

**EXPLORING THE LOW LEVELS OF WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION
IN KABWE CENTRAL CONSTITUENCY OF ZAMBIA FROM 1964 TO 2021**

BY

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Declaration

I, Phiri Bessy, affirm that this dissertation is entirely my original work, and I have appropriately acknowledged all sources of information used. Furthermore, I confirm that this work has not been previously submitted to this university or any other institution.

Signed.....

Date...../...../.....

Approval

This Dissertation for Phiri Bessy has been approved for the partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Masters in Civic Education by the University of Zambia.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my father Mr. Godwin Phiri as my hero and counselor for all the times he encouraged and pushed me to complete this study. I am indebted for the vigorous encouragement that made me work extremely hard to produce this work. For all prayers and good will made towards the work, I am very thankful.

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Abstract

The study explored the reasons for low levels of women political participation in Kabwe Central Constituency of Zambia. The objectives of this study were as follows: to explore reasons affecting low women political participation, the effects of low participation of women in politics and measures to promote women participation in politics. The study is qualitative and used a descriptive research design because its flexible, offered in-depth and detailed information, allowed the use of multiple data collection methods and minimized the chance of having missing data. Moreover, the approach was found to integrate human touch, was cost-effective and was indeed the only option in some cases of research problems. The data was collected using Focus Group Discussion and structured interviews. The target population of the study comprised of Provincial Secretary General of political parties, ECZ officials, members of Kabwe central constituency and Non-Government Organisation. The study sample consisted of 30 participants. Purposive sampling also known as a judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling was used in the study. The interviews and FGDs conducted in this study established that women face numerous challenges in political participation which includes; lack of support from fellow women and family, inadequate financial resources to fund political activities, unsafe or fear of political violence, low confidence due to intimidation and lack of political motivation in key positions. On the effects of low political participation, the study revealed that; policies formulated do not reflect the interest of girls and women, women's voices may not be heard in politics, demotivating young girls as well as proliferation of gender gap representation. It was clear that the negative effects of low women participation in political participation increased the already existing gender gap representation in governance. The findings of the study reveal some measure that can put in place to address low women political participation were to; training and leadership programmes for women, promoting community talks or sensitization, reducing charges of adoption by political parties as well as reducing political violence against women in politics. Based on the study findings, the following future political were suggested to stakeholders; stakeholders such NGOs, CSO, Political parties among others should be on lookout in communities and identify those women interested in politics and fund them, ECZ, police, political parties and other stakeholders should ensure to create a political friendly atmosphere to accommodate women in political landscape and to use various platforms such as the media, market places, churches, traditional leaders to be used as conduits or channels to disseminate information on the importance of women participation in political participation. There is need for further studies to investigate the impact of low women participation in politics on the development of Kabwe Central Constituency.

Key words: Politics, feminism, intersectionality, womanism, poststructuralist.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ABREVIATIONS	MEANING
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CW	Common Wealth
ECZ	Electoral Commission of Zambia
EU	European Union
FGD	Focus Group Discuss
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisation
PF	Patriotic Front
PI	Plan International
SADC	Southern African Development Communities
TRWL	Train, Run, Win, and Lead
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNHR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UN	United Nations
UPND	United Party for National Development

WSP	Women Sports Foundation
WYWW	What Young Women Want
ZNWL	Zambia National Women's Lobby

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

The chapter presents the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the objectives, research questions, significance of the study, theoretical framework, conceptual framework, delimitation, operational definitions as well as organisation of the dissertation

1.2 Background of the study

Women have historically been disadvantaged in participating in politics in most of the countries worldwide. Africa and the rest of the world are far from achieving 50% women's representation in politics and at all levels of governance (William, 2018). Under international standards, both men and women should have equal rights and opportunities to everything worldwide, most especially to participate fully in all aspects and at all levels of political processes (Oloyede, 2020). Political participation means the right under which the ruling authority is committed to providing rights to citizens, including the right to nominate and elect representatives, to hold public office in accordance with the principle of equal opportunities, to participate in private and public meetings, and the right to form and join political parties.

Globally, women constitute over half of the world's population and contribute in vital ways to societal development generally (UN, 2022). In most societies, women assume some key roles, which are: mother, producer, home manager, and community organizer, sociocultural and political activists (Oloyede, 2020). Political participation is broadly defined as any action a citizen takes to influence their political system. Political participation is valuable for most forms of government, but it is vital for a healthy democracy. Articles 20 and 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights make a similar declaration about the right to participate in the management of public affairs (Fluker, 2015). But what is politics? It can be defined as the search for truth about how human beings exercise power, or might be thought to be completely separate from actually seeking to exercise that power. But in practice, as noted in this study, political ideas are some of the most important weapons in the politician's armoury. Attempts to ignore this are either naive or, quite frequently, a deliberate attempt to present a controversial political ideology as an

indisputable political fact. Nevertheless, what is politics is the question the researcher of this thesis looked at. According to Stephen and Jackson (2008) politics is a way of ruling divided societies by a process of free discussion and without undue violence. In Zambia politics has been linked to governance. The concept of “governance” and specifically narrowing down to political governance, as a basis for providing the conceptual understanding and context for the study. The concept of “governance” is not new, just as much as the broad definitions are often rather vague. It is interpreted differently by various people. The actual meaning of the concept depends on the level of governance this study explored in Kabwe constituency.

Therefore, this study explored the under representation of women in political participation in 2021 elections in Kabwe. In Africa, women political participation was at 24 per cent women representation in parliament (Sifisosami, 2022). According to the World Bank (2017), at 18 per cent, Zambia has the lowest proportion of seats held by women in national parliament in Sub Saharan Africa. The regional average is projected at just below 25 per cent. Low levels of female political representation in Zambia are considered to undermine the quality of the country’s democracy. In line with global trend, Zambian women constitute nearly half of the population of the country. But despite the major roles they play with their population, women roles in the society are yet to be given recognition (UN, 2022). Various international benchmark has been put in place to see to it that hindrances to political participation is curbed. Laws such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), now ratified by the majority of the world’s governments, into legal guarantees of gender equality as mechanism to improve political participation (Warioba, 2012). Similarly, the International Conference on women in Beijing in 1995 enhanced the effective participation of women in politics and Zambia inclusive.

In Zambia, over 50 percent of women are involved in voting during elections. Despite these, women are still under represented in both elective and appointive positions. Zambia has been recording low participation of women in both elective and appointive positions, this is a growing concern to many Zambians and stakeholder (ZNWL, 2023). Low women participation has been worrying some since the restoration of democracy in 1991 in Zambia. After the general election in 1991 women won 7 percent of the seats; this percentage increased to 14 percent in 2006 and 17 percent in 2016. Following the most recent August 2021 election, women now holding 13 percent

of parliamentary seats and 21 percent of cabinet positions. Women's representation in local government has remained steady at 8 percent (European Democracy Hub, 2021). In 2021, only one female candidate stood for parliamentary elections in Kabwe District.

Scholars of feminism and gender equality have long argued that 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. Therefore, this study explored the low levels of women political participation in Kabwe Central Constituency of Zambia from 1991 to 2021.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

At the global level, the right to political participation is expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR); legally provided for by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) of 1966 (Hannan, 2015). Zambia being a member of several international, regional bodies guarantees the right to be elected and to vote under Article 25 enshrined in the Zambian constitution. Despite these benchmarks, there is a low representation of women in politics in Kabwe central Constituency which is a source of concern. The question is: why? For example, during the first democratic elections held in 1991, women won 7 percent of the seats in Kabwe. This percentage increased to 14 percent in 2006 and 17 percent in 2016. By 2016, women also held 40 percent of positions in the executive cabinet but with no one from Kabwe constituency. Further, women's political representation once again decreased following the most recent August 2021 election, with women now holding 13 percent of parliamentary seats and 21 percent of cabinet positions. Women's representation at local government has remained steady at 8 percent (European Democracy Hub, 2021). In 2021. General elections, only one female candidate contested as a Member of Parliament. Clearly, if this problem of low women political participation persists and left unchecked, addressing the under representation of women in politics in Zambia will remain a fallacy. This had motivated the researcher to explore the reasons (*why* and *how*) are there lower levels of women's political participation in Kabwe Central Constituency in Zambia. In order to explore the reasons, the study used feminist theoretical framework to understand what takes place in every corner of human existence of Kabwe constituency.

1.4 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to explore the low levels of women political participation in Kabwe Central Constituency in Zambia.

1.5 Objective of the study

1. To explore reasons for women low political participation in Kabwe Central Constituency
2. To ascertain the effects of low participation of women in politics in Kabwe Central Constituency
3. To establish measures to be put in place to encourage women participation in politics in Kabwe Central Constituency

1.6 Research questions

1. What are the reasons affecting women low political participation in Kabwe Central Constituency from 1964 to 2021?
2. What are the effects of low participation of women in politics in Kabwe Central Constituency from 1964 to 2021?
3. What measures and strategies are to be put in place to increase women participation in politics in Kabwe Central Constituency?

1.7 Significance of the study

The study may bring in a new dimension of promoting women participation in politics. In this case the policy makers may also benefit in the sense that the findings of the study may provide gendered approach to women participation in politics. The study may also provide a bench mark for governance sensitization in the selected study area. Important to mention, the study may further contribute to the existing literature on how to enhance women representation in governance through political participation at local level and international level. For example, the feminist movement has affected change in Western society, including women's suffrage; greater access to education; more equitable pay with men; the right to initiate divorce proceedings; the right of women to make individual decisions regarding pregnancy (including access to contraceptives and abortion). This study examined if exposure to a feminist perspective may provide alternative interpretations of cultural messages, thereby increasing body image satisfaction. Participants were

randomly assigned to a feminist or psychoeducational intervention, or a control group. These are parliamentarians in Kabwe constituency. Exposure to the feminist condition resulted in increased self-identification as a feminist and greater appearance satisfaction, and changes in feminist identity were related to positive changes in body image as a politician. The findings indicate that exposure to feminist theories may serve as an effective intervention strategy for low participation of women in politics.

1.8 Theoretical framework

This study was guided by key concepts of feminism namely *intersectionality* and *womanism*. The key principle in feminism is that women are entitled to equal rights and equal treatment, because it is a human right issue to treat humanity the same. Furthermore, it is argued that the differences that we see between men and women are as a result of socialisation or inequalities of treatment (Hughes, 2003). Women are capable to do what men can do. Therefore, feminism is a belief that women and men are inherently of equal worth (Freedman, 2012:11). In this study, feminist theory was used in order to spotlight the problem of women's under-representation in politics in Kabwe central constituency. At issue is that feminism has the following advantages, namely; to promote equal rights to all human beings irrespective of their gender. However, other disadvantages of these theories are with the help of the encouragement of these theories women try to put themselves over men and this as a result creates inequality in society. The gender-power-order¹ according to feminist theory is always present in our society, it shapes structures and sets current power relations. The core of this theoretical framework is the essentials of feminist theory. A central feature of feminist political theory is the notion that women and their situation are central to political analysis. Its interest lies in questioning the fact that men appear to have more power and privilege than women and asking how it can be changed (Bryson, 2003). The implication of this theory can be seen from the finding based on the tradition beliefs that impedes women participation in decision making positions.

In this study the theory was informative to the study in the sense that one fundamental point in feminist view on the politics of women's representation is that differences among women, such as

¹ See Connell (1987) who defines gender power order as a historically constructed pattern of power relations between men and women, journal of Gender studies, available online at: www.tandfonline.com

class, ethnicity, race and generation, have great impact on their levels of participation in politics (Lovenduski, 2002). The theory helped to bring to light important differences among women that should not be neglected in determining the levels of participation of women in politics. Feminist theory, through its focus on gender and power, has formed valuable lens through which to understand the intersection of discrimination against women and children (Dawson, 2018).

This theory was important because it emphasizes the notion of power and control and is an inclusive theory as it considers how systems of power and oppression interact among men and women in society (Brown, 2004). Although the study uses an umbrella term, for example feminist theory, the study acknowledges that feminism is not a unitary theory. Instead, it encompasses a range of theories that incorporate those that espouse adaptation of a traditional positivistic scientific model to promote women's interests to those that advocate for the radical separatist feminist position (Bunting and Campbell, 1990). The aim is not to homogenize different strands of thinking into one convenient label (Morrissey, 2003). Therefore, this theory helped the author to understand why there is low women participation in politics. This is based on the understanding that most societies privilege men as a group, therefore, a social movement with fundamental beliefs in equality is necessary to enhance equality between the two genders. The poststructuralist feminist scholars thinking was applied for this study because it helped to question the meaning of and gender roles to women in politics which the classics² ignored. At the heart of post-structural feminist theory is the questioning techniques which other methods of inquiry do not have leading to biased theories on women and gender in politics. The two theoretical feminist concepts discussed below are:

1.8.1 Intersectionality

Intersectionality theoretical concept was used for purposes of framing this study. There are many interpretations of intersectionality in the field of feminist studies. For example, in agreement with Lykke, (2010) "intersectionality" in this study was interpreted as a way of understanding and analysing the complexities in the world, in people, and in human experiences". In this thesis

² Classics' is the name given to the study of ancient Greeks and Romans. Nowadays it is an umbrella term covering all aspects of the field, from art history through philosophy to demography and archaeology, but the label was originally applied to literary texts alone

intersectionality was considered as a theoretical and methodological tool to analyse historically specific kinds of power differentials and constraining normativity, based on discursively, institutionally and structurally-constructed sociocultural categorizations such as gender, ethnicity, race, class, sexuality age, disability, nationality, mother tongue and so on, interact, and in so doing produce different kinds of societal inequalities and unjust social relations at political level in Kabwe district. The events and conditions of social and political life and the self can seldom be understood as shaped by one factor or reason. They are generally shaped by many reasons perpetuating lower levels of women presentation in political life in Kabwe constituency. When it comes to social inequality, people's lives, and the organization of power in a given society are better understood as being shaped not by a single axis of social division, be it race, gender or class, but by many axes that work together and influence each other (Collins, 2010). This means that intersectionality in this study was used as an analytic tool for the purpose of analysing how women have access to the complexity of the political power and life in Kabwe district. One core premise of intersectionality concerns the relationships between political ideas and practices in Kabwe.

