foundations of the whole edifice’ (Grix, 2004, p. 59).

Ontological and epistemological aspects concern what is commonly referred to as a person's worldview which has significant influence on the perceived relative importance of the aspects of reality. Ontology, the nature of reality, describes how the researcher perceives reality and nature of human engagement in the world (Cresswell et al., 2007, p. 237). Thus, it questions the fundamental nature of existence and the question associated with ontology is ‘What is there?’ Epistemology on the other hand deals with the study of knowledge and belief. It describes the ways knowledge about reality is acquired, understood and utilised (Babbie, 2020). Epistemology, in

other words, helps to increase the researcher's level of confidence in their data by influencing how researchers approach, identify and find answers while conducting research. Therefore, it asks the question, 'What is Knowledge?' These different ways of seeing the world have repercussions in most academic areas; yet, none of these views is considered to be superior to the other. Both may be appropriate for some purposes and insufficient or overly complex for other purposes. Also a person may change his/her view depending on the situation. For example, this study makes use of elements from both views and considers them as complementary.

Nuryatno (2003), classified research paradigms into three philosophically distinct categories as positivism, interpretive and critical postmodernism. This three-fold classification is considered ideal for this study because these three categories can be used to conveniently place the more specific psychological and sociological theories used in education management. Further, these three philosophical perspectives are the popular paradigms in contemporary social, organizational, and management research. The key features of these three perspectives is that they include the worldview, the nature of knowledge pursued, and the different means by which knowledge is produced and assessed within each paradigm or worldview as discussed below. However, there is no consensus, as to whether these research paradigms are necessarily opposed or whether they can be seen as contributing a different role in the same study.

The positivist paradigm of exploring social reality is based on the philosophical ideas of the French Philosopher August Comte (1798-1857). According to him, observation and reason are the best means of understanding human behaviour; true knowledge is based on experience of senses and can be obtained by observation and experiment. At the ontological level, positivists assume that the reality is objectively given and is measurable using properties which are independent of the researcher and his or her instruments. In other words, knowledge is objective and quantifiable. Positivistic thinkers adopt scientific methods and systematize the knowledge generation process with the help of quantification to enhance precision in the description of parameters and the relationship among them. Positivism is concerned with uncovering truth and presenting it by empirical means (Henning et al., 2004).

According to Aliyu et al., (2014), the positivist position maintains that scientific knowledge consists of facts while its ontology considers the reality as independent of social construction. If

the research study consists of a stable and unchanging reality, then the researcher can adopt an 'objectivist' perspective. Positivism regards human behaviour as passive, controlled and determined by external environment.

This study, however, took an interpretivist view. Interpretive researchers believe that the reality consists of people's subjective experiences of the external world; thus, they may adopt an intersubjective epistemology and the ontological belief that reality is socially constructed. The interpretive approach looks for culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life world. This interpretivist philosophy develops knowledge in a different way by focusing on a subjective and descriptive method to deal with complicated situations rather than an objective and statistical method (Remenyi et al., 2005). Interpretivists are anti-foundationalists, who believe there is no single correct route or particular method to knowledge. Williams (2000), argues that in the interpretive tradition there are no 'correct' or 'incorrect' theories. Instead, they should be judged according to how 'interesting' they are to the researcher as well as those involved in the same areas. They attempt to derive their constructs from the field by an in-depth examination of the phenomenon of interest.

Alharahsheh and Pius (2020), argue that interpretivists assume that knowledge and meaning are acts of interpretation, hence there is no objective knowledge which is independent of thinking and reasoning humans. Myers (2009), argues that the premise of interpretive researchers is that access to reality (whether given or socially constructed) is only through social constructions such as language, consciousness and shared meanings. Interpretive paradigm is underpinned by observation and interpretation, thus to observe is to collect information about events, while to interpret is to make meaning of that information by drawing inferences or by judging the match between the information and some abstract pattern (Potrac et al., 2014). In other words, interpretivist considers the situation in each business as unique, and differs from other situations.

Reeves and Hedberg (2003), note that the interpretivist paradigm stresses the need to put analysis in context. The interpretive paradigm is concerned with understanding the world as it is from subjective experiences of individuals. Therefore, Reeves and Hedberg use meaning (versus measurement) oriented methodologies, such as interviewing or participant observation, that rely on a subjective relationship between the researcher and subjects. Interpretive research does not

predefine dependent and independent variables, but focuses on the full complexity of human sense making as the situation emerges (Walsham, 2006). Thus, interpretive approach aim to explain the subjective meanings that lie behind social action. Andrade (2009) presents three different uses of theory in interpretive case studies: theory guiding the design and collection of data; theory as an iterative process of data collection and analysis; and theory as an outcome of a case study. The use of theory as an iterative process between data collection and analysis has been applied in this research study. The study adopted Interpretivist paradigm because of its focus on understanding social reality from the standpoint of those experiencing it. Interpretivist approach aims at understanding subjective knowledge in its contextual form (Porta & Keating, 2008). This entails that people attach subjective meanings to their social world and that these meanings are shaped by their knowledge, experiences and socio-cultural factors (Chirwa, 2017). Interpretivism was useful in situating the studied group in a Zambian historical, political, structural and socio-cultural setting and sought interpretations from participants' own perspectives and understandings (Bryman, 2016). It allowed participants to construct their lived participation experiences in public administration decision making structures.

This study used ontology to understand how to perceive reality and human nature by capturing meanings, experiences and perceptions of participants. The ontological stance was Relativism in that there is no objective or absolute truth but rather multiple interpretations to reality. Relativism is the view that reality is relative to the observer or the context in which it is observed. It holds that there are no objective truths or values, but only subjective interpretations of reality. In other words, relativism posits that what is true or real for one person may not be true or real for another (Gupta, 2023). In other words, this study took an ontological stance to that reality is 'relative' according to how individuals experience it at any given time and place.

On the other hand, the study used epistemology to understand that participants' experiences are captured by hearing their side of the story through lived experiences. Interpretivists, as Flick (2004, p. 89), observed, believe in socially constructed multiple realities that truth and reality are created, not discovered. Therefore, it is not possible to know reality as it is because it is always mediated by our senses. In other words, interpretive epistemology is subjective in that external reality cannot be directly accessible to observers without being contaminated by participants' worldviews, concepts, backgrounds as well as perceptions. Thus, the researcher took an emic approach by being

part of the research and got close as possible to participants. This helped increase the level of confidence in gathering data making the findings subjective. As Flick states, ‘perception is seen not as a passive-receptive process of representation but as an active constructive process of production’ (2004, p.90). In other words, an epistemological stance made the researcher to interact with participants and society and ascribe meaning and names to social phenomena being studied.

The core objective of this study was to ascertain the role of higher education qualifications on women’s appointment to decision making positions in public administration. According to Creswell (2012), a research methodology comprises the procedures which are followed by individual researchers to find answers to the research problems which they have identified. Research methodologies are broadly classified into qualitative and quantitative thereby creating a huge divide amongst researchers, especially in social sciences (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). Myers (2009, p. 8) distinguishes that qualitative research is an in-depth study of social and cultural phenomena and focuses on text whereas quantitative research investigates general trends across populations and focuses on numbers. Quantitative research is based on the measurement of quantity or amount and is applicable to phenomena that can be expressed in terms of quantity; whereas qualitative research, is concerned with qualitative phenomenon, (phenomena relating to or involving quality or kind). Hence, this study resorted to use the qualitative approach to answer the current problem.

This study used qualitative approach because qualitative method provides deeper understanding of the issue being investigated, honouring the voices of the participants. The application of qualitative research methodologies entails researchers placing themselves within the contexts of the events, occurrences, or phenomena which they are investigating (Chivanga & Mongai, 2020). Another reason was that the study involved human phenomena and so used qualitative research which employs a variety of systems of inquiry such as ethnography, grounded theory, action research studies, narrative research and phenomenological research (Ugwu & Eze, 2023). Despite some similarities, they emphasize various goals and viewpoints. Qualitative research was used to examine the attitudes, feelings and motivations of the sample. Thus, since this research endeavoured to find out the role that higher education qualification has on women’s appointment to decision making positions in public administration, this approach helped the study get concrete answers needed to solve the problem at hand.

3.3 Research Design

From the above, it has been noted that research methodology comprises all of the processes by means of which information is collected. A research design therefore defines the type of study which is to be conducted in order to answer research questions and achieve objectives (Kumar, 2014). The research design that was used in this study was the case study design. A case study as Robson (2002) puts it, refers to a situation that one is interested in. This type of case study is used to describe an intervention or phenomenon and the real-life context in which it occurred (Yin, 2014). It involves careful and in-depth investigation of a particular unit or event under study for purposes of understanding factors that contribute to low participation of women in decision making in public administration.

3.4 Target population and Sample size

The population of the study is the study's population that it intends to study. Selection of participants in qualitative research depends on the purpose of the research and relies on the researcher's discretion. Therefore, a target population needs to be exclusive enough to avoid having participants who do not represent the study needs which may misrepresent the population of interest. Asiamah et al., (2017, p. 1607), emphasized specifying the general target and accessible populations in a qualitative study. Alvi (2016), described a target population as 'all the members who meet the criteria specified for a research investigation'. Thus, the target sample for the study was 30 participants while the actual number sampled was 25 participants. These included participants from the various Ministries in Lusaka. These ministries were, Ministry of Local Government and Housing, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Ministry of Community Development and Social Services, Public Service Management Division and the Gender Division. From the sample presented above, 5 participants were women in decision making positions while 20 included both men and women who occupied other positions in the organisations.

3.5 Sampling Technique

To decide the sample for the study, a non-probability sampling methods using purposive (expert purposive sampling) and snowball sampling methods were used. Selection of the sample was made deliberately based on predetermined criteria based on the research objectives. Purposive sampling technique provided breadth for researchers to determine when information is stopped and resumed

(Sukardi, 2003). Non-probability sampling according to ILO (2009), uses non-randomized methods to draw the sample and mostly involves judgment. Thus, instead of randomization, participants are selected because they are easy to access. In other words, non-probability sampling is where individuals are selected based on non-random criteria and not everyone has an equal chance of being included in the sample. This kind of technique is, therefore, used in qualitative research mostly and uses sampling methods such as purposive and snowball sampling methods.

Purposive sampling as defined by Black (2010) is a non-probability sampling method and it occurs when elements selected for the sample are chosen by the judgment of the researcher. Researchers often believe that they can obtain a representative sample by using a sound judgment, which will result in saving time and money. Also, the method is reliable and appropriate for the study because when a research is qualitative and its goal is to investigate what is more concerned with a deeper understanding of the research problem rather than generalisation, purposive sampling is best to be used. According to Nosrat (2010), researchers select participants purposively when they believe that those participants are key informants and especially important to articulate a view. Therefore, participants were purposively sampled by targeting those experts in the field under study.

Snowball sampling, also known as chain referral sampling method was used in this study. According to Platt et al., (2015), the chain referral sampling is an advantage for the researcher to include people in the research that they would not have known and easily found. Snowball sampling which is a non-probability sampling method is basically sociometric in nature and is considered to be a form of accidental sampling by some. The method is appropriate when the members of a special population are difficult to locate. Thus it begins by the collection of data from one or more contacts usually known to the person collecting the data (Shaukat & Parveen, 2017). Since the research had participants that may not be known to be providers of certain key information, this method was appropriate. By so doing, the participant who was purposively sample referred another person in line who had expertise in the field of inquiry thus creating a snowball sample. In other words, snowball was done by target participants nominating other potential data sources to participate in the research since they had the information being sought.

3.6 Data collection Instruments

In this study, both secondary and primary data were gathered. Secondary data was gathered from reports such as government reports, and also journals and also reports done by international organisations. These consisted of reports on gender statistics for GIZ, to help the study compare gender trends from 2017 to 2019 in Zambia. The Afrobarometer report was also consulted and helped provide statistics on Zambia. Another important report that provided data for the secondary data was from the PMRC, HEA and also GIDD. At an international level, reports were also consulted and these were from Unicef, Unesco, OECD, UNDP, ADB, WEF and also a report from FAWE was used to gather data to help build a rich literature. Most of the reports consulted helped present trends in gender and also decision making over the years and thus provided good literature to refer to in this study. In other words, most of the secondary data was gathered from report indicated above and also websites of these organisations.

Primary data, on the other hand, was gathered using semi-structured interview guides. An interview guide or schedule, is an instrument for collecting qualitative data by way of asking questions orally (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). The use of semi-structured interview guides was helpful for this study in that it permitted the researcher to interrogate participants' responses where there was lack of clarity or where the responses were incomplete. The semi-structured nature of the interviews accommodated the participants' responses and emerging viewpoints, while providing a degree of structure and direction to each interview (Merriam, 1998). The interviews ensured that 'interviewees and interviewers [were] always actively engaged in constructing meaning' (Silverman, 2006, p. 116). Thus, this type of data collection instrument helped the study to probe the participants further and allow them to provide more information on the problem. All interviews were conducted keeping in mind the fact that, as a rule of thumb, a case number of -30 is often mentioned and suitable for collecting primary data.

3.7 Data collection Procedure

Primary sources mainly included data obtained in the field. Thus, to collect data using semi-structured interview guides, the procedure involved making appointments to visit the ministries by writing a letter through the Permanent Secretaries' office and then wait for the responses. After the response came, an official was allocated to be interviewed in those ministries. Interview schedules were drawn up based on the convenience of the participants and were done at neutral

settings allowing the participant to express openly and willingly. Data were gathered by writing field notes, recordings and transcriptions of each interview, and reports presented and provided to supplement basic information or to provide context for their organization or programs. The interviews, though were central to the investigation and they drove the analysis with researcher's field notes and other documents providing contexts. Therefore, sitting with the participants stretched over eight months with multiple sitting that lasted 45 minutes to an hour. The study reached saturation after similar trend was observed in the responses. As noted by Ilker (2016), the study adopted qualitative methods which place primary emphasis on saturation that is obtaining a comprehensive understanding by continuing to sample until no new substantive information is acquired. On the other hand, secondary data were gathered mainly by desk review, all literature related to the study and also reports presented to the researcher during interviews.

3.8 Data analysis

Data analysis is a process of inspecting, cleansing, transforming and modelling data with the goal of discovering useful information, informing conclusions, and supporting decision making (Brown, 2014). All participants in the study were recorded and given codes according to the organisation where they worked. Women in decision making where were interviewed were given the Participant Identification and number as WD1. These participants ranged from 1 to 5. The next thing was to identify which organisation they belong to and various ministries were given the letters PS, for example to represent those participants from PSMD. CD, where participants from Ministry of Community Development and Social Service and so on. For participants who were referred, and these were both male and female, the coding was done by given each participant an ID starting with the letter P to stand for participant, followed by the number of participant, then gender of the participant and then organisation for example, P1FPS as shown in the table below.

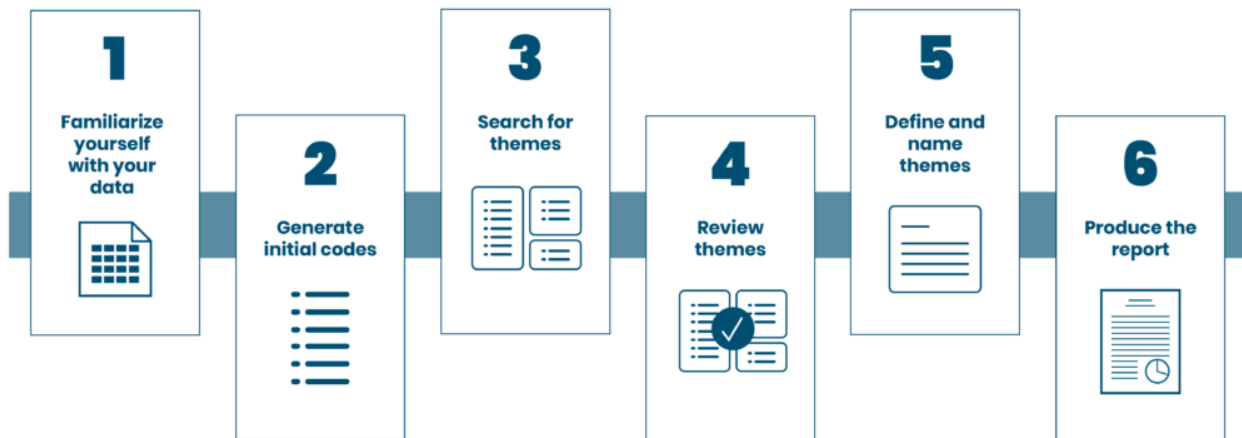
Table 6: Codes generated during data analysis

Participant ID	Gender	Institution	Code	Participant ID	Gender	Institution	code
P1	Male	MLSS	P1MLS	P14	Female	MLGH	P14FLG
P2	Female	MCDSS	P2FCD	P15	Female	MOE	P15FE
P3	Female	MLGH	P3FLG	P16	Female	MCDSS	P16FCD
P4	Male	PSMD	P4MGD	P17	Male	GD	P17MGD
P5	Male	PSMD	P5MPS	P18	Male	PSMD	P18MPS
P6	Female	MLGH	P6FLG	P19	Female	MLGH	P19FLG
P7	Male	MCDSS	P7MCD	P20	Male	MCDSS	P20MCD
P8	Male	PSMD	P8MPS	WD1	Female	PSMD	WD1PS
P9	Male	MCDSS	P9MCD	WD2	Female	MCDSS	WD2CD
P10	Female	MLGH	P10FLG	WD3	Female	MLGH	WD3LG
P11	Female	MCDSS	P11FCD	WD4	Female	MLSS	WD4LS
P12	Female	MLSS	P12FLS	WD5	Female	MOE	WD5E
P13	Male	MLSS	P13MLS				

Source: Field research

All interviews were recorded and transcribed and based on critical review, the data were analysed to identify similarities, difference and emerging themes to inform findings and recommendations using thematic analysis relying on reflexive thematic analysis. Reflexive thematic analysis is an easily accessible and theoretically flexible interpretative approach to qualitative data analysis that facilitates the identification and analysis of patterns or themes in a given data set (Braun & Clarke, 2012). This study used reflexive thematic analysis because it highlights the researcher’s active role in knowledge production where codes drawn from the data gathered are understood to represent the researcher’s interpretations of patterns of meaning across the dataset. Therefore, Braun and Clarke (2019), asserts that reflexive thematic analysis is considered a reflection of the researcher’s interpretive analysis of the data conducted at the intersection of: (1) the dataset; (2) the theoretical assumptions of the analysis, and; (3) the analytical skills/resources of the researcher. Thematic analysis involved classification of words and phrases that emerged from the interviews and related to the same content into major themes (Bryman, 2008). The idea was to allow the actual prevailing pattern, themes and phrases of the research findings to emerge from the data, rather than be controlled by factors predetermined prior to their collection and analysis. Thus the study adopted Braun and Clark (2006) phases of thematic analysis to analyse the data as shown in the figure below.

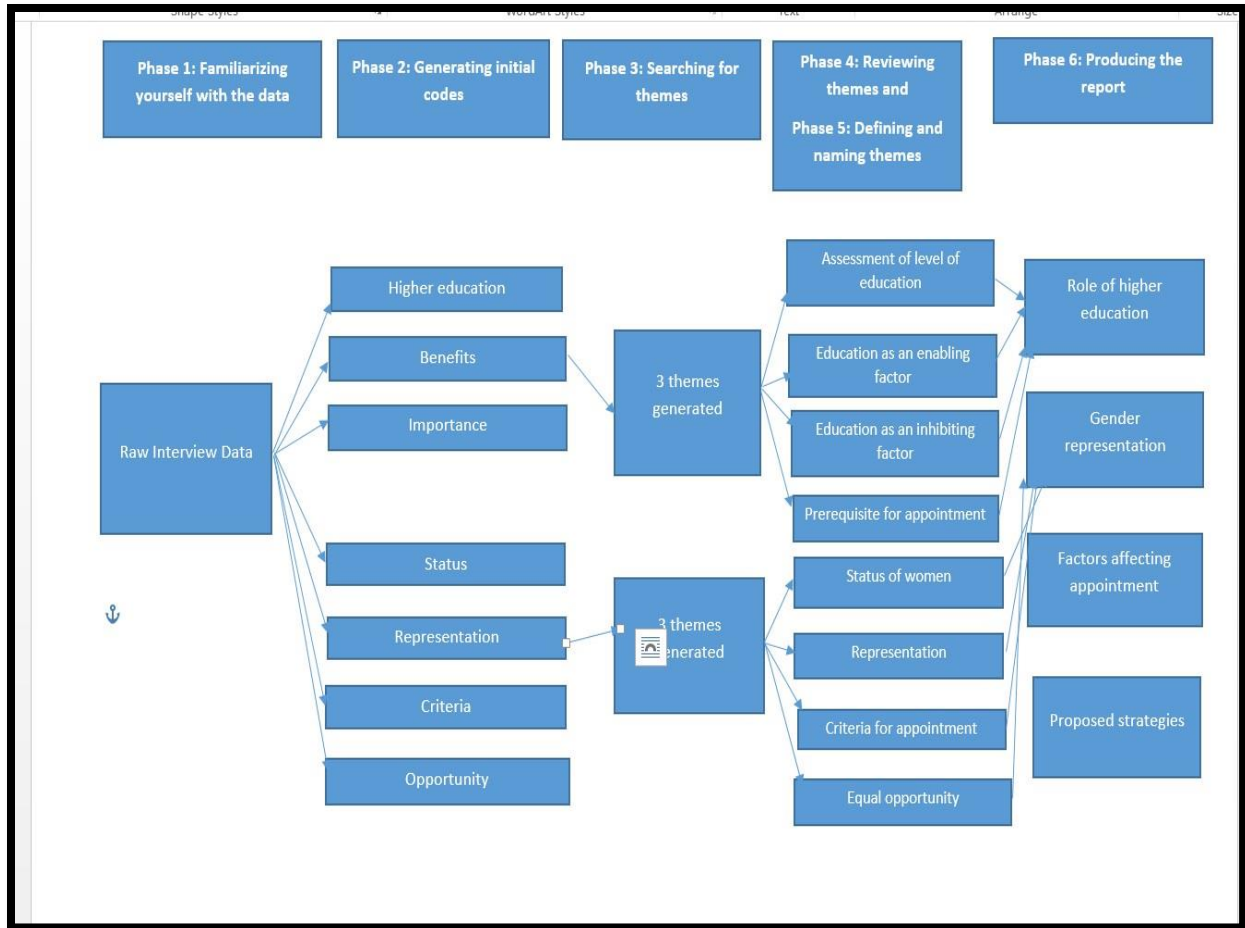
Phases of thematic analysis



Source: Braun & Clarke (2006)

Figure 9: Phases of thematic analysis

The systematic nature of the thematic analysis entails focusing on the identification and analysis of patterns or themes within data. Their definition underscores the importance of organizing and describing the dataset while also emphasizing the interpretive aspect of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). As such, both secondary and primary data were analysed by firstly reading and re-reading the data to familiarise myself with it. The idea was to allow the actual prevailing pattern, themes and phrases of the research findings to emerge from the data, rather than be controlled by factors predetermined prior to their collection and analysis. The process involved reading, reviewing, critiquing where necessary and comparing of different findings already done by different scholars in the context of higher education and women representation in decision making process in different institutions. After that, different codes were generated to find similar occurrences. Then themes were searched and thereafter reviewed. These were then organised to match and reflect the nature of the data. Furthermore, the themes were defined and lastly themes were gathered from the data and these were named accordingly. From the themes defined and named, the report was produced and this is shown in the diagram below that shows how codes and themes were defined and named for the first two objectives in the study.



