

**FACTORS INFLUENCING WOMEN'S CAREER PROGRESSION TO  
LEADERSHIP POSITIONS IN HARARE CITY COUNCIL, ZIMBABWE**

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KENYATTA UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY**

## DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been submitted to any other university for award of a degree.

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my daughter Ivana Chiwashira, my sister Helga and my uncles Howard, David, Ishmael and Bothwell. I sincerely thank them for their love and encouragement but above all, for the sacrifice they paid to ensure that this project was seen to completion.

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I would also like to thank MS TCDC for availing me the opportunity to study for this course by offering me a full scholarship to undertake this program. Last but not least, I would like to thank my family for all the financial contributions they made to ensure that I am present to attend this course.

Thank you all very much, May God continue to richly bless you.

## **ABSTRACT**

This study examines the factors influencing women's career progression to leadership positions in Harare City Council. The main objective was to determine the factors influencing women's career progression in Harare City Council. The specific objectives were to determine whether patriarchal attitudes influence women's career progression to leadership positions, to establish the influence of gender roles on women's career progression to leadership positions and to determine the influence of organizational policies on women's career progression to leadership positions in Harare City Council, Zimbabwe.

The target population included management team and permanent staff in the Harare City Council. These are inclusive of the directors, divisional heads, middle management as well as the line staff. The study was conducted in Harare city council where preliminary research by the researcher had shown that women constituted only 15% of the leadership positions. Data was collected using questionnaires as well as semi structured interviews. A sample size of 116 was determined by using 33% of the population. Data from the questionnaires was analyzed using SPSS and findings from the interviews were integrated with quantitative data during the data analysis and presentation of the findings.

The findings revealed that patriarchal attitudes did not directly affect women's career progression to top leadership positions since the authority was governed by acts and policies. However it was established that negative criticisms from men made some women to hate taking up leadership positions. On the other hand it

was realized that traditional gender roles made the balance between work and family difficult in such a way that some women would prioritize family responsibilities at the expense of focusing on their careers. Furthermore, it was revealed that gender roles affected the careers choices they make thus influencing the gender compositions in departments and divisions and consequently those in leadership positions. It was also established that organizational policies supported women's progression but their lack of proper implementation and lack of transparency in recruitment and promotion procedures were challenges to women's leadership.

Implementation of gender deconstruction programs both at the workplace and the society at large is recommended. It is also recommended that family friendly policies be instituted that will help women to strike a balance between work and family life. The organization also should set up monitoring mechanisms to ensure that selection of candidates for promotion is free from bias and discrimination as well as institute systematic but temporal affirmative action strategies across all departments in order to address the gender imbalance in leadership positions.

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## ACRONYMS

ACPD	Africa Community Publishing Department
CCPR	Convention on Civil and Political Rights
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
COE	Centers of Excellence
GMI	Governance Metrics International
GFP	Gender Focal Person
HCC	Harare City Council
HoD	Head of Department
ILO	International Labor Office
IPU	Inter- Parliamentary Union
LGB	Local Government Board
MS TCDC	Ms Training Centre for Development Co-operation
RCT	Role Congruency Theory
RDC	Rural District Council
RFT	Radical Feminist Theory
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SARDC	Southern Africa Research and Documentation Centre
SLT	Synergistic Leadership Theory
US	United States

## **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

**Gender roles** - according to Blackiston (2003) gender roles is a social construct that prescribes roles and responsibilities based on sex as defined within a society.

**Local Authority** - refers to a municipal council, town council, rural district council or local board (Urban Councils Act, Chapter 29:15)

**Local Government** - refers to the lowest structure of National Government comprised of independent authorities recognised by law, which are elected by the local people and are legally responsible for the planning and implementation of specific functions despite central government's interference (Africa Community Publishing Development, ACPD)

**Organizational Culture** - is defined as a way of doing things that shapes how people within an organization view things, relate and respond to situations either internal or external and it is passed on from generation to generation (Schein, 2010). It is often expressed in behavior, group norms, standards, public documents such as charters and employee orientation materials (Schein, 1984)

**Organizational Policies** - are principles, rules and guidelines that are adopted by an organization and are designed to influence major decisions and actions (businessdictionary.com)