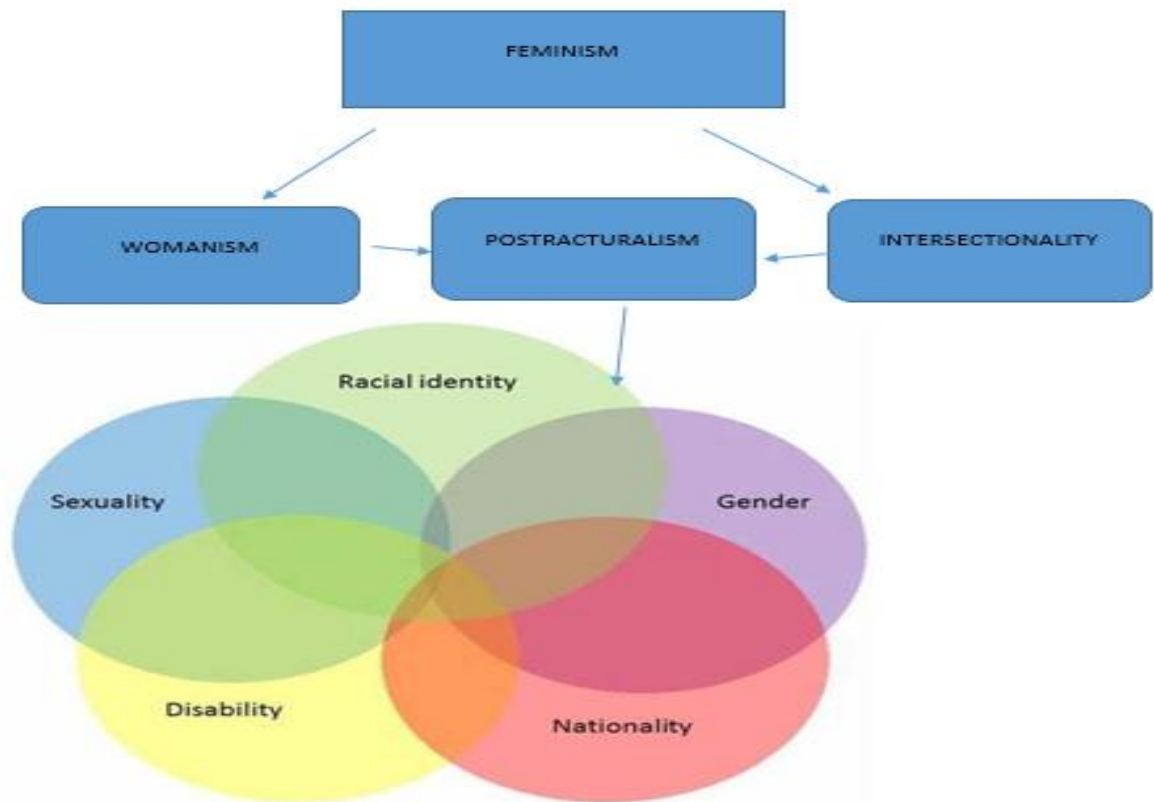
Simply, intersections between gender, sex and power differentials premised on age, class, sexuality, violence and other social division by locating it in the “African womanist feminist” concept. The study borrowed ideas and practices espoused by intersectionality theory, namely gender, sex and culture and locate them in “womanism” to explore politics and governance in Kabwe. In line with Collins *et al.* (2019), the author argued that intersectionality as a concept is everywhere because it has helped to unfold the long feminist debate between sex and gender across languages and boundaries forever. Therefore, feminist intersectionality was used as an analytic tool to help have a critical poststructural feminist gaze on lower level of women political participation. For example, in using “intersectionality” as a concept the study was meant to understand the complex “life world” of women’s perspectives on gender and politics, regarding its historical values and meanings in Kabwe constituency. It was found that intersectionality concept was inadequate to answer to the reasons why there are lower levels of women political participation in politics in Kabwe was found to be Eurocentric because intersectionality seems to blame men for the lower levels of political participation world over. This brought in another theoretical concept known as womanism. Simply, intersectionality theory led the author to use Ogunyemi’s womanism as argued below.

1.8.2 Womanism

This study agreed with Walker's observations that womanism is equally a multiple authored feminist perspective. But for Ogunyemi, it is defined from the "Afrocentric", perspective based on healing, embodied, and spiritual concept of it (Razak, 2006:100). The authors agree with Alice in Collins (1996) that "womanism" as a feminist concept to black women helps them to address gender oppression without attacking black men, which, unfortunately, is core by Walker's intersectionality theory. Despite the weakness, the study used both Ogunyemi's "womanism" (1991) and Kimberle's (1986) intersectionality feminist theoretical concepts, to guide it as follows: The "womanism" concept proposed by Ogunyemi (2007) is woman centred in an African context. The figure of "*Amama*" (meaning mother in *Ngoni* language) in womanism is very important in this genre. The application of the word *Amama* in womanism helped to unearth different types of relationships that occurs among women and between women and men premised on gender, sex and power which is absent under intersectionality theory. Despite, Ogunyemi's womanism resembling Walker's womanism (1983: 67) in many respects, in this study it was used in terms of underpinning the reasons for the lower participation of women in governance and politics in Zambia. For example, Ogunremi's womanism feminist concept was anchored on meaningful union between men and women (based on love) that is absent under intersectionality. In short, does love take a Centre stage towards reasons why there are few women in politics at constituency level? Her womanist approach goes beyond the classification of feminism into gender, race ethnicity and sexuality to include historical conditions under which women participate in politics in Zambia. The Ogunyemi's womanist idea brings itself an everyday woman into the environment she enters with a different voice (Arndt, 2011:23) at local government level. Therefore, Ogunyemi's "womanism" was of value to help in identifying how different forms of subjugation such as economic exploitation, sexual oppression and complementarities that exist between different genders intersect and mean to women's political life in Zambia. Fundamentally, this confirms that the African womanist approach as a post structural feminist theory guided this research in the context of explaining women's oppression based on sex, class and ethnicity in Kabwe. The study used the African womanism to questioning notions of a group to explaining the individual interpersonal dynamics between them and social groups (Frost and Elichaooff, 2014:43). This shows how Ogunyemi's "womanism" was important for this topic because enabled the researcher to incorporate complex power relations between men and women in politics.

Graphical presentation of the feminist model

Figure 1. Graphical Presentation of the Theoretical Framework



1.9 Conceptual definitions

Gender – State of being male or female. It could also mean that the male sex or the female sex, especially when considered with reference to social and cultural differences rather than biological ones, or one of a range of other identities that do not correspond to established ideas of male and female.

Politics- relating to the government or public affairs of a country. Politics is defined in such different ways: as the exercise of power, exercise of authority, the making of collective decisions, the allocation of scarce resources, the practice of deception and manipulation, and so on. (Heywood, 1997)

Elective Positions- these are position that a person occupies as a result of being voting into office. These include mayoral, councillor, Member of Parliament and President

Participation –involving oneself in governance activities

Violence- behaviour involving physical force intended to hurt, damage, or kill someone or something.

1.10 Organisation of the Dissertation

This study has been organised and divided into six chapters. The first chapter gives the introduction to the study. It also presented the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives and research questions, significance of the study, conceptual framework and operational definition of terms used in this study. Chapter two presents the literature review. Literature was reviewed and gaps were identified. Chapter three presents the methodology which was used in the collection and analysis of data. The chapter explains the research design, population, sampling procedure, sampling technique, data collection instruments, data collection procedure, data analysis, presentation of data, validity and reliability of data collected, ethical considerations and limitations. Chapter four presents findings from the study. The chapter gives answers to the research questions. Chapter five discusses the findings of the study. The discussion is based on the objectives of the study. Finally, chapter six gives the conclusion of the study and makes recommendations based on the findings.

1.11 Summary

This chapter provides an introduction to the study. The chapter also outlines the research questions which seek to find what existing literature says about the subject matter under investigation. Furthermore, the chapter gave the significance of the study to stakeholders. It also provided the limitations and delimitations of the study. The theoretical conceptual frameworks were also discussed in this chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Overview

This chapter presents a scholarly view of related literature on the low political participation of women. Essentially, the chapter presents under the following subheadings; understanding political participation, historical perspective of low women participation in politics, women and political participation, the significance of women participation in politics- African perspective, the challenges women face in participating in politics, the challenges women face in participating in politics in Africa, measures to be put in place to promote women participation in politics as well as research gap.

2.2 Definitions of Political Participation

Political participation are those voluntary activities by which members of a society share in the selection of rulers directly or indirectly, in the formation of public policy (Shi, 2002) from a classical perspective political participation is described as voting, seeking information, discussing and proselytizing, attending meetings, contributing financially and communicating with representatives (Norris, 2010). Political participation refers to the activities of the mass public in politics for example, voting in elections, helping a political campaign, giving money to a candidate or cause, writing or calling officials, petitioning, boycotting, demonstrating, and working with other people on issues (Roued-Cunliffe, 2017).

William (2018) describes political participation a process that includes a broad range of activities through which people develop and express their opinions on the world and how it is governed, and try to take part in and shape the decisions that affect their lives. These activities range from developing thinking about disability or other social issues at the individual or family level, joining disabled people's organizations or other groups and organizations, and campaigning at the local, regional or national level, to the process of formal politics, such as voting, joining a political party, or standing for elections. This study used this definition of political participation.

Political participation also mean activity by private citizens designed to influence government decision-making (Norris, 2010). Political participation refers the activities that has the intent or effect of influencing government action either directly by affecting the making or implementation of public policy or indirectly by influencing the selection of people who make those policies. Roued-Cunliffe (2017) submits that political participation is action that influences the distribution of social goods and values. From these definitions, William (2018) ideas that political participation is the process were citizens (women) get involved in decision making process and have right to be voted and vote will be used as a stand point for this study.

Political participation refers to processes that are specifically designed to engage citizens in decision-making. The literature suggests that many such processes are either officially organised or sponsored by the government (Lowndes et al., 2001), although, in recent times, there has been an increase in political participation programs organised by civil society organisations and NGOs. The strength of any community is reliant on how much its members participate in the activities of the nation. Through participation in civic activities, people from different backgrounds in a community come together to address some problems affecting them. In particular, young people should be encouraged to participate more frequently in activities central to the growth of democracy in their communities, such as voting and having a voice in decision making. How this IS NOT done hence this study will endeavour to establish in Kabwe Central.

Equally, Political participation is described as the involvement of citizens in a wide range of activities that relate to the making and implementation of policy including the determination of levels of service, budget priorities, and the acceptability of physical construction projects in order to orient government programmes towards community needs (Fox and Meyer, 1995). For Campbell and Marshall (2000) and Anderson (2015), citizen involvement means the publics' ability to take part or participate in the nation-states' processes and activities especially concerning preparation of public policy and the critical decision making that affects their day to day lives. According to Obasi and Lekorwe (2014) various scholars are in agreement that citizen engagement refers to ways, activities or processes for involving citizens in the public policy process. Basically citizen involvement entails engagement of citizens as participants in the development of public activities such as public policy formulation.

The concept of political participation has been evolving through two different approaches in the literature. The first is a normative approach discussed in democracy theories. This approach asserts that political participation in political decision-making is vital to renew the relationship between elected representatives and their voters. Some earlier thinkers about democracy have realist views about political participation in democracies, saying that democracy enables citizens to choose their leaders to make decisions on behalf of them (Schumpeter, 1943). However, this view of political participation in democracy has been increasingly challenged in recent times and this is not different in Zambia. Scholars working in the field of participatory democracy and deliberative democracy theories have been asserting that democracy must provide opportunities for citizens to participate directly in the political decision-making (Pateman, 2012).

The second approach is empirical. The focus of political participation is to bring citizens' voices into the decision-making that affects them. However, offering participation opportunities to citizens in decision-making is not as straightforward as it sounds because, as scholars and practitioners often point out, political participation requires the transformation of institutions that were institutionalised to operate in representative settings (Hendriks 2015; Pateman, 2012; United Nations Public Administration Network, 2008). In recent decades, many developing countries have witnessed a proliferation of participatory processes to involve citizens in the making of local public policies and budgeting, small-scale short-term and medium-term development projects and (re)arrangement of local public services at the local level (Heller and Rao, 2015). The participatory governance literature suggests that such a proliferation of participatory processes is, inter alia, a response to the failure of representative institutions to include ordinary citizens in public policy processes (Fischer, 2016). Specific to the developing world, the literature shows that both donor-driven approaches to governance and leftist political movements supporting political participation in governance have contributed to the expansion of both new and conventional forms of participatory processes (Wampler, 2012).

However, in recent times, the participation of citizens in decision-making has become a norm in almost all countries. These norms are advocated in the literatures of public administration (Peters 2014), democratic governance (Haque 2014), participatory governance (Fung 2015) and public sector management and reforms (Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff 2015). However, not all countries have similar approaches to political participation. Different governments introduce participatory

mechanisms for different purposes, but the essence is to encourage a participative environment by transforming traditional non-participatory institutions into more citizen-centric platforms as well as by empowering citizens to make decisions which are more robust and practical (Pateman 2012). Whether this is the case in Zambia, this study will have to establish.

Political participation involves collective action to address problems or to promote specific interests within communities. It means promoting the quality of life in a community through both political and non-political processes. However, in order for citizens to fully participate in the affairs of their community, there is need for them to understand what democracy is and what it demands. This is supported by Magasu (2021) which argues that, understanding the basic processes and functions of government encourages more involvement in democratic processes. This is what political participation is all about.

According to Keeter et al (2002), political participation includes a variety of activities falling into three not necessarily exclusive categories these are; civic activities, political voice activities, and electoral activities. Civic activities focus on voluntary associations that promote the health and wellbeing of a community which include membership in fraternal organizations, religious organizations, clubs, or professional associations as well as volunteering, charitable fundraising, and community problem-solving. Most of the citizens who know and understand their civic rights have in most cases actively participated in such civic activities. The Political voice activities involve efforts to shape social institutions through collective action. Some of the political voice activities include boycotting companies, signing petitions, protesting, expressing opinions to media sources and lobbying efforts such as writing letters or e-mails, testifying, and visits with policymakers while electoral activities include all those activities aimed at influencing the outcomes of the electoral process, such as voting, campaigning, and registering other people to vote (Keeter et al, 2002).

For a community to succeed, citizens must participate in all the above three categories of activities: civic, political voice, and electoral. Civic participation promotes an understanding of the connection between individual self-interest and the common good. Additionally, political voice and electoral activities enable citizens to hold the people who make decisions answerable to the

needs and interests of citizens. However, for citizens to participate in the civic, political and electoral activities, they need to be civically enlightened. This means that they should have relevant information on governance and the political processes of their country (Hylton, 2015). Depending on the political will, citizens can still be marginalized.

Additionally, Political participation is not only important for the growth of democracy but also for positive community and individual outcomes. At the individual level, it can help develop habits and social networks. At college and university level, civic participation plays a pivotal role in the experiences of students. According to AACU (2012), students who participate in civic activities have higher rates of satisfaction with college, higher grades, and higher retention rates; they are also more likely to complete degrees than are their less engaged peers. Therefore, greater civic knowledge leads to increased rates of political engagement among citizens in democratic societies. Simply this is the case in Kabwe Central, this study has established.

2.3 World Historical Perspective of Women Participation in Politics

In many countries, women have been underrepresented in the government and different institutions (Chesser, 2019). This historical tendency still persists, although women are increasingly being elected to be heads of state and government institutions. As of October 2019, the global participation rate of women in national-level parliaments is 24.5%. In 2013, women accounted for 8% of all national leaders and 2% of all presidential posts. Furthermore, 75% of all female prime ministers and presidents have taken office in the past two decades (Toplak, 2019).

The proportion of women in national parliaments around the world is growing, but they are still underrepresented. As of April 1, 2019, the global average of women in national assemblies is 24.3 percent. At the same time, large differences exist between countries, for example. Sri Lanka has quite low female participation rates in parliament compared with Rwanda, Cuba, and Bolivia, where female representation rates are the highest (UNICEF, 2023). Three of the top ten countries in 2019 were in Latin America (Bolivia, Cuba, and Mexico), and the Americans have seen the greatest aggregate change over the past 20 years (Clayton, 2020).