Source: Field research

Figure 10: Data analysis using Reflexive thematic analysis

3.10 Credibility and trustworthiness

In any research, the researcher must obtain data that are valid. Qualitative studies are usually not based upon standardised instruments and they often utilise smaller, non-random samples (Creswell, 2014). Evaluating the accuracy of qualitative findings is not simple, though there are a few conceivable techniques and criteria that can be utilized to enhance the trustworthiness of qualitative research findings. In qualitative research, therefore, it is important to look at matters of credibility and trustworthiness if the data are to be accepted by others. When it came to trustworthiness, this study used enquiry audit in order to establish trustworthiness. According to Schreier (2012), nowadays, qualitative content analysis is most often applied to verbal data such as interview scripts. Since this study used interviews, to achieve trustworthiness, the strategy was

to ensure that trustworthiness of content analysis starts by choosing the best data collection method to answer the research questions of interest. Thus, the study used inquiry audit to ensure that findings from the study are consistent and supported by data gathered.

Credibility

According to Polit and Beck (2012), credibility refers to the truth of the data or the participant views and the interpretation and representation of them by the researcher. It is enhanced by the researcher who describes their experiences as a researcher and verifying the research findings with the participants. Thus to achieve credibility, the study used multiple perspectives throughout data gathering to ensure data was appropriate and this was done through methods such as triangulation, iterative questioning as well as persistent observation or member checks. The study used member checks because in a research, participants appreciate the member check process as it gives them a chance to verify their statements and fill in any gaps from earlier interviews. By iterative questioning the study used probes to elicit detailed data and return to matters previously raised by the participants so as to extract more data through rephrased questions, thereby ensuring that false data is detected and then decide whether to discard the suspected data. Credibility was further enhanced when Western and African researchers collaborate and are involved in research endeavours according to Chilisa (2012, p.167). Thus, comparing what other researchers have done on the topic made the study enhance credibility. The review of related literature played an important role and also helped the study to enhance credibility.

Dependability

A third perspective on trustworthiness offered by Lincoln and Guba (1985) is dependability, or the trust in trustworthy. Dependability is a way to make and get consistency of data that will be found by the researcher so that the data can be dependable. Key (1997, p. 7) defines dependability as 'dense descriptions of research methods, triangulation, coding and re-coding procedures'. Thus, in this study, dependability was used to prove that the results of this study can reflect the stability and consistency of the entire research process, both in data collection activities, in interpreting findings and in reporting research results. By so doing, the study maintained dependability through journaling, debriefing, cross-checking and also triangulation. In other words, dependability in this study was carried out by conducting an audit of the entire research process by reviewing or criticizing the research results by way of asking someone else to review the research results.

Triangulation

Triangulation is the use of multiple theories, data, methods, and observers in research to study one phenomenon (Greene & McClintok, 1985). Triangulating means using several sources of information or procedure from the field to repeatedly establish identifiable patterns. Thus, recognizing similar outcomes repeatedly through various data sources is a different phenomenon than replicability in an a priori empirical study. Multiple forms of triangulation exist. This study used data triangulation. Data triangulation is the use of multiple complementary data to investigate a phenomenon, and the purpose of using data triangulation is not just to gather comprehensive data about the phenomenon being studied, it is a means of validating and verifying data as well as recognizing inconsistencies in the data sets. This study used data triangulation which included member checking, comparison of interview data, and through the use of available government documents and reports with other literature.

3.11 Ethical issues consideration

Any study that is conducted using qualitative or quantitative approaches must adhere to sound ethical principles and to maintain this, prior permission needs to be sought. Ethical clearance was sought from the Ethics Committee to get informed consent for this study. According to Thackray (2018), informed consent requires potential participants to be adequately informed of the nature of the research studies before they agree to participate in them. A letter of introduction and ethical clearance was first obtained from the University's Institute of Distance Learning before data is collected. After that, a letter seeking permission to carry out research was written to the various offices of the Permanent Secretaries of the various ministries in Lusaka. This was purely an academic research and so participants had the right to withdraw at any time whenever they felt they are stressed, without fear of being penalized or any other reason. They had to voluntarily and willingly participate in the study. Assurance about confidentiality was given to all participants ensuring they understand the reasons for this study and time allocated for each interview was 45 minutes utmost.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality refers to separating or modifying any personal identifying information provided by participants from the data. It pertains to the understanding between the researcher and participant that guarantees sensitive or private information will be handled with the utmost care

(Novak, 2014). Thus, in a qualitative study, the participant is known by the researcher, a situation that commonly arises during an interview, for example. The interviewer knows the name of the participant and may know other personal, identifying information. As such, it is the responsibility of the researcher to protect the participant from harm by altering any personal, identifying information that may be revealed during the interview. This study, therefore, made sure that names of participants and institutions were masked and raw data secured after the research was completed so that it is not possible to tie the data to the participants.

3.12 Limitations of the study

As is the case with any research, this study has its limitations. The limitations of this study mainly included time factor. This study was designed to be specific in focus, time and place and, therefore, the purposeful sampling method was applied to the participants. However, data gathering took longer than usual to complete. Another limitation was how to access potential and suitable participants for the study. As mentioned already, women are under-represented in decision making in public administration. Therefore, the researcher's presence during data gathering can affect the participants' responses since the presence of the researcher is unavoidable in qualitative research.

Reflexivity

Conducting qualitative research involves people impacting people – research, participants and readers of the study. Thus, as a researcher, it was important to be consciously aware of the reflexivity upon the participants. ‘Reflexivity is often understood as involving an ongoing self-awareness during the research process which aids in making visible the practice and construction of knowledge during the research in order to produce more accurate analysis of our research (Pillow, 2003, p. 178). Watt (2015) asserts that being reflexive means being attentive to cultural, political, social, and ideological origins of your own perspective and voice. These are the perspectives and voices of those you interview or observe as well as the perspectives of those to whom you report your research. In short, reflexivity involves examining your own judgments, practices, and belief systems during the data collection process. Therefore, the goal of being reflexive is to identify any personal beliefs that may have incidentally affected the research.

Another goal of reflexivity is not to search for objectivity or remove bias, but instead to use the researcher's personal experience and values as the primary tool to make sense of data. To manage

reflexivity, the researcher was keenly aware of her expressions as the participants shared their stories. However, Hesse-Biber and Leavy, (2006) go on to argue that acknowledgement of differences allow the researcher to take account of these differences and its impact on the interview analysis. Therefore, before the interviews the researcher was mindful of the fact that the participants being interviewed were not going to share their experiences with willingly. As such, the researcher had to make a deliberate effort to make them as comfortable as possible and discuss the many similarities they (researcher and participants) had in order for them to open up to freely. This further made the interviews to be carried out smoothly as participants expressed themselves with ease.

Delimitations of the study

This qualitative study's scope included a limited number of participants from the public service, both men and women, who were selected through purposive sampling to participate in the study based on specific criteria. The study was conducted from Ministry of Education, Ministry of Community Development and Social Services, Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Ministry of Local Government and Housing, the Gender Division and also Public Service Management Division in Lusaka.

3.13 Chapter summary

The emphasis of this study was to explore the role of higher education on women's participation in decision making positions in public administration in Zambia. This chapter covered the rationale in choosing a qualitative research, why it was a case study design, including the selection of participants and sampling methods. This chapter discussed the various philosophical underpinnings in research and how they were used in the study. Further, the chapter also explained the methods of data gathering and also details of data analysis, it concluded with the trustworthiness of the study and the limitations it had.

CHAPTER FOUR PRESENTATION OF STUDY FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the main findings for the study. The study set out to explore the role that higher education has on the appointment of women to decision making positions in public administration. The study was carried out in the various ministries in Lusaka and the participants included both genders consisting of women decision makers and other staff employed in different capacities in these ministries. The major findings of the four research questions covered themes that were related to higher education, women’s representation in decision making, socio-cultural practices, personal attributes, gender and leadership concepts in the work place, and lack of institutional policies to protect women from various challenges that affect women’s appointment to decision making positions in public administration. All these were analysed to find out the reasons why women are lowly represented in decision making and the importance that higher education has on their appointment to decision making positions in public administration.

Data for this study were gathered and analysed using codes given to each type of respondent. These codes helped the study identify which responses were given by a particular individual and in what capacity as well as from which ministry the participant belonged to. This chapter also presents the various themes from the study. The following tables present the emergent themes from the study according to the objectives and research questions that were formulated in the study. The four tables represent each objective in the study according the themes that were generated.

Table 7: Research Question 1

THEMES	SUB-THEMES
Theme 1: Level of education	Sub-theme 1: Assessment of level of education
Theme 2: Role of education	Sub-theme 1: Education as an enabling factor Sub-theme 2: Education as an inhibiting factor
Theme 3: Influence of higher education	Sub-theme 1: Benefits of higher education Sub-theme 2: Prerequisite for appointment

Source: Field research

Table 8: Research Question 2

THEMES	SUB-THEMES
Theme 1: Gender representation	Sub-theme 1: Status of women Sub-theme 2: Representation
Theme 2: Criteria for appointment	Sub-theme 1: Criteria used for appointment
Theme 3: Equal opportunity	Sub-theme 1: Equal opportunity

Source: Field research

Table 9: Research Question 3

THEMES	SUB-THEMES
Theme 1: Factors affecting appointment	Sub-theme 1: Institutional factors Sub-theme 2: Societal factors Sub-theme 3: Personal factors
Theme 2: Overcoming barriers	Sub-theme 1: Institutional interventions Sub-theme 2: Personal interventions

Source: Field research

Table 10: Research Question 4

THEMES	SUB-THEMES
Theme 1: Protocol on women rights	Sub-theme 1: Familiarity of protocols Sub-theme 2: Institutional adherence
Theme 2: Interventions to increase numbers of women	Sub-theme 1: Institutional interventions
Theme 3: Strategies	Sub-theme 1: Proposed strategies

Source: Field research

4.2 Background information of participants

To help us understand the type of participants the study had, it was important to know their background characteristics and so data was collected regarding their gender, age and education qualification and these were presented as shown in the table below.

Table 11: Biodata of participants

	Characteristic	Male	Female	Total
1	<u>Gender</u>	10	15	25
2.	<u>Age</u>			
	30-39	1	1	25
	40-49	6	10	
	Above 50	3	4	
3.	<u>Education</u>			
	Bachelor's degree	4	5	25
	Master's degree	6	9	
	PhD	0	1	
4.	<u>Experience</u>			
	1- 2 years	2	3	25
	3- 5 years	2	2	
	Above 5 years	6	10	

Source: field research

From the biodata table above, we see that all participants interviewed had higher education qualification and the lowest qualification of those that were interviewed was a bachelor's degree.

4.2.1 Role of Education

The first objective of the study was to explore the role that higher education qualification has on women in particular to their appointment in decision making in public administration. Varied responses were given by participants.

Participants perceived that educational background had played a significant role in establishing a framework to advance their careers and prepare them to be in the position they were in the institution. It was apparent that all participants believed that receiving higher education qualifications in their respective fields had provided them with opportunities and opened doors for them to access different positions in the institutions.

WD3LG: 'having the right educational background qualified us to get the positions we have over others'.

WD1PS: most women in the institution have upgraded their qualifications and hold a minimum degree for the positions they have currently.

P8MPS: most women nowadays are educated and are at the same level as men.

(a) Education as an enabling factor

Findings indicated that education is an enabling factor for women as it provides credibility, fosters knowledge seeking and decision making skills such that informal educational activities impart leadership essential proficiencies such as communication skills.

Formal education – formal education qualifications provide credibility and recognition where professional avenues could be accessed especially in various positions in public administration.

P15FE: education is enabling when it comes to decision making and is an important factor in policy making because you need to have some kind of knowledge, or skills in terms of knowledge seeking.

WD5E: having higher education background qualifies one to get the various opportunities over others.

WD2CD: tertiary education facilitates learning through vital interaction with others, thus enables us to be independent and to assume underscoring self-discipline.

P1MLS: higher education is vital for both men and women's character development, earning ability, self-expression, and personality development. But more importantly, higher educational attainment for women can have a cumulative effect not only inside their homes but across generations.

(b) Education as an inhibiting factor

Lack of access to formal education was the most significant inhibiting factor on the part of education for women as findings indicated. Factors such as educational access and life circumstances were highlighted to inhibit education. And the responses were as below:

WD4LS: women are sometimes unable to further their education due to circumstances such as familial responsibilities which hinder their educational and career progression.

P10FLG: women were further restrained in their professional progression because of constraints on their mobility and travel prospects.

WD5E: women are unwilling to make sacrifices at the expense of their loved ones. Thus, many were trapped by such fears, which have negative implications for their career advancement, impeding their motivation to pursue decision making positions. An inability to strike an appropriate work–life balance resulted in a profound sense of guilt, especially with regard to one’s children, as the mother’s role within the family is considered pivotal.

4.2.2 Influence of higher education

The study sought to find out the influence that higher education has on women in public administration. The study took participants’ thoughts on importance of acquiring higher education firstly by finding out how their higher education journey has been. Findings were that most of the participants started with lower qualifications when joining the organization and later upgraded to a higher qualification.

P19FLG: I was able to reach to this position after I upgraded my qualifications and been transferred from ministry to ministry in different capacities.

P18MPS: higher education makes women have more opportunities in life and makes them more important in society.

When asked what benefits accrue to women when they acquire higher education qualification and if it has impacted their appointment to decision making positions, participants highlighted that there were great benefits that accrue to women when they acquire higher level of education.

P9MCD: women’s higher education attainment is beneficial because it makes communities and societies better, wealthier, safer, and more prosperous. Also, women who have higher education qualification, no doubt, are the primary teachers of their children and can play an essential role in the shaping and sculpting the lives of their children.

P12FLS: higher education qualification influences the knowledge, consciousness, personality, performance, attitude and skills of women such that lack of educational qualification prevents women from attaining decision making positions. It gives women the skill of making better decisions that are inclusive of everyone not only the institution but society as a whole.

P13MLS: education helps close the gap between men and women in terms of pay.

On whether higher education qualification was a prerequisite for women's appointment to decision making positions, many participants agreed that for one to be appointed to the level of decision making in any organization, they require higher level of education.

WD5E: higher education is a dominant factor affecting decisions making power of women. Hence, women with the rise of educational qualifications have great decision making power and will have more access to political power and decision making both at state institution and household levels.

P2FCD: contrary to participant WD5E above, in most ministries, higher education qualification is not a prerequisite because the minimum qualification one needs is a bachelor's degree. Thus when one upgrades further, there is less chance they will move upwards as some positions are political appointments that may not consider whether one has a much higher qualification.

The study also sought to explore how higher education has impacted on the institution where women who have acquired it are working and if it has impacted on the operations of the institution.

P20MCD: higher education has raised the calibre of women who make good decisions in the institutions. Women now have more confidence in themselves and have the ability to contribute effectively to national development. Currently, the few women that are occupying decision making positions have delivered good decisions.

From these findings, it can be deduced that higher education qualification plays an important role in women's lives especially in their appointment to decision making positions. Further, findings also suggest that the higher the educational degree, the better the chances for women to be appointed to decision making positions in public administration.

4.3 Decision making

In the context of this study, women's participation in decision making was operationalized as those women occupying positions of decision making at both strategic and middle level management, such as principal and heads of departments in public administration.

4.3.1 Status of women

Decision making is characterized by many players in Zambia. In a typical public administration, in this case various ministries where data was collected, there are levels of decision making (managerial, administration and functional work) and at every level of decision making, women are supposed to be represented. When it comes to the status of women, though women are represented at various level of decision making, there seems to be a situation where at top most positions, there are fewer women as compared to the bottom of the decision making ladder.

P3FLG: men dominate the public sector in Zambia and are more frequently selected for top positions. Even when both men and women possess the same qualifications, men are considered first and given the top position before women.

4.3.2 Gender representation

Zambian public administration institutional arrangement structure from the national, provincial, district and sub-district level comprising different heads of people and appointment. It is important to observe the evolution of women in positions with power of decision and their concentration in higher, medium or low levels of management in order to establish if in public administration, women are well represented, if they occupy positions from the superior levels of management which suppose high power of decision or if they only present in a large number in the inferior levels of management. Thus, the study wanted to examine the gender representation of women in decision making by ascertaining the level of their representation in various ministries.

Table 12: Gender representation in the public service in Zambia

POSITION	TOTAL	No. OF MEN	% OF MEN	No. OF WOMEN	% OF WOMEN
Permanent Secretary	56	43	76.6	13	23.2
Deputy P. Secretary	12	10	83.33	2	16.67
Directors	349	241	71	103	29
Heads of Department	2319	1597	68.9	722	31.1

Source: secondary data from PMRC 2021 (document made available during field work)

The findings in table 12 resonate with what participants reported as follows:

P19FLG: women remain underrepresented in decision making positions in public administration. Women occupy feminine positions in care departments such as Human

Resources, while men are given masculine positions in policy departments like finance and planning.

WD1PS: most top positions show a larger percentage of men as Permanent Secretaries, whilst the lower positions though having more men, show that women do not yet participate equally with men in public administration, especially in decision making roles.

4.3.3 Criteria for appointment

The study findings on the criteria for appointing women to decision making positions in public administration revealed that the minimum required qualification is a degree.

WD3LG: most top most decision making positions are political appointments such as Permanent Secretary and criteria is not known.

P9MCD: the criteria known to everyone in this organization is academic qualification starting from a bachelor's degree. In some instances, some positions require administrative abilities and experience which may be regarded as key in the appointment to that position.

Some ministries had a bias towards women and some towards men. Nevertheless, many participants also highlighted the role of evaluation as typically more favourable for men involved in decision making roles.

P14FLG: many people underestimate women's abilities to make decisions and the assumption appears to be that men would perform better in decision making roles and that is why men are considered first.

4.3.4 Equal opportunity

When asked if women were given equal opportunity as men in decision making, various participants highlighted that both men and women were given equal opportunity while others still indicated that women were considered next after men.

P16FCD: men dominated the public sector and are more frequently selected for top positions because, some argue, they are perceived to be more willing to work longer hours and supervise others. Men are willing to work far from home.

P9MCD: both men and women may be given a position but women are hesitant to accept positions that may take them out of town because of fear of working far from their families.

4.4 Challenges faced by women in their appointment to decision making

The study wanted to find out if at all gender affected women's appointment to decision making positions and what obstacles women face in public administration. Findings showed that women not only experience barriers and discrimination in accessing senior leadership positions, but also, once they get to those positions, they face a number of complex challenges.

4.4.1 Institutional challenges

Institutional or organizational cultures are influenced by gendered norms, which are usually unarticulated, unwritten, and sometimes unconscious, and therefore hard to identify and address. These affect the way women are treated in these organizations. Findings indicated that:

WD4LS: gender affects appointment of women to decision making positions because there have been instances where an advert for a position that fell vacant is seen and both men and women apply for it. Issues arise when it comes to appointing in that men may be considered first even when both possess the qualification needed for that position.

P11FCD: women have to prove themselves that they can do it and deliver while for men it is a different case and do not need to prove anything.

WD2CD: women encounter difficulties in dealing with other women, as other female colleagues did not want them to flourish as leaders, and characterizing their relationships with some of them as non-cooperative.

When asked what obstacles women face in their appointment to decision making positions, most participants highlighted that at an institutional level, they face mainly two types of segregation that is horizontal and vertical segregation.

(a) Horizontal segregation

Horizontal segregation refers to the situation when women are treated differently than men in terms of payment, promotions, and professional evaluation when it comes to accessing decision making positions. Another aspect that shows this type of discrimination is the separation of occupations in feminine and masculine fields in these institutions.

P6FLG: there are less opportunities for women in decision making because when assessing candidates, men are considered first because they are willing to work anywhere.

WD3LG: most superiors regard women to have excuses because of their care activities where they are forced to stay away from work to tend to family issues.

(b) Vertical segregation

Vertical segregation refers to the fact that women are underrepresented in positions with high power of decision or in upper management of organization and over represented in medium and low management positions.

P13MLS: there is no adequate recognition for women especially as all decisions they make are barely noticed. Women have to prove that they can work twice as men in order to move upwards.

When asked if men and women faced the same kind of obstacles, participants had this to say;

P17MGD: men and women face different obstacles be it in society or in the institutions. Men have been brought up to be leaders and women to be led. This has led to differing perceptions of each of them.

WD5E: even when it's a women in the decision making position, she will face obstacles and sometimes resentment from men under her.

P15ME: women do not fully support their fellow women in decision making positions. Men on the other hand definitely support each other whether they are in a superior position or not.

P10FLG: we are acutely aware of the notion that certain jobs are classified by gender suitability as we live in a masculine world, where leadership posts are reserved for men, culture-wise.

P5MCD: perceptions of what is women's work, both by colleagues and women themselves, affects the types of jobs women occupy. In this vein, appointing authorities generally see women as more suited for jobs in the realm of human relations.

From the perspective of the study participants, it appears that women are discriminated against at an organizational level, and that this discrimination can take several forms limiting the professional

evaluation of women. At the institutional level, discriminatory recruitment, appointment and promotion procedures, political appointments, unclear promotion criteria, absence of documented staff development policies for senior managers and few opportunities for further training deride women's appointment to decision making. Therefore, our findings indicated that after women occupy the top positions in the decision making hierarchy, it can be hard for them to move into other positions, further reducing the likelihood that they will make it to and remain in decision making positions.

4.4.2 Societal challenges

Generally, the findings of this study places the cultural milieu which children are taught as they grow up as the foundation of gender differences in perceptions and attitudes formation towards work and career as well as appointment of women to decision making positions.

P15FE: the way we socialize our children has led to the low number of women in decision making because society regards women as care takers and so cannot handle decision making positions.