**Patriarchal Attitudes** - refer to perceptions, beliefs and attitudes derived from a system that observes the dominancy of men over women within a society (Giddens,2009)

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Due to global pressure for the realization of women's rights their participation in the workforce has grown steadily over the years, from 43 percent in 1970 to 59 percent in 2004 (US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2005). There has been an increase in women occupation of strategic positions in professional and managerial fields, despite the deficiencies emanating from societal and patriarchal beliefs. Women are yet to occupy strategic positions within society that shapes policy and development agendas of their nations specifically within the developing countries. Women's careers are decidedly different from those of men. In particular, men tend to follow more linear career paths, whereas women's careers are more likely to be nonlinear, disjointed, and interrupted (Mainiero and Sullivan, 2006).

Globally, there is still a gap between the ideal gender inclusion of both women and men and the actual situation in leadership practice (Do, Levchenko, & Raddatz, 2011). Even though women constitute over 50% of the worlds' working population, their representation in leadership roles in both public and private sectors continues to remain low in most regions across the world (Elborgh-Woytek et al, 2013).

Warner (2014) indicates that women in the US make up 14.6% of executive officers. He further explains this to imply that, it's only 4.6% of Fortune 500

CEOs and only 16.9% of the Fortune 500 organizations board seats that are held by women. This study grounds the fact that - even in the most seemingly gender sensitive societies as the US, women inclusion in senior management positions remains a challenge.

Ernst and Young (2014) revealed that the global percentage of women on corporate boards stood at 11% in 2013. However, they further identified that some countries had better women representation statistics in management positions. For example Norway has 40.5%, Sweden (27.0%), Finland (26.8%), the UK (20.7%) and France (18.3%). It is worrisome to note that these countries made the top five out of the forty-four countries ranked GMI ratings in 2013 globally.

The first-mentioned disparities are also evident in the public sector as well as in the political arena. A survey carried out by Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) (2014) revealed that women constitute about 21.8% of the parliamentarians worldwide in both the lower and upper houses and Sub Saharan Africa has representation at 22.5%. Tolmay and Morna (2010) revealed that in the Southern African Development Community (SADC), women involvement in parliament was at 26%, women in cabinet at 21% and in local government 24%. In Zimbabwe, women constitute 35% in parliament, 12% in cabinet and for local government women constitute 16% (Gender Links, 2014). This therefore implies that the biggest percentages of political and senior cabinet positions are male dominated.



Abubakari and Ayuune, (2014) further assert that women are mostly identified with domestic life while politics is viewed as a male-dominated public activity that is typically masculine in nature. Mainiero and Sullivan (2006) and Elborgh-Woytek et al (2013) proved how this trend has persisted in all spheres of African leadership strata to the extent that leadership was considered an exclusively male activity. The low representation of women in leadership and decision making roles has been changing over the past three decades through the international community's commitments to promote gender equality and the elimination of discrimination against women.

As a result of treaties such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), Convention on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR) and the Millennium Declaration 2000, there has been an increase in women political representation in Southern Africa as compared to the low rates that existed in the 1960s (Ndlovu and Mutale 2013).

Despite this positive trend of progress, overly, the average impact of these treaties is still very low in Zimbabwe (Zimbabwe Country Analysis Working Report, 2014). Most countries in Southern Africa still lag behind in terms of women inclusion in decision making and leadership roles from the local, regional municipal/district and national levels both in the public and private sectors; political/public offices and para-statal bodies, commissions and other institutions in SADC Member States (Southern Africa Development Community Report,

2013). Participation of women in decision making is regarded as a vital ingredient in national development especially in Zimbabwe.

Women's involvement in leadership amplifies their decision making power, an aspect most regarded as contributing factors towards a democratic and just society. The Report on the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995) was conclusive on "Women's equal participation in decision-making is not only a demand for simple justice or democracy but can also be seen as a necessary condition for women's interests to be taken into account," ( United Nations,1996,p 79).

The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, which was adopted by the SADC Heads of State and Government in August- 2008, is very elaborate in its provisions to ensuring equal representation and participation of women. It endeavors, by 2015, to enshrine gender equality and equity in their constitutions and ensure that these rights are not compromised by any provisions, laws or practices. The idea is to ensure that all legislative and other measures are accompanied by public awareness campaigns which demonstrate the vital link between the equal representation and participation of women and men in decision making positions, democracy, good governance and citizen participation.