At presidents and prime ministers' level the number of women leaders around the world has grown, but they still represent a small group. At the executive levels of government, women become prime

ministers more often than they become presidents. In 2013, women accounted for 8 percent of all national leaders and 2 percent of all presidential posts (McNamara, 2020). Furthermore, 75 percent of all female prime ministers and presidents have taken office in the past two decades. Baskaran (2018) indicates that since 1960 to 2015, 108 women have become national leaders in 70 countries, with more being prime ministers than presidents. In case of Kabwe Central Constituency, the situation was that the constituency is its first time to have a female Member of Parliament since time in memorial.

Zarkov (2017) found that women have long struggled in more developed countries to become president or prime minister. Israel elected its first female prime minister in 1969 but has never done so again. The United States, on the other hand, has had no female presidents. Sri Lanka was the first nation to possess a female president, Chandrika Kumaratunga (1994–2000), and a female prime minister (Sirimavo Bandaranaike) simultaneously. This also marked the first time that a female prime minister (Sirimavo Bandaranaike) directly succeeded another female prime minister (Chandrika Kumaratunga). Mary McAleese's election as president of Ireland (1997–2011) was the first time that a female president directly succeeded another female president, Mary Robinson. Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir, prime minister of Iceland (2009–2013), was the world's first openly lesbian world leader, first female world leader to wed a same-sex partner while in office. The struggle for women representation in Zambia is a matter of concerns. For example, since independence in political landscape the country had never have a female ascending to higher position above ministerial not until in 2016 when Zambia had recorded her first ever vice president female.

The longest serving female non-royal head of government and longest serving female leader of a country is Sheikh Hasina. She is the longest serving prime minister in the history of Bangladesh, having served for a combined total of over 18 years. As of 5 February 2023, she is the world's longest serving elected female head of government (UNICEF, 2023). In 2021 Estonia became the first country to have both a female elected head of state and elected head of government. (If you only consider countries where the head of state is directly elected, then the first country to have both an elected female head of state and an elected female head of government is Moldova, also in 2021) (McCarthy, 2021).

From historical perspective, women may face a number of challenges that affect their ability to participate in political life and become political leaders. Several countries are exploring measures that may increase women's participation in government at all levels, from the local to the national and international levels. However, more women are pursuing leadership positions in the present-day.

2.4 Reason affecting Women Political Participation

Women constitute slightly more than half of the world population. Their contribution to social & economic development of societies is also more than half as compared to that of men by value of their dual roles in the productive and reproductive spheres. Yet their participation in formal political structures and processes is less, where decisions regarding the use of societal resources generated by both men and women are made remains insignificant (UN, 2005), the former secretary general argues for equal participation of women in politics from the human rights perspective. However, the social economic conditions play a significant role in the recruitment of women to legislatures in both long-standing and new democracies. The social and economic status of women in society has a direct influence on their participation in political institutions and elected bodies. For example, researchers point to the correlation between women's legislative recruitment and the 20 proportion of women working outside the home, as well as the percentage of women college graduates. According to some researchers, socio-economic conditions take second place to electoral systems in women's legislative recruitment within established democracies (Matland, 2012). Lack of economic resources is one of the obstacles to women's political participation and electoral processes. It is clear that women face specific and diverse economic and financial challenge. As you can see the relationship between economic resources and electoral processes reveal important difference between women and men candidates. Women's unequal access to economic resources restricts the management of their political activities (Nagaad Umbrella organization report, 2013). Both men and women rely on direct resource and indirect resources for their campaign.

Direct resources can be characterized as a cash money that comes from private donors, political parties, state budgets, subsidies or candidate's personal own resources. Indirect resources are usually made by individuals, political parties, association or clan-based constituencies that donate on behalf of a candidate. This money is more freely designated to pay for the candidates' campaign

needs (Academy for Peace and Development, 2012), having access to direct and indirect financial resources, critically affect women's decision to run for the office.

In Somalia, women tend to be unwilling to become political candidates for a variety of economic reasons. This include investing family resources, which they do not feel they individually own, asking for credit or risking their own or the family's capital, paying for domestic or caring work they will not be able to do, leaving their jobs and re-entering the labour market in cases where they do not get elected (Abdi, 2012). Somali society and culture norms have historically been characterised as pastoralist and nomadic. Pastoralism is a mode of production that relies on livestock rearing cattle, sheep, camels and some other form of subsistence including cultivation of land, hunting and gathering (Hodson, 2006). Somali society is organized along clan families, women are often caught between two clans, her husband's clan and her natal clan. Somalia has organized its political institutions along clan lines to maintain a balance of power and was a result of the early peace conferences. Naturally, women are outside of this clan politics landscape and find it difficult to assert decision-making power through formal political institutions (Siham, 2013). In case of Kabwe Central Constituency, raised fees of adoption and nomination fees by the ECZ was established as among hindering factors to women participation. For example, out of 12 wards in the constituency not even one councillor represented the female. This shows that, low political participation of women is in the constituency which is a source of concern.

Abdul-razak (2010) reveals that woman in Somalia hews the wood, carries the water, satisfies the man, produces and takes care of the child to continue the family tree and manages all house chores. All these are justifications that she can be put in a position of trust and responsibility since society treasures the valuable services she provides. Embarrassingly, she is absent when it comes to the area of representing her locality or community to make decisions in the local council. Is she only good in family management and not that of the larger community where the man she serves has an almost automatic and comfortable position? There is no denying the fact that democracy is appreciated all over the world because of the opportunity it provides for the participation of various interest groups in the management of societal affairs. It is reasonable to argue, therefore, that participation in decision making will be severely hindered when a good number of females are not elected or appointed into the local assemblies. In spite of the fact that women constitute more than half the population and have a better voter tum out, the role, scope and quality of women's

participation in Kenya politics has consistently been lower than that of men since independence in 1963. This may not be the case in Kabwe Central Constituency.

This progress ruled visibility in the economic sphere and has been attributed to the efforts by women's organizations dealing with economic empowerment of the women. The recognition of the power of women's organizations in mobilizing action saw the rise of women's organizations particularly dealing with women's participation in politics from 1992. Research indicates that political structures can play a significant role in women's recruitment to parliament. The system of elections based on proportional representation, for example, has resulted in three to four times more women being elected in countries with similar political cultures. Generalizations such as this are valid so long as there are cultural norms similarities that are similar levels of social and economic development, between countries.

Fraser, Arvomle and Irene (2012) a voter's political literacy, the capacity to make coherent choices and decisions when voting, which is clearly not only dependent on level of formal education plays a significant role, as does the political will to improve the situation. On the other hand, women's lack of capital has caused their exclusion from the leadership because they are neither head of communities, tribes (traditional clan leaders) nor kinship groups and social organizations. Moreover, the women's lack of clan financial supports is another constraints factor of women's political participation (Adamu and Mekomlen, 2014). Lack of confidence is one of the main reasons for women's under-representation in formal political institutions, whether parliaments, ministries or political parties. With confidence, women can reach the highest levels in the political process. Women are equal to and have the same potential as men, but only they can fight for their rights. Women are very good campaigners, organizers and support-mobilizers, but fear sometimes prevents women from contesting elections and from participating in political life (Shvedova, 2013).

Violence impacts the electoral participation of both men and women. However, most existing studies of electoral violence, as well as the frameworks and interventions based upon these studies focus on electoral violence that occurs in the form of observable acts in the public sphere, the data for which is more readily available. Election related violence involving women, much of which is difficult to quantify and analyze because it occurs in the private sphere or in the form of psychological threats or social restrictions, is often overlooked (Haslam, 2007).

Bangladesh ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1984, although it did so with reservations, stating that certain articles conflict with Sharia law. Bangladesh also acceded to the International Covenant on Civil and Political High Levels of Political and Electoral Violence. Participants can cite examples of concerted violence, including harassment of women and girls in public transport as a consequence of ongoing political rivalry, intimidation, harassment and threats issued against those who supported an oppositional party, direct and overt pressure from political party members to switch party loyalties and attacks on homes (Shvedova, 2015).

Furthermore, women lack the resources to engage in muscle politics on par with men, which results in fear for their personal safety as well as the safety of their families in such a violent environment (Kabira and Nzioki, 2019). The reliance on muscle, hired by political parties, contributes to a systemic culture of violence by party members and supporters against voters. Participants highlighted the presence of muscle men who either threaten individuals and communities who are seen as sympathetic to an opposition party or to gather votes from specific communities such as gang controlled slums. Because the ability to rally muscle is often perceived as critical to advance in a political party and gain party backing for candidacy, this lack of access is seen to undermine women's propensity to enter politics. As participants note, party leaders tend to prioritize candidates with money, muscle power ... and controlling capability (Hillman and Cannella 2007 and Ryan and Haslam, 2007). This corresponds with McNamara (2020) who found that women fail to support each other and have trust issues towards electing their fellows into leadership positions. Similarly, the UNICEF (2023) reports that women in politics have low self-confidence attributed from family and their fellow women.

2.5 Effects of Low Women Participation in Politics

In several African countries during the 1990s, women were significantly involved in the process of creating constitutions. In South Africa, women were very active in drafting a new constitution that guarantees women equality, freedom and security of the person, freedom from violence, the right to make decisions concerning reproduction, and the right to control one's own body (Wängnerud and Sundell, 2012).

According to Chalaby, (2017) and Radu (2018) the independent Women's National Coalition (WNC) lobbied hard to have a women's charter passed in South Africa which was Formed in 1991 to unite women of all parties and political persuasions. The WNC brought together 81 organizations and 13 regional alliances, including affiliates of the African National Congress, the Inkatha Freedom Party, the National Party, the Pan Africanist Congress, the Azanian People's Organization, and the Democratic Party (Chalaby, 2017). The WNC also included such diverse groups as the Rural Women's Movement, the Union of Jewish Women, and the South African Domestic Workers Union. More than three million women have the broadest coalition ever formed in South Africa participated in focus groups and regional and national conferences organized by the WNC to voice women's concerns. In 1994, the Women's Charter was drafted and endorsed by the national parliament and all nine regional parliaments. The Charter addresses a broad range of issues, including equality, legal rights, economic issues, education, health, politics, and violence against women. The constitution allows the Charter to become a guideline for priorities in reforming government gender policy.

Nevertheless, Radu (2018) observes that, similar developments took place in Malawi, where women's organizations involved in the constitutional process had to be constantly on the alert to ensure that women's concerns were not downgraded or dropped from the agenda. A 1994 conference, held to prepare for Malawi's multiparty elections, agreed under pressure from women delegates to endorse specific women's concerns and incorporate some of them into the constitution. These included education for girls, equal rights and equal access for women in politics and business, and HIV/ AIDS prevention programs for men and women alike. Recommendations by the National Commission on Women in Development (NCWID) that women's concerns should be included in the bill of rights and that the Senate should have equal representation of men and women were incorporated into the constitution and then withdrawn four times prior to ratification in May 1994 (Momodu, 2013). A group of women in the NCWID lobbied the National Consultative Council against each successive attempt to remove the recommendations and were partially successful (Wängnerud and Sundell, 2012).

In Uganda, no group was as well organized or as united as women in influencing the drafting of the constitution. Embarking on a countrywide effort to educate women about the constitution and to gather their views, women's groups submitted more memoranda to the constitutional

commission than any other sector of society. Female members of the constituent assembly formed a non-partisan women's caucus that organized workshops for women delegates on speech making, constituency building, coalition building, parliamentary procedures, and related topics. However, 284 delegates elected to Uganda's constituent assembly, were women, the women's caucus worked with women's organizations to make sure that their concerns were raised in the constituent assembly and publicized their views in a weekly radio program on the constituent assembly debates. The fruits of these efforts were seen in the final draft of the constitution, which included a provision requiring that gender equity be written into all laws passed by parliament, a prohibition of laws, customs, and traditions that undermine the position of women, the establishment of an equal opportunity commission to enforce constitutional principles, and a call for expanding the number of women in parliament (Wängnerud and Sundell, 2012).

Furthermore, the increased mobilization of women in Africa has also been visible in the effort to pass or amend laws to improve the legal status of women, mainly in the areas of property rights, land rights, inheritance laws, citizenship laws, domestic violence, rape, and defilement that is, rape of girls under the age of consent. In South Africa, women established a Commission on Gender Equality to ensure that the country's laws would be fully implemented. Women fought to be included in the budget process so that state expenditures would better reflect women's interests, and to see to it that the Labour Relations Act recognized maternity rights and women's rights against sexual harassment in the workplace (Wängnerud and Sundell, 2012). Additionally, they also lobbied for an Employment Equity Bill requiring employers to hire without discrimination based on race, gender, or disability. And they even won the right to choose with a Termination of Pregnancy Bill. In Malawi, the National Commission on Women and Development and nonpartisan organizations like Women's Voices have worked to increase the number of women representatives in both parliament and local legislative councils. They have sought better implementation of laws against domestic violence and have educated women about their inheritance rights (Kumar, 2018).

However, political participation as one of the key elements of democracy in Africa provides the justification for inclusion of marginalised groups such as women and youth in electoral competition. Participation of women in politics will be meaningful only if the process is just, fair, permissive and level playing ground is guaranteed for possible ascension of women politically.

Politics has strategic importance for women because the ultimate success of women's movement will rest heavily on effective use of the political process (Lynn, 1978). Women's ability to effectively use the political process to get to political positions may increase their representation in elective positions and effect public policies. In addition, it is very clear from Nigeria's experience that the political process is male dominated and men influence the process more than women. Momodu (2013) submits that the issues of women's political participation and representation in politics and governance should be seen from four perspectives.

Therefore, access to political institutions, participation which includes control of power within such institutions, quantitative and qualitative representation and the end result will be social and political transformation in the polity. Women's political empowerment can be enhanced when these four conditions are fulfilled. The view that women in politics matter is sustained by three reasons and these are, first, politics is an important arena for decision making. Individuals who hold official positions in government get to decide how to allocate scarce resources, such as tax revenues. Politicians make political decisions that may help some people at the expense of others. Decisions by politicians often affect people's individual choices by encouraging some behaviours and outlawing others. Second, political power is a valuable good. Politicians hold power over other social institutions, such as the family. Third, holding a political position is to hold a position of authority (Paxton, 2017). Women in positions of authority and power can influence decisions on issues that bother on women and impact positively on the lives of female gender. It is possible to argue that men cannot adequately represent women's interests, needs and concerns in the legislature. There are substantive women's issues such as reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, women trafficking amongst others that require women's perspectives and orientation towards addressing them. Integrating women in the political process provides women with the opportunity to discuss women issues facing challenges. Empowerment relates to the degree of representation in deliberative bodies and is often measured by the percentage of women in the Legislature (Beer, 2019). The number of women in the legislative house can determine the extent to which women's issues will attract the attention of policy makers.