P5MPS: because of societal factors, women are appreciated more for their outward looks and good character than for their intellectual skills and competence.

WD3LG: society expects men to be in the forefront and women as followers and this has led to lower numbers of women in decision making positions in public administration.

4.4.3 Personal challenges

It was also found that at a personal level, factors such as lack of confidence and fear of public office are deterring women from taking decision making positions.

P2FCD: women lack self-confidence to participate in decision making.

P20MCD: they underestimate their abilities and perceive themselves as less skilled to handle decision making positions. Because of this, their ability to actively and effectively play a role in decision making is reduced.

4.4.4 Overcoming challenges

Participants were asked to suggest how the obstacles can be reduced or overcome.

P17MGD: training for women would help eliminate these gender biases.

P16FCD: women also need to support fellow women in decision making and ensure that they play a role in all issues that concern decision making. This is because women in many organizations work against each other because of jealousy.

P11FCD: women need to build their self-esteem and ensure they are up to the task given to them.

4.5 Strategies to enhance appointment to women to decision making positions

The study wanted to find out if there were strategies in place or planned to increase the number of women in these decision making positions in public administration. Participants had varied views on strategies institutions have.

WD4LS: we are aware that women have been given special attention as per government policies in order to participate equally in all decision making positions and all levels in public administration.

P4MPS: in most government institutions, there is a deliberate move and policy to have more women apply and occupy most jobs that are advertised. Women have been encouraged to apply for all positions of decision making.

4.5.1 Protocols on women's rights

The study wanted to find out if at the participants were familiar with the protocols and declarations that concern women's affairs especially those that encourage women to be part and parcel of decision making and if these were being applied in their organizations.

WD1PS: we are familiar with all protocols that champion women's rights and participation. We have seen them being talked about and championed by various institutions but are not that effective as implementation is almost impossible.

P19FLG: the writings are there but merely on paper and most institutions claim to apply them though this is not the case.

4.5.2 Interventions to increase the number of women

Experts interviewed during the study emphasized that the key values of public administration must be clearly defined and common for all institutions and those employed in public administration, thereby establishing a single public administration instead of a fragmented one. The study wanted

to find out what strategies the institution has put in place to eliminate gender biases and reduce the gender gap in decision making.

WD2CD: the institutions have deliberate strategies such as encouraging women to apply for positions of authority. For example, institutions encourage women all around the country to vie for positions of decision making.

4.5.3 Strategies to reduce gender gaps

Participants were asked to suggest any recommendations to their institution as a way of increasing the number of women in decision making.

P3FLG: recommend women to have further trainings to help them manage decision making positions.

WD1PS: need for deliberate checks on all institutions to know the number of women holding decision making positions around the country as this would help know how the country is doing with closing the gender gap in decision making in public administration.

The participants were asked to make suggestions to government in order to increase the number of women in decision making.

WD5E: the current public service would need to identify existing policy instruments that could be tweaked to accurately reflect its policy agenda. In some instances this will require amendments to policies or the drafting and administration of new policies. All of this requires an appropriate mix of capacity for policy action that will lead to the desired outcomes.

WD2CD: recommend political will on the part of the appointing authority and also serious implementation of protocols that champion women affairs.

P5MPS: there is need to ensure that the selection process is representative of both men and women.

From the responses, we can deduce that implementation of the laid out policies championing women's affairs and rights to equal participation in public administration require political will from implementers and will only work when implemented and not just in wording.

4.6 Chapter summary

The study sought to explore the role that higher education has on women's appointment to decision making positions in public administration. Five research questions were asked in order to have a better understanding of problem. And findings showed that higher education is important to women and is a panacea for their appointment to decision making. The study further found that women face institutional, societal and personal factors in their appointment to decision making. It was revealed also that women are underrepresented in decision making in Zambia and participants suggested strategies that could increase the number of women in decision making in public administration. Therefore, the following chapter discusses the findings based on the themes that emerged from the semi-structured interview sessions.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the main research findings, highlighting the study's contribution to the field of higher education and decision making in public administration as well as its limitations. It has been seen from the literature reviewed that no comprehensive study exists on the role of higher education on women's appointment to decision making positions specifically in public administration in Zambia. While there was readily available data on women representation in politics, there was less data on the role that higher education qualification has on women's representation in public administration. From the scanty information available in other countries, it appears that despite the diversity of countries studied, women remain underrepresented overall in the top levels of public administration (UNDP, 2014). Despite massive gains in higher education and labour force participation, women continue to be underrepresented in decision making positions in public administration especially in Zambia. Therefore, this study was premised on the assumption that there are few women in decision making positions and based on this assumption, the researcher set out to establish what was pertaining in public administration in Zambia and to understand why despite women acquiring the needed higher education, they still lagged behind men when it came to appointment to decision making positions in public administration.

5.2 Influence of higher education on women's appointment to decision making positions

From the results of the study, many participants highlighted that higher education for women is an important factor that opens up avenues for them in society. Higher education is a vital tool for equipping women with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence they need and aids in the reduction of inequalities and the improvement of their family status. According to Rathgeber (1995), evidence suggests that higher education has a positive impact on development and social change of a country. It adds to the self-esteem of women and encourages them to participate in public roles. Higher education, in this way, challenges and reinforces existing gender structures, however, an increased access of women to higher education is generally not fully reflected in labour markets, families or societies. Therefore, the challenges and obstacles faced by girls and women with low educational attainment are multifaceted and they reinforce each other, leading to

a diminished ability to break away from patterns of disadvantages. In other words, it would seem intuitive that women's leadership and their full and effective participation in public life and decision making should correlate closely with their attainment of higher education (UNESCO, 2021).

5.2.1 Level of Education

5.2.1.1 Assessment of level of Education

Most participants in the study agreed and indicated that various positions in the institutions required one to have higher education qualification. Currently, contributions to society have increasingly been demanded of higher education institutions. According to UNESCO (2000, p. 67), 'higher education has expanded throughout the world remarkably, though there have been different degrees of this expansion. If one looks at increases in enrolment rate, one sees that the increase for higher education was greater than that for primary and secondary education'.

From the findings of the research, it was established that women have attained higher education though not at the same pace as their male counterparts. The British Council (2022) agrees with this finding and indicated that gender equality issues impact and are reflected in higher education systems worldwide – with unequal access to higher education in many countries, fewer resources and opportunities available to women, the existence of violence against women affecting students and staff, and sustained underrepresentation of women in leadership positions in higher education institutions. Therefore, despite women succeeding academically, it is more challenging for women to succeed in their future careers. Similarly, in Zambia, Mwanza (2015) indicated that the uneven access to education between boys and girls is still a major problem where girls that complete school are less than 40% of boys. When girls are not educated on the same level as boys, there is a huge effect on their future and the kinds of opportunities they get.

5.2.2 Role of Education

5.2.2.1 Education as an enabling factor

The study wanted to ascertain the role that higher education qualification has on women's appointment to decision making positions in public administration. Participants highlighted that education, both formal and informal was an enabling factor in women's appointment to decision making positions in public administration.

Education is enabling in decision making and is an important factor in policy making because you need to have some kind of knowledge, or skills in terms of knowledge seeking. Further, tertiary education facilitates learning through vital interaction with others, thus enables us to be independent and to assume underscoring self-discipline.

In line with this finding, therefore, according to Tinuke (2011), higher education is critical to the public economy because it provides a ready and trained workforce for the rest of the economy. A key factor in this regard is to ensure that women have the minimum educational requirements to enter the public service. If there is a limited pool of eligible women in a society, or if the pool is not visible, then the chances for improvement of gender balance in public administration and at decision making levels are slim. Moreover, when educated women occupy top positions in decision making organs their involvement helps in women-inclusive policies which eliminate inequality based on gender (Lyon, 1999). In short, qualified women, who have acquired higher education, not only become strong and reliable leaders of the society but are able to make relevant decisions that better the lives of everyone in society. Education is a dominant factor affecting decisions making power of women in society and so it is expected that with the rise of educational level, decision making power of women will also be increased and they will have more access to political power and decision making both at state institution and household levels. However, although continued efforts to improve women's and girls' access to education are obviously an important foundational measure to advance women's equal participation and decision making, including in public administration, other factors must also be taken into consideration.

Higher education, as seen from the findings, has for a long time fulfilled the role of producing government and private sector leaders. As such, the ability to apply knowledge and technical skills is important to economic development. This knowledge and ability is best generated through informal education/learning. This makes informal education important to women's empowerment. UNESCO (2012, p. 8) defines informal education as 'learning that occurs in daily life, in the family, in the workplace, in communities and through interests and activities of individuals'. Through the recognition, validation and accreditation process, competences gained in informal learning can be made visible, and can contribute to qualifications and other recognitions. Informal education plays a vital role in the development of professional skills of individuals and people can benefit from it to improve their wellbeing. Jeffs and Smith (2016, p. 3) support this view and

summarise informal education by suggesting that it ‘works through, and is driven by, conversation and is spontaneous and involves exploring and enlarging experience, and can take place in any setting’.

Similarly, as findings suggested, informal education gives women chance to be change agents in addressing and analysing issues. Thus, a positive argument that informal learning and literacy contribute to community and individual development emerges in the long-term ethnographic work (Papen, 2003). Papen (2003) commends the significance of informal learning and literacy based on a study conducted in Namibia that found that informal learning and literacy were found to be a social practice instead of just a means of writing and reading. Papen (2003) also found that informal learning and literacy are connected to human rights and social justice and the embodiment of power among the marginalised people especially women. Therefore, findings and literature both agreed that informal education is essential in promoting effective growth and development of the individuals because it is through this education that individuals are able to generate awareness and continue to learn throughout his life.

5.2.2.2 Education as an inhibiting factor

Lack of access to formal education was seen to inhibit women’s appointment to decision making in public administration. Most participants indicated that women are sometimes not willing to further their education because of familial responsibilities. Women mostly were unwilling to make sacrifices by going for further training at the expense of their children. Supporting this finding, in the Asian cultural context, some women negatively believe that taking up leadership roles would consume more of their time, resulting in reduced time to be spent with the family (Kim & Kim, 2018), which may jeopardize conjugal and family relationships (Howe-Walsh & Turnbull, 2016). Similarly, in a developing world cultural context, some women reject leadership positions due to their responsibilities towards their families (Derks et al., 2016). The adoption of this attitude is occasioned by cultural stereotypes which assume that regardless of working in organizational leadership as men, women still retain a significant proportion of household duties (Kelleher et al., 2011).

In this vein, findings suggested that women needed to be helped by getting a work-life balance so that they can further their education. OECD (2014) highlights how employment outcomes are

innately associated with societal gender roles. Traditional gender roles associate women with caring work which constitutes one of the predominant forms of unpaid work (OECD, 2012). Eddy et al., (2015, p. 7), also supports these findings, highlighting that ‘it is not necessarily the challenge of the work that prevents people from pursuing career opportunities; it is the anticipation that there will be challenges, albeit an assumption borne out by the reality of many women’s lives’. It is rather, as one participant expressed, ‘the inner fear of losing what we have in our daily life with people around us’. Similarly, Eddy (2009) reveals that while women pursue their own career progression, they must also accommodate their children and their husbands’ career needs. In some cases, their family obligations prevent them from following career plans, making attainment of upper-level positions difficult. Similar to the findings of the present study also, Eddy (2009) attributes the lack of senior female academics in leadership positions to women’s decisions to prioritise family over career (Eddy, 2009). Thus, flexible working arrangements are one of the most widely used organisational policies for addressing work-life balance issues and tackling gender equality issues (OECD, 2014).

5.2.3 Influence of higher education

Concerning the influence that higher education has on women’s appointment to decision making positions in public administration, participants highlighted that higher education impacts greatly on women and the institution. Results from the study showed that participants perceived that their educational background had played a significant role in establishing a framework to advance their careers and prepare them for their decision making roles. They described how ‘having the right educational background qualified them to get the positions over others’. According to Northedge (2003, p. 22), ‘students entering higher education gain the ability to participate in prestigious and powerful knowledge communities giving them ‘intellectual’ and ‘social power’ that can have a significant impact on the future of a country’. Thus, the higher the educational degree, the better the chances for women to pursue significant leadership roles in different governmental sectors.

From the results also, it was established that higher education for women has great impacts in that it influences the knowledge consciousness, personality, performance, attitude and skills such that lack of higher education prevents women from occupying decision making positions. Higher education was found to be fostering insight regarding the societal norms, equipping young women with traits such as ‘self-reliance’ makes their overall quality of life better, key in eliminating

various sorts of discrimination (based on social class, gender, religion, beliefs) and uplifting vital factors such as democratic governance (McClelland & Evans, 1992). Therefore, higher education of women in public administration acts as a motivator, and organizations need to remove barriers to mid-career women to facilitate and increase the representation of women as decision makers in public administration. Higher education gives women an opportunity to participate in public affairs actively as it gives them space where not only civil, political, economic, cultural participation of women is ensured, but also the power of knowledge strengthens their self-confidence to resist any kind of exploitation.

5.2.3.1 Benefits of higher education

Findings from the study on what benefits accrue to one having higher education showed that education helps women in taking crucial decisions in their personal and political life by empowering them with the right to vote, right to contest, and campaign in public affairs. According to Akawa (2014), education equips women with the know-how to make sure that women are part of structures and participate in making influential decisions and policies that affect women and ensure that their interests are advanced. Macro level research stresses the links between girls and women's education and economic development where nations with higher levels of female enrolment in education in general have higher over all levels of economic productivity (Kwesiga, 2002). In other words, women's higher education qualification adds to the reduction of gender gaps and also impacts greatly on their lives as it enables them acquire decision making skills that leads them to occupy decision making positions in public administration. Higher education no doubt widens the mental horizons and releases from the ignorance and superstitions, it makes a person aware about rights and improve decision making capacity.

Higher education also, as can be seen from the findings, plays a huge role in gender equality. Literature illustrates that gender equality can be achieved through giving women education as it enables girls to participate in social, economic and political life and is a base for development of a democratic and inclusive society (Radford, 2000). Participants indicated that higher education not only develops the individual's personality, but also qualifies them to perform specific economic, political, and cultural functions, enhancing their socioeconomic level. This finding, is consistent with earlier studies (Al-Subhi, 2016) that have highlighted the importance of attaining further degrees. Al-Subhi (2016, p.14) confirms that 'education is the most powerful tool

to achieve socioeconomic and political changes' for Omani women. Muñoz's (2010) participants also expressed similar views concerning the importance of attaining a doctoral degree to advance one's leadership prospects. Some of the participants in the present study claimed that having higher academic qualifications 'qualified [them] to get the positions over others'.

5.2.3.2 Prerequisite for appointment

Findings of the study also showed that participants indicated that education is a prerequisite for women to have opportunities to occupy decision making positions. This was because higher education was said to be a strong force that provides women with decision making power and leading skills. Public administration seeks high quality services such that organisations in the public sector must be high performing. In order to perform highly, persons working in the public sector should be of the highest level of skill and preparation. According to Adedeji (1974, p. 21), 'professionalism in public administration implies the existence of a professional community, a body of knowledge, an ethos, values and standards, an ethical code of conduct and the ability and willingness to uphold standards, and discipline recalcitrant or erring members. But most importantly it implies higher qualifications'. Agreeing with this finding, Panchami (2017) argued that literacy alone cannot help women in self-dependence but higher education helps women to become more capable. Panchami further highlighted that higher education is one of the most important means of empowering women with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence. His study collected data from secondary sources and listed out the challenges faced by women in pursuing higher education level. Further, Panchami suggested widening the scope of higher education and recommended universities to play the role of empowering agents of higher education. In short, when women are educated, they will be able to assist in national building and reconstruction.

5.3 Gender representation of women in decision making in public administration

Women's appointment to decision making positions is essential for women's interests to be incorporated into governance. Women have the right to participate in decision making, to engage in society, vote in elections, be elected to government office, serve on boards, and make their voices heard in any process that will ultimately affect them, their families and communities. Namdeo (2017) was of the opinion that women get better recognition in society when they are able to participate equally in the decision making process and can express their views. Women earn attention from everyone through the power of expression and ability to solve problems with their

views and ideas. However, participation of women in decision making is a necessary but insufficient condition for representation because representation does not flow automatically from participation. The focus of participation is on whether women are able to participate fully and influence decisions that are made. Accordingly, the meaningful participation of women in national, local and community leadership roles has become an important focus on global development policy (Otieno, 2015).

5.3.1 Gender representation

5.3.1.1 Status of women

Public administration is an important institution as it is the largest employer of women. According to GEPA (2019), in many countries, public institutions continue to be male-dominated and patriarchal, perpetuating harmful, and sometimes violent, attitudes and practices. Although there is no global baseline on women's participation in public administration, existing research from UNDP shows that women are under-represented, especially in leadership and decision making roles. The available data suggests that women make up on average 45% of public administration, yet there is high variation of women's participation across countries, ranging from 3% to 77%. The overall share of women in public administration is highest, on average, in OECD countries (55.1%), and lowest in the Arab States (35.9%). However, when looking at the share of women in decision making positions in public administration, the highest average share is found in Latin America and the Caribbean (43.4%) and the lowest in Africa (25.1%). Moreover, just 20% of countries have reached parity (50%) in the share of women in decision making. Similarly UNDP (2021), observed that women remain concentrated in some policy areas and starkly underrepresented in others. While women's numbers are highest in ministries focused on women's issues, health and education, they are underrepresented in 15 of the 20 policy areas, with Public Works and Transportation reporting the lowest share of women. These 'glass walls' are likely limiting women's influence on policymaking and their ability to effect change overall. Overall, these averages reveal a familiar pattern: as the level of decision-making power and influence increases, women's numbers decline.

Similarly, Catalyst (2016, p. 5) concluded that a substantial gender gap exists on a global scale concerning the representation of women in leadership roles. The report highlights that, despite the current rise in the number of women occupying positions of leadership, these 'do not necessarily

translate into greater gender equality'. Women are under-represented as leaders in most aspects of working life, with the Global Gender Gap Report underlining that a study of 68 countries revealed a greater number of skilled women workers than men across the globe, but that women represent 'the majority of leaders in only 4', that is, Iceland, Norway, Finland and Sweden (WEF, 2015, p. 5). Further, Hoeritz (2013) highlights that, in all institutions, women tend to be represented in positions of lower seniority (for example, administrators, coordinators and office managers) rather than in senior executive positions.

5.3.1.2 Representation

The Zambian society is slowly changing in terms of the perceptions that people have towards women in their appointment to decision making in public administration. According to the UNICEF (2019), gender equality means that women and men, and girls and boys, enjoy the same rights, resources, opportunities and protections. It does not require that girls and boys, or women and men, be the same, or that they be treated exactly alike. Therefore, findings from the study showed that despite many efforts to eradicate inequalities between men and women in decision making, women have remained underrepresented in positions of power.

In Boserup (1970), the position of women in development efforts is critically discussed. She was the first to argue that the modern sector is dominated by men, while women remained in the 'traditional' or 'subsistence' sectors. She further argued that the low participation of women in the 'modern economic sectors' was bad for both development and women themselves. Women should be integrated into decision making processes to bring improvements to their status and for them to enjoy the fruits of development initiatives. Achieving the goal of equal participation of women and men in decision making provides a balance which more accurately reflects the composition of society and is needed in order to strengthen democracy and promote its proper functioning (Kanjaye, 1999).

This finding was true as most ministries visited during data collection, were run by men. One ministry, however, was found to be gender biased towards women. In this vein, from these findings, it is important to note that gender in public administration is a concern. At the global level, the distribution between the two genders in decision making positions tends to favour men. Women have been underrepresented at all levels of decision making, especially in governmental

and parliament sector (ZARD, 2011). This coincides with the study by Clark. Historically, the role of women in public administration in Europe was similar to other parts of the world, with very few women in public administration and those employed therein were in caregiving and nurturing roles, such as substitute mother in social institutions (Clark, 2000). However, women began to occupy more prominent positions like inspectors of school and prisons in the nineteenth century. Clark (2000) researched the rise of women in public administration in Europe specifically France, over an extended period beginning from 1830 to the first half of the 20th century. Clark's study provided evidence of women's barriers to employment and advancement in public administration, thus providing a historical perspective of women in public administration in Europe. Clark indicated that women held positions in the so called 'female professions' like nursing and teaching.

Public administration especially in Zambia has been seen to be gendered for a long time now. Gender equality in decision making is to be in the context of whether women are in the position to make or influence public decisions on the same footing as men. According to Acker (1990), historically, gendered substructures formed the structure of public sector organizations, which were hierarchical and male-dominated with very few women. Women operated within the lower ranks of the public sector with little or no power, while men held all the prominent positions, dominant and influential roles in public administration. In Indonesia, men were leading the organizations, made the decisions, developed the hierarchical structure, systems, and processes, and established gendered organizational images, relationships and culture to foster their dominance in public administration (Elfadhila & Kurniawan, 2020).

The findings of the study and also the findings of Acker were similar. Public administration creates barriers for women to maintain their status quo where factors such as glass fences, or glass ceilings are used to undermine women and their advancement to decision making positions. Even where women manage to advance to top decision making positions in public administration, women experience barriers from social, political and cultural including economic factors. Further, most women occupy positions expected or defined as female positions by society and public organizations (Clark, 2000). Agreeing to our findings also, UNDP (2014) indicated that in many national contexts where numbers of women equal those of men in public administration as a whole, women tend to be clustered in junior, less prestigious and lower paying positions and in those traditionally considered to be 'soft' or feminized sectors, such as culture, education, health and

tourism. In most countries, women are underrepresented, if present at all, in sectors such as security, finance and planning, which remain dominated but men. Such sectoral segregations known as ‘glass wall’ were also identified at the decision making level across all 13 of the GEPA has studies.

From these findings, however, we can deduce that though women have transitioned to decision making positions in public administration, their appointment remain to care positons such as care departments or care ministries. As such, if public jobs are public resources, Hays (1998, p. 300) suggests that a representative government workforce is a critical objective for the public sector. Without a critical mass of women, public administration is not tapping into the full potential of a country’s workforce, capacity and creativity (UNDP, 2014).

5.3.2 Criteria for appointment

Another finding was that of the criteria used for appointment to decision making positons in public administration. The Zambian government recognized the need to promote equitable gender representation at all levels of decision making through affirmative action such as developing criteria for recruitment, appointment and promotion of more women to advisory and decision making positions. In order to address the problem of gender imbalance in decision making positions, the government adopted the National Gender Policy on 6 March 2000. The principle of merit based recruitment and promotion is fundamental to public administration and attention to gender equality should not be interpreted as compromising this principle. Findings showed that:

Higher education qualification is the number one criteria used in public administration.