In addition, the protocol further details its endeavor to consider at least fifty percent of decision making positions in the public and private sectors are held by women including the use of affirmative action measures as provided for in Article

5 by the year 2015 and lastly, it mandated equal participation of women and men in decision making by putting in place policies, strategies and programs.

Despite these provisions, many countries in Southern Africa are still far from achieving the equal representation in decision making and Zimbabwe is no exception (SARDC Report, 2013). ILO (2012) and Elborgh-Woytek et al, (2013) have agreed that women's participation is vital as they offer different perspectives that also promote development and overall well-being of the society. According to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (2009), the involvement and participation of women in local government can have significant influence on development both at national and local levels. Furthermore, the impact is also witnessed on issues that directly affect their lives and families such as access to health, education and development of necessary infrastructure. These social issues are crucial in meeting their basic needs as well as determining their quality of life for both men and women.

Demographic and gender distribution studies across sub-Saharan Africa on women have shown underrepresentation in electoral politics among voters and candidates. Female candidates have often been victims to unequal 'access to and control over the basic services provided by local government' (ibid). Disparities of gender differences in leadership are still very evident across every sector in Zimbabwe. There is an intention by the government of Zimbabwe to increase women's participation in leadership and decision making to fifty percent as indicated in the Constitution of Zimbabwe (2013). To the contrary, this has not

happened - Zimbabwe like many other African countries has taken various positive steps towards addressing the issues of gender political representation at various levels. For example, it has ratified various regional and international protocols on gender equality such as the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development which is very elaborate and specific and also the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Furthermore, Zimbabwe formulated a very comprehensive Gender Policy aimed at achieving gender parity in both private and public institutions. Even though the government is making socio-political commitments to gender equity in places of work, a number of challenges still affect women's career advancement to top leadership positions in local authorities. It is from this background that the study will focus on examining factors influencing women's career progression to leadership positions in local government authorities with a focus on Harare City Council.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Gender disparities in leadership involvement are still very evident across many sectors in Zimbabwe (Zimbabwe Country Analysis Working Report, 2014). Even though the government is a signatory to the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development which clearly mainframe policy measures for gender mainstreaming in leadership involvement, and its intentions to increase women's representation in leadership and decision making to 50 percent as indicated in the Constitution of Zimbabwe (2013) - by increasing their political participation by

50 percent in the year 2015 - the level of women participation in top leadership positions has often been challenged by sentiments from a culturally dictated male dominated society among other socio economic and political factors. Women's representation at local government level remains at 16 percent being suffocated by an 84 percent male dominant legislature.

In a study conducted by Gender Links (2010), results revealed that women representation in local council administration especially at management stood below 30 percent. Data gathered from seven councils in Zimbabwe, namely, Gweru City Council, Kadoma Town Council, Makoni Rural District Council (RDC), Mutoko (RDC), Ngezi (RDC), Tongogara (RDC) and Zvimba (RDC) revealed that in the top management 92.3% were men and women were only 7.7%, at senior management level men constituted 95% and only 5% were women (Tolmay and Morna, 2010). This affirms the gender equity gap in management positions which poses the need to find mechanisms for redressing such an anomaly.

Most studies on women in local government in Zimbabwe have focused on factors affecting women's political leadership in local government and not their progression to executive positions (Mupfeka, 2008; Tolmay and Morna, 2010; Kurebwa, 2014). Limited studies have been conducted to establish factors that affect women's career progression to top management positions in local administrative structures. Studies have shown that political and administrative structures that allow for equity in career advancement/progression are two to three

more times likely to achieve their national development plan as well as maintain sustainable governance structures (Inter-parliamentary Union Report, 2014).

It has been argued that limited participation of women in decision making is deleterious to social and economic growth indicators (Duflo, 2012). Thus once barriers that limit women's involvement in leadership are not minimized, their level of participation in leadership and management positions as a means to human resource development, will continue to be compromised. Therefore, the study sought to explore factors that influence women's career progression to top leadership positions within local government structures in Harare City Council.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

#### **1.3.1 General Objective:**

The general objective is to determine the factors influencing women's career progression to leadership positions in Harare City Council, Zimbabwe.