In Africa Women's full and effective political participation is a matter of human rights, inclusive growth and sustainable development (OECD, 2018). The active participation of women, on equal terms with men, at all levels of decision-making and political involvement is essential to the

achievement of equality, sustainable development, peace and democracy and the inclusion of their perspectives and experiences into the decision-making processes. Despite this, Kumar (2018) states that in the twenty-first century, women are facing obstacles in their political participation worldwide. Women around the world at every socio political level find themselves under represented in parliament and far removed from decision-making levels. Additionally, as noted in the Millennium Development Goals (United Nations, 2019), women's equal participation with men in power and decision-making is part of their fundamental right to participate in political life, and at the core of gender equality and women's empowerment. Strategies to increase women's participation in politics have been advanced through conventions, protocols and international agreements for gender mainstreaming, but they are yet to prove effective in achieving gender parity in the highest government rankings (Morobane, 2014).

Half of the world's population are women, but today women only hold 23% of all seats in parliaments and senates globally (Chalaby 2017 and Radu, 2018). Furthermore, given the fact that many states have approved international conventions and protocols on gender equality and women political participation, however, the low level of women's representation in government and political may be considered a violation of women's fundamental democratic rights. The African government's public commitments have not materialized into better protection for women and support for victims and this has made women to play outside the political ground. According to Royd (2013) many African state sign and commit themselves to promoting gender parity in political participation, but end up shelving the agreement. Abuse of office and desire to acquire power through self-centred means has resulted in the state ignoring women concerns. Thus, women continue to be underrepresented in governments across the nation and face barriers that often make it difficult for them to exercise political power and assume leadership positions in the public sphere. The UN (2011) concurs and states that, women in every part of the world continue to be largely marginalized from the political sphere, often as a result of discriminatory laws, practices, attitudes and gender stereotypes, low levels of education, lack of access to health care and the disproportionate effect of poverty on women.

Southern African Development Community (SADC) is no different in this global trend. Figures for most of the countries still fall short of the target set by SADC to have 50% women in decision-making positions (SADC, 2019). In light of this, this study seeks to examine the factors that

influence woman political participation in the SADC region. The study of Momodu 2013 established that there were minimal negative community attitudes towards women participation in elective leadership positions such as women being perceived to be weak to handle political campaigns and were also poor political mobilizers.

Approximately 70 women have occupied prime minister or president positions around the world (Jalalzai, 2014), and while these women have certainly set examples for all types of followers, observers, and admirers, they are a surprising minority and represent a very small percentage of women in elective leadership positions. Rather than spotlighting these extraordinary women and elucidating the influence of their achievements, this research examines women in lower levels of leadership, like business ownership and public office positions, because of the importance of their involvement in their economies and societies. The importance of this research lies in the idea that attitudes toward women in leadership affect women's participation in leadership, and in turn, women in positions of leadership engage in policies that positively affect women (Caiazza, 2014).

The report by United Nations (2009) reveals that sex stereotypes are among the most firmly entrenched obstacles to the elimination of discrimination, and are largely responsible for the denigration of the role and potential of women in society. The subordinate position of women in the society seems to legitimize their exclusion from participation in political and decision making processes. Many stories depict women as disloyal, disagreeable, untrustworthy, stupid and even gullible (Kabira and Nzioki, 2019). Even today women continue to be left out of official records and when recognised, they are addressed as those who need welfare assistance rather than actors in the historical process. The heavy under-representation of women in political life and most decision making processes in Kenya needs to be closely investigated.

The study by Karl (2011) explored some of the factors affecting women's political participation worldwide. Among the factors she cites include: house-hold status, work related rights such as maternity leave, job security, provision of child care, employment and remuneration, double burden of work, education and literacy, access to financial resources, legal rights, traditions, cultural attitudes and religion, socialization and self- reliance, violence against women, the mass media, health, ability to control fertility. Cooper and Davidson (2012) sought to study the problems that women in leadership positions generally face. They found that women face stress from both the work, home and social environments. In addition, women have to acquire male leadership and

managerial skills (for example, being aggressive, assertive, confident), as well as multiple demands in running a career and a family. Other sources of stress include difficult working relationships with male (Hillman & Cannella 2007 Ryan, & Haslam, 2007).

2.6 Forms of Violence against Women in Politics

Violence against politically active women is a serious problem that discourages women from participating in political processes, constitutes a fundamental violation of their human dignity, undermines democracy, and is an obstacle to the strengthening of egalitarian and non-discriminatory societies (Kumar, 2018). The problem has been hidden, unknown, unrecognized or ignored. It is considered part of the normal practice of politics, the struggle for power or the price to pay in politics. Violence against women in politics has three special characteristics. It targets women because of their sex, in its very form additionally, violence can be gendered, as evidenced by gender-based threats and sexual violence. Nevertheless, its impact is the discouragement of women to be or become politically active. Research reveals that women in politics around the world report similar experiences, although their nature, intensity and impact differ in different political contexts.

Further, there have been notable attacks against politically active women in environments with well-established democratic systems and norms in place to include women in the political process. However, when violence is directed against women with fewer resources or coping mechanisms, it can silence their voices and stymie their participation in the political process, particularly the vulnerable mostly women who are marginalized, or physically or geographically isolated (Radu, 2018). In those cases, women are subject to all kinds of abuse and mistreatment. Demonstrations of violence against politically active women take the following forms, all of which have distinctive characteristics when implemented in the field of politics, psychological, physical, sexual and economic. Political violence falls in the following categories:

2.6.1 Emotional Abuse: Involves hostile and abusive behaviour designed to cause fear and emotional harm. In politics, there may be threats of physical violence, intimidation, defamation, sexual harassment, social boycotts increasingly common on social media, and acts aimed at harming social status and the image of women. This type of psychological violence seeks to delegitimize women as political actors, undermining their trustworthiness, competence and

visibility in political and public spheres. It's negatively affecting the way women are portrayed and therefore, how they are perceived (Wängnerud and Sundell, 2012).

2.6.2 Physical Violence: involves injuries and bodily harm inflicted directly on women or their loved ones, to frustrate their political participation. They include killings, kidnappings, beatings and domestic violence.

2.6.3 Sexual Violence: Includes sexual acts and attempted sexual acts through coercion, including unwanted sexual comments or insinuations. Examples include sexual harassment and even rape to force women to trade sexual favours to win an appointment or obtain funding.

2.6.4 Economic Violence: Involves coercive behaviour to control access to economic resources. For example, women may be systematically denied access to the financial threats and coercion may be verbal or physical indications of intent to cause harm or to commit acts of violence. Coercion is the act of persuading or forcing someone to do something using threats of violence. Demonstrations of violence against politically active women take the following forms, all of which have distinctive characteristics when implemented in the field of politics: psychological, physical, sexual and economic (Royd, 2013).

2.7 The Challenges Women Face in Participating in Politics

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Southern African Development Community (SADC) is no different in this global trend. Figures for most of the countries still fall short of the target set by SADC to have 50% women in decision-making positions (SADC, 2019). In light of this, this study seeks to examine the factors that influence woman political participation in the SADC region. The study of Momodu 2013 established that there were minimal negative community attitudes towards women participation in elective leadership positions such as women being perceived to be weak to handle political campaigns and were also poor political mobilizers.

Approximately 70 women have occupied prime minister or president positions around the world (Jalalzai, 2014), and while these women have certainly set examples for all types of followers, observers, and admirers, they are a surprising minority and represent a very small percentage of women in elective leadership positions. Rather than spotlighting these extraordinary women and

elucidating the influence of their achievements, this research examines women in lower levels of leadership, like business ownership and public office positions, because of the importance of their involvement in their economies and societies. The importance of this research lies in the idea that attitudes toward women in leadership affect women's participation in leadership, and in turn, women in positions of leadership engage in policies that positively affect women (Caiazza, 2014).

The report by United Nations (2009) reveals that sex stereotypes are among the most firmly entrenched obstacles to the elimination of discrimination, and are largely responsible for the denigration of the role and potential of women in society. The subordinate position of women in the society seems to legitimize their exclusion from participation in political and decision-making processes. Many stories depict women as disloyal, disagreeable, untrustworthy, stupid and even gullible (Kabira and Nzioki, 2019). Even today women continue to be left out of official records and when recognised, they are addressed as those who need welfare assistance rather than actors in the historical process. The heavy under-representation of women in political life and most decision-making processes in Kenya needs to be closely investigated.

The study by Karl (2011) explored some of the factors affecting women's political participation worldwide. Among the factors she cites include: house-hold status, work related rights such as maternity leave, job security, provision of child care, employment and remuneration, double burden of work, education and literacy, access to financial resources, legal rights, traditions, cultural attitudes and religion, socialization and self-reliance, violence against women, the mass media, health, ability to control fertility. Cooper and Davidson (2012) sought to study the problems that women in leadership positions generally face. They found that women face stress from both the work, home and social environments. In addition, women have to acquire male leadership and managerial skills (for example, being aggressive, assertive, confident), as well as multiple demands in running a career and a family. Other sources of stress include difficult working relationships with male (Hillman & Cannella 2007 Ryan, & Haslam, 2007).

2.8 Measures to be put in place to Promote Women Participation in Politics

Violence impacts the electoral participation of both men and women. However, most existing studies of electoral violence, as well as the frameworks and interventions based upon these studies focus on electoral violence that occurs in the form of observable acts in the public sphere, the data

for which is more readily available. Election related violence involving women, much of which is difficult to quantify and analyse because it occurs in the private sphere or in the form of psychological threats or social restrictions, is often overlooked (Haslam, 2007).

Bangladesh ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1984, although it did so with reservations, stating that certain articles conflict with Sharia law. Bangladesh also acceded to the International Covenant on Civil and Political High Levels of Political and Electoral Violence. Participants can cite examples of concerted violence, including harassment of women and girls in public transport as a consequence of ongoing political rivalry, intimidation, harassment and threats issued against those who supported an oppositional party, direct and overt pressure from political party members to switch party loyalties and attacks on homes (Shvedova, 2015).

Furthermore, women lack the resources to engage in muscle politics on par with men, which results in fear for their personal safety as well as the safety of their families in such a violent environment (Kabira and Nzioki, 2019). The reliance on muscle, hired by political parties, contributes to a systemic culture of violence by party members and supporters against voters. Participants highlighted the presence of muscle men who either threaten individuals and communities who are seen as sympathetic to an opposition party or to gather votes from specific communities such as gang-controlled slums. Because the ability to rally muscle is often perceived as critical to advance in a political party and gain party backing for candidacy, this lack of access is seen to undermine women's propensity to enter politics. As participants note, party leaders tend to prioritize candidates with money, muscle power ... and controlling capability (Hillman and Cannella 2007 and Ryan and Haslam, 2007).

Therefore, this contributes to the general perception among party leaders that women will not be able to contest effectively against men, and that ultimately the party will suffer if they nominate a woman candidate. However, weak implementation of laws and a lack of enforcement of the law impacts the violence that women experience within the family, some of which is the result of women seeking to exercise their electoral rights. Shvedova (2015) Bangladeshi law provides some protection against violence that could affect women's electoral participation. Bangladesh's domestic violence protection and prevention Act, for example, criminalizes domestic violence as defined by physical, emotional or sexual abuse, as well as financial damage. Furthermore, despite

the existence of these laws, a lack of comprehensive protection for all forms of violence, combined with weak enforcement, results in a system that fails to provide adequate recourse against deeply entrenched practices of gender based electoral violence. In addition, social acceptance of violence in some cases, violence against women is overlooked and unreported due to social perceptions of women's role in society. Participants note, for example, that some particular patriarchal interpretations of Islam result in a systematic undermining of women's rights in marriage (Hillman and Cannella, 2007).

Nevertheless, given the prevalence of psychological and family-based abuse against women as a primary source of electoral violence and failure to protect women's rights within the home have direct impacts on women's unique experiences with gender based electoral violence. This failure to protect women from psychological abuse was noted in the study as it highlighted that the impact of psychological pressure from family members is not taken seriously enough in Bangladesh (Kabira and Nzioki, 2019). Participants reported that existing anti-violence legislation is rarely enforced. Participants also note that despite the fact that open violence, threats, insults and slander against women are considered violence in the society, the culprits are rarely brought to justice and women are blamed by their families for the evil deeds of men. Others note that, particularly in rural areas, if a husband does not beat a woman too severely, it is acceptable, and verbal abuse is okay. Inequitable Access to Justice in other cases, systemic failure to protect women's rights contributes to inequitable access to justice, especially during elections.

Furthermore, it is important to create laws, rules and regulations to limit the use of money in politics and the use of muscle power during the electoral process (Shvedova, 2015). Convene electoral stakeholders, the media, community leaders, security personnel and others prior to the start of the electoral period to develop strategies to prevent and mitigate electoral violence, including violence against women. Conduct training and education campaigns for political contestants and activists, polling agents, domestic observers, media, and voters on elections and democracy, women's political rights, and violence against women as well as deploy female police in larger numbers during the electoral period, to ensure security and protect the dignity of female voters, political activists, and polling agents. To Political Leaders: Take a strong public stance against the use of electoral and political violence, both against and by women and identify male allies for gender-equity in leadership and political participation (Kabira and Nzioki, 2019).

2.9 Research Gap

From the reviewed literature it is clear that, a number of reasons affect women participation in elective positions. According to studies by Hillman and Cannella (2007) they find that ethicized politics have been one of the factors affecting women participation in politics. Gok, (2001) observe that Gender based violence is also a hindrance to the attainment of gender equality for women to participate in governance. Kabira and Nzioki (2019) focused on electoral violence against women. From the reviewed studies, they haven't been political challenges faced by women at constituency level. Many studies attribute the political challenges faced by women at national level. A constituency is a grass root platform to engage the local community in active politics especially women. This study was necessary in order to explore the low levels of women political participation at constituency level.

2.10 Summary

The chapter provided the literature review from a number of studies on how political violence brings about the discrepancy in participating in elective positions. The literature was discussed in line with the objectives of the study. Literature from the global level, regional level and local level.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

This chapter outlined the methodology which was used to collect data for the study. Franklin (2012) defined research methodology as a process used to collect information and data for reaching a conclusion. This section particularly focused on the design of the research, target population, sample size, data collection procedure, research instruments, data analysis, and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Design

This study is qualitative and used descriptive research design. Bless and Achola (1998) referred to research design as the planning of any scientific investigation from the first to the last step. Research design involves deciding what the research purpose and questions will be, what information will appropriately answer specific questions and which strategies are most effective for getting the answers. The study employed a descriptive research design. In this design, feelings and insights will be considered important. Kombo and Tromp (2006) argue that qualitative research usually emphasizes words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data. In terms of data collection in the qualitative approach, the study used in-depth structured interviews. This method was appropriate in that the researcher interacted with the participants to gather honest and broad information on the problem under investigation. This design helped the researcher to get the views and opinions of the participants on the reasons behind low women participation in politics in Kabwe Central Constituency.

3.3 Research approach

A research approach is the procedure selected by the researcher to collect, analyse, and interpret data. In this study, qualitative approach was used because it was deemed suitable by the researcher as it gives room for participants to express their experiences and feeling on a particular phenomenon. This approach uses inductive reasoning. Using this approach explanations and views were sort on the reasons why there were low women participation in politics in Kabwe Central Constituency.

3.4 Target population

The target population of the study comprised of Provincial political party chairmen, ECZ officials, selected members of Kabwe Central Constituency and NGOs. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) have defined population in research as a group of individuals, objects or items from which samples are taken for measurement. It refers to an entire group of persons or elements that have at least one thing in common. Population also refers to the larger group from which the sample is taken (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). Creswell (2012) also agrees that a population is the entire set of objects and events or group of people the researcher wants to determine some characteristics. These participants were picked because they were believed to have background information on the issue under study.