Other appointments are political appointment but the bottom line is that one needs to have higher education in order to be appointed to decision making positions.

From the many responses given during data collection, the general view was that women do not reach public office because the requirement of advanced education, and other qualifications are more difficult for women to achieve in the face of social discriminations against them. Further participants also had other views and said that currently, women are just as qualified and professional as men, with few being better qualified than their male counterparts. However, when it comes to equality in appointment, men are considered first before women. Therefore, most

prominent from the findings was that there is no equality of opportunity in public administration as the recruitment and selection process discriminates against women and also creates barriers for women to be appointed to decision making positions. Similarly, UNDP (2012, p. 10), ‘in terms of affirmative measures for gender equality in the public administration, none of the Arab countries have yet established any quota or special temporary measures to increase women’s representation in decision making. Accordingly, women continue to have low representation in these positions, achieving: 1% in Qatar, 2% in Djibouti, UAE and Sudan, 3% in Syria, 5% in Kuwait, 6% in Algeria, 8% in Mauritania, 10% in Morocco, 13% in Iraq, 18% in Tunisia, and 21% in Bahrain’.

5.3.3 Equal opportunity

The Zambian public sector is still characterised by a small number of women working in managerial positions which are podiums of decision making processes. Moreover, the contribution of these few women in decision making processes is very limited as the public service is still male dominated. Findings of the study indicated that men dominate the public service with few women occupying few decision making positions. Agreeing with our findings, in England, Davies (2011, p. 4) states that ‘fewer women than men are coming through to the top level of organisations’ further suggesting that clear plans need to be put in place to promote ‘gender equality in the workplace, with flexible working and an equal pay act’. It could be argued, however, that it will be some time before true equality is achieved in the England. This is because public administration is a gendered organization by nature, with the jobs, concepts, structure, wages and the workers image being masculine mostly (Acker, 1990).

The findings of the study revealed that women are not given equal opportunities as men in public administration. For example, Stivers (1990) notes that while at the ground level, most public servants are female, at the top level, women are scarce. Moreover, women who enter the highest echelons in public administration, are facing a different work environment than men. Because of their female status, women are closely watched as to how they behave, dress, talk and make decisions. They face criticism if they appear as too masculine (for example, Hillary Clinton), but also if they are deemed too feminine (which is commonly associated with being weak). Further, some public sector organizations where management implemented gendering programs provide the right conditions for women to excel, indicating that women can outperform men in public administration under the right conditions (Stivers, 2002). In this vein, it is important to observe the

evolution of women in positions with power of decision and their concentration in higher, medium or low levels of management in order to establish if in public administration. Women are well represented, if they occupy positions from the superior levels of management which suppose high power of decision or if they only present in a large number in the inferior levels of management.

Another finding was that both men and women were given opportunities but some women mostly shunned some positions due to family responsibilities. This finding was echoed by Smith (2016, p. 85), who states that the ‘powerful social discourses of motherhood continue to find expression in the restrictive parameters within which many women make their life and career decisions’. As with the female leaders in Eddy’s (2009) study, many women in the present study often adopted different roles at work or refused opportunities to pursue higher education degrees because of the potential impact of relocation on their families. Similarly, Emmanuel (2016) asserts that despite a great number of women graduates, there are few women at senior management level, most as a result of women being compelled to relinquish or interrupt their career for the sake of their family, to strike a balance between family and work.

5.4 Challenges faced by women in decision making in public administration

It has been seen from the findings of the study that women’s participation and appointment to decision making positions in public administration is important. This is because inclusive decision making is necessary in terms of both legitimacy and good policy outcomes. According to Nasser (2018), balanced total employment among women and men is important but it is equally important to have women dispersed throughout all the different sectors of administrative governance, as well as equitably represented in all levels of decision-making. Public administration, at both the central and local level, generally reflects the orientation and character of domestic politics. Public administration, including the implementation of policy, is influenced by politics. Thus, in patriarchal and exclusionary societies, women, youth and minorities are often excluded from the public administration. For instance, it is common in many countries to observe a higher proportion of women in lower-levels of the public administration.

5.4.1 Factors affecting appointment

Public administration is the bedrock of government and the central instrument through which national policies and programs are implemented and a fundamental argument for increased

representation of women in public administration is that when the composition of the public sector reflects the composition of the society it serves, government will be more responsive and effective. According to Bano (2014) there are divisions of roles and responsibilities in a society that shape the identities of men and women. But most norms and ideologies of the society are in favour of men. Men control the sphere of women's lives in the way of grandfather, father, father-in-law, husband, son and grandson. The social notion of the pattern of work reflects the biased gender inequalities where men have all the power and women have been exploited by them. Similarly, findings of the study presented an array of challenges that inhibit women from being appointed to decision making positions in public administration. Factors such as institutional, societal and personal were highlighted as being major challenges.

5.4.1.1 Institutional factors

The lack of female representation in public administration reveals vertical and horizontal occupational gender segregation. At an institutional level, women face two main challenges being horizontal and vertical segregation. Horizontal segregation shows that women predominantly occupy leadership positions from inferior levels of management (for example head of office) and men were concentrated in positions with high power of decision (Moldovan, 2016). On the other hand, vertical discrimination refers to the fact that women are underrepresented in positions with high power of decision or in upper management of organization and over represented in medium and low management positions (Nastala Fulga, 2019). These institutional factors (horizontal and vertical) highlighted above were found to be glass walls and glass ceilings respectively. This was consistent with the words of Yaghi (2018) who uttered the same views when he said that discrimination and barriers exist in different forms of public sector organizations and these discriminate against women.

Participants highlighted that there are less opportunities for women in decision making because when assessing candidates, men are considered first because they are willing to work anywhere and most superiors regard women to be full of excuses because of their care activities where they stay away from work to tend to family issues.

This finding is consistent with the views of Finkel et al., (2019) who highlighted that women are often concentrated in sectors like education and social services, where skills and training are often

considered less moveable or transferrable than those in sectors like planning and finance, where men are concentrated. Because experience in several sectors can be considered valuable for senior leaders, men's greater mobility across sectors helps them to move up the ranks more quickly than women. Thus, horizontal segregation is when women are concentrated in specific sectors or professions of public administration such as education and health sectors. This is also referred to as 'glass walls' with women stereotypically associated with feminine professions such as caring roles (Guy & Newman, 2004). 'There is also intra-professional gender segregation where females are concentrated in less prestigious positions than men. Women are concentrated in fields like education or health, which are considered to be feminine and men prefer areas like defence, infrastructure or the core administration' (Cribb et al., 2014, p. 2). Findings thus showed these variations in that some departments in ministries had more women holding most of the decision making positions while in others, women were outnumbered by men starting from the top position all the way down.

Another challenge was the vertical segregation which often referred to as 'glass ceiling' where women struggle to reach leadership and senior decision making positions (McTavish & Miller, 2006). Findings where that;

Indeed, we are acutely aware of the notion that certain jobs are classified by gender suitability as we live in a masculine world, where leadership posts are reserved for men, culture-wise.

Acker (2009) used the term 'glass ceiling' to describe gender-based barriers that lead to the underrepresentation of women in critical roles in organizations and the society at large. Thus, that gender-based roles exists, with women occupying the lower roles in the hierarchical structure of the organization. Morrison et al., (1987) affirmed that 'glass ceiling' is 'a transparent barrier that kept women from rising above a certain level in corporations. It applies to women as a group who are kept from advancing higher because they are women. As a result, women must work harder than men in order to prove their aptitudes and competencies and break the glass ceiling (Morrison et al., 1987). Therefore, unless addressed directly, 'glass ceilings' will continue to prevent women from advancing to the highest levels of leadership.

From the findings also, it was established that men are more often in open or competing occupations or positions, and are more likely to move inter-occupationally, while women are confined to non-competing occupational groups and are thereby limited to intra-occupational mobility. In agreement, as Schmid (1994) observed, as these groups provide almost no upward mobility, possibilities to compete for higher classifications are extremely limited in the case of women. Thus, enhancing flexibility in occupational classifications, and opening job categories especially for upward competition seem to be one of the most urgent equal opportunities strategy needed within the public sector.

From the findings of the study, therefore, glass ceiling or vertical segregation is very much there in public administration and limits women's progression to decision making positions. Yaghi (2018) who researched the glass ceiling and glass prison concepts and suggested recent studies on women and leadership in public administration reveal that women fail in leadership because men usually make it difficult for them to succeed by placing them in risky positions with high probability for failure, which is glass cliffs. In other words, the findings of this study gave a true picture of the reality in line with other studies done in that when the presence of women in a work field is high, it could be considered that they are situated above the glass ceiling, having promotion opportunities, if not, they are situated under the glass ceiling with low chances of occupying leadership positions (Baxter & Wright, 2000).

Further, in agreement with our findings, Eagly and Carli (2007) reveal that women in the United States are required to navigate considerably greater obstacles to become leaders in comparison to their male colleagues. The researchers claim that the well-known concept of the "glass ceiling" is not an accurate boundary preventing women from reaching senior levels of authority in the workplace, but rather that women face complex (and even irresolvable) challenges at many stages of their careers, that is, sex discrimination, domestic obligations and (at times) self-underestimation. Meanwhile, if a woman does manage to reach the top of her chosen profession, she is required to be a 'superwoman' in order to succeed in the role and compete in what is still a man's world (Robinson, 2015). Women face a continuous struggle to prove themselves as leaders, along with their worth, leading to many experiencing health issues related to the subsequent high levels of stress (Robinson, 2015).

5.4.1.2 Societal factors

The role that women play in the decision making process in the day to day lives in the social as well as economic spheres is very crucial. Mostly in all patrilineal societies, women have less say in decisions regarding anything. The exclusion of women is not limited to societal culture either but extends to corporate culture, which strongly favours men and impedes women's career advancement. Lack of a female role model is a concern for an organizations that limits women's senior leadership positions (Shimelis, 2015). As a result of cultural stereotypes, women face many challenges in holding and growing in leadership aspects. Findings from the study indicated that women are regarded inferior to men and only men can occupy decision making positions in public administration. These barriers are an obstacle in women's promotion in decision making positions. Thus, 'these cultural factors and stereotypes could influence women's promotion in decision making positions and their possibility of breaking the glass ceiling' (Palmer & Simon, 2008, p. 221). Further, findings also indicated that the appointing authority hinders women as findings showed that in the United States of America;

'I don't think a woman should be in any government job whatsoever....mainly because they are erratic and emotional. Men are erratic and emotional, too, but the point is a women is more likely to be' (President Nixon on appointing a woman on the Supreme Court).

Findings indicated that cultural beliefs were among major factors that affected women's appointment to decision making positions in public administration. This is because the cultural beliefs and practices that prescribe the public domain for men and domestic for women inhibit women's appointment and also influencing the other limiting factors. Our findings were similar to the views of Meron (2003) who's findings support this study's findings that cultural perceptions that say a woman is less than men embodied in our culture that affect their exposure to the leadership. These stereotypes lead to many obstacles for women to access (or even maintain) leadership positions 'by perpetuating the misconceptions that women are innately different from male leaders and do not possess the requisite leadership qualities' (Bucklin, 2014, p. 170). Heilman (2001, p. 662), also agreed to this and notes that 'this tends to appear more frequently in workplace relationships, stating that 'despite producing the identical work product as a man, a woman's work is often regarded as inferior'.

While findings of the study found that societal factors largely affect women's participation and appointment in decision making in public administration, Ryan et al., (2016) added that since stereotypical male characteristics are similar to the stereotypical characteristics of strong leaders, a selection bias could prove to be beneficial to men and detrimental to women. However, Sabharwal (2015) criticised this and said discrimination and stereotypes have less to contribute to the ceiling when compared with factors such as past experiences and assignments, type of occupation, geographical mobility, work/life responsibilities and willingness to serve in supervisory roles. Therefore, factors such as type of occupation may hinder or affect women's appointment as well.

5.4.1.3 Personal factors

Women play an important role in decision making in public administration but many factors slow or hinder them. As indicated from the findings in this study, a key role of women in public administration is negotiation to ensure equal opportunity for all. Therefore, women are needed in all sectors. Findings indicated that women have various personal challenges when it comes to their appointment to decision making positions in public administration. Participants' highlighted lack of confidence is a major cause that inhibited women's participation and eventually appointment to decision making positions. Kasier (2009) had the same views and mentioned that women's lack of self-awareness makes them have low level of self-confidence. They fail to perform when appointed to decision making positions. The qualitative data seemed to tie up well with some studies by Achola & Aseka (2001) which suggested that some women are not assertive enough, while others do not want power, lack self-confidence and rarely apply for decision making positions.

Regarding education and skills, findings were that women perceive themselves less skilful in public administration. Thus women's underrepresentation in decision making positions may be recognized also to women's own decision not to apply for promotion, for a variety of reasons, such as lack of necessary aspirations, lack of awareness of the promotion system and a lack of confidence that they will succeed gender based socialization, fear of failure and lack of competitiveness (Chalcissa, 2012). It was found that women consider themselves to have low level of acceptance compared to men and therefore underestimate their abilities thereby reducing their ability to actively and effectively play a major role in decision making. Hirut (2004) supported this view also and concluded that women perceive themselves unskilful and passive in decision making

and this in turn leads them to confine themselves at lower ranks below their male counterparts. Further, other individual factors included barriers which have been highlighted by scholars like Cubillo (1999) to include, the tendency among women to avoid criticism and/or receiving negative feedback, fear of failure, which often translates into reluctant to voice their opinions, undertake excess responsibilities; fear of conflict and loneliness; and self-doubting among others.

Family was another challenge that women had with regard to being in decision making positions. Family responsibilities do affect women's ability to participate in long-term training courses outside the local area, and they may force women to decline promotions (or not apply for them) if this implies relocation, which is often the case in higher civil service jobs. From our findings, participants added that double responsibilities affects their appointment to decision making positions. Most women were found not hold these positions because of family ties and also not so much support from their partners, plus the fear of losing their marriages if they relocated. Agreeing to our findings, Greenhaus et al., (1999, p. 409) stated that 'women's family responsibilities can severely limit their careers in ways that do not generally affect men. Women tend to choose occupations that are compatible with their family's needs. They also limit their aspirations for career advancement, reduce their behavioural and psychological involvement in work, adjust their work schedules for family reasons and turn down opportunities for career development and growth that would interfere with their family responsibilities'. Similarly Marshal (1985) supported this finding and claimed that home and family responsibility on women is another factor for lack of aspiration to leadership.

Some participants also indicated that women are too emotional to make important decisions. To support this view, Dines (1993, p. 22) asserts that 'women in advanced industrialized societies, as well as those in the developing world, still suffer from the myth that women are too emotional or too illogical for senior management, or best suited to the domestic maintenance aspects of administration'. In addition, negative expectations concerning the performance of women are reinforced in many work settings, which 'prevent a woman's accomplishments from being evaluated in an unbiased manner' (Heilman, 2001, p. 662). Consequently, women have been 'victims of an unfair evaluation process' (Kern, 2015, p. 27).

5.4.2 Overcoming barriers

In order to overcome these challenges, findings from the study found that institutions need to give chance to both genders to compete on merit, revisit their appointment and selection criteria to include more women. At a personal level, women needed to have the necessary qualifications, be assertive and have self-confidence.

5.4.2.1 Institutional interventions

Findings from the study revealed that there was need for public institutions to intervene and help reduce and overcome obstacles that women face at an institutional level. According to the UNDP (2022), change in organisational culture in public administration agencies was needed. Findings indicated that institutions needed to develop programs that were going to help women by reducing challenges they faced in the institution. For example, Selzer et al., (2017) examined the role of women in leadership development as a strategy for preparing and equipping women for leadership positions. The leadership development programs consisted of courses on leadership skills enhancement, gender bias, supporting women's identity at work, coaching and mentorship and resulted in women empowerment and advancement to leadership roles. Therefore, just like our findings, Selzer et al., (2017) found that effective training is needed on the personal, interpersonal and organizational level as they are interrelated and interdependent.

There was need for human resources policies (recruitment, retention, promotion, performance, work-life, capacity-building, networking) in public administration (UNDP, 2022). Supporting our findings, D'Agostino et al., (2020) also share the same sentiment, as they purported public administrators need to negotiate for the scarce organisational resources, and generally, women tend to be poor negotiators due to male dominance and discrimination. Hence, women need to be effective negotiators to access the resources necessary to succeed as future public administrators. Therefore, the public service needs to help women develop their negotiation skills through human resource development programs to lead and manage public governance, communicate and interact productively with the changing workforce and citizenry.

5.4.2.2 Personal interventions

Findings of the study revealed that women need to have training in order for them acquire the needed qualification and be appointed to decision making positions in public administration.

UNDP (2014) suggests that, as training and other forms of capacity building have strategic importance to increase women's presence as senior leaders of organizations, governments need to restructure recruitment and development programs to ensure that all women have equal access to managerial, entrepreneurial, technical, and leadership training. In support of this view, a study in Lesotho's public sector (Posholi, 2012) illustrated that the majority of women interviewed were enthusiastic to study further and advance their careers. Women's training in public administration was important as it enables them have more skills needed for the decision making positions. As highlighted by D'Agostino (2017), training women could stimulate change in the prevailing public administration culture and institutional norms. The training was, therefore, used as a strategy to advance women and gender equality in public administration and should be encouraged to allow women to realize their full potential in whatever roles they choose in public administration.

5.5 Strategies to enhance women's appointment to decision making

Various interventions have been put in place for the numbers of women to increase in public administration. There is deliberate moves to ensure that women are considered for positions of decision making and ensure that those that qualify apply for that position. At a national level, constitutional, legal, and policy frameworks should guarantee gender equality not only in the case of women's political representation but also in the case of public service organizations. However, the UN's 2017 report on gender equality noted that most African governments in general struggle to achieve gender equality due to weak policy implementation and poor institutional capacity, which have negatively affected the possible gains that may have been achieved via the quota system and related forms of policy instruments. African governments should therefore build their capacity to adequately implement, monitor, and evaluate progress made in implementing policies, laws, and programs to advance women's career progress in all sectors (UNESCO, 2017).

5.5.1 Protocol on women rights

5.5.1.1 Familiarity of protocols

The equal representation and participation of women in public life gained impetus in the second half of the 20th century. International benchmarks such as the 1979 United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of the Fourth UN World Conference on Women; the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – especially Goal 5 on gender equality – can

provide excellent starting points for developing a national vision statement (Viljoen, 2009). The quest for gender equality and non-discrimination is expressed in several UN human rights and development frameworks. Within the African region, a number of frameworks speak to gender equality, including the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (African Charter), and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (African Women's Rights Protocol). Findings of the study reviewed that most participants interviewed were aware and familiar with the various protocols that concern women's rights in decision making. They were aware that the Zambian government has rectified some of them and the various institutions in Zambia have these protocols lined up in their operations. The ratification of the Protocol in 2008 was expected to improve women representation in key political and decision-making institutions (Gender Links, 2013).

5.5.1.2 Institutional adherence

Findings on whether various institutions are adhering to the gender protocols revealed that most institutions though having these protocols in their operations do not adhere to them. The protocols are merely on paper. In 2015, governments unanimously endorsed the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and, through its Goal 16 on "promoting just, peaceful and inclusive societies" and Goal 5 on "ensuring gender equality and women's empowerment," recognized the role of gender equality and inclusive public administration and institutions in achieving more peaceful, prosperous, equal and sustainable societies (UNDP, 2019). There has, however, been significant progress that has been made at the regional and national levels towards advancing the human rights of women and ensuring gender equality on the continent. Yet, from the findings of the study and literature also, it must be acknowledged that the remaining challenges and gaps for the full realization of women's rights is daunting. Such that in almost every country on the continent, as is the case globally, women continue to be denied full enjoyment of their rights and remain underrepresented despite institutions claiming to adhere to these protocols. Thus, despite the progress made in the advancement of gender equality in the SADC region, implementation still falls short of the stated commitments especially in Zambia as seen from these results.

According to Zanzi (2013), women's representation improved significantly in political and decision making processes. This improvement was a result of the concerted efforts to implement

the Protocol through constitutional and policy reforms, and other endeavours by state and non-state actors. However, women are yet to enjoy equal participation in public life even with efforts to implement article 9 of the Protocol. Similarly, as our findings from the study showed, Zanzi's findings showed that in most cases, statistics in Zimbabwe show women comprising around 30%, but that is still below the desired 50-50 representation. Notably, there continues to be few women managers, clerks and mayors in local government even after ratification of the Protocols. All things considered, women participation and representation in public life is vital for democratic transition or consolidation. As equal human beings, women must be afforded the chance to participate at the same level with men in matters shaping their lives. Expectedly, gender balanced decision-making institutions and structures are poised to be efficient, effective and responsive to the concerns and perspectives of all segments of the society. Therefore, from these findings, when public administration fully integrate gender considerations into their work and enforce policies and programmes, they produce better and more equitable policies for men and women, therefore contributing to good governance. Even though gender mechanisms have been able to achieve a better position within the ministries, the lack of adherence to these policies is to be seen as one of the threats to their continued existence.

5.5.2 Interventions to increase number of women

5.5.2.1 Institutional interventions

From the findings, policy makers highlighted that there have been deliberate moves to have many women come on board and be appointed to decision making positions. Women were advised to cultivate around the minimum qualifications required for promotion by learning new skills, demonstrating innovativeness and creativity. This happens through continuous professional development and is accomplished by cultivating life-long habits, which will support the manager to successfully navigate shifting organizational leadership directions. This echoes what Lamb and Cassidy (2006) refer to as career self-management. Thus, employability enables individuals, men and women, to enhance promotion chances when posts are advertised either in the applicants' current organization or elsewhere. Further, it is imperative upon the administration to build a cadre of public administration who are highly competent in identifying and managing policy that will not result in diffused benefit across, society, but tangible results particularly aimed at enabling social mobility for the poorer classes. To this end, it proposed that the state introduces a capacity

building program for middle and senior managers in the public service that focus on public administration (Cedras, 2013).

5.5.3 Strategies

5.5.3.1 Proposed strategies

Participants were asked to suggest strategies to institutions and also government that can enhance the number of women in decision making positions. Findings were:

The current public service would need to identify existing policy instruments that could be tweaked to accurately reflect its policy agenda. In some, instances this will require amendments to policies or the drafting and administration of new policies. All of this requires an appropriate mix of capacity for policy action that will lead to the desired outcomes. We recommend political will on the part of the appointing authority and also serious implementation of protocols that champion women affairs.