#### **1.3.2 Specific objectives:**

- i. To determine whether patriarchal attitudes influence women's career progression to leadership positions in Harare City Council, Zimbabwe.
- ii. To establish the influence of gender roles on women's career progression to leadership positions in Harare City Council, Zimbabwe.
- iii. To determine the influence of organizational policies on women's career progression to leadership positions in Harare City Council, Zimbabwe.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

- i. To what extent do patriarchal attitudes influence women's career progression to leadership positions in Harare City Council, Zimbabwe?
- ii. In what way do gender roles influence women's career progression to leadership positions in Harare City Council, Zimbabwe?
- iii. To what extent do organizational policies influence women's career progression to leadership positions in Harare City Council, Zimbabwe?

#### **1.5 Significance of the study**

The study provides insights into the factors influencing women's career progression in the Harare City Council. Findings from the study will be useful in adding to the existing knowledge in academia and also offer invaluable insights on the issues that affect women's progression to leadership positions in local authorities.

The study provides information which women in local authorities will benefit from by shedding light on the factors influencing their progression to leadership positions. In turn it is expected that women will find ways of managing these factors identified. This will increase women's chances to advance in career positions of leadership. The study also provides vital information to civil society organizations and the various groups advocating for gender equality. Furthermore, the study provides information that will help local authorities in coming up with

policies and strategies to enhance gender equality and mainstreaming in the work place.

## **1.6 Scope of the study**

The study looked at factors in local government the independent variable and career progression to top leadership positions as the dependent variable. Factors were operationalized by considering patriarchal attitudes, gender roles and organizational factors.

### **1.6.1 Location of the study**

The study was conducted in Harare, the Capital City of Zimbabwe. The location was chosen because the researcher observed that few women occupied positions of leadership within HCC. Furthermore the observation was supported by preliminary research conducted by the researcher which revealed that women in leadership positions were very few as compared to their male counterparts. Respondents will be derived from permanent employees in the Harare City Council (HCC). HCC was also the preferred location of study as it was also convenient for the researcher in terms of resources. It is the largest local authority in Zimbabwe.

## **1.7 Limitations of the study**

The research was based on a local authority where the respondents were entangled in busy schedules and in some cases it was difficult to interview those in top



management. Furthermore focus group discussions were not feasible because of the location of the departments. The researcher resorted to the use of structured questionnaires. Some of the targeted respondents were unwilling to cooperate; they were unwilling to read the questionnaire due to lack of interest thus necessitating substitution. A drop and pick later method was used for administering the questionnaires, some were not returned as the respondents were constantly away from office and tracing them proved difficult. Due to time constraints data collection tools could not be pre tested. The study was also conducted during a very stressful time where employees across the board were uncertain of their future in the organization due to a labour act that gave employers the leeway to dismiss an employee without notice, hence respondent's biases were difficult to avoid during the research process.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

In this chapter the researcher discusses theories and empirical literature relevant to the study. Research gaps which the study sought to fill are identified. The conceptual framework which guides this research is also presented and explained.

#### **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

This section presents an overview of the theoretical framework and its underpinnings to the study. Based on the assumptions in the objectives of the study, three theories were adopted in building the theoretical rigor throughout the discussion; presented are the Radical Feminist Theory (RFT), Role Congruity Theory (RCT) and Synergistic Leadership Theory (SLT).

##### **2.2.1 Radical Feminist Thought**

According to Bryson (1999), feminists' ideas are based upon the premise that women are more disadvantaged than men. The disadvantage is not as a result of biological differences and therefore can be changed. According to Bryson (1999), four key elements characterize the Radical feminist theory. First, the theory is grounded on women's experiences and perceptions. It is a theory of women, advanced by mainly women and therefore meant for women only. Secondly, it sees the oppression of women as the most universal form of discrimination rooted

in patriarchy. The theory portrays women as people who have different and opposing interests to those of men. As such, women should unite in order to set themselves free from male domination. Finally, Bryson notes that radical feminism views male domination, as not only confined to the public life but also extends to the private life. This private life encompasses family life as well as sexual relationships, both of which are key facets of patriarchal domination. Haralambos and Holborn (2004) note that patriarchy is the most important concept used by radical feminist in explaining gender inequalities. This suggests that the gender gap in leadership and decision making in politics, private and public institutions are as a result patriarchal systems.