3.5 Sample Size

As ably put by Borg and Gall (1979) sampling is the selection of some units to represent the whole set from which the units were drawn. The study purposively sample consisted of 30 participants. These were selected according to their political seniority and activism as follows: Two (2) provincial chairmen and 8 members from two political parties, 15 political counselors were picked across political parties. The most popular were purposive picked according to their political popularity on the ground were picked from. Kabwe Central, 3 from NGOs such as NGOCC, ZNWL and YWCY, and 2 from the electoral commission of Zambia.

3.6 Sampling Techniques

In this study, non-probability sampling was used. Non-probability sampling is a method in which not all population members have an equal chance of participating in the study, unlike probability sampling (Blaikie, 2010). For this reason, the study used purposive sampling technique. Creswell (2013) defines purposive sampling as a judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling which was used in the study. It is however a form of non-probability sampling in which researchers rely on their own judgment when choosing members of the population to participate in their study. Purposive sampling was chosen to enable the researcher collect only information relevant thereby saving both the researcher's and participant's time. The three from NGOs were from the secretariat while the 8 members from the political parties were those who at some point had ambitions of

contesting for a position within the party. The two political parties were chosen based on the performance in the 2021 General Elections.

3.7 Data Collection instruments

Data collection is the precise, systematic gathering of information relevant to the research, using instruments such as interviews, focus group discussion, narratives and case histories (Creswell, 2012). In order to meet the objectives of the study, the study used the following methods to collect data; these are interview Guide and focus group guide. Kombo and Tromp (2006), explains that interview guide and focus group discussion are good because they use open-ended questions whereby the researcher has a complete and detailed understanding of the topic under research. This is the more the reason these tools were used to give participants opportunity to express themselves freely.

3.8 Data collection procedure

Data collection is the precise, systematic gathering of information relevant to the research, using instruments such as interviews, participant observation, focus group discussion, narratives and case histories (Creswell, 2012). Before undertaking this study, permission (consent form) was sought from the University of Zambia. In this study, information was collected using the structured interview guide and Focus Group Guide. This was so because the study is qualitative and all participants responded to similar questions for authenticity purposes. Participant were given more time to recollect/recall, consult and obtain information thereby minimizing content errors. The researcher then wrote to the local Municipal Council in Kabwe to seek permission to conduct the study in the local community of Kabwe. The researcher conducted interviews and focus group discussions in Kabwe to selected participants.

3.9 Data analysis

Creswell (2013) state that data analysis takes different ways depending on the instruments used to collect data and how the researcher presented the information. LeCompte and Schensul (1999), indicate that data analysis is the process a researcher uses to reduce data to a story and its presentation. Data from interviews and focus group discussions were transcribed having read text files thoroughly for general understanding and common themes were identified and summarized

using thematic analysis. Relevant information was labelled and grouped according to category. The data was then reduced to its essence and representative and most striking quotes were identified. Afterwards, codes related to the objectives were then identified and a thematic analysis was done.

3.10 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is the quality or fact of being trustworthy. It means that one is able to be trusted, dependable, reliable, honest, and ethical (Bogdan and Biklen, 2003). Trustworthiness also involves consistently following through on commitments and promises. To enhance credibility, a researcher used member checking (where participants review and verify the findings), prolonged engagement with the data and triangulation (using multiple data sources or methods) were also used to grantee trustworthiness. To enhance transferability, a researcher provided a detailed descriptions of the research methods that were used and why they were employed. To ensure dependability, researcher maintained a clear audit trail documenting the research process and this enabled the research process to be reviewed and replicated. To enhance conformability, researcher maintained reflexivity by acknowledging their own perspectives and biases, use an audit trail to document decision-making processes and involved multiple research in data analysis to ensure different viewpoints be considered.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Furrow (2004) defines ethics as a morality or a position of doing what is right both morally and legally. In order to collect data from the purposively sampled participants, the researcher asked for permission through writing before going in the field to collect data. Firstly, authority was sought from University of Zambia ethical clearance committee to embark on data collection. It is important to protect participants who willingly present themselves for the purpose of advancing our understanding in research. Therefore, a strict set of guidelines and code of conduct was adopted and adhered to. The researcher ensured that participant's consent to participate in the research was voluntary by making them sign a consent form, free of any coercion or promises of any benefits as a result of their participation in the research. The researcher further ensured that the participants received adequate information on the study, the expected benefits to the participants and nation at large. Confidentiality and anonymity (pseudonym) of the participants was ensured by not revealing

their names and personal details. The participants were advised to withdraw their participation at any time if not comfortable.

3.11 Summary

This Chapter has presented the main methodological aspects of this study, detailing the research methodology, design, procedure and techniques that were adopted. The study will be conducted in Kabwe district of Central Province of Zambia. A descriptive research survey study will be used. In this context qualitative technique will be employed in the study. The proposed study further discussed the research site, population and sample, sampling technique, methods of data collection, data analysis and ethical considerations.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Overview

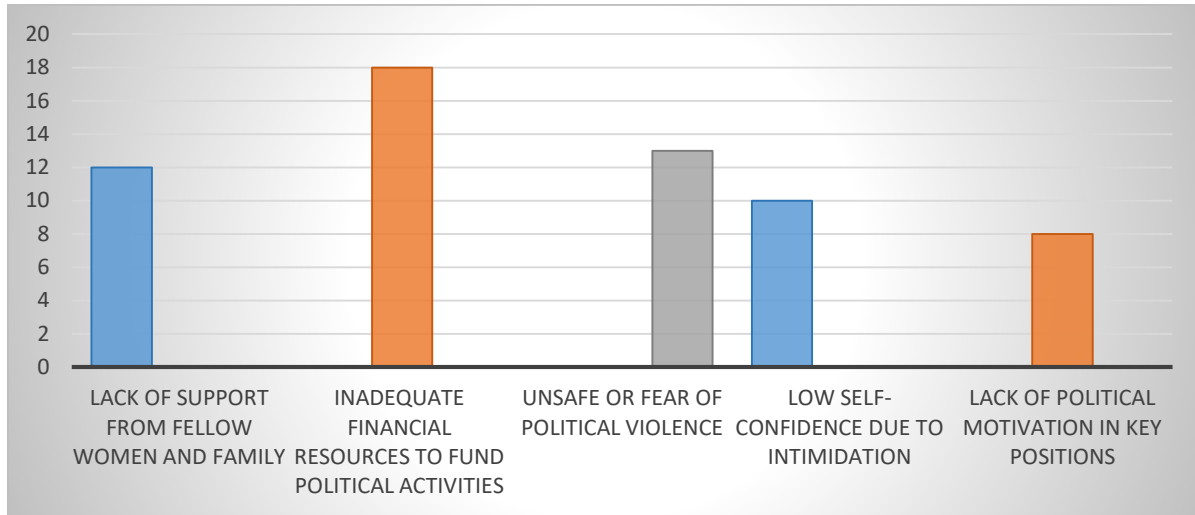
This chapter presents the findings on the low levels of women's political participation in Kabwe Central Constituency. The information has been presented using themes and verbatim transcriptions derived from interviews and Focus group discussions. After thematic analysis was done, data was presented through the use of pie charts and graphs and reported directly in the report. The data collected was presented according to the following research questions:

1. What are the reasons affecting women participation in politics in Kabwe Central Constituency?
2. What are the effects of low participation of women in politics in Kabwe Central Constituency?
3. What are the measures to be put in place to promote women participation in politics in Kabwe Central Constituency?

4.2 Reasons Affecting Women Political Participation

In order to respond to the research question which sought to explore reasons affecting women political participation in Kabwe Central Constituency, the participants were asked the question; *What are the reasons affecting low women participation in politics in Kabwe Central Constituency?* From the responses, the following themes emerged as shown in figure 2.

Figure 2: Reasons for low women participation



Source; field data 2024

4.2.1 Lack of Support (love) from Fellow Women and Family

During the interviews, it was clearly stated that lack of moral and financial support among women was the reason to low women participation in politics. Others felt that women fail to participate in politics because they do not receive maximum support from family members. In a FGD3 4 participants had the following to say:

“Lack of support from fellow women contributes to poor number of women participate in political activities...equally at family level women are discouraged to participate in politics since to others politics is considered to be a dirt game.”

Another participant (A6) from YWCA had this to say:

“Women fail to support each other as they think that women have divided attention hence look down on those who want to take active role in politics. women are considered to be weak being and their fellows think they cannot handle the pressure hence they are not considered important in politics which makes the women have low self-confidence. For I had someone during submission of nominations saying; Abanob ati tetibakwanishe (meaning this one can’t manage).”

In a FGD 1 participant C2 had this to say:

“Some husbands refuse women who want to participate in politics because they feel their partners will start having affairs with other politicians...she went on to say women do not fully participate in politics due to such misconception from their spouses. They are equally demoralised by their fellow women who do not support their fellow women which is also called the pull her down syndrome because of a belief that women cannot stand the pressure of campaigns.”

During interview B6 said the following:

“Married women find it difficult to take part in political activities in that, if the husband doesn't allow her, meaning her ambitions are doomed even if she had a zeal to engage into politics...remember the women have a home or family to look after and, in this case, she has to seek permission from the head of the house. This means that if the permission is not granted the dreams are automatically shuttered.”

4.2.2 Inadequate Financial Resources to Fund Political Activities

In the interviews and FGDs conducted, it was revealed that inadequate financial resources to fund political activities was an issue contributes to low participation of women in politics. From the FGDs5 participant D4 was quoted saying:

“Due to financial constraints women feel they have no chance in political activities for example participation/adoption fee is too expensive in these political parties. She further continued saying the amount to pay for one to be adopted as an MP is too high such that not all can afford.”

Participant B7 had this to say;

“Politics needs funds/money that are used in different ways such as transport, fuel, branding of burners/fliers, buying t-shirts/chitenge materials, among others. Such huge sums of money needs individual with financial muscle thus there are few women who can fully manage to fund such political activities.”

During FGD 2, participant A8 contributed saying;

“Without finances it almost impossible to reach on all 12 wards found in Kabwe Central Constituency...if one is to contest as an MP means she has to reach out in soliciting for votes. Therefore, even if one wants to participate in politics financial constraints impedes their ambitions because even if you want to engage the media like KCM, Power FM or other means it still points to money.”

4.2.3 Unsafe or Fear of Political Violence

The study established that unsafe political environment in Kabwe Central Constituency was also responsible for low women participation in politics. The interviews and Focus Group Discussion conducted reviewed that women fear to take part in politics because of political violence that usually characterises Zambian politics. During interviews participant A9 had this to say:

“The physical violence perpetrated by youths mostly from both the ruling and opposition political parties threatens the freedom of women to participate in politics as they fear of being harassed and beaten. In the recent years youths have become violent cadres who instils fear in women who cannot with stand unsafe environment.”

A male participant on a FGD4 said;

“Attacks threaten the lives of people such as damaging private and public property and putting the security of not only the community...this affects women psychologically thus they sit back and shun away from taking active role in political participations.”

D7 had the following to say;

“Unruly behaviour of political cadres conducts scares women from taking part in politics for example, destroying of billboards belonging to both parties (ruling and oppositions) affects women emotionally thus they decide to stay back home....”

Therefore, politics is complex for women. Women are social beings. They are members of society as well. In order to survive women have have to co-operate and work together which is rare among

women. When the people work together there is a need to make decisions about how the problems that arise by working should be solved, or how the resources available to the group are to be shared out. Politics is the study of how such decisions are made. Unfortunately, women in Kabwe constituency fail to work together. This is against the understanding that political scientists define politics as the process by which scarce resources are allocated within a social unit (be it a city, a state, a nation, or an organization) for the purpose of providing for human needs and desires.

4.2.4 Low Confidence due to corruption and intimidation

Five (5) participants identified low confidence and corruption among the women as reason for the lower levels of woman participation in politics. It was clear that due to intimidation and corruption of different kinds, a woman finds it very hard to raise up to their fit. Participant C1 was quoted saying;

“In most cases women are demoralised because they lack confidence and corruption to stand pressure that comes with politics which affect how they feel about themselves and their abilities. He went on saying this has affected how women make decisions on political matters.”

From the researcher’s analysis this confirms the feminist theory of womanims that women are inferior they are mothers and have no political clout to take part in politics.

Interviewee A6 explained the following;

“...physical violence and non-physical forms of intimidation like harassment or online abuse, which occurs undermines women’s engagement in politics. I mean women are subjected to various forms of intimidation especially on social media which demoralises their ability to participating in politics.”

This confirms the intersectionality theory that women are physically a weaker sex and an abused based on their gender. Simply, in the popular mind, politics is closely associated with the activities of political parties and politicians. These activities are not free and fair. They involve physical violence. This extremely narrow view of politics helps to explain why negative images have so often been attached to politics in Zambia, hence the lower levels of women involvement in politics.

Politics is often described as a negative phenomenon because only politicians are seen as decision-makers, which is wrong.

Participant B4 during the interviews added the following;

“Low confidence among women is attributed with high illiterate and cultural practices. I mean due to cultural practices women mostly lower themselves in these communities.... you find that when we hold meetings of sensitization on active participation of women in leadership positions, women from nowhere will sit on the mat or floor and men on chairs.”

4.2.5 Lack of Political Models in key Positions

During focus group discussion the study revealed that lack of political motivation in key positions also contributes to low numbers of women participating in politics. This was the reason why participant D9 during FGD said;

“Women lack individuals to look up too, lack of political role models in prominent positions affects women participation in politics. Look here in Kabwe Central Constituency it is the first time that we have a female MP, all along the position has been dominated by males.”

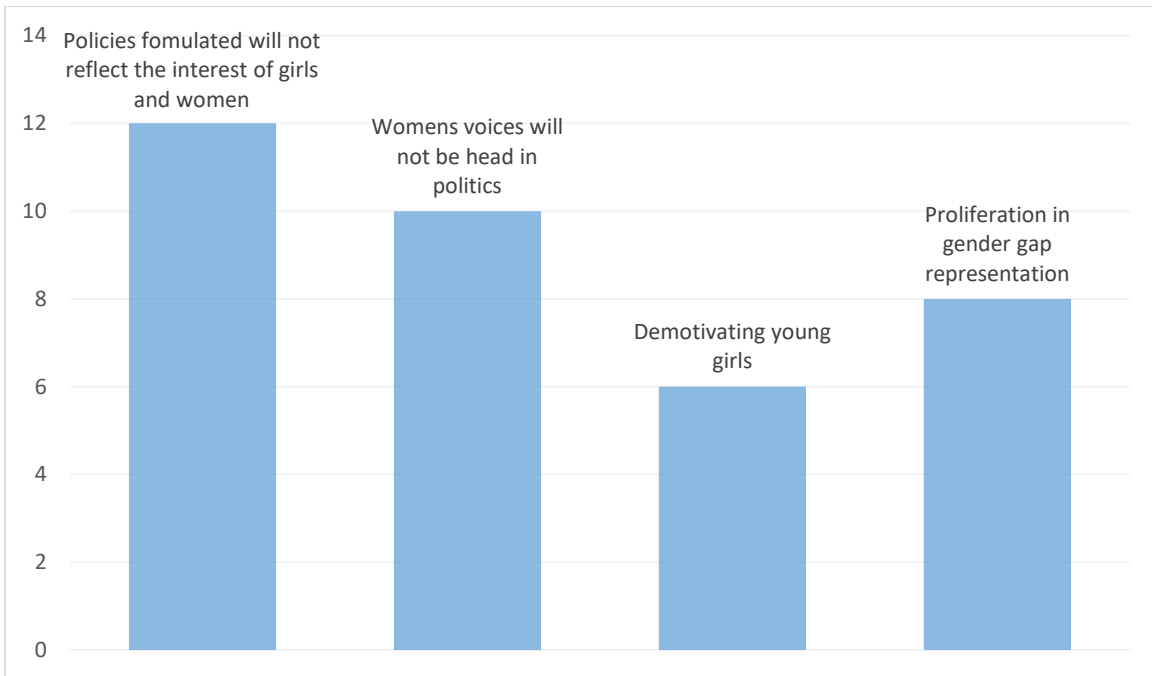
She explained that political models are important that can serve as a game changer in women's attitudes towards participating in politics. It's clear here that most of positions are occupied by males which disadvantages the women in taking part in these elective positions. For example, only one female councillor pulled through the last 2021 general elections. This already demoralizes other women to take a stance in politics.