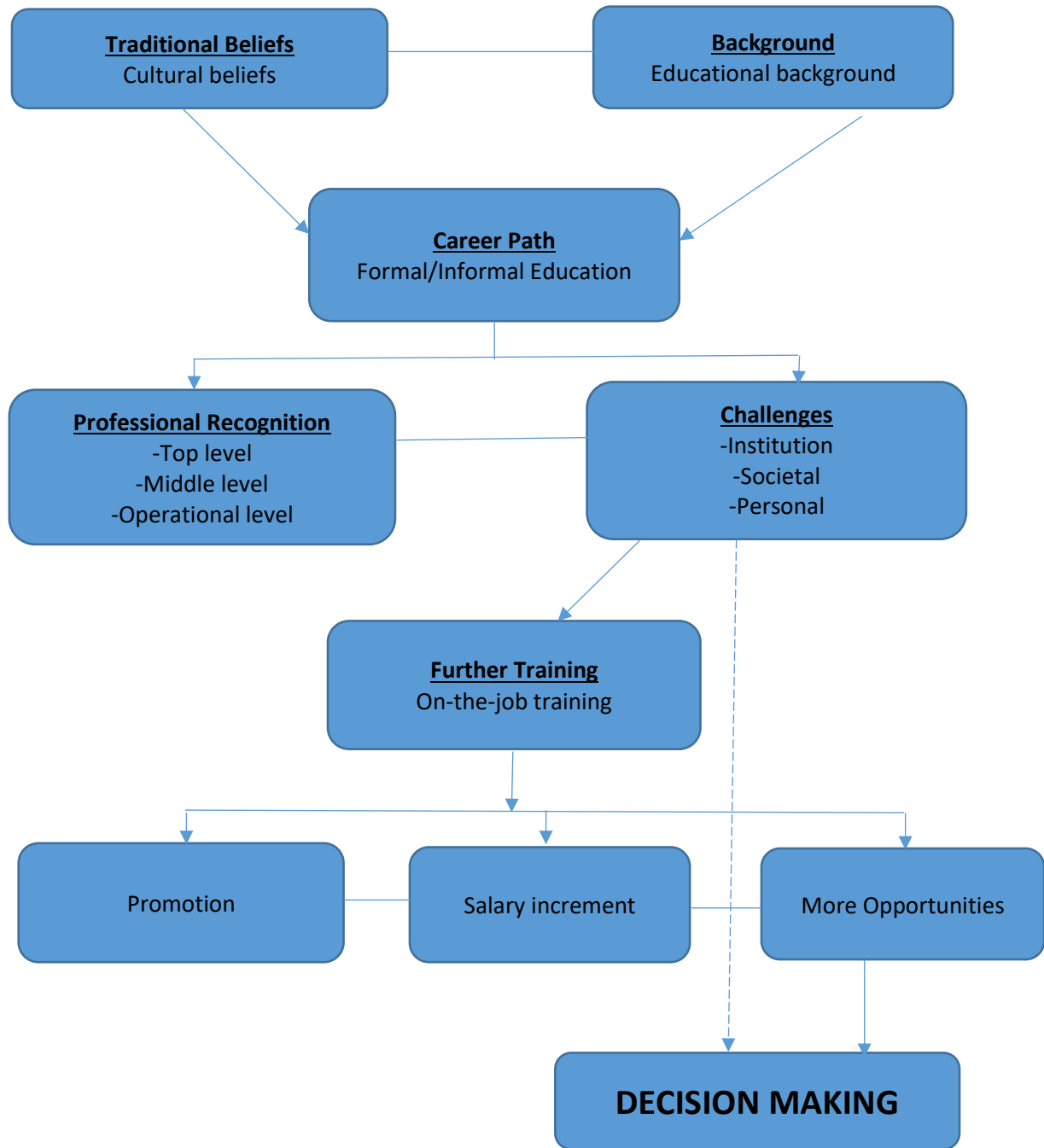
In Zambia, many of the national gender equality laws enacted to date focus on equal participation in decision making generally or in politics especially, and they often provide for temporary special measures. However, not all gender laws explicitly address women's equal participation in public administration and not only have some included strong implementation mechanisms. Thus, there was need to enact gender specific laws with regard to decision making in public administration as this would increase the representation of women. Another and related outcome of unrepresented public administration is poor policy making. If policy makers do not include a broad spectrum of the populace, then societal interest as a whole would not be included in the policy process indicating there is an input deficit in policy making. The quality of decisions making suffers, resulting in poor policy outcomes, service delivery and public sector organizational performance (Johnston & McTavish, 2014). Therefore, with respect to policy-making, one way forward can be that institutions focus on those women who are interested in decision making roles and ensure they receive the required training, support and motivation they need to fulfil their responsibilities or to advance in public administration. By so doing, these women would then be role models for less aspiring women to decision making.

Experts interviewed during the study emphasized that the key values of public administration must be clearly defined and common for all institutions and those employed in public administration, thereby establishing a single public administration instead of a fragmented one. Another suggested strategy was that the public service commission in Zambia needs to have periodical checks on the number of women holding decision making positions in public administration. There is need for Zambian Civil Service Commission to report regularly on the number of women nominated to decision making positions, the total number of positions held by women and the total number of women appointees. Therefore, at the same time, it is very important that employees of public administration, irrespective of their post and position with the common hierarchy, would have a clear and comprehensible vision of the mission of public administration, and also of each individual institution or structural unit and the objective and tasks subordinated to it. Similarly, UNDP (2012, p. 21) agrees and indicated that ‘ there is need to monitor the recruitment procedures in government institutions to ensure non-discrimination against women in recruitment and open all jobs to them, raise the awareness of employers, managers and heads of administrative units about the need to abolish discrimination against women in hiring, training, and promotion as well as monitor the application of laws in terms of non-discrimination in wages between men and women doing the same value of work’.

From all the findings however, one thing important to all came up and that was political will on the part of policy makers. Implementers needed to have enough knowledge of policies that could enhance women’s appointment to decision making. Supporting our findings, Meier’s (1993) study concluded that representation is enhanced when there is political support and a critical mass of representation. This is borne from the fact that, gender equality laws and policies are important entry points, but there is considerable variation in how these policies are worded in that they often focus on getting women into elected or appointed positions and do not explicitly apply across all positions and levels in public administration. As the UNDP (2014) rightly put it, many of the national gender equality laws enacted to date focus on equal participation in decision making generally or in politics specifically, and they often provide for temporary special measures. Therefore, not all gender equality laws explicitly address women's equal participation in public administration and only some include strong implementation mechanisms.

In conclusion, a lot needs to be done in the public sector. As the UNDP (2014) rightly put it, to date, governance reform programs most often have prioritized other important gender equality issues - notably women's participation in the political arena - and have tracked the status of women in political leadership positions and encouraged policies and practices that promote women's access to services. As far back as 1995, the Beijing Platform for Action of the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women urged the international community to improve knowledge gathering on women in politics and to make better use of databases and methodologies to follow women's involvement in decision-making. The same level of attention has not been paid to women in public administration; and unlike women's political participation, no global tracking mechanism exists for women's participation and leadership in public administration. The qualitative and quantitative data that does exist suggests there remains ample room for progress in gender equality in public administration. Without this being done however, there will still be gender gaps in public administration. To conclude, this study formulated a framework that is going to help in the increase of numbers of women in public administration. With this framework it is hoped that factors that affect women's underrepresentation may be dealt with to help increase numbers of women appointment to decision making positions in public administration.

PROPOSED FRAMEWORK FOR INCREASING REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN



Source: Researchers framework

Figure 11: Framework for women in Decision making Positions

From the framework above, we can see that the traditional beliefs expressed in many ways affect the way someone will choose their career path. As much as children have that educational

background (primary and secondary) as they grow up, type of secondary school subjects they got interested in affects their career choice. Further when they enter the higher education system, whether formal or informal education, this will also affect the type of job and entry level they will have when they enter the job market. From there also, because of traditional beliefs and initial education plus career choice, women tend to face challenges that hinder or obstruct them from being appointed to decision making positions. Once they are recruited by the organisations, they need to attend further training which affords them opportunities such as promotion and salary increment that enables them have the needed requirement for higher positions in decision making.

Therefore, the ability of women to be appointed and make a difference may also be a function of what factors propelled them to public office. Findings of this study propose that there is need for change of mind set both from society and organisations to tackle the various challenges that inhibit women and thus reduce or completely eliminate the barriers that affect them from being appointed. As seen from the findings, women tend to be given opportunities in areas of decision making that parallel their stereotype traditional roles as nurturers and caregivers in the domestic sphere of the family. Therefore, this framework suggests that to reduce or eliminate the barriers that inhibit women, women need to choose careers that give them the ability to participate in decision making and while they are in institutions, they need further training to help them get appointed. This agrees with Lord et al., (2001) that it is the culture of a society that provides a framework within which its members must operate and the standard to which they must explain values and ideology that form much of the content in which the socialization process shape occupational and social life. Depending on their social class, race and sex, specific types of the work are encouraged, tolerated or tabooed. Despite the incidental evidence of women leadership growth in the developed countries, biases toward women in decision making positions persist (Lopez-Zafra et al., 2009). Thus, by changing the socialization process, women will have the desire to be part of decision making.

Another suggestion is a change of the type of education and training that women take on. Education, whether primary or secondary shapes the way a woman will perceive their career. In this vein, to help women, educational institutions need to encourage women to take up those subjects and courses that will allow them cross any barrier concerning their job specification. Supporting this framework, Still (1990), through studies carried in Australia did conclude that

limited access to higher education for girls is denial to higher ranks for administration. He further concluded that lack of qualification and training was enough for non-appointment of women to managerial positions. Similarly, Dorsy (1989) found that the reasons for poor representation in administration of women are simply because they have generally low qualification than men. This means, when promotions are done on merit, more men qualify compared to women. Most women have no access to education and training that would let them join administration at high levels. It is hoped that once these suggestions and worked on, the numbers of women occupying decision making positions in public administration will increase.

According to Goulding (2013), it is always good to carry out an analysis of factors that cause problems and the effects they have on the involved actors in institutions. This is because examining institutions on the basis of their rules, practices, people, distribution of resources, and their authority and control structures, helps you understand who does what, who gains, who loses (which men and which women). At an institutional level, this framework will help stakeholders to examine issues in terms of where women are placed, that is either macro, meso and micro levels so that it will be easier to determine the level which various issues concerning decision making should be addressed. By so doing, the institutions will determine which elements are within the control of the individual or institution in terms of effecting change, as well as those elements beyond the control of those carrying out the mandates. At the micro level, such matters are related to the national policy governing activities in the country which includes legislation and regulations. Thus, the policy holders should look at how various policies influence activities in public administration and at what level. This will help reflect the awareness of inequalities between men and women that exist and what levels are affected more.

At meso level, focus is still on institutions and how they influence national policy. Factors such as women and men having equal access to employment and services are considered; is there equal treatment in terms of pay and benefits guaranteed to both men and women; or there is occupational segregation as the study findings indicated. The analysis should focus on how to identify their specific needs and priorities relating to their context, and examine the extent to which gender roles, relationships and cultural issues are key while looking at factors that influence access to and control over resources (for example age, sex, position in an organisation, education level)

5.6 Knowledge contribution

The study findings indicated that women's higher education attainment is important for their participation and appointment to decision making positions in public administration. However, there are factors that women face in this appointment and these were found to be personal, institutional and societal. Public administration was found to be a gendered organisation, which made roles be defined for both men and women. Various roles in the organisation were gendered and women were found to be underrepresented. Therefore, this study found new knowledge with regards to male marginalization in public administration.

From the interactions between the researcher and the participants, the study found that in trying to ensure that women are not marginalised in public administration, men have been side-lined and now are slowly moving towards marginalisation. Various policies have been put in place to ensure that women are treated well and considered at the expense of men. Most policies have been favouring women for a long time now and thus more concern is placed on women with the men being side-lined. An example of the Social Cash Transfer was given where it was established that the most beneficiaries of this social cash transfer are women no matter the level it is given at. Women have been seen to benefit more in the name of them being empowered. On the other hand, policies on higher education for example, foster women's representation and attainment of higher education. For example the, Gender Division coordinates the implementation of the Girls Education and Women Empowerment and Livelihoods (GEWEL) Project which mainly focuses on girls and women. The GEWEL Project aims to support the Government of Zambia to increase access to livelihood support to women and access to secondary education to disadvantaged girls in selected districts. The Project has three Components namely Supporting Women's Livelihood (SWL) which is administered by the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services; Keeping Girls in School (KGS) under the Ministry of General Education and Institutional Strengthening and System Building (ISSB) under the Gender Division. All these initiatives have targeted only women and none about men. The participants indicated that while fighting for women's rights, men have been neglected and if this continues, many men will be marginalised too.

The new knowledge this study bring therefore, is that, as much as many stakeholders have drawn their attention to women, men have in turn been left out on some of the benefits and the route leads

to them being marginalised in the process. If gender equality is to be attained, therefore, there is need to balance the opportunities being given to women to cater the men too.

5.7 Chapter summary

This study findings indicated that higher education is an important tool for women to be appointed to decision making positions in public administration. The chapter discussed the findings and compared to existing literature on some of the findings of the study. Conclusions were drawn and the study proposed a framework that would help stakeholders to enhance numbers of women in decision making. The chapter therefore, found new knowledge in that when trying to have more women considered for decision making, men have been found to be marginalised as well.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Overview

This chapter presents conclusions of the study as well as recommendations made in the study. In this chapter also, the study suggests implications for policy and practice, as well as offering recommendations for future research.

6.2 Conclusion

The first question was concerned with the extent to which higher education qualification influences women's appointment to decision making positions in public administration. Research findings indicated that currently, women are just as qualified and professional as men, though not in equal numbers but that they possess the needed higher education qualifications for appointment in any decision making position in public administration. Education was found to be an important factor that enables women to gain not only decision making power but is a panacea for their appointment in any sector of the economy especially public administration, such that low levels of education, less training and educational opportunity hinders women's appointment to decision making positions. On whether education was a prerequisite to women's appointment to decision making, it was concluded that women with higher education qualification had higher chances of being appointed than women without or having lower education qualifications because highly educated women had high power of decision making unlike uneducated women. Therefore, institutions required candidates to have higher education in their recruitment and selection processes.

Regarding the impact that higher education has on decision making of women in various institutions, the study concluded that higher education has enabled women to tackle problems, confront their established roles and also make credible decisions that benefit not only them but the organizational performance as well. Women's higher education is critical in releasing their energy and creativity, as well as enabling them to address today's difficult challenges. Thus, higher education has enhanced human resources with the goal of closing gender gaps and helped achieved equitable participation. Further, that higher education is a critical tool for equipping women with the information, skills and self-confidence they need and enables women to grasp the constitutional and legal requirements made to strengthen them in various institutions.

The second question posed was ascertaining the level of representation of women in decision making in public administration. Representation is an important factor in decision making. The seclusion of women from decision making bodies has very negative consequences for development. As such, representation and participation enables people to identify with their own policies and other decision making instruments and practices. These factors mean that for any government program or policy that depends on the input of women to succeed, women's representation and participation in the appropriate public debates and the consequence decisions must be sought and assured. From the findings, it was concluded that women are underrepresented in most decision making positions in public administration. Males usually occupied the top positions in the organization and the women employed in those organizations were forced to act as social men.

Most public administration are gendered organizations that have glass ceilings and glass walls that prevent women from excelling to top decision making positions. There is inequality regimes and intersectionality where there is degree of inequality, segregation and recruitment/hiring/promotion inequalities. Findings showed that in the public service, these inequality regimes most like exist as it appears to be a hierarchical organization with several layers, and differences between individuals with varying wages and positions exist throughout. Women are concentrated in care ministries such as health while men lead key ministries such as defence and finance. Therefore, the study concluded that because public administration remains a patriarchal institution, perpetuating gender biased traditions, attitudes and practices, this has caused women not to participate equally with men especially in leadership and decision making roles.

The third question pertained to the challenges that women face in their appointment to decision making positions in public administration. Here, many factors were found to affect their appointment. Factors at institutional, societal and personal level were found at affect their appointment. When looking at the institutional level, findings suggested that women are not fully considered due to various institutional factors such as horizontal and vertical segregation. These involved glass ceilings that made women not to excel upwards and also glass walls that made women not to move to the next position in the institution. At societal level, culture and traditions do not favour women in decision making positions because they believe they are supposed to carry nurturing roles in the home. Thus, because of their double responsibilities, responsibility to family

issues and child care, their appointment is affected in decision making. Men are more socialized to lead and women to be led. Whereas at a personal level, women themselves are a factor in that their lack of self-confidence is a major cause that affects their appointment. Women underestimate their abilities or perceive themselves less skilful than men. This puts them at a level where they feel comfortable and not pursue higher. The study concluded that women face various challenges in their appointment to decision making positions in public administration and these were personal, institutional as well as societal. To overcome these, training for women was suggested as well as institutional to include representative human resources policies in their selections processes.

The fourth question posed what strategies can enhance women's appointment to decision making positions in public administration. Findings indicated that intervention strategies were to increase women's participation in education at all levels. This would help women to choose domains of expertise whether as decision makers through influence on policy issues related to social, economic and cultural development or by their participation in community life. Another strategy was for institutions to formulate equal opportunity policies. There was need for institutional policies to encourage women in decision making in public administration. By so doing, the study concluded that formulating as well as implementing programs and creating of laws governing these strategies so that they are correctly and effectively applied towards equity between men and women in decision making in public administration. At a personal level, on the other hand, interventions included women taking a stand and be aggressive instead of assertive towards their appointment to decision making positions. To do this, there was need to review recruitment and promotion policies in public administration. In most decision making positions, apart from academic qualifications. Another criteria followed was experience in the relevant field, administrative abilities and also commitment. Therefore, it was concluded that there was need to embark on promotion, recruitment and selection criteria that will enhance gender equality in decision making in public administration.

This study data provided evidence that women's attainment of higher education is important and a necessity for their appointment to decision making positions in public administration. Further, the study provided evidence to promote gender equality and positive social change, especially where women hold positions in stereotypically masculine areas, encouraging more women to policy formulation and decision making roles. Therefore, the study provided information that will

fill the knowledge gap that exist in literature owing to the fact that as findings and literature reviewed have shown, there is no such study that has been carried out in Zambia yet concerning the role that higher education has on women's appointment to decision making positions in public administration.

The study may also help achieve SDG 4, target 4.3, in ensuring universal equal access to inclusive and equitable quality education and learning, which should be free and compulsory, leaving no one behind irrespective of their gender, disabilities, social and economic situation. Another contribution would be achievement of SDG 5, target 5.1, 5.5 and 5.9 by ensuring that policies are enforceable for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.

6.3 Recommendations

6.3.1 Social Transformation

Public administration is gendered and founded on patriarchal world-views which reinforce social relations rather than challenge them. There is need to change the way society thinks about women because if the dominant ideology in institutions remain male-biased, transformation is unlikely to take place. This is because male-dominated hierarchical power often purposefully excludes women's participation or devalues their contributions, creating a disabling environment for women's advancement.

6.3.2 National Gender Policy and other protocols

The study findings indicated that many policies and international declarations are merely on paper and are yet to be implemented in Zambia. Therefore, the study recommended that there was need implement these policies and also strengthen all protocols Zambia is ascribed to. Government should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming in all policies and programs so that before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men respectively.

6.3.3 Specific training for women

The study findings indicated that women needed to be trained further so as to help them acquire decision making skills and be appointed to decision making positions since they lacked the needed skills. Special training is required for women to capacitate them on various skills regarding

decision making in public administration. Institutions should come up with deliberate policy to encourage women to go for further studies. This will build their self-confidence, self-esteem, assertiveness and teach them skills to better analyse social problems and developmental issues.

6.3.4 Recruitment policy

Findings of the study indicated that men were considered first in some positions because women were regarded to have many care responsibilities and attached commitment to families. Therefore, it was recommended that there is need to look at the recruitment policy as merit-based recruitment and promotion is fundamental to public administration. In various ministries, the evaluation of candidates should be based on training, skills, competence, knowledge and the need to redress the imbalances of the past to achieve a public service representative of both men and women. Therefore, recruitment policies, processes and mechanisms require careful consideration using a gender equality and gender parity perspective.

6.4 Future Research

A key finding of this research was that higher education qualification is important for women and plays a key role in their appointment to decision making in public administration. Another key finding was that women's equal participation in public administration and decision making is viewed as a necessary condition for women's interests to be fully taken into account and properly addressed. It would be good to conduct a study to understand the contribution men make to public administration in Zambia while looking at the possibility of male marginalization in this sector. The study should attract future research as comparative studies at another location.

REFERENCES

- Achola, P., & Aseka, E. (2001). *Searching and Accessing Senior Managers for Public Universities in Africa: Challenges and opportunities*. Leadership and Management of Higher Education for Efficacy in Africa, 12-16. Nairobi: Kenyatta University.
- Acker, J. (2012). Gendered organization and Intersectionality: Problems and possibilities. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion*, 31(3), 214-224.
- Acker, J. (2009). From glass ceilings to inequality regimes. *Sociologie du Travail*, 51(2), 199-217.
- Acker, J. (1992). Gendering organization theory. In, A. J. Mills & P. Tarcred (Eds.), *Gendering organizational analysis* (pp. 248 - 260). Sage Publications.
- Acker, J. (1990). Hierarchies, jobs, and bodies: A theory of gendered organizations. *Gender & Society*, 4(2), 139–158. <https://doi.org/10.1177/089124390004002002>
- Adams, R. B. (2016). ‘Women on boards: The superheroes of tomorrow?’ *The Leadership Quarterly*, 27:371–386.
- Adichie, C. N. (2017). ‘A feminist manifesto in fifteen suggestions.’ 1st edition, Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, a division of Penguin Random House, LLC.
- African Development Bank and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (2020). *Africa Gender Index Report, 2019*.
- Akawa, M. (2014). The Gender Politics of the Namibian Liberation Struggle. Basel: *Basler Afrika Bibliographien* 2014. 978-3-905758-26-9
- Akram, S. (2018). Representative bureaucracy and unconscious bias: Exploring the unconscious dimension of active representation. *Public Administration*, 96(1), 119–133.
- Alharahsheh, H. H., & Pius, A. (2020). A review of key paradigms: Positivism VS Interpretivism. *Global Academic Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2(3), 39-43.
- Alkadry, M. G. and Leslie E. T. (2014). *Women and Public Service: Barriers, Challenges, and Opportunities*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.
- Al-Ababneh, M. M. (2020). Linking Ontology, Epistemology and Research Methodology. *Science & Philosophy*, Volume 8 (1), 2020, pp. 75-91.
- Al Subhi, A. (2016) *Women's representation in majlis al shura in Oman: how do gender ideology, Islam, and tribalism matter?* [online] MA dissertation. Iowa State University. available from <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/45660805.pdf> [28 November 2020].

Althaus, C. (2015). 'What Do We Talk About Now? Reflecting on Publications in AJPA 1970-2015', *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, vol. 74, pp. 227 - 238, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/1467-8500.12150>

Aliyu, A. A., Bello, M. U., Kasim, R., & Martin, D. (2014). Positivist and non-positivist paradigm in social science research: Conflicting paradigms or perfect partners. *J. Mgmt. & Sustainability*, 4, 79.

Alvi, M. H. (2016). *A manual for selecting sampling techniques in research*. Pakistan: University of Karachi, Iqra University. [Online] Available at: <https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/70218/1/>. Accessed April 22 2021.

Amina, B. Z. J. & Ibrahim, S. G. (2019). Role of African Women Leaders in inspiring women participation in leadership: An analysis. *African Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Research*, Volume 2, Issue 3, 2019 (pp.12-17).

Andrade, A. D. (2009). *Interpretive research aiming at theory building: Adopting and adapting the case study design*. The qualitative report, 14(1), 42.

Ashraf, D. (2004). Shifting positions and changing images: Women teachers' experiences in the Northern Areas of Pakistan. In R. Qureshi & J. Rarieya (Eds.), *Gender & Education in Pakistan*. Karachi: Oxford University Press, 78-105.

Baba, U. S., & Anumaka, B. I. (2019). Hegemonial evaluation of importance of women education and their socio economic development in Fika local government. *Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal*, 6(9), 166–171. <https://doi.org/10.14738/assrj.69.6176>

Babbie, E. R. (2020). *The Practice of Social Research*. 15th ed, Boston: Cengage Learning.

Bala, N. (2004). Assessments for post separation parenting disputes in Canada. *Family Court Review*, 42(3), 485-510.

Bahiru, B. & Mengistu, A. B. (2018). 'The challenges of women leaders of business organizations in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in balancing work-family responsibilities.' *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 19:140-158.

Baltodano, J. C., Carlson, S., Jackson, L. W., & Mitchell, W. (2012). Networking to leadership in higher education: National and state-based programs and networks for developing women. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 14(1), 62-78. <https://doi:10.1177/1523422311428926>

Banda, N. H. (2002). *In-service training opportunities among secondary school teachers in private schools*. M. Ed. Dissertation, University of Zambia.

Banchefsky, S. & Park, B. (2018). 'Negative gender ideologies and gender-science stereotypes are more pervasive in male-dominated academic disciplines.' *Social Sciences*, 7:27.

- Baró, F., Chaparro, L., Gómez-Baggethun, E., Langemeyer, J., Nowak, D., & Terradas, J. (2014). Contribution of ecosystem services to air quality and climate change mitigation policies: The case of urban forests in Barcelona, Spain. *Ambio* 43:466–479.
- Baxter, J. & Wright, E. O. (2000). ‘The Glass Ceiling Hypothesis: A Comparative Study of the United States, Sweden, and Australia’. *Gender & Society* 14(2).
- Beckwith, A. L., Carter, D. R., & Peters, T. (2016). ‘The under-representation of African American women in executive leadership: What’s getting in the way?’ *Journal of Business Studies Quarterly*, 7:116-130.
- Bhat, A. (2015). *Experimental research- definition, types of designs and advantages*. Retrieved from <https://www.questionpro.com/blog/experimental-research/>
- Bishu, S., & Alkadry, M. (2017). A systematic review of the gender pay gap and factors that predict it. *Administration & Society*, 49(1), 65–104.
- Black, K. (2010) ‘*Business Statistics: Contemporary Decision Making*’ 6th edition, John Wiley & Sons.
- Bloom, D., Canning, D., & Chan, K. (2006). ‘*Higher Education and Economic Development in Africa*’. Washington DC: The World Bank.
- Bolarinwa, O. A. (2015). Principles and methods of validity and reliability testing of questionnaires used in social and health science researches. *Niger Postgrad Med J*. 22(4):195-201
- Boserup, E. (1970). *Women’s Role in Economic Development*. New York: St. Martin’s Press.
- Bowles, S. & Gintis, H. (2000). ‘Does Schooling Raise Earnings by Making People Smarter?’, K. Arrow, S. Bowles and S. Durlauf (eds.), *Meritocracy and Economic Inequality*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Bowling, C. J., & Deil, S. W. (1998). ‘Change and Continuity in State Administration: Administrative Leadership across Four Decades’. *Public Administration Review* 58 (5): 429–94.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). ‘Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology’. *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3 (2): 77-101.
- Braun, V., Clarke, V. (2012). Thematic analysis. In: Cooper, H., Camic, P.M., Long, D.L., Panter, A.T., Rindskopf, D., Sher, K.J. (eds.) *APA Handbook of Research Methods in Psychology, Research Designs*, vol. 2, pp. 57–71. *American Psychological Association*, Washington (2012).
- Braun, V., Clarke, V., Hayfield, N., & Terry, G. (2019). Thematic Analysis. In P. Liamputtong (Ed.), *Handbook of Research Methods in Health Social Sciences*, 843–860. Singapore: Springer Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-5251-4_103

- Brown, M. S. (2014). 'Transforming Unstructured Data into Useful Information', *Big Data, Mining, and Analytics*, Auerbach Publications, pp. 227–246, 2014-03-12, <https://doi:10.1201/b16666-14>, ISBN 978-0-429-09529-0, retrieved 2021-05-29
- Browne, A. W. & Barrett, H. R. (1991). 'Female Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Key to Development'. *Comparative Education*, 27:275-285.
- Bryman, A. (2008). *Social Research Methods*. New York: Oxford University.
- Burchard, S. (2014). Women's political participation in Africa: An upside of conflict? *African Watch*, 6
- Caiden, G. E. (1982). *Public Administration*. California: Palisades Publishers.
- Camp, W. G. (2001). Formulating and evaluating theoretical frameworks for career and technical education research. *Journal of Vocational Education Research*, 26(1), 1–16.
- Carroll, S. J. (1994). 'The Politics of Difference: Women Public Officials as Agents of Change'. *Stanford Law and Policy Review* 5 (2): 11–20.
- Celikten, M. (2005). A Perspective on Women Principals in Turkey. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 8 (3), 207-221.
- Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, CAPMAS, (2017) www.capmas.gov.eg
- Chambers, R. (2008). *Revolutions in development inquiry*. London: Sterling, VA : Earthscan.
- Cheelo, L. (2002). 'The Impact of Cultural Norms, Customs and Beliefs on the Zambian Working Women'. Kitwe: The Copperbelt University.
- Chikulo, B. C. (2011 February 9-11). *Decentralization and Local Governance performance in Zambia* (paper prepared for the centre for policy Dialogue annual conference on Traditional Authorities, Decentralization and Rural development in Zambia. Lusaka: Government Printers.
- Chivanga, S. Y., & Monyai, P. B. (2020). Scramble for mutual partnerships? The case of China and Zimbabwe. *Journal of African Foreign Affairs*, 7(2), 7-20.
- Christ, C. P. (2014). Do we still need the Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion? *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, 30(2), 139–41.
- Clark, L. L. (2000). *The rise of professional women in France: Gender and public administration since 1830*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. California: Sage publications.

Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research* (4th ed). Lincoln: University of Nebraska.

Creswell, J. W. (2009). Research Design. In *Muqarnas* (Vol. 8). <https://doi.org/10.2307/1523157>

Creswell JW, Hanson WE, Clark Plano VL, Morales A. Qualitative research designs: Selection and implementation. *The Counselling Psychologist*. 2007; 35 (2):236-64.

Crosby-Hillier, K. (2012). ‘Women and educational leadership: Exploring the experiences of current and aspiring female educational administrators’. Electronic Theses and Dissertations. 243. <https://scholar.unwindsor.ca/etd/243>.

Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. 1st ed. London: Sage Publication, Inc.1998.

Collins, C. S. (2012). ‘Land-grant extension as a global endeavour: Connecting knowledge and international development’. *The Review of Higher Education*, 36 (1): 91–124.

Council of Europe. (2017). *Balanced Participation of Women and Men in Decision-Making*. Gender Equality Commission Analytical Report. Available at <https://rm.coe.int/analytical-report-data-2016-/1680751a3e>. Accessed on 9 January 2021.

Cuberes, D., and M. Teignier (2016). “Aggregate Effects of Gender Gaps in the Labour Market: A Quantitative Estimate”. *Journal of Human Capital* 10(1):1–32.

Cubillo, L. (1999). Gender and Leadership in the NPQH: An Opportunity Lost? *Journal of In-Service Education*, 545-55.

Daka, H., Chipindi, F.M. & Mwale-Mkandawire, M. (2020). The relationship between assessment practices and students’ academic performances. A case of undergraduate at the medical school of the University of Zambia, 2008 – 2016. *Zambian Journal of Educational Management, Administration and Leadership*, 1, (1), 143-156. ISSN: 2706-7416 (Print). <http://dspce.unza.zm/handle/123456789/6742>

D’Agostino, M., Levine, H, & Sabharwal, M. (2020). Gender in negotiation: Preparing public administrators for the 21st century workplace. *Journal of Public Affairs Education*, 26(1), 96 -116.

Dahlberg, L. & McCaig, C (eds.) (2010). *Practical Research and Evaluation: A Start-to-Finish Guide for Practitioners*. Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks.

Dar, S. A. & Shairgojri, A. A. (2022). Role of Women in Good Governance. *Journal of Social Science*. 3(4). <https://doi.org/10.46799/jss.v3i4.360>

Davidson, M. J., & Burke, R. J. (2016). Women in management worldwide: Progress and prospects—An overview. *Women in management worldwide*, 19-36.

- Derks, B., Van Laar, C., Ellemers, N. (2016). The queen bee phenomenon: Why women leaders distance themselves from junior women. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 27(3), 456-469. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2015.12.007>
- Demiray, E. (2014). Education of Women and Women's Expectations from Distance Education on the Issues Concerning Them. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education*. 15 (4) 332-349.
- Diehl, A. B. & Dzubinski, L. M. (2016). 'Making the invisible visible: A cross- sector analysis of gender-based leadership barriers.' *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 27 (1):181- 206.
- Doepke, Matthias, and Michèle Tertilt. (2009). 'Women's Liberation: What's in it for Men?' *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 124 (4): 1541–91.
- Domingo, P., Holmes, R., O'Neil, T., Jones, N., Bird, K., Larson, A., Presler-Marshall, E. & Valters, C. (2015) '*Women's Voice and Leadership in Decision-Making: Assessing the Evidence*'. London: ODI.
- Dorsey, B. J. (1989). Academic Women at the University of Zimbabwe: Career Prospects, Aspirations and Family Role Constraints. *Zimbabwe Journal of Educational Research*, 1 (3), 342-376.
- Douglas, K. M., Leite, A. C. (2017). Suspicion in the workplace: Organizational conspiracy theories and work-related outcomes. *British Journal of Psychology*, 108, 486–506.
- Duflo, E. (2012). 'Women empowerment and economic development'. *Journal of Economic Literature* 50 (4): 1051-1079.
- Dye, J. G, Schatz, I. M., Rosenberg, B. A., & Coleman, S. T. (2000). Constant comparison method: A kaleidoscope of data. *The Qualitative Report*, 4(1/2).
- Eagly, A. H. & Carli, L. L. (2007). *Through the labyrinth: The truth about how women become leaders*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.
- Eccles, J. S. (1994). 'Understanding women's educational and occupational choices: Applying the Eccles et al. model of achievement-related choices', *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, Vol. 18, Blackwell Publishing, Oxford.
- Eddy, P. L. (2009). Leading gracefully. In D. R. Dean, S. J. Bracken & J. K. Allen (Eds.), *Women in academic leadership: Professional strategies, personal choices* (pp. 8-30). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, LLC.
- Elfadhila, S & Kurniawan, T. (2020). An analysis of career development of women civil servants (Pns) in ministry of finance. *Jurnal Natapraja: Kajian Ilmu Administrasi Negara*, 8(1), 13–22. <https://doi.org/10.21831/jnp.v8i1.27037>

Eritobor, T. (2017). *‘Women’s education and development in Nigeria: A content analysis of nussbaum’s capability approach applied to women’s empowerment (2010–2017)’* [Master of Arts thesis, International Development Studies]. Saint Mary’s University.

Ernst & Young. (2013). *Worldwide index of women as public sector leaders*. UK: EYGM Limited.

European Commission (2009), *Toolkit on Mainstreaming Gender in EU Development Cooperation*. DG EuropAid, p. 85, ITC/ILO (2009), Training Module: Introduction to Gender Analysis and Gender-sensitive Indicators, p. 7-9.

European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) (2015), *Gender Equality Index 2015: Measuring gender equality in the European Union 2005-2012: Report, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg* (<http://eige.europa.eu/rdc/eige-publications/gender-equality-index-2015-measuring-gender-equality-european-union-2005-2012-report>).

Eurostat. (2018). *Gender pay gap*. Retrieved from <http://ec.europa.eu>. Accessed on 2 January 2020.

Evans, M., Edwards, M., Burmester, B., & May, D. (2014). ‘Not yet 50/50’– Barriers to the Progress of Senior Women in the Australian Public Service. *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 73(4), 501-510. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8500.12100>

Fawcett Society. (2018). *Sex and power*. Retrieved from www.fawcettsociety.org.uk Accessed on 5 September 2022.

Federal Authority for Government Human Resources, FAHR, (2017) <https://www.fahr.gov.ae/>

Flöttmann, J., 2021. *Examining the Barriers and Gender Backlashes of Women’s Pathway to Leadership in Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises in Kenya*, s.l.: s.n.

Follett, M. P. (1926). *The new state: Group organization, the solution of popular government*. New York: Longmans, Green and Co.

Forum for African Women Educationalists [FAWE] (2016a). *Gender-responsive pedagogy*. Retrieved from <http://www.fawe.org/activities/interventions/GRP/index.php?lang=2&lang=1>

Fox, A. R., & Schuhmann, R. A. (1999). Gender and local government: A comparison of women and men city managers. *Public Administration Review*, 59, 231-242.

Gantaloo, U. S. (2016). Study of Women Role in Higher Education and Research Development of Baramati Taluka Dis Pune. *International Education & Research Journal*. 2(12), 20-21.

Gehlert, S. & Mozersky, J. (2018). Seeing beyond the margins: Challenges to inform inclusion of vulnerable populations in research. *The Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics*, 46:30-43.

Geisler, G. (2014). Sisters Under the Skin: Women and the Women's League in Zambia. *Journal of Modern African Studies* (25.1), 43-66.

Gender in Development Division. (2004). *Zambia' progress report on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action*. Lusaka: Government Printers.

Gender in Development Division. (2000). *National gender policy*. Lusaka: Government Printers.

Giddens, A. (2001). *Sociology*. Oxford, Polity Press.

Gilbert, N. (2014). *A mother's work: How feminism, the market, and policy shape family life*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Ghazala, N. & Khalid, H. (2012). Gender Empowerment through Women's Higher Education: Opportunities and Possibilities. *Journal of Research and Reflections in education*, Vol.6, No.1.

Goetz, A. M. (2001). *Women development workers: Implementing rural credit programmes in Bangladesh*. Dhaka: University Press Limited.

Golembiewski, R. T. (1996). The Future of Public Administration: End of a Short Stay in the Sun? Or a New Day A-Dawning? *Public Administration Review*, Vol 56, No. 2 (Mar-Apr., 1996), pp.139-148. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/977198>

Gottard, A., Mattei, A., & Vignoli, D. (2015). The relationship between education and fertility in the presence of a time varying frailty component. *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society, Series A: Statistics in Society*, 178, 863-881

Government Republic of Zambia (2019). Local Government Act No. 2 of 2019. Available at: <http://www.parliament.gov.zm/sites/default/files/documents/acts/The%20Local%20Government%20Act%20No.%202%20of%20202019.pdf> [Accessed: 30 November 2020].

Grant, P.J. (1993). *Girls and Women A Unicef Development Priority*. New York, U.S.A.

Greenwood, D. J. & Levin, M. (2007). *Introduction to action research: social research for social change*. (2nd. ed.). Thousand Oaks, London: SAGE.

Griffin, R. W. (2016). *Fundamentals of Management* (8th Ed). USA: Cengage Learning.

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. 1994; 2 (163-194):105.

Gutmann, A. & Thompson, D.F. (2004). *Why Deliberative Democracy?* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Heaton, T. B., Huntsman, T. J., & Flake, D. F. (2005). The effects of status on women's autonomy in Bolivia, Peru, and Nicaragua. *Population Research and Policy Review*, 24(3), 283-300.

- Hakura, M. D. S., Hussain, M. M., Newiak, M. M., Thakoor, V. & Yang, M. F. (2016). *Inequality, gender gaps and economic growth: Comparative evidence for Sub-Saharan Africa.* (June 2016). IMF Working Paper No. 16/111, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2882524>
- Hays, S. (1998). The Fallacious Assumptions and Unrealistic Prescriptions of Attachment Theory: A Comment on 'Parents' Socioemotional Investment in Children'. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol. 60, No. 3 (Aug., 1998), pp. 782-790. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/353546>
- Heilman, M. E. (2001). Description and prescription: How gender stereotypes prevent women's ascent up the organizational ladder. *Journal of Social Issues*, 57(4), 657-674. doi:10.1111/0022-4537.00234
- Herz, B., & Sperling, G. B. (2004). *What works in girls' education: Evidence and policies from the developing world*. New York: Council on Foreign Relations.
- Higher Education Authority. (2020). *The State of Higher Education in Zambia: 5 Decades of University education*. Lusaka: UNZA Printers.
- Hirut, T. (2004). Violence against Women in Ethiopia: A Strong Case of Civil Society Concern. In: Chowdhury, and Kahsai Wolde Giorgis (Eds) *Civil Society in Ethiopia: Reflections On Realities and Perspectives of Hope*. African – Asian Studies Promotion Association.
- Hout, M. (2012). Social and economic returns to college education in the United States. *Annu. Rev. Sociol.* 2012. 38:379-400. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.012809.102503>.
- Howe-Walsh, L., & Turnbull, S. (2016). Barriers to women leaders in academia: tales from science and technology. *Studies in Higher Education*, 41(3), 415-428.
- Ilesanmi, O. O. (2018). Women's Visibility in Decision Making Processes in Africa—Progress, Challenges, and Way Forward. *Front. Sociol.* 3:38. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fsoc.2018.00038>
- Ilker, Etikan, S. A. (2016). Composition of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, Vol 5, Issue 1, 1 – 4.
- Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, (2013). *Political Parties in Africa through a Gender Lens* (Stockholm: International IDEA, 2013), <https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/publications/political-parties-in-africa-a-gender-lense.pdf> accessed 11 October 2021.
- IPU Parline Database, Global Data on National Parliaments (2020): <https://data.ipu.org> (last accessed on 23rd February 2020).
- IPU (2012). *Women in National Parliament 2011 Study*. Retrieved 13 March 2012
- ILO/UNDP. (2012). *Rethinking Economic Growth: Towards Productive and Inclusive Arab Societies*. Beirut: ILO.

ILO. (2009) *ILO School to Work Transition Survey: A Methodological Guide*, volume 3, p. 13 – 14

ILO. (2007). *The employment situation of people with disabilities: Towards improved statistical information*. ILO Bureau of Statistics in collaboration with the ILO Skills and Employability Department (Geneva).

ILO. (1999). [Address by Mr. Juan Somavia, Secretary-General of the International Labour Conference, 1 June 1999](#), International Labour Conference, 87th Session, (Geneva)

ILO. (1995). *Safety, health and welfare on construction sites: a training manual*, Geneva: ILO. www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/safework/publicat/iloschcat/cons-eng.htm

Institute for Women's Policy Research. (2018). 'Women's median earnings as a percent of men's median earnings, 1960-2017 (Full-time, Year-round Workers) with projection for pay equity in 2059.' Available online: <https://iwpr.org/publications/gender-wage-gap-2017/> (Accessed on 13 September 2018).

Jadhav, S. (2019). A Conceptual Study of Decision Making and Thoughtful Decisioning February 1, 2019). Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract-3413706> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3413706> Accessed 8 July 2019

Johns, M. L. & Brad, D. (2020). Breaking the Glass Ceiling: Structural, Cultural, and Organizational Barriers Preventing Women from Achieving Senior and Executive Positions. *Perspectives in Health Information Management/AHIMA, American Health Information Management Association*, 10 (Winter).

Jones, S. J. & Palmer, E. M. (2011). Glass Ceilings and Catfights: Career Barriers for Professional Women in Academia. *Advancing Women in Leadership*, 15 (31): 189-198.

Kamangar, F, I. F. (2013). Sample size calculation for epidemiologic studies: principles and methods. *Archives of Iranian Medicine (AIM)*. 2013 May 1;16(5).

Kauzya, John-Mary. (2007). 'Political decentralization in Africa: experiences of Uganda, Rwanda, and South Africa'. Unpan. December 1, 2007. Accessed October 20, 2014. <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan028411.pdf>.

Kele, T., & Pietersen, J. (2015). Women Leaders in a South African Higher Education Institution: Narrations of Their Leadership Operations (May 30, 2015). *OIDA International Journal of Sustainable Development*, Vol. 08, No. 05, pp. 11-16, 2015, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2618069>

Kelleher, F., Severin, F. O., Khaahloe, M. B., Samson, M., De, A., Afamasaga-Wright, T., & Sedere, U. M. (2011). *Women and the teaching profession: Exploring the Feminization Debate*. London, UK: Commonwealth Secretariat and UNESCO.