This shows that the factors which affected women to participate in politics were lack of support from fellow women and family, inadequate financial resources to fund political activities, unsafe or fear of political violence, low self-confidence due to intimidation and lack of political motivation in key positions.

4.3 The Effects of low Political Participation of Women in Kabwe constituency

The second research question sought to establish the effects of low participation of women in politics and the research question was: *What are the effects of low participation of women in politics in Kabwe Central Constituency?* The following themes as shown in figure 2 emerged.

Figure 3: Effects of low political participation



Source; field data 2024

4.3.1 Policies Formulated do not reflect the Interest of Girls and Women

From the fieldd 12 participants interviewed indicated that the effects of low participation of women in politics would compromise the policy formulation. Participants felt hat when women are not fully engaged in politics, their interest and that of girls will not be considered. During the interviews participant B7 and A3 had the similar views. This is what A3 had to say;

“Policy formulation at all levels requires divergence views drawn from all sexes in order to carter their interest. Otherwise, if policy formulation in politics is left in the hands of males alone trust me the interest of girls and women will be side-lined.”

During FGD 6 participant had similar observation and said the following;

“Key barriers to women’s political participation include the structure of the current legal framework, a political culture surrounded with male-controlled values and norms that are unsupportive to female candidates, and a lack of personal wealth or access to resources to fund campaigns. Therefore, in order to have policies and laws that will mirror the interest of women’s and girls, women need to be part of the process as they have full understanding of reality unlike men who can only assume or imagining.”

This confirms the intersectionality theory, that while the policies affect more girls and women, both genders are affected hence the need to recognize the intersectionality theory importance

4.3.2 Women’s Voices³ are not Heard in Politics

The study established that the effects of low participation of women in politics is that their (women) voices are not heard in the governance process. B7 had the following to say:

“The low levels of female political representation in Zambia are considered to undermine the quality of the country’s democracy. The only way our voices can be heard in the governance process is having female representatives. The danger of low participation of women in politics is that problem that affect us women will not be taken seriously by men and the decisions made are not going to be balanced...”

Another female lamented saying;

“...us women pass through a lot of challenges that can be better understood by our fellow women and women are known to make better decisions. For example, if a man is given a K100 to buy food for a launch the things he will buy will not be compared to the things a woman can buy, you will find that a woman will buy more than a man. So, for women voices to be heard they have to be represented in numbers just like men in the decision-making process.”

³ Women voices the struggle for women’s rights and equality. Alongside the socio-economic barriers holding down millions of women, is the fight against the gender bias and stereotyping which puts women marginalized.

4.3.3 Demotivating Young Girls

It was clear from the findings that the effect of low participation of women in politics will not affect women but also young generation. Participants felt that negative effect of low female participation had a direct impact on the young girls as well in that they will have no one to inspire them. In a FGD7 participant A5 explained the following;

“Young girls get inspiration and motivations by women who have succeeded politically, the danger of low women participation has a direct impact of not having young ones who will see no need to engaging into political participation.”

4.3.4 Proliferation of Gender gap Representation

From the responses given, it was clear that the effect of low participation of women in politics will increase the gender gap representation that has continued since time in memorial. Ten (10) participants were for the view that the increasing of gender representation is the order of the day because women have not taken an active role in political landscape. One of them clearly stated that;

“Look at the cabinet only 4 women out of 25 ministerial positions are headed by women. Already we have a gender gap representation inequality at cabinet level which is a clear indication of low women participation in politics.”

During FGD at YWCA participant B7 had this to say;

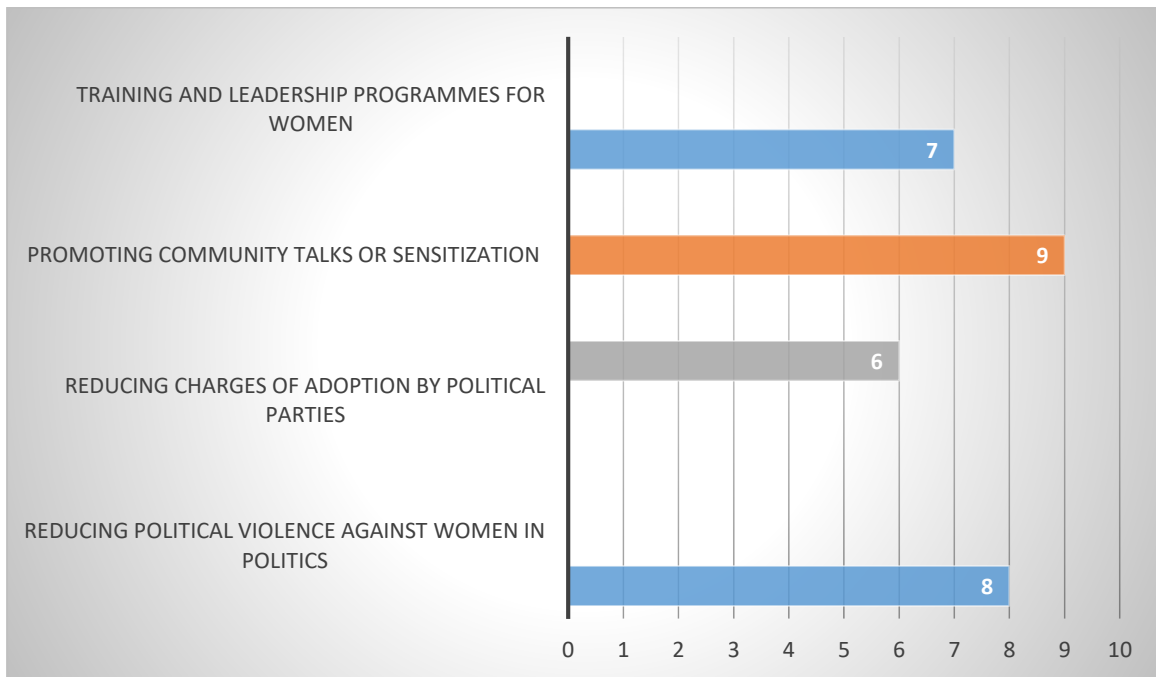
“As of 2021 general election Kabwe Central Constituency has not even had a female councillor out of 12 wards...as for me low participation of women in politics increases the disparities in gender representation.”

The findings reveal that the effects of low women participation were that policies formulated will not reflect the interests of girls and boys, women voices will not be heard in politics, it demotivates young girls and there will be proliferation in gender gap representation.

4.4 Measure to Promote Women Political Participation

The third research question sought to establish measures to be put in place to promote women participation in politics the research question was: *What are the measures to be put in place to promote women participation in politics in Kabwe Central Constituency?* In line with the research question, the interviews and focus group discussion conducted in this study, four themes emerged as illustrated in figure 4.

Figure 4: measures to promote women political participation



Source field data 2024

4.4.1 Lack of Training and Leadership Programmes for Women

The study revealed that enhancing training and leadership programmes for women was ideal to promote women participation in politics. Both interviews and FGD conducted found that once women are empowered with relevant skills, they'll be able to actively participate in politics. D3 had this to say;

“Such programmes create an environment for enhancing knowledge for women to be self-confident, learn the mechanisms of self-defence against oppression, and be

more confident and determined, thus playing an important role in the making of women politicians.”

Participant C9 during interview was quoted lamenting saying the following;

“...advocating for training programmes can positively help to promote equality, non-discrimination and fight stereotyping which has been a scourge hindering political participation among women.”

Another FGD explained the following;

“As NGOCC and the other umbrella organization have been training women who aspire for political positions and other influential position.... She went on saying some have been provided with financial and other material support.”

During the interviews participant D2 was quoted saying;

“There is a strategic plan in place to ensure that women aspire for leadership positions are identified, empowered, mentored and encouraged as well as supporting them...As YWC we are now advocating for the introduction of a mixed member electoral system which will give women, youths and other marginalized groups in society.”

4.4.2 Promoting Community Talks or Sensitization

Participants observed that continuous community talks and sensitization is a strategy to promote women participation in politics. It was clear that if women are to be actively involved in political activities raising awareness is of great significant. B1 had the following to say:

“Community talks and sensitization can be facilitated monthly gatherings between elected officials, civic leaders, political party officials from the opposition and ruling and community members to foster productive dialogue about building a better community that will create a fair playing field for everyone to participate in politics.”

4.4.3 Reducing Charges of Adoption by Political Parties

In the interviews, it was revealed that reducing adoption charges by the political parties and ECZ is a measure that can enable women to participate in politics. Both PF and UPND participants when interviewed agreed that reducing fees by ECZ can help to mitigate the unfair playing grounds. This is what one participant had to say:

“For example, 2021 general election nominations were as follows, female MP 13,500, mayoral 13,500, council chairperson 3,500 and councillor 1,000. This is a lot of money that to somewhat hinders some women to contest in certain position.”

Another participant had this to say:

“Can you imagine paying k13,500 before even starting campaigning, printing fliers/burner, t-shirt branding among other costs can a women manage? He wondered! I for one to reduce costs for nomination is ideal and will enable women to participate in politics.”

4.4.4 Reducing Political Violence against Women in Politics

All eight (8) participant suggested that reducing political violence against women in politics in all angled can create a favourable environment for all players. It established that once the playing field is levelled by the government and other stakeholders can enable women to stand up and act. During FGD 6 participant A5 explained the following;

“No doubt women fear political cadres who are hostile towards those who holds divergent views. Madam you know what used to happen few years ago, how individuals who holds different views used to be beaten, insulted, harassed, destroying of their properties among other evil acts...once the political field levels I am sure women can come on board and participate in politics because they would have nothing to fear about.”

Participants D7 during interviews clearly said;

“Creating a political violence free and friendly atmosphere is solution that can help to promote women participation in politics at all levels.”

This confirms the intersectionality theory.

The study established that the strategies of improving women participation in politics were to enhance training and leadership programmes for women, promoting community talks and sensitisation, reducing charges of adoption and reducing political violence.

4.5 Summary

This chapter presented the findings of the study on the low levels of women's political participation in Kabwe Central Constituency. These findings have been presented in line with the three objectives set out in chapter one. The researcher used the thematic approach to present qualitative results. The presentation of the findings mainly bordered, reasons, effects and the measures affecting women political participation, the effects of low participation of women in politics and measures to promote women participation in politics respectively.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Overview

The researcher presents and discusses the findings obtained from the previous chapter. It is organised based on the following subtitles arising from the following research objectives:

1. To explore reasons for low women political participation in Kabwe Central Constituency from 1964 to 2021
2. To ascertain the effects of low women political participation in Kabwe Central Constituency from 1964 to 2021
3. To establish measures which would promote women participation in politics in Kabwe Central Constituency

5.2 Reasons Affecting Women Political Participation

The study found that lack of support (solidarity) from fellow women and family affects women in political participation. As observed during interviews and FDG lack of support from fellow women contributes to poor number of women participating in political activities. This corresponds with McNamara (2020) who found that women fail to support each other and have trust issues towards electing their fellows into leadership positions. Similarly, the UNICEF (2023) reports that women in politics have low self-confidence attributed from family and their fellow women. The report further indicates that sometime husbands refuse their women to participate in politics because they feel their partners will start having affairs with other politicians.

Similarly, the study reveals that women do not fully participate in political activities due to misconception once their spouses engage into such activities they may start cheating. It was clear that political activities make their husband uncomfortable thus denying them permission to taking part into political participation. These finding agrees with that of Baskaran (2018) who points out that women fail to actively involve into public participation because their spouse have wrong perspective especially if them are not interest. This consist with the findings of Zarkov (2017) who found that political participation of women is impeded by lack of support from family members

who sees women as the one to perform house chores only. It can be concluded that lack of support towards their fellow women is a stumbling broke for political participation.

Inadequate financial resources to fund political activities during interviews and FGDs was strongly mentioned as a factor affecting women in participating in politics. It was clear that financial constraints among women willingly to participate in political affairs makes it had difficult. United Nations (2020) reports that there are factors affects women participation in political line that includes socio-economic and cultural barriers predominantly constrain or prevent women's participation in all SADC countries. This finding is in line with Toplak (2019) who affirms that political activities requires funds and money that are used in different ways such as transport, fuel, branding of burners and fliers, buying t-shirts among other materials, among others and those women willing to participate do not have capacity.

Likewise, the report by ZGEGA (2021) agrees that inadequate/lack of financing for female candidates caused women candidates to drop out of the contest at all levels. Women's historical experience of discrimination puts them at a disadvantage position economically. Socio-economic status of women to a greater extent plays a significant role in enhancing their participation and representation in political decision-making bodies. In this regard Shvedova in 2002 argues that social and economic status of women in society has a direct influence on their participation in political institutions and elected bodies. In other word Lack of economic resources is one of the biggest obstacles that prevent women from participating in politics in greater numbers.

The study done by Seyedeh et al also revealed that most of women are financially dependent on their husbands or relatives (Godwin, 2013). So, they may not be possible to them to enter in political campaign. Similarly, the study revealed that lack of financial resources is the overwhelming obstacles to women political participation. Women move from their father's home to their husband's home... They are like refugees. They have no base from which to develop contacts with the people or to build knowledge and experience about the issues. The study done by Clayton (2020) women have no money of their own; the money belongs to their fathers, their husbands or their in-laws. Given the rising cost of running an effective campaign, this poses another serious hurdle for women in the developing world.

In Kenya Douglas (2014) conducted a study on factors affecting women participation his findings were that electoral process is prone to violence this scare away most women. He further points out that electoral related violence is an impediment that hinders the participation of female candidates. Male candidates are more likely than female candidates to introduce political violence and hooliganism in their campaigns (Zambia, 2021) thus aspiring female candidates shun away in political participation in fear of being injured, threatened, and insulted among other evil acts.