- Kelly, R. M., & Newman M. (2001). 'The Gendered Bureaucracy: Agency Mission, Equality of Opportunity, and Representative Bureaucracies'. *Women and Politics* 22 (3): 1–34.
- Key, J. P. (1997). *Research design in occupational education*. Oklahoma: Oklahoma State University.
- Khalid, S.H., and E. Mujahid-Mukhtar. (2002). *The future of girls' education in Pakistan. A study on policy measures and other factors determining girls' education*. Islamabad: UNESCO Office.
- Khare, S. (2021). Impact of Women's Education on Decision Making Regarding Their Children Affairs. *Journal of Scientific Research*. Volume 65, Issue 1, 2021.
- Khan, S. U., & Awan, R. (2011). *Contextual assessment of women empowerment & its determinants: Evidence from Pakistan* (30820). Germany: University Library of Munich.
- Khattak, S. G (2011). Feminism in Education: Historical and Contemporary Issues of Gender Inequality in Higher Education, Occasional Papers in Education & Lifelong Learning. *An International Journal* 5(1):67-81.
- Kiamba, J. M. (2008). *Women and leadership positions: social and cultural barriers to success*. Wagadu 6, 5. Available online at: <https://www.questia.com/library/journal/1P3-1657657541/women-and-leadershippositions-social-andcultural>
- Kim, N., & Kim, W. (2018). Do your social media lead you to make social deal purchases? Consumer-generated social referrals for sales via social commerce. *International Journal of Information Management*, 39, 38–48. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2017.10.006>.
- King, C. S. (1995). 'Sex-Roles Identify and Decision Styles: How Gender Helps Explain the Paucity of Women at the Top'. In *Gender Power, Leadership, and Governance*, edited by Georgia Duersti-Lahti and Rita Mae Kellu, 67-92. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press
- Kivunja, C., & Kuyini, A. B. (2017). Understanding and applying research paradigms in educational contexts. *International Journal of Higher Education*. 2017; 6(5):26-41.
- Klasen, S., & Pieters, J. (2015). What explains the stagnation of female labor force participation in Urban India? *The World Bank Economic Review*, 29(3), 449–478.
- Kombo, D. K., & Tromp, D. L .A. (2006). *Proposal and Thesis Writing: An introduction*. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa.
- Koomson, F., Enu-Kwesi, F., & Fadehan, M. (2012). *Microfinance, cultural norms and women empowerment: A study of Osun State, Nigeria*. USA: Lambert Academic Publishing.
- Knowles, S., Lorgelly, P. K. & Owen, P. D. (2002). Are Educational Gender Gaps a Brake on Economic Development? Some Cross-country Empirical Evidence. *Oxford Economic Papers*, 54(1), 118-149.

- Kumar, S. (2014). Signature pedagogy, implementation and evaluation of an online program that impacts educational practice. *Internet and Higher Education*. 21, 60-67.
- Kutanis, R. O., & Bayraktaroglu, S. (2020). Female entrepreneurs: Social feminist insights for overcoming the barriers. *Stream 19: Gender Perspectives and Management*. Sakarya University.
- Kwesiga, J. C. (2002). *Women's Access to Higher Education in Africa: Uganda's Experience*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers.
- Lamb, P., & Cassidy, N. (2006). *Jump start your career: Essential steps to a brilliant future*. Harlow: Education Publishers LLP.
- Lassibille, G., & Tan, J. P. (2005). 'The returns to education in Rwanda.' *Journal of African Economies*, 14 (1): 92–116.
- Leslie, L. (1994). *Women's literacy in worldwide perspective*. *Convergence*, Toronto Vol.27, Iss. 2, (Jan 1, 1994): 33.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E.G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Local Government Act (2019). *The Local Government Act, 2019*. Lusaka. <https://www.parliament.gov.zm/sites/default/files/documents/acts/TheLocalGovernmentActNo.2of%202019.pdf> Accessed May 2 2020.
- Longman, K., Daniels J., Bray, D. L. & Lindell W. (2018). 'How organizational culture shapes women's leadership experiences.' *Administrative Sciences*, 8:1-16.
- Lord, R. G., Brown, D. J., & Harvey, J. L. (2001a). *System constraints on leadership perceptions, behavior and influence: an example of connectionist level processing*. In *Blackwell Handbook of Social Psychology: Group Processes*, ed. MA Hogg, S Tindale, pp. 283–310. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publ.
- Lyon, A. (2011). Municipal decentralisation in the Republic of Macedonia: preserving a multi-ethnic state? *Federal Governance*, 8(3), 28-49. <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-341929>.
- Mabokela, R. O., & Kaluke, F. N. M. (2004). Impact of Race, Gender, and Culture in South African Higher Education. *Comparative Education Review*, Vol. 48, No. 4, 2004.
- Maitra, S. (2007). *'Population Growth and Rising Dowries: The Mechanism of a Marriage Squeeze'*, Canada: University of York.
- Manda, D. K., Mwabu, G., & Kimenyi, M. S. (2002). *Human capital externalities and returns to education in Kenya*. Discussion Paper 13. Nairobi: Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis.

- Maseko, T. I. (2013). *A Comparative Study of Challenges Faced by Women in Leadership: A case of Foskopos and the Department of Labour in Mhlathuze Municipality*. Unpublished masters' thesis. University of Zululand. [Online]. Available: <http://uzspace.uzulu.ac.za/.../CHALLENGES+FACED+BY+WOMEN+LEADERSHIP.pdf> ? [Accessed: 2017, October 31].
- Matonya, M. (2016). *Accessibility and Participation in Tanzanian Higher Education from the perspectives of Women with Disabilities. "My Ability is stronger than my disability"*. Academic dissertation to be publicly discussed, by permission of the Faculty of Education of the University of Jyväskylä.
- Mastracci, S., & Arreola, V. I. (2016). Gendered organizations: How human resource management practices produce and reproduce administrative man. *Administrative Theory & Praxis*, 38(2), 137–149.
- Maxcy, S.J. (2003). *Pragmatic threads in mixed methods research in the social sciences: The search for multiple modes of inquiry and the end of the philosophy of formalism*. In Tashakkori, A. and Teddlie, C. (Eds.), *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioural research* (pp. 51-89). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Maynard, M. (1995). Beyond the 'big three': the development of feminist theory into the 1990s. *Women's History Review* 4(3):259-281.
- Mazur, A. G., & Pollock, M. A. (2009). Gender and public policy in Europe. *Comparative European Politics*, 9(1), 1–11.
- McClelland, J., & Evans, A. (1992). *The Education of Women*. New York: Garland Publishing Inc.
- McClintock, C. (1985, April). *Clarifying information needs for program evaluation*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 257 880).
- McCowan, T., & Schendel, R. (2016) *The impact of higher education on development*. In McGrath S., Gu Q. (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of international education and development*. Abingdon, Routledge.
- McDaniel, A. (2014). Women's Rising Share of Tertiary Enrolment: A Cross-National Analysis. *FIRE: Forum for International Research in Education*, 1(2). Retrieved from <http://preserve.lehigh.edu/fire/vol1/iss2/>
- McGrath, S., (2010). Beyond aid effectiveness: the development of the South African further education and training college sector, 1994–2009. *International Journal of Educational Development* 30 (5), 525–534
- McTavish, D., & Miller, K. (eds.) (2006), *Women in Leadership and Management*, New Horizons in Management Series Editor: Cary L. Cooper, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

- Medhanit, A. & Mekonnen, S. (2009). *Gender and law: Teaching material*. Prepared under the sponsorship of the Justice and Legal System Research Institute. Ethiopia: Addis Ababa, 1-133
- Meier, K. J. (1993). Latinos and Representative Bureaucracy: Testing the Thompson and Henderson Hypotheses. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 3, 4, p. 393-414.
- Meron, G. (2003). *Gender and leadership-issues for discussion*. Paper Presented at the Conference entitled Bridge building between Ethiopia and Austria, Vienna: Austria.
- Merriam, S. B (1988). *Case Study Research in Education: A Qualitative Approach*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Myers, M. D. (2009). *Qualitative Research in Business & Management*. Thousand Oaks: CA Sage Publications.
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Miller, W., Kerr, B., & Reid, M. (1999). A national study of gender-based occupational segregation in municipal bureaucracies: Persistence of glass walls? *Public Administration Review*, 59, 218-230.
- Ministry of Gender (2021). *Gender Status Report 2017 – 19*. Government of the Republic of Zambia: Lusaka
- Ministry of Gender. (2018). *Gender statistics on women's representation in local government: the case of Zambia*. Lusaka, GRZ.
- Ministry of Gender and Child Development. (2014). *National Gender Policy 2014*. Available at: <http://extwprlegs1.fao.org/docs/pdf/zam152916.pdf> [Accessed: 15 December 2019].
- Miranda, L. (2005). *Impact of women's participation and leadership on outcomes*, Geneva.
- Mitroussi, A. and Mitroussi, K. (2009). Female educational leadership in the UK and Greece. *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, 24 (7): 505-522.
- Moghadam, V. (2015). Gender and globalization: Female labor and women's mobilization. *Journal of World-Systems Research*, 5, 366-389.
- Mok, K. H. (2016). Massification of higher education, graduate employment and social mobility in the Greater China region. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 37, 51-71.
- Moldovan, O. (2016). 'Representative Bureaucracy in Romania? Gender and Leadership in Central Public Administration'. *Transilvanian Review of Administrative Sciences*, No. 48 E/2016, pp. 66-83.

- Moodly, A., and Toni, N. M. (2017). Accessing Higher Education Leadership: Towards a Framework for Women's Professional Development. *South Afr. J. Higher Edu.* 31 (3), 138–153. doi:10.208535/31-3-917
- Morrison, A. M., White, R. P., & van Velsor, E. (1987). *Breaking the glass ceiling*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Munachonga, M. (2016). "Women and the State: Zambia's Development Policies and Their Impact on Women," in Parpart, J. And Staudt, K., eds. *Women and the State in Africa*. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, pp. 131-4.
- Mundy, L. (2017). 'Why is Silicon Valley so awful to women?' The Atlantic.' Available online: <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/04/why-is-silicon-valley-so-awful-to-women/517788/> (Accessed on 4 April 2017).
- Mustafawi, M. (2017). the contribution of decision-making in the sense of job satisfaction, *Al-Hikma Journal of Social Studies*, Algeria, Issue (11) pp. 98-82.
- Mwanza, P. (2004). *Teacher perception of school management practices and their influence on teacher performance in selected high schools of Lusaka*. M.Ed. Dissertation, University of Zambia.
- Myers, M. (2000), Qualitative Research and the Generalizability Question: Standing firm with Proteus. *In the Qualitative Report*. 4(3/4). Retrieved on 11.06.2020 from <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR44-3/myers.html>.
- Nalis, R. (2012). *Governance and citizen Participation*. Retrieved from http://www.worldbank.org/wbi/governance/ac_courses.htm on 24th January 2012 at.
- National Assembly. (2017). Members <https://listwww.parliament.gov.zm/members-of-parliament>. Accessed 30 December 2019.
- National Assembly of Zambia (2019). Higher Education Act. Lusaka https://www.parliament.gov.zm/sites/default/files/documents/acts/Act%20No.%2023%20of%202021%2C%20The%20Higher%20Education%20%28Amendment%29%20%20Act%202021_0.pdf
- Namdeo, P. (2017). Impact of Education on Decision-making Ability of Women. *Educational Quest: An Int. J. of Education and Applied Social Science* 8(Special Issue): 431-434.
- Namdeo, R., & Puspha. P. (2017). Educational Quest. *An international journal of education and Applied Social Science*. 8, 431 – 434.
- Nasser, S. (2017). *Gender Equality in the Public Administration*, UNDP

Nasser, S. (2018). 'Boxed Women in Public Administration - Between Glass Ceilings and Glass Walls: A Study of Women's Participation in Public Administration in the Arab States'. *Journal of International Women's Studies* 19(3):152–71.

Nayak, P., & Mahanta, B. (2009). *Women empowerment in India*. Online at <http://mpira.ub.uni-muenchen.de/24740/>

Nestor, A. (2017). General, Target, and Accessible Population: Demystifying the Concepts for Effective Sampling. *The Qualitative Report* 22 (2017): 1607-1621.

Nienaber, H., & Moraka, N. V. (2016). Feminism in management research: A route to justly optimise talent. *Acta Commercii* 16(2):139-163. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/ac.v16i2.417>

Ngcobo, A. D. (2016). *Analysing the empowerment of women leadership: A Case of the Durban University of Technology*. Theses and dissertations (Accounting and Informatics) <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.51415/10321/1706>

Northedge, A. (2003). Enabling participation in academic discourse. *Teaching in Higher Education* 8(2): 169-180.

Nosrat, S. (2010). The financial obstacles of women's political participation in Iran. *Report and Opinion*, 2(10), 41-49

Nuryatno, M. A. (2003). The Call for the Paradigm Shift in Qualitative Research from Positivism and Interpretive to Critical Theory. *Journal Hermeneia* Vol-2-No-1-2003.

Odhiambo, G. (2011). Women and higher education leadership in Kenya: A critical analysis. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management* 33(6): 667–678.

OECD. (2019). *Education at a Glance 2019: OECD indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/f8d7880d-en>

OECD. (2018). *Aid to gender equality and women's empowerment: An Overview*. OECD DAC Network on Gender Equality (Gendernet) July 2018. www.oecd.org/dac/gender-development

OECD. (2017b). *Report on the Implementation of the OECD gender recommendations - some progress on gender equality but much left to do*. Meeting of the OECD council at ministerial level. Paris: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

OECD. (2014), 'Focus on Top Incomes and Taxation in OECD Countries: Was the crisis a game changer?' <http://www.oecd.org/els/soc/OECD2014-FocusOnTopIncomes.pdf>

OECD. (2012). *Gender equality in education, employment and entrepreneurship: Final report to the MCM 2012*. Retrieved from <https://www.oecd.org/employment/50423364.pdf>

OECD. (2007). *Higher Education: Quality, Equity, and Efficiency* in Education Policy Analysis 2006: Focus on Higher Education, OECD Publishing, Paris, 2007 https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-policy-analysis-2006/higher-education-quality-equity-and-efficiency_epa-2006-2-en.

Oketch, M, McCowan T, & Schendel, R., (2014). *The Impact of Tertiary Education on Development*: Department for International Development, 2014 <https://eppi.ioe.ac.uk/cms/Portals/0/PDF%20reviews%20and%20summaries/Tertiary%20education%202014%20Oketch%20report.pdf?ver=2014-06-24-161044-887>

Okin, S. M. (1979). *Women in Western Political Thought*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Omar, O., & Ogenyi, V. (2004). A qualitative evaluation of women as managers in the Nigerian civil service. *The International Journal of Public Sector Management* 17:360–73.

Onsongo, J (2004). *Factors affecting women participation in higher education management in Kenya*. Gender Issues Report Series, no.22. Organization for Social Science Research in Eastern and southern Africa. A.A Ethiopia

Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Leech, N. (2005). On Becoming a Pragmatic Researcher: The Importance of Combining Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methodologies. December 2005. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 8(5): 375-387. <https://doi10.1080/13645570500402447>.

Osei, P., & Nwasike, J. (2010). *The Central System of Employment for Senior Government Officials: Experiences from Africa*. Commonwealth Secretariat.

Oxaal, Z., & Baden, S. (1997). *Gender and Empowerment: Definitions, Approaches and Implications for Policy*. Bridge Report No. 40. Briefing Prepared for the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.

Palmer, B., & Simon, D. (2008). *Breaking the Political Glass Ceiling*. New York: Routledge.

Papen, Robert A, (2003) ‘*Michif: one phonology or two?*’ Proceedings of the Workshop on Structure and Constituency in Languages of the Americas. UBC.

Patel, G. (2013). *Gender Differences in Leadership Styles and the Impacts within Corporate Boards*. The Commonwealth Secretariat, Social Transformation Programmes Division. [Online]. Available: www.cpahq.org/cpahq/cpadocs/Genderdiffe.pdf [Accessed: 2017, October 31].

Patel, V. (2004). *Getting Foothold in Politics: Women in Political Decision Making Process*. New Delhi: University of New Delhi.

Pateman, C. (1988). *The Sexual Contract*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

- Pham, X., Fitzpatrick, L., & Wagner, R. (2018). 'The US gender pay gap: the way forward.' *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 38:907-920.
- Peters, A. (2006). *Electoral Gender Quotas: Undemocratic, Unfair and Inefficient?* Unpublished Manuscript on File with the Author.
- Peshkin, A. (1993). The Goodness of Qualitative Research. *Educational Researcher*, 22(2), 23-29
- Pollert, A. (2005). Gender, transformation and employment in central and eastern Europe. *European Journal of Industrial Relations*, 11(2), 213–230.
- PMRC. (2020). *Assessing Levels of Participation among Women in Policy Formulation*. Lusaka: Ministry of National Development Complex.
- Polit, D. F., & Beck, C. T. (2012). *Nursing research: Generating and assessing evidence for nursing practice*. Philadelphia, PA: Lippincott Williams and Wilkins.
- Posholi, M. R. (2012). *An examination of factors affecting career advancement of women into senior positions in selected parastatals in Lesotho* (Doctoral dissertation, Cape Peninsula University of Technology).
- Potrac, P., Jones, R. L., & Nelson, L. (2014). Interpretivism. *In Research methods in sports coaching* (pp. 31-41). Routledge.
- Powley, E. (2006). *Rwanda: The impact of women legislators on policy outcomes affecting children and families*. New York: UNICEF.
- Psacharopoulos, G., & Patrinos, H. A. (2018). Returns to investment in education: A decennial review of the global literature. *Educ. Econ.* 26 (5), 445–458.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09645292.2018.1484426>.
- Qian, M. (2016). *Women's leadership and corporate performance*. Asian Development Bank Economics Working Paper Series, (472).
- Radford, B. (2000). *Education, Equality and Human Rights: Issues of gender, race and sexuality*. London: Ruthledge. Ruthledge, 7 (2), 132-137.
- Rathgeber, E. (1995). *Schooling for what? Education and career opportunities for women in science, technology and engineering*. In Missing Links: Science and Technology for Sustainable and Equitable Development. Gender Working Group of the United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development. Ottawa, Canada: International Development Research Centre (p.181-201).
- Rao, A., and D. Kelleher. (2005). *Affirmative action as a means of social inclusion: Myths and realities* in Gender and social inclusion assessment for Nepal. Washington, DC: World Bank.

Reeves, H., & Baden, S. (2000). *Gender and Development: Concepts and Definitions*. Available at: <http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/sites/bridge.ids.ac.uk/files/reports/re55.pdf>. (Accessed on 2 March 2018).

Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chapter. I, resolution 1, annex II. Paragraph 181

Report of the Secretary-General | Review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing+25)

Reeves, T. C., & Hedberg, J. G. (2003). *Interactive learning systems evaluation*. Englewood Cliffs. New Jersey: Educational Technology Publications.

Rhode, D. L. & Kellerman, B. (2007). *Women and Leadership*. In B. Kellerman & D.L. Rhode (Ed.), *Women and Leadership* (pp. 1-62). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Robson, C. (2002). *Real World Research: A Resource for Social Scientists and Practitioner-Researchers*. (2nd ed). USA: Blackwell Publishing.

Rocco, T. S., & Plathotnik, M. S. (2009). Literature reviews, conceptual frameworks, and theoretical Frameworks: Terms, functions, and distinctions. *Human Resource Development Review*, 8(1), 120-130 <http://hrd.sagepub.com/content/8/1/120>

Rogus-Pulia, N., Humbert, I., Kolehmainen, C., & Carnes, M. (2018). How gender stereotypes may limit female faculty advancement in communication sciences and disorders. *American Journal of Speech—Language Pathology*, 27(4), 1598–1611.

Rosemarie, T. (1989). *Feminist Thought*. Abingdon: Routledge

Rule, P., & Modipa, R. (2012). We must believe in ourselves: Attitudes and Experiences of Adult Learners with disabilities in Kwa-Zulu Natal. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 62, 138-158.

Rusaw, A. C. (2011). Managing Gendered Politics in Careers: A Case of Women Managers in the Federal Government, in M.J. D’Agostino & H. Levine (eds.). *Women in Public Administration: Theory and Practice*. Jones & Bartlett Learning: Micheal Brown Publisher. 271-283.

Ryan, M. K., Haslam, S. A., Morgenroth, T., Rink, F., Stoker, J., & Peters, K. (2016). Getting on top of the glass cliff: Reviewing a decade of evidence, explanations, and impact. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 27(3), 446-455.

Sabharwal, M. (2015). From glass ceiling to glass cliff: Women in senior executive service. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 25(2), 399–426. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mut030>

SADC Gender Monitor. (2013). ‘Tracking progress on implementation of the SADC protocol on Gender and Development’. Women in Politics and Decision-making positions.

- Sadie, Y. (2005). 'Women in political decision-making in the sadc region'. *Agenda*, No. 65, 17-31.
- Saidel, J. R., & Loscocco, K. (2005). Agency leaders, gendered institutions, and representative bureaucracy. *Public Administration Review*, 65, 158-170.
- Samanga, R. (2019). *The Zambian women's history museum is returning to Africans what colonialism stole*. Okay Africa. Available at <https://www.okayafrica.com/samba-yongawomens-history-museum-in-zambia-africa/> Accessed on 31 January 2020.
- Sapru, R. K. (2002). *Development Administration*. Sterling Publishers Private Limited: New Delhi, India
- Sépulchre, M. et al., (2018). *Gendering Active Citizenship: Experiences of women with disabilities*. In: Halvorsen, R. et al, (Ed). *Understanding the lived experiences of persons with disabilities in nine countries*, (pp 156-173). New York: Routledge.
- Schachter, H. L. (2008b). Lillian Borrone: Weaving a web to revitalize port commerce in New York and New Jersey. *Public Administration Review*, 68, 61-67.
- Schachter, H. (2017). Women in public administration: Giving gender a place in education for leadership. *Administration and Society*, 49(1), 143–158.
- Schein, V. E. (1975). Relationships between sex role stereotypes and requisite management characteristics among female managers <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0076637> *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 60(3), 340–344.
- Schreier, M. (2012). *Qualitative content analysis in practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Shah, H. S., Lodhi, S. A. and Ahmed, M. (2016). Does higher education really matter in improving women's social status? Empirical evidence from Baluchistan. *The Sindh University Journal of Education*; 45(1), 141-160.
- Shang, B. (2022). *Tackling Gender Inequality: Definitions, Trends, and Policy Designs*. IMF Working Paper No. 2022/232, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4308641> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.5089/9798400227271.001>
- Shaukat, S., & Siddiquah, A. (2013). *Personal and social factors encountered in Higher Education: A survey of female students and faculty of Punjab, Pakistan*. Unpublished Paper for the Higher Education Commission, Pakistan. Lahore: University of Education.
- Sheikh, A. Q., Meraj, M., & Sadaqat, B. M. (2015). Gender equality and socio-economic development through women's empowerment in Pakistan. *Ritsumeikan Journal of Asia Pacific Studies*, 34(1), 124-140.
- Shields, Patricia. (2008). "Rediscovering the Taproot: Is Classical Pragmatism the Route to Renew Public Administration?" *Public Administration Review* 68 (2): 205–21.