In field the study revealed that unsafe or fear of political violence was among responsible factor for low women participation in politics. As observed during interviews and Focus Group Discussion conducted, women fear to take part in politics because of political violence that usually characterises Zambian politics especially under the previous regimes. These findings agree with Zarkov (2017) who found that the physical violence perpetrated by youths mostly from both the ruling and opposition political parties threatens the freedom of women to participate in politics as they fear of being harassed and beaten.

Sometimes, women politicians are threatened with exposure of their private lives which can be a source of embarrassment to them and their families thus affecting political participation (Zambia, 2021). In today's politics, violence has become the normal way of conducting politics and sad enough cadres who are in most cases men are paid to insult and beat women politicians (ZNWL, 2023). Similarly, the field data reveals that some women politicians are even accused of sleeping with men in the political arena to enable them ascend to the top and secure senior positions both at party and national levels. All in all, the playing field for the participation of both men and women is not level.

Douglas (2014) also indicates that attacks threaten the lives of people such as damaging private and public property characterises elections in most African countries which poses a threat to women stance in political participation. The report by Zambia (2021) equally agrees that unruly behaviour of political cadre conduct scares women from taking part in politics i.e. destroying of billboards belonging to both parties (ruling and oppositions) affects women emotionally thus they decide to stay back home...

The findings denote that low confidence due to intimidation hinders woman to take part in political participation. The study established that women are demoralised because they lack confidence to

stand pressure that comes with politics which affect how they feel about themselves and their abilities. Physical violence and non-physical forms of intimidation like harassment or online abuse, which occurs undermines women's engagement in political participation. On a contrary, as quoted in Douglas (2014), Mittulah and Owiti (2011) finds that lack of political goodwill by their male politicians to include women in structures of political governance is to blame for limited participation of women in political parties.

Lack of political motivation in key positions was spotted in the field as one of factor affects women political participation. The study revealed that lack of political motivation in key positions also contributes to low numbers of women participating in politics. It was clear that women lack individuals to look up too as their role models. International growth Centre (2017) and Michelle (2018) found that, female role models in politics plays a crucial role. In a number of Kenyan communities, single and divorced women cannot be allowed to run for political office and those who do are ridiculed and insulted in public meetings. This is so because societal norms and socialization tends to be harsh on women (Douglas, 2014). Men who are divorced are never treated with contempt the way women are.

The UN (2011) concurs and states that, women in every part of the world continue to be largely marginalized from the political sphere, often as a result of discriminatory laws, lack role models, practices, attitudes and gender stereotypes, low levels of education, lack of access to health care and the disproportionate effect of poverty on women. Similarly, SADC (2016) concurs and states that lack of role model attributed to patriarchal aspects of traditional cultural systems and male-dominated structures of modern governance are still a factor affecting women political participation. The report further indicates that other challenges are the continuing structural rigidities within political parties, and lack of political will at various levels.

In 2018, the National Democratic Institute published findings from surveys of men and women party members in Cote d'Ivoire, Honduras, Tanzania, and Tunisia. These surveys found that a majority of men and women are aware that violence occurs in their political parties; a majority of men and women believe that women are more likely to experience violence in political parties; women actually do experience high rates of violence within their parties; and there is a lack of financial resources and party support for women overall (National Democratic Institute, 2019).

This is in with the womanism theory which hindered women participation in politics based on their conditions. This finding is also against the classical theories, for instance, Marxist theory.

5.3 The Effects of Low Political Participation of Women

The study established that policy formulated and laws may not reflect the interest of girls and women when there is low political participation. It was clear from the interviews that the effects of low participation of women in politics would compromise the policy formulation at different levels of governance. These findings agree with Baskaran (2018) and SADC. (2019) whose study found that side-lining women in governance process undermines the interest of women and girl. Furthermore, the effect of low women political participation intimidates and demotivates their capability in social and economic development.

United Nations (2019) similarly reports that policy formulation at all levels requires divergence views drawn from all backgrounds in order to cater for their interest. The report by Common Wealth (2017) concurs that low women participation effects the process of developing laws and policies that doesn't mirror and reflect women's challenge in their communities and beyond. For example, the low levels of women's participation in leadership are often attributed primarily to patriarchy or male dominance. This is a key aspect of the Ghanaian social system in which the woman's role and status are relatively recognised to be inferior to those of the man in almost all aspects of social, political and economic life (United Nations, 2019).

The study by Kasomo (2012) indicates that women's voices are rarely heard in African politics. The findings further indicate that in Africa, political participation among women is a mere thing because they (women) voices are not heard due to various reasons such as not included in decision making process. Okoronkwo (2020) indicates that in Nigeria effects of low participation of women in politics contributes to underdevelopment in social and economic aspects. According to Godwin (2013) states that the impact of poor and low women political participation contributes to unequal representation in the governance process all levels.

Similarly, the study reveals that the danger of low participation of women in politics is demotivates young girls. It was clear from the findings that the effect of low participation of women in politics will not affect women but also young generation. This corresponds with Godwin (2013) who found that effect of low levels of women in political participation acts as stumbling block to the future

politicians (girls). The findings of Kabwe (2020) also are in line with field that the effect of low levels of female political participation or representation in Zambia are considered to undermine the quality of the country's democracy.

The report by ZNWL (2023) reveals that low levels of female representation in leadership and decision-making positions in the country is a source of concern. According to the review, women made up just 14% of members of parliament, 7.6% of councillors, 12.9% of mayors and council chairpersons, and 17.8% of Cabinet Members. At the provincial level, only 10% of ministers are women. According to ZNWL the effect of low women political participation is attributed by violence against women, including sexual and gender-based violence, early and forced marriage among other which will widen the gap of gender representation in governance position.

The study established that the effect low women political participation is proliferation of gender gap representation. It was clear that the effect of low participation of women in politics increases the gender gap representation that has continued since time in memorial. These findings concur with Michelle (2018) who found that the effect of low women participation remains an attainable but unrealized aspiration in all too many parts of the world. Similarly, United Nations Development Programme (2018-2021), indicates that women often remain excluded from politics, the labour market and other aspects of social life which is attributed to low political engagements at all levels of governance. Few countries in the world have ever had a situation in which more women than men hold positions in their most important political institutions, and women are still frequently paid less than men for the same work (United Nations, 2020). The UN (2020) further reports that beyond politics, economic and social elites across Europe continue to be dominated by men the impact of low political participation from women point of view.

In relation to study findings SADC. (2019) indicates that the effect of neglecting women in political participation creates a gender differences and inequalities directly and indirectly affect the impact of development strategies and hence the achievement of overall development goals becomes unrealised. The study by Common Wealth. (2017) reports that persistent differences and disparities between women and men can mean that women have to bear more of the costs of lack of development and gain fewer benefits than men from development interventions. This does not only have negative implications for women themselves, but for the society as a whole (United

Nations, 2019). Women represent half the resources and half the potential in any society. This potential remains unrealized when women are constrained by inequality and discrimination effects.

5.4 Measures to Promote Women Political Participation

From the study findings, training and leadership programmes for women was strongly suggested as measure to enhance women political participation. The study revealed that enhancing training and leadership programmes for women is an ideal to promote women participation in politics. It was established that such programmes (training) will create an environment for enhancing knowledge for women to be self-confident, learn the mechanisms of self-defence against oppression, and be more confident and determined towards participation at all levels.

Correspondingly, UNDP (2013) and Plan International (2019) suggested that creating training and leadership pathways for girls and women that are gender sensitive is a mechanism to promote women political participation. The report by United Nations (2019) indicates that encouraging continuous participation and civic education of girls and women in schools, universities, and civil society spaces can be important to their future political participation. The UN report further indicates that civic education taught to girls in school from a young age helps them understand the workings of democracy and their country's political system which is measure to promote women participation in political arena. According to Women Sports Foundation (2015) observed that enhancing women participation can be achieved through equipping them with necessary knowledge and skills to become active citizens and engage with the political issues of their time.

As observed in the field, trainings and leadership is strategy that can help them (women) to acquire the foundational skills for political participation, such as problem-solving, assertive communication, and negotiation capabilities, along with opportunities to engage in decision-making processes at the family, community as well as society are all critical pathways to political empowerment. The findings are corresponding with National Democratic Institute (2016) in Burkina Faso whose report indicates that promoting trainings and leadership by civil society groups allow women to learn about decision-making processes and exercise their agency in issues affecting their own community.

Similarly, educational sports programming, especially for girls, can be a confidence-building mechanism that cultivates their leadership, agency, and resilience (ZNWL, 2023). The study

Godwin (2013) in Nigeria found that offering gender-sensitive political leadership and skills-based training for women also provides them with the foundation they need to actively participate in politics. By fostering opportunities in political engagement training, women may increasingly take action at local, national, and international levels to yield lasting results (Vibeke and Ragnhild, 2019).

In Burkina Faso, a Train, Run, Win, and Lead (TRWL) case study was conducted. Ahead of the 2015 election in Burkina Faso, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) supported local partners, including the Council of Burkinabe Women, in their work to increase the number of women candidates nominated by their parties and the number of women elected to public office (National Democratic Institute 2016). The Council of Burkinabe Women and NDI trained a total of 379 prospective female candidates, of which 110 were nominated and 13 were ultimately elected after being placed on the party's candidate lists. Similarly, in the field it was found that prioritizing training and leadership programme is a measure that can help to promote women participation in political sphere.

Equally, the Plan International (2019) carried a case study on What Young Women Want (WYWW). Plan International conducted a survey taken by nearly 10,000 girls and young women between the ages of 15 and 25 across 19 different countries. The survey asked the girls and young women about their leadership aspirations in terms of career, community, and family. While 76% of the girls and young women surveyed said they aspired to be a leader, only 60% felt confident in their ability to lead, and 94% thought that being a leader would result in being treated unfairly compared to their male counterparts. These findings demonstrate that while girls and young women have aspirations to lead, they also have extremely negative perceptions of what being a female leader involves (Plan International 2019). Findings and recommendations from the report call for cultivating leadership aspirations at home first; setting up girls to succeed through access to schools and wider educational opportunities, as well as supporting and encouraging girls' and young women's networks and youth-led civic action; and addressing sexism, discrimination, and gender bias within the community, educational systems, and political spaces (National Democratic Institute 2019). These findings agree with field data that established that advocating for training programmes can positively help to promote equality, non-discrimination and fight stereotyping which has been a scourge hindering political participation among women.

In the field participants pointed out that Promoting Community Talks or sensitization is a measure that can enhance women political participation at all levels. As observed during interviews and FGD it was clear that continuous community talks and sensitization is a strategy to promote women participation in politics. These findings agree with ZNWL (2023) whose reports recommends that there is need to raise awareness across the Zambia community on the importance of women taking proactive role in political participation. This is also supported by Kabwe (2020) who found that sensitization is a key to bridge the gap that exists between males and female representation in political arena. The study by Jayachandran, (2015) indicates that if women are to be actively involved in political activities raising awareness is of great significant.

It was revealed that community talks and sensitization can be facilitated monthly gatherings between elected officials, civic leaders, and community members to foster productive dialogue about building a better community that will create a fair playing field for everyone to participate in politics. The findings concur with United Nations (2020) report that indicates that incorporating all stakeholder in disseminating information about women participation in decision making process in a benchmark to achieve gender inequality. According to Human right careers (2019) suggests that empowering, equipping and sensitization of general citizenly improves perception on women political engagements. Equally, Nalukui (2021) under EU recommends that to mitigate the challenge of low women participation there is need to continue investing in capacity-building and networking. The report commends that there is need for development partners to continue providing capacity-building aimed at supporting local civil society organizations and scale up such interventions at the subnational level.

Reducing political violence against women in politics was suggested as a measure to improve women participation. The study revealed that reducing political violence against women in politics in all angled can create a favourable environment for all players. It was established that once the playing field is levelled by the government and other stakeholders can enable women to stand up and act. Similarly, UNDP (2018) claims that ensuring political environments are free from gender-based discrimination and violence is paramount in promoting political participation. The study further recommends that governments need to demonstrate gender equality in their leadership and decision-making bodies by not only increasing female representation in ministerial and elected positions, but also by fostering gender-equitable work cultures in state institutions.

FRIDA (2016) and UN Women (2021) observed that adopting gender-responsive policies and practices in governing institutions can ensure that female leaders are able to function and perform their services in an open and inclusive work environment. Violence against girls and women in politics and those in decision-making positions is a global issue and has serious repercussions for inclusive democratic societies (FRIDA, 2016). According to FRIDA the Young Feminist Fund, more than 50% of its young female activist members regularly feel unsafe or threatened because of the work they do in advancing gender equality. The increased political participation of girls and women necessitates a safe and open physical, social, and online environment, where all can participate and lead without fear of violence or harassment (National Democratic Institute, 2019).

The study reveals that building an enabling environment for women's free and equal participation can be done by integrating protection from gender-based violence within the legal framework around electoral cycles. These findings connect with UNDP (2018) report says improving girls' and women's access to justice and legal aid can ensure accountability of assailants and discourage gender-based violence in politics. Additionally, engaging boys and men in promoting and supporting girls and women as leaders and decision-makers is also essential for building open political spaces (UN Women, 2021). In relation to field data, it was clear that creating a political violence free and friendly atmosphere is solution that can help to promote women participation in politics in all levels. EU (2021) also reports that there is need to support activities to curb political violence in Zambia to enable a free playing field for youths and women in political participation. The reports further, recommends that development partners should fund and promote interventions aimed at curbing political violence, which is on the rise and affects women's participation in politics.

On a contrary to study findings, UNICEF (2023) suggest that ensuring recognition of women in decision-making capacities as a human right is a great measure to enhance women political participation. Similarly, Chesser (2019) is for the view that advancing the rights of women to serve in positions of leadership and actively participate in decision-making processes can be achieved in part through their enhanced visibility. By publicly recognizing their contributions and protecting their rights by implementing international agreements such as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the capacities of girls and women are more broadly accepted, thus dispelling negative gender stereotypes (McNamara, 2020).

As established in the field, reducing charges of adoption by political parties and the ECZ was a measure suggested that can help to promoting the political participation of women. Participants felt that reducing adoption charges by the political parties and ECZ is an ideal measure that can enable women to participate in political activities at all levels. During interviews and FGD participants from PF and UPND agreed that reducing fees by ECZ can help to mitigate the unfair playing ground that has existed for long time. In line to study finding ZNWL (2023) and United Nations General Assembly (2018) indicates that there is a need for both political parties and government to harmonise fees that women and youths required to pay for them to participate in political affairs.

Similarly, the Continental Leadership Research Institute (CLRI) found that the increased nomination fees by the Electoral Commission of Zambia ECZ is a hindrance to youth and women participation in elective representation (Mundia, 2020). In a statement issued to the media Mundia Hakoola the Institute's Director noted that the increase in the nomination fee by the country's electoral body goes against the call for deliberate affirmative action that would allow youths and women to participate in the Democratic process of the country. The proposal to increase nomination fees by Electoral Commission of Zambia reduced the participation of youths and women to aspire as elected representatives at various levels.

The CLRI suggest that there should be a deliberate affirmative action that allows youth and women to participate in democratic process such as aspiring for public office and various levels to arrest the challenge of low women and youth's participation in political sphere. The report by ZNWL (2023) indicates that the increasing of fees by the ECZ does not only add on the already existing challenges of low representation by women and youths but also undermining the regional and international benchmarks on elimination all forms that hinders them to taking an active role in governance. Mundia (2020) expressed concerns that the increase of the nomination fees is by more than 50% of the previous (2016) reduced youth and women participation.

From the findings, participants felt that ECZ and political parties should drop or reduce the nomination fees and consider ways of ensuring that youth and women participate in electoral cycle effectively without the limitation of high nomination fees. It was established that reducing the fees to be paid from both political and ECZ will pave way for more women to actively participate in politics. These findings concur with Mundia (2020) who issues a statement on the increased 2021

nomination fees by over 50% by the electoral managing body or ECZ. The findings above are in line with theory of internationalism which advocates for improved women participation in politics.

5.5 Theoretical Implications of the Findings

The concept of intersectionality, posits that individuals experience oppression in overlapping and interconnected ways. This theory is pivotal to womanism and in this study, as it recognizes that the challenges faced by women in Kabwe Central Constituence to participate in politics was exacerbated by racial discrimination and socioeconomic disadvantages. Feminism, while acknowledging the importance of diversity, frequently fails to confront these intersecting oppressions comprehensively.

Through the lens of intersectionality, womanism champions the lived experiences of women to understanding the broader struggles for equality and to fight for their place in society. This includes acknowledging the historical and contemporary injustices that racialized women endure, such as institutional racism, economic disenfranchisement, and social marginalization. By centering the voices of women who occupy multiple marginalized identities, womanism emphasizes the importance of inclusivity and solidarity in social justice movements, and in this case, political participation. It challenges readers to recognize the limitations of a singular narrative and to embrace a multiplicity of experiences that inform the quest for empowerment. Then women will contribute fully to national development.

5.6 Summary

The research presented the discussion of the findings of the study by addressing each research objective. The chapter started by discussing factors affecting women political participation. The study further discussed the effects of low political participation of women and measures to promote women political participation respectively. The two theories help us to understand why there is low participation by women in politics and why it is important for them to participate in politics.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Overview

The research presents the summary, overall conclusions of the findings. It gives the conclusions that the study makes after answering the three research questions. The aim of the study was to establish the low levels of women's political participation in Kabwe Central Constituency of Zambia.

6.2 Conclusions

The study has highlighted the low levels of women's political participation in Kabwe Central Constituency of Zambia and the following were the three objectives set in chapter one that anchored this study; factors affecting women political participation, the effects of low participation of women in politics and measures to promote women participation in politics respectively.

The interviews and FGDs conducted in this study established that women face numerous challenges in political participation. It was evident during the focus group discussion and interviews those factors affecting women political participation in Kabwe Central Constituency includes the following; lack of support from fellow women and family, inadequate financial resources to fund political activities, unsafe or fear of political violence, low confidence due to intimidation and lack of political motivation in key positions. From the findings these factors were identified by the participants who acknowledged that some woman's have the desire to participate but resources are not available to fund the process. Some indicated that poor or lack of solidarity among women impeded other to participating in politics. It can be concluded that these factors are responsible for low women political participation in Kabwe.

As far as the effects of the low political participation of women is concerned, various points were raised by the participants. From both interviews and FGD discussion conducted in the field on the effects of low women participation the following are listed; policies formulated not reflecting the interest of girls and women, women's voices will not be heard in politics, demotivating young girls and proliferation of gender gap representation. It was clear that the negative effects of low women participation in political participation increased the already existing gender gap representation in

governance. The study reveals that women voices may not be heard due to the fact that women who faces numerous challenges in communities their interests will not be fully addressed and considered. It was clear that, such effect may result into a situation of unheard voices of women governance process.

The findings of the study reveal some measure that can put in place to address low women political participation in the area. Participants pointed out that measures to promote women political participation may include; training and leadership programmes for women, promoting community talks or sensitization, reducing charges of adoption by political parties as well as reducing political violence against women in politics. The study concludes that, raising awareness on the importance of women participation is paramount to addressing low levels of participation. It can be further stated that reducing fees for both adoption and nomination by both political parties and ECZ is a mechanism to curb the vice.

6.3 Recommendations

Based on the study findings, the following recommendations were suggested to stakeholders;

1. Since the study established that resources was a major factor contributing to low political participation, the research recommends that stakeholders such NGOs, CSO, Political parties among other should be on lookout in communities and identify those women interested in politics and fund them.
2. The fact that the study revealed the effect of low women participation increases the already existing gender gap representations, ECZ, police, political parties and other stakeholders should ensure to create a political friendly atmosphere to accommodate women in political landscape. Such as deliberate policies in the country to allow all political parties adopt atleast 30% candidates female at all levels of elections.
3. Since the study established that training and leadership programmes for women, the study recommends that various platforms such as the media, marketplaces, churches, traditional leaders among should be used as conduits or channels to disseminate information on the importance of women participation in political participation. Men must also be advocates of gender equality.

4. Based on these findings, the researcher noted that the largest reason there is low women participation in politics is perhaps the way children are oriented in society and therefore there is need for them to start learning Civic Education from primary school.

6.4 Suggestions for Further Research

This research focused on the low levels of women's political participation in Kabwe Central Constituency of Zambia. There is need for the further studies to investigate on the impact of low women participation on the development of Kabwe central Constituency

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APPENDICES

Appendix One

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR KEY PARTICIPANTS

Dear participants, I am a student at the University of Zambia doing a Master of Education Degree in Civic Education. You have been purposively selected as a sample in this research. The data to be collected will only be used for academic purposes. Your confidentiality is highly guaranteed.

TITLE: Exploring the low levels of women's political participation in Kabwe Central Constituency in Zambia.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer the following questions to the best of your knowledge.
- Your identity will remain anonymous as this study is purely for academic purposes.

QUESTIONS

1. What are some of the reasons affecting women participation in politics?
2. How do these factors affect women participation in politics?
3. How do women respond to the challenges encountered?
4. Do these challenges affect the overall country? If yes how?
5. Are there any measures that have been put in place to promote women participating in politics?
6. What are some of these measures if any?
7. Has there been a challenge in executing these measures in the constituency?
8. Do you think it is important for women to be included in political matters? If yes why do you think so?
9. Is there any known experience that you have witnessed undermining the involvement of women in politics? If yes, what was the experience
10. Has there been any progress in terms of women participation in politics in Kabwe Central?

Appendix Two

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE ELECTION COMMITTEE (POLITICAL PARTY)

Dear participants, I am a student at the University of Zambia doing a Master of Education Degree in Civic Education. You have been purposively selected as a sample in this research. The data to be collected will only be used for academic purposes. Your confidentiality is highly guaranteed.

TITLE: Exploring the low levels of women's political participation in Kabwe Central Constituency in Zambia.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer the following questions to the best of your knowledge.
- Your identity will remain anonymous as this study is purely for academic purposes.

QUESTIONS

- 1) What requirements are needed for one to be nominated as parliamentary candidates? -
Educational background -political experience -financial back up (could it be same as for men) -personal background -family orientation
- 2) What are some of the factors put into consideration? If yes what mechanism is used to implement this?
- 3) How do you look at female candidates? Do you have full confidence in them that they will compete and win the elections? -may you assist me with statistics of women contesting/ selected and elected from the 2011 tripartite and by- elections to date.
- 4) Is your party concerned about the under representation of women in parliament? If yes what is being done about it?
- 5) In your opinion, why are so few women nominated and elected to parliament?
- 6) How can Zambia as a democratic nation benefit from a gender balanced parliament?
- 7) What is your comment on reserved seats? Do you think they should apply in Zambia?
- 8) Do you think there must be laws legislated to compel political parties to consider gender equality in nominating parliamentary candidates in form of political party quotas in Zambia? - Might your party introduce a quota system?

- 9) The constitution of Zambia Article 68 (1) allows for the president to nominate parliamentarians, would you advise only or the majority women are nominated to help close the gender gap in terms of reserved seats?
- 10) In your opinion, would you consider the Zambian government to be silent on women representation in parliament?
- 11) The National Assembly Bill (N.A.B.) 17 of the Constitution of Zambia, as by July, 2015 under article 47 had the Mixed Member Proportional Representation kind of electoral system as submitted by the Electoral Reform Technical Committee but could not pass in the final constitution. Was this article going to help political parties implement gender equality in the adoption of parliamentary candidates?

Appendix Three

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE WOMEN'S LOBBY AND MINISTRY OF GENDER

Dear participants, I am a student at the University of Zambia doing Master of Education Degree in Civic Education. You have been purposively selected as a sample in this research. The data to be collected will only be used for academic purposes. Your confidentiality is highly guaranteed.

TITLE: Exploring the low levels of women's political participation in Kabwe Central Constituency in Zambia.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer the following questions to the best of your knowledge.
- Your identity will remain anonymous as this study is purely for academic purposes.

QUESTIONS

- 1) Do you think the National Gender Policy has adequately addressed the issue of women in politics and decision making?
- 2) How is government implementing the issues relating to women in politics and decision making in the National Gender Policy?
- 3) Despite Zambia being a signatory to the 50% AU and 30 % SADC declarations on women representation in parliament, apart from the mention of ensuring gender equity in the National Assembly, there is no mention of a strategy to achieve this in the Zambian Constitution, what would be your observation and comment on this silence as the ministry/ organisation directly responsible with increased female representation?
- 4) Is the Ministry and the organisation planning, monitoring and evaluating that the government is undertaking the pledged strategies in increasing female political representation?
- 5) What is your opinion on the adoption of reserved seats in Zambia?
- 6) Would you recommend that president nominates women as the majority to help close the gender gap?

7) What are some of the contributions and challenges faced in the previous elections in trying to promote female representation in legislature? And learning from the previous elections what would be devised to overcome the challenges?

8) It is the objective of women 's lobby and the Ministry of Gender to increase female representation in legislature, and if political parties are the sole gate keepers to the political office, then would it make an impact to focus on increasing more women in these political parties as an entry point to the legislature?

9) Considering all the efforts and recommendations that have been put in place by Non-Governmental Organisations especially the Zambia National Women 's Lobby Group and the ratified declarations by the government with regards to the female political representation, the figures are still far from gender equality, can we attribute this to lack of political will?

Appendix four: Focus Group Discussion Guide

Dear participants, I am a student at the University of Zambia doing a Master of Education Degree in Civic Education. You have been purposively selected as a sample in this research. The data to be collected will only be used for academic purposes. Your confidentiality is highly guaranteed.

TITLE: *Exploring the low levels of women's political participation in Kabwe Central Constituency in Zambia.*

INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer the following questions to the best of your knowledge.
- Your identity will remain anonymous as this study is purely for academic purposes.

QUESTIONS

1. What are some of the factors affecting women participation in politics?
2. How do these factors affect women participation in politics?
3. How do women respond to the challenges encountered?
4. Do these challenges affect the overall country? If yes how?
5. Are there any measures that have been put in place to promote women participating in politics?
6. What are some of these measures if any?
7. Has there been a challenge in executing these measures in the constituency?
8. Do you think it is important for women to be included in political matters? If yes why do you think so?
9. Is there any known experience that you have witnessed undermining the involvement of women in politics? If yes, what was the experience
10. Has there been any progress in terms of women participation in politics in Kabwe Central?

Appendix five: Ethical Clearance



THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

Great East Road Campus | P.O. Box 32379 | Lusaka10101 | Tel: +260-211-290 258/291 777 Fax: (+260)-211-290
258/253 952 | E-mail: director.drgrs@unza.zm | Website: www.unza.zm

APPROVAL OF STUDY

IORG No. 0005376
HSSREC IRB No. 00006464
REF NO. HSSREC-2025-FEB-059

7th March, 2025

Ms Bessy Phiri
The University of Zambia
P.O. Box 32379
LUSAKA

Dear Ms Phiri

**RE: "EXPLORING THE LOW LEVELS OF WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION
IN KABWE CENTRAL CONSTITUENCY OF 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:- 2025-FEB-059
Approval and Expiry Date	Approval Date: 7 th March, 2025	Expiry Date: 6 th March, 2026
Protocol Version and Date	Version - Nil.	6 th March, 2026
Information Sheet, Consent Forms and Dates	<input type="checkbox"/> 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 suspended. Should the study be suspended, study sponsors and other regulatory authorities will be informed.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

- No participant may be involved in any study procedure prior to the study approval or after the expiration date.
- All unanticipated or Serious Adverse Events (SAEs) must be reported to HSSREC within 5 days.
- All protocol modifications must be approved by HSSREC prior to implementation unless they are intended to reduce risk (but must still be reported for approval). Modifications will include any change of investigator/s or site address.
- All protocol deviations must be reported to HSSREC within 5 working days.
- All recruitment materials must be approved by HSSREC prior to being used.
- Principal investigators are responsible for initiating Continuing Review proceedings. HSSREC will only approve a study for a period of 12 months.
- It is the responsibility of the PI to renew his/her ethics approval through a renewal application to HSSREC.
- Where the PI desires to extend the study after expiry of the study period, documents for study extension must be received by HSSREC at least 30 days before the expiry date. This is for the purpose of facilitating the review process. Documents received within 30 days after expiry will be labelled “late submissions” and will incur a penalty fee of K500.00. No study shall be renewed whose documents are submitted for renewal 30 days after expiry of the certificate.
- Every 6 (six) months a progress report form supplied by The University of Zambia Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee as an IRB must be filled in and submitted to us. There is a penalty of K500.00 for failure to submit the report.
- When closing a project, the PI is responsible for notifying, in writing or using the Research Ethics and Management Online (REMO), both HSSREC and the National Health Research Authority (NHRA) when ethics certification is no longer required for a project.
- In order to close an approved study, a Closing Report must be submitted in writing or through the REMO system. A Closing Report should be filed when data collection has ended and the study team will no longer be using human participants or animals or secondary data or have any direct or indirect contact with the research participants or animals for the study.
- Filing a closing report (rather than just letting your approval lapse) is important as it assists HSSREC in efficiently tracking and reporting on projects. Note that some funding agencies and sponsors require a notice of closure from the IRB which had approved the study and can only be generated after the Closing Report has been filed.
- A reprint of this letter shall be done at a fee.
- All protocol modifications must be approved by HSSREC by way of an application for an amendment prior to implementation unless they are intended to reduce risk (but must still be reported for approval). Modifications will include any change of investigator/s or site address or methodology and methods. Many modifications entail minimal risk adjustments to a protocol and/or consent form and can be made on an Expedited basis (via the IRB Chair). Some examples are: format changes, correcting spelling errors, adding key personnel, minor changes to questionnaires, recruiting and changes, and so forth. Other, more substantive changes, especially those that may alter the risk-benefit ratio, may require Full Board review. In all cases, except where noted above regarding subject safety, any changes to any protocol document or procedure must first be approved by HSSREC before they can be implemented.

Should you have any questions regarding anything indicated in this letter, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us at the above indicated address.

On behalf of HSSREC, we would like to wish you all the success as you carry out your study.

Yours faithfully,

DR. J. I. Ziwa

CHAIRPERSON

**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA HUMANITIES AND
SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE - IRB**

CC: Director, Research and Development

Assistant Director, Research Support and Grants

Manager, Research Administration and Support

Ethics and Affiliation Officer