- Shimelis K. (2015). Opportunities and challenges of women political participation in Ethiopia. *Journal of Global Economics*, 3 (4), 1-7.
- Schreiber, U. (2013). *Worldwide index of women as public sector leaders*. Opening doors for women working in government.
- Selzer, R., Howton, A. & Wallace, F. (2017). Rethinking women's leadership development: Voices from the trenches. *Administrative Science* 7(18). <https://doi.org/10.3390/admsci7020018>
- Sichone, O., & Chikulo, B. C. (1996). *Democracy in Zambia: Challenges for the third Republic*. Harare: Sape Books.
- Silverman, D. (2006). Interpreting Qualitative Data: Methods for Analysing Talk, Text and Interaction. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-9.1.358>.
- Skaggs, D. (2014). Higher education as a matter of national security: can a democracy plan ahead? *Liberal Education*. Winter 2014, vol. 100, No. 1.
- Smith, B. S., & Squires, V. (2016). The role of leadership style in creating a great school. *SELU Research Review Journal*, 1(1), 65-78.
- Snyder, S. H. (2013). *Women in Leadership: Performance and Interpersonal Consequences of Stereotype Threat*. UNF Graduate Theses and Dissertations. 464 <https://digitalcommons.unf.edu/etd/464>
- Sridevi, T. O. (2005). *Empowerment of Women-A systematic analysis*. IDF Discussion Paper retrieved from <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?> Accessed 5 June 2008.
- Stivers, C. (2002). *Gender images in public administration: Legitimacy and the administrative state*. Sage.
- Stivers, C. (2000). *Bureau Men, Settlement Women: Constructing Public Administration in the Progressive Era*. Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press.
- Stivers, C. (1993). *Gender images in public administration: Legitimacy and the administrative state*. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE.
- Stratigaki, M. (2005). Gender mainstreaming vs positive action. *European Journal of Women Studies*, 12(2), 165–186.
- Stromquist, N. P. (1990a). 'Gender Inequality in Education: Accounting for Women's Subordination'. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 11 (2): 137-153.
- Sukardi, P. (2003). *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan, Kompetensi dan Praktiknya*. Yogyakarta: Bumi Aksara.

Sürücü, L. & Maslakçı, A., (2020). Validity And Reliability In Quantitative Research, *BMIJ*, (2020), 8(3): 2694-2726, doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15295/bmij.v8i3.1540>

Tamerius, Karin L. (1995). "Sex, Gender, and Leadership in the Representation of Women." In Georgia Duerst-Lahti and Rita Mae Kelly, eds., *Gender Power, Leadership, and Governance*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Taylor, F. (2003). Analysis and Gender Stereotypes. *Teaching Sociology*, 31 (3): 300-311.

Teal F. (2011) 'Higher education and economic development in Africa: A review of channels and interactions'. *Journal of African Economies*, 20(suppl. 3), pp.50–79.

Thackray, L. (2018). *Anonymity, Confidentiality and Informed Consent: Exploring Ethical Quandaries and Dilemmas in Research with and About Disabled Children's Childhoods*. In The Palgrave Handbook of Disabled Children's Childhood Studies (pp.299-313). London: Palgrave Macmillan

Thevenon, O., & Del Pero, A. S. (2015). Gender equality for economic growth? Effects of reducing the gender gap in education on economic growth in OECD countries. *Annals of Economics and Statistics/Annales d'Économie et de Statistique*, 117(118), 353–377.

Tilak, Jandhyala B. G. (2015). 'Higher Education in South Asia: Crisis and Challenges'. *Social Scientist* 43, nos. 1/2 (2015): 43–59.

Titus, R., Sengupta, D., & Madan, S. (2017). A Woman as a Decision-Maker: Exploring the "Lived Experience" at Home and Outside. *The Qualitative Report*, 22(5), 1379-1394. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2017.2383>

Tong, R. (2009). *Feminist Thought*. University of North Carolina, Charlotte: Westview Press.

Tuomi, M., Lehtomaki, E., & Matonya, M. (2015). As capable as other students: Tanzanian women with disabilities in higher education. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*, 62(2), 202-214.

Ugwu, Chinyere. N. and Eze Val, H. U. (2023). Qualitative Research. *IDOSR Journal of computer and applied sciences* 8(1) 20-35.

UN. (1995). *Beijing Platform for Action*. Fourth World Conference on Women. Available at www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/BDPfApercent20E.pdf. Accessed on 10 January 2021.

UN. (2015). *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. Available at: https://www.un.org/en/udhrbook/pdf/udhr_booklet_en_web.pdf. [Accessed: on 16th December 2019].

UN. (2016). *Global Sustainable Development Report 2016*, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, New York, July.

UNDP. (2022) *Gender Equality Strategy 2022 – 2025*. New York. https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2022-09/UNDP_Gender_Equality_Strategy_2022-2025_EN.pdf

UNDP. (2021). *Gender equality in Public administration: United Nations Development Programme*, New York. <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2023-03/UNDP-Gender-Equality-Strategy-2018-2021-Annual-Report.pdf>

UNDP. (2020). *Human Development Report 2020 Zambia: The Next Frontier: Human Development and the Anthropocene*, Addis Ababa: United Nations.

UNDP. (2017). *Sustainable Development Goals*. Retrieved 20 Sept, 2017 from www.undp.org

UNDP. (2016). “*Human Development Report 2016: Human Development for Everyone.*” New York. NY: United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

UNDP. (2015). *National Human Development Report 2014 Ethiopia: Accelerating Inclusive Growth for Sustainable Human Development in Ethiopia*. Development Programme, Addis Ababa: United Nations.

UNDP. (2014). *Gender Equality Women’s participation and leadership in governments at the local level Asia and the Pacific 2013*. Bangkok.

UNDP. (2012). *Strengthening Gender Equality III Public Administration in Somalia* (unpublished), pp. 11-12.

UNECE. (2019). *Statistical Database*. Available at: [https://w3.unece.org/PXWeb/enMinimum Set of Gender Indicators](https://w3.unece.org/PXWeb/enMinimum%20Set%20of%20Gender%20Indicators). Available at: <https://genderstats.un.org/#/home>

UNESCAP. (2019). *Pathways to Influence: Promoting the Role of Women’s Transformative Leadership to Achieve the SDGs in Asia and the Pacific*.

UNESCO, Institute for Statistics. (2022). *School enrolment, tertiary (% gross)*. The World Bank. Available: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.TER.ENRR> [2022, November 28]

UNESCO. (2018) *Global Education Monitoring Report, Paris: UNESCO Report*.

UNESCO. (2017). *Gender Equality in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP, France.

UNESCO. (2012). ‘*Shaping the Education of Tomorrow*’ Report on the UN decade of Education for Sustainable Development UNESDOC Digital Library, 2012

UNESCO. (2011). *Adult and Youth Literacy Rates*. Montreal, Canada: UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

UNESCO. (2000). Dakar frame work for the action of education for all: Meeting our collective Commitments. *Dakar: Leopard Publisher*.

UNESCO. (1998). 'Higher Education in the Twenty-First Century: Vision and Action', *World Conference on Higher Education*, 1, Paris, 5–9 October. Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

UNICEF. (2017). *State of the World's Children Report*. Data for the period 2010-2017.

UNPF. (2005). *The State of World Population*. The Promise of Equality: Gender Equity, Reproductive Health and the Millennium Development Goals.

UN Women, (2020). <http://unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/06/policy-brief-covid-19-and-the-care-economy>, Policy Brief No. 16. (Accessed on 27 January 2021).

Viljoen, F. (2009). 'An introduction to the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa' (2009) 16 Washington & Lee Journal of Civil Rights & Social Justice 11.

Volden, Craig, Alan E. Wiseman, and Dana E. Witter. (2013). When are Women More Effective Lawmakers than Men? *American Journal of Political Science*, 57 (2): 326–41.

Waisath, W., Perry N., Lutz I., Raub A., Sprague A., Assis T. and Heyman J. (2014). *Closing the Gender Gap: A summary of findings and Policy Recommendations*. World Policy Analysis Center.

Walsham, G. (2006). Doing interpretive research. *European journal of information systems*, 15(3), 320-330.

Wehrich, H. and Koontz, H. (1993) *Management*. New York: McGraw-Hill

Williams, M. (2000). Interpretivism and generalization. *Sociology*, 34(2), 209-224.

Wollack. K. (2010). 'Assisting democracy abroad. American values, American interests', *Harvard International Review*. Fall 2010. Available at: [http://www.ndi.org/files/Harvard International Review Wollack Fall2010.pdf](http://www.ndi.org/files/Harvard%20International%20Review%20Wollack%20Fall2010.pdf) (accessed 20/03/2010).

Woodd, M. (2013). The move towards a different career pattern: Are women better prepared than men for a modern career? *Career Development International*, 5, 99-105.

Women Watch. (2007). *Women in Leadership Roles: Report of Online Discussion*. Division for the Advancement of Women [Electronic]. Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). [Online].

Available:http://www.un.org/womenwatch/feature/women_leadership/Online_discussion_report_Women_in_Leadership_Roles.pdf. [Accessed: 2015, May 18].

World Bank. (2017). *'Progress towards gender inequality in the Middle East and North Africa Region.'* Washington, DC. World Bank.

World Bank. (2010). *Education Data*. Washington, D.C.: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and Institute for Statistics.

World Bank. (2009) *'Accelerating Catch-up: Tertiary education for growth in sub-Saharan Africa'*. Washington DC, The World Bank.

World Bank (2004). *'Zambia: Strategic Country Gender Assessment'*. 15-17.

World Economic Forum. (2021). *Annual Report 2020 – 2021*. Geneva. www.weforum.org

Yaghi, A. (2018). Glass cliff or glass prison: Think evil-think men in organizational leadership. *International Journal of Public Administration* 41(12), 998–1008.

Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research design and methods*. Fifth edition, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Yousefy, A., & Baratali, M. (2011). Women, employment and higher education schoolings. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 15 (1): 3861–3869.

Zanhi, M. (2013). 'Is there political will to translate it into reality?' Legal Resources Foundation: Bulawayo 2013.

ZARD (2011). *'Attaining Gender Equality still A Pipe Dream'*, Lusaka.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: ETHICAL CLEARANCE



THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

Great East Road Campus | P.O. Box 32379 | Lusaka 10101 | Tel: +260-290 258/291 777
Fax: (+260) 211 290 258/253 952 | Email: director.drgrs@unza.zm | Website: www.unza.zm

APPROVAL OF STUDY

23rd January, 2023,

REF NO.HSSREC-2023 JAN - 002

Ms. Sharon Nsana,
The University of Zambia,
Institute of Distance Education,
P.O. Box 32379
LUSAKA

Dear, Ms. Sharon Nsana,

RE: 'ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION ON WOMEN'S APPOINTMENT TO DECISION MAKING POSITIONS IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN ZAMBIA''

Reference is made to your submission of the protocol captioned above. The HSSREC resolved to approve this study and your participation as Principal Investigator for a period of one year.

REVIEW TYPE	ORDINARY REVIEW	APPROVAL NO. HSSREC-2022-JAN- 002
Approval and Expiry Date	Approval Date: 23 rd January, 2023	Expiry Date: 22 nd January, 2024
Protocol Version and Date	Version - Nil.	22 nd January, 2024
Information Sheet, Consent Forms and Dates	• English.	To be provided
Consent form ID and Date	Version - Nil	To be provided
Recruitment Materials	Nil	Nil
Other Study Documents	Questionnaire.	
Number of Participants Approved for Study		

Specific conditions will apply to this approval. As Principal Investigator it is your responsibility to ensure that the contents of this letter are adhered to. If these are not adhered to, the approval may be

APPENDIX II: INTRODUCTORY LETTER

TO:
.....

**RE: ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION ON WOMEN’S APPOINTMENT TO
DECISION MAKING POSITIONS IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN ZAMBIA**

I am a postgraduate student under the Institute of Distance Education at the University of Zambia carrying out a research on *‘The role of higher education on women’s appointment to decision making positions in Public Administration in Zambia’*.

As part of the requirement for the award of Doctor of Philosophy, I am required to undertake this study and you have been selected to participate in it. Therefore I humbly request your cooperation and assist me with information for the study. Kindly be advised that the information you shall provide is for academic purposes only and at no circumstance should you provide your name. Your responses will be treated with strict confidentiality.

I wish to thank you most sincerely for accepting to participate in this essential educational undertaking.

Yours sincerely

RESEARCH STUDENT

APPENDIX III: CONFIRMATION OF STUDY LETTER



**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
INSTITUTE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION**

Telephone: 26021-1-291777-78 Ext. 3500/ 0978772249
Telegrams: UNZA LUSAKA
E-mail: director_ide@unza.zm

P.O. Box 32379
LUSAKA, ZAMBIA

DATE: 22 June 2023

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: CONFIRMATION OF STUDY: DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Name: SHARON NSAWA Computer #: 19002149

Reference is made to the above subject.

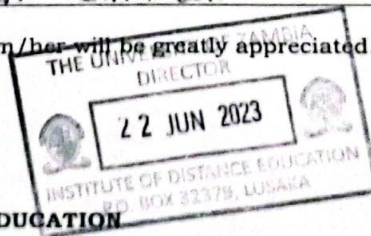
This serves to confirm that the above named student of NRC Number _____ is a bonafide student of the University of Zambia under the Institute of Distance Education.

The student is pursuing a Doctor of Philosophy Programme and that he/she will be carrying out a research on

The Role of Higher Education Qualifications on women's appointment to decision making positions in Public Administration in Zambia.

Any assistance rendered to him/her will be greatly appreciated.

Prof. Joseph Zulu (PhD)
DIRECTOR
INSTITUTE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION



APPENDIX IV: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUR RESEARCH LETTER

Telephone:
Telegrams: LOC GOVT.LUSAKA
Fax: 252680
E-mail: ps@migh.gov.zm



In reply please quote:

No.

MLGRD/101/1/39

REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

**MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT
AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

29th June, 2023
P. O. BOX 50027
15101 RIDGEWAY
LUSAKA

Ms. Sharon Nsana
0977699800

RE: REQUEST FOR AN INTERVIEW: YOURSELF

Reference is made to your minute dated 27th June, 2023 in which you requested for an interview with the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development regarding an academic research.

I wish to inform you that authority has been granted for you to carry out an interview on the "role of higher education on women's appointment to decision making positions in Public Administration in Zambia".

Kindly contact Ms. Vivian k. Mwansa on 0977138374 for further information.

Maambo B. Haamaundu (Mr.)

Permanent Secretary-Administration

MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

All Correspondence should be addressed
to the Permanent Secretary
Telephone 223319 / 235341
Fax 235342



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

In reply please quote

No.

MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL SERVICES

OFFICE OF THE PERMANENT SECRETARY
COMMUNITY HOUSE
SADZU ROAD
PRIVATE BAG W 252
LUSAKA

25th July, 2023

To All Departments
MCDSS
LUSAKA


RE: INTRODUCTORY LETTER – MS. SHARON NSANA

Reference is made to the above subject matter.

2. This serves to inform you that the above mentioned student is pursuing a PhD at the University of Zambia. As one of the requirements for the course is to submit a Research Project. She intends to undertake a research entitled "Role of Education on Women's appointment to decision making positions in Public Administration".

3. This serves to introduce the aforementioned student in the Departments to be granted authority to collect data.

4. Any assistance rendered to her will be highly appreciated.


Mala M. Sikazwe
Director - Human Resource and Administration
For/Permanent Secretary
MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL SERVICES

/em

All correspondence should be addressed to
the Permanent Secretary
Telephone: +260 211 221 432
Fax: +260 211 225 169



In reply please quote
No.

REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

MLSS/101/1/32

MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

OFFICE OF THE PERMANENT SECRETARY
NEW GOVERNMENT COMPLEX
INDEPENDENCE AVENUE
KAMWALA
P.O. BOX 32186
LUSAKA

19th September, 2023

Ms. Sharon Nsansa
0977 699800
LUSAKA

RE: REQUEST FOR AN INTERVIEW

I refer to the above subject matter.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Security is in receipt of your letter dated 27th June, 2023 in which you wrote requesting to come and conduct an interview on the **role of higher education on women's appointment in decision making positions in Public Administration in Zambia**. I wish to inform you that authority has been granted for you to conduct the interview at any time of your convenience.


Bwalya Banda
Acting Assistant Director - Human Resource and Administration
MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

All communications should be addressed to
The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education
Not to any individual by name

Telephone: 250855/ 251315/ 251283
251293/ 211318/ 251291
251003/ 251316



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

MOE 101/16/15

In reply please quote

No.

P. O. Box 50093
LUSAKA

12th October, 2023

Ms. Sharon Nsana
University of Zambia
P.O Box 32379
LUSAKA

Re: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT INTERVIEWS FROM MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Reference is made to the above captioned subject.

I am pleased to inform you that the Ministry of Education has granted permission to enable you conduct interviews for your research entitled "**Role of Higher Education on Women's appointment to decision making positions in Public Administration**".

Kindly be informed that the interviews are purely for academic purposes and you are expected to exhibit high professionalism, confidentiality and being ethical during the period that you will be conducting them. Be reminded that the research should not interfere with planned programmes and activities in the Ministry.

By copy of this letter, the Director Higher Education is informed accordingly.

Kasonde Mwila (Mr.)
Director – HRA
For/Permanent Secretary – Educational Services
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

CC. Director – Higher Education

/KD

APPENDIX V: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR VARIOUS MINISTRIES

1. Gender
2. Age
3. Educational level attained
4. Professional background
5. Years of professional experience
6. The government in its effort to eliminate gender gaps between men and women in society has put in place several strategies to achieve this.
 - (a) What are the numbers of directors (men and women) in public administration?
 - (b) What strategies is the government promoting in the public sector to eliminate gender gaps?
 - (c) Do you think equality in terms of decision making between men and women is being achieved?
7. We can see that some regulations in Zambia are still gender blind when we compare women's representation in decision making which currently stands as being low for women.
 - (a) What do you think can be done to increase women's representation in decision making positions?
 - (b) Do legal structures have a statistically significant influence on women's participation in decision making?
 - (c) What benefits can women derive from these laws when enhanced in institutions?
8. How would you describe the difference, if any in the way women participate in decision making when compared to men?
9. What barriers or obstacles do women face when participating in decision making in public administration? In your opinion, how can these barriers or obstacles be reduced?
10. It has been alleged that men are viewed to be more capable of producing results when in positions of decision making especially top positions.
 - (a) What do you think about this statement?
 - (b) Have gender gaps in your institution affected the operation of the institution?
 - (c) What changes can you propose to the government that can promote women's participation in decision making?

11. What can you say are the benefits for women attaining higher education?
12. Has higher education impacted on women's participation in decision making? Kindly explain how.
13. Are there any advantages or disadvantages that higher education has on women's participation in decision making?

APPENDIX VI: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR WOMEN IN DECISION MAKING

1. Gender
2. Age
3. Educational level attained
4. Professional background
5. How would you describe your journey in higher education that led you to participation in decision making?
6. What opportunities are there for you to participate in decision making?
7. What is your view on participation of women in decision making positions in public administration?
8. Can you tell us what you think about high education and if at all it affected your appointment in any way.
9. Are there any advantages or disadvantages of higher education that can made you participate in decision making?
10. Do you feel your gender affects your participation in decision making structure?
11. What personal obstacles do you face when participating in decision making?
12. What societal obstacles do you face when participating in decision making?
13. What institutional barriers do you face in participation in decision making?
14. Do men and women face the same obstacles in participation in decision making?
15. In your opinion, what could be the reason why there are fewer women in decision making positions?
16. Are you familiar with any of the following documents?
 - (a) National Gender Policy
 - (b) SADC Declaration
 - (c) Beijing Declaration
 - (d) Sustainable Development Goals
 - (e) CEDAW protocols
17. Are you aware if any of these instruments above are being applied in your work place?
Highlight the ones being applied.
18. What do you think can be done to increase women's participation in decision making?

APPENDIX VII: PUBLICATIONS

Publication 1



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH AND INNOVATION IN SOCIAL SCIENCE (IJRISS)

ISSN No. 2454-6186 | DOI: 10.47772/IJRISS | Volume VII Issue XI November 2023

Strengthening Gender Equality in Decision Making in Public Administration in Zambia

*Sharon Nsana and Harrison Daka (PhD)

University of Zambia

*Corresponding Author

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2023.7011028>

Received: 13 October 2023; Revised: 01 November 2023; Accepted: 04 November 2023; Published: 01 December 2023

ABSTRACT

Achieving significant women representation in decision making positions in public administration has been identified as key step towards achieving gender equality. Gender equality is regarded as a top priority to any institution, not because equality between men and women is an important developmental goal, but because both men and women's participation in activities that affect them and the nation leads to growth as well as development. Women represent more than half of the world's population, have talent, are human capital and their productivity is equal to that of men, such that their absence in decision making affects the operations of



Higher Education: Pathway for Women's Appointment to Decision Making Positions in Public Administration in Zambia

Sharon Nsana*, Harrison Daka and Lydia Mukuka Mulenga-Hangane

University of Zambia

*Corresponding Author

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.804005>

Received: 23 February 2024; Accepted: 23 March 2024; Published: 25 April 2024

ABSTRACT

The success of development efforts depends on making women full and equal partners in all matters of the economy. Higher education, to be certain, by itself, is not a panacea, but is a necessary condition for the advancement of women in society. Through higher education, the journey towards participation in decision making power begins. Access to education is considered an important determinant of women's appointment to decision making positions in public administration. This is because women's increased education is positively associated with autonomy of decision making in different sectors of society. As such, women's decision making power increases when they are empowered with higher education. The main objective of this study was to explore the influence of higher education qualifications on women's appointment to decision making positions in public administration. The sample size was 25 respondents who were interviewed from various ministries in Lusaka. Both secondary and primary data were collected for the study. Primary data was collected using semi-structured interviews and secondary data from various documents, reports as well as electronic documents. The research design used was case study and using a non-probability sampling technique, purposive sampling and snow ball sampling methods were used. Data was analyzed using thematic analysis. Findings of the study reviewed that despite women acquiring higher education qualification in Zambia, their appointment to decision making positions in public administration

PROPOSED RESEARCH BUDGET

Project period (October 2021 – December 2023)

Personnel	Amount (ZMW)	
Principal Investigator	3,000	
Other Personnel		
Research Assistant x 2	1,500	
Total Personnel		4,500
Other Expenses		
Travel	1,000	
Ethical clearance	1,500	
Materials	500	
Printing	1,000	
Total Expenses		4,000
TOTAL BUDGET		8,500

WORK SCHEDULE REPRESENTED IN A GHANTT CHART

TASKS	TIMELINE IN MONTHS						
	OCT – DEC 20	JAN – JUNE 21	JULY – DEC 22	JAN – JUN 23	JUNE – DEC 23	JAN – DEC 23	APR – MAY 24
Developing research proposal							
Writing chapter 1							
Literature review							
Chapter 3							
Pilot study							
Data collection							
Data analysis							
Write up for the first draft							
Write up for the final draft							
Submission of dissertation							
Corrections and final submission							