Millett (1970) as cited in Bryson (1999) argued that the relationship between sexes had been based on power, which takes the form of male domination over women all areas of life. Furthermore this phenomenon is universal to such an extent that it appears natural. This exercise of power is not only limited to political parties and parliaments, but exists in situations whereby one group of people is controlled by another (Millett, 1970 as cited in Haralambos and Holborn, 2004).

In explaining the existence of patriarchy Millett (1970) as cited in Haralambos and Holborn (2004) notes several factors to explain the existence of patriarchy. The factors include biology, socialization, educational factors, religion, psychology and physical force exerted on women by men. She argues that men from childhood are taught to exercise dominance in societal decision making

spheres. This therefore leads men to pursue roles in which they have influence over women and this finally finds its way into sociopolitical leadership positioning of more males than females. Thus, the way men are socialized since childhood builds a given behavioral pattern that eventually manifests itself into power affluence of males over their female counterparts. Intuitively, one can argue that these imbedded patriarchal attitudes have led to women especially in African societies to accept their subordinate position thus affecting their desire or willingness to compete with their male counterparts. As such their aspirations to reach the top of the corporate ladder is quite low as compared to their male counterparts who have been socialized to be competitive and dominant.

### **2.2.2 The Role Congruity theory**

According to Diekmann and Goodfriend (2006), Role Congruity Theory (RCT) postulates that, a group will be positively assessed when its characteristics have been observed to be in sync with the expected group's social roles. The theory assumes that perceived incongruity between the female gender role and leadership role will result in two forms of prejudice; one that perceives women less favorably than men as potential occupants of leadership roles. The other form evaluates behavior that fulfills expectations a leader's role being less favorable when it is being exhibited by a woman (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

As explained by Eagly and Karau (2002), women leaders are likely to be viewed less favorably if their female gender roles do not align to the leadership role. As compared to males, women are likely to receive more disapproval due to the

perceived gender role incompatibility. Paustin-Underdahl, Walker & Woehr (2014), argue that the RCT can also be applied to men. Their argument is based on survey conducted by Eagly et al (2005). Eagly et al argue that, a leadership role that encourages participation and open consideration is often considered feminine while a role requiring ability to direct and control people is rated masculine. As a result, women take more precedence over social determined leadership positions than men. In this vein, the argument above affirm the fact that women often fall prey to discrimination when it comes to occupying certain leadership roles within various departments in Harare City Council. Evidently, a glance at some departments in Harare City Council, affirm the assumptions postulated by the theory- more women occupy low level positions serving as street sweepers and office cleaners.

### **2.2.3 The Synergistic Leadership Theory (SLT)**

The SLT emphasizes the dynamic interaction four factors which are the leadership behavior, organizational structure, external forces and attitudes, beliefs and values. It is based on the assumption that an alignment of all four factors results in a leader being perceived as successful or effective, whereas a misalignment among the four factors results in a leader being perceived as less effective or less suitable for the leadership position. Therefore, there is always need to identify any area of tension and address it in order to maintain harmony between the four factors (Irby, Brown, Duffy & Trautman, 2002).

**Factor 1: Attitudes, beliefs and values**

In the theory attitudes, values and beliefs are revealed in actions and they can be of either individuals or groups. Examples include openness to change, valuing diversity or valuing integrity. SLT emphasizes that tension will occur if there is no harmony between attitudes, beliefs and values and the other three factors (Irby et al, 2002).

**Factor 2: Leadership behavior**

This aspect examines the range of behaviors that are ascribed to female leaders. Behaviors such as interdependence, cooperation, receptivity, merging, acceptance and cooperation are ascribed to female leaders (Marshall, 1993 as cited in Irby et al 2002). Thus the behaviors range from autocratic to nurturing (Irby et al, 2002).

**Factor 3: External Forces**

These refer to forces outside the control of the organization or the leader that interact with the organization or the leader and represent a set of values, attitudes and beliefs. These forces are associated with local, national and international community conditions, governmental policies, laws, technological advancements, political climate and geography (Irby et al, 2002).

**Factor 4: Organizational Structure**

Organizational structure refers to the characteristics of organizations and how they operate. The SLT model shows organizational structures ranging from open, feminist to bureaucratic ones (Irby et al, 2002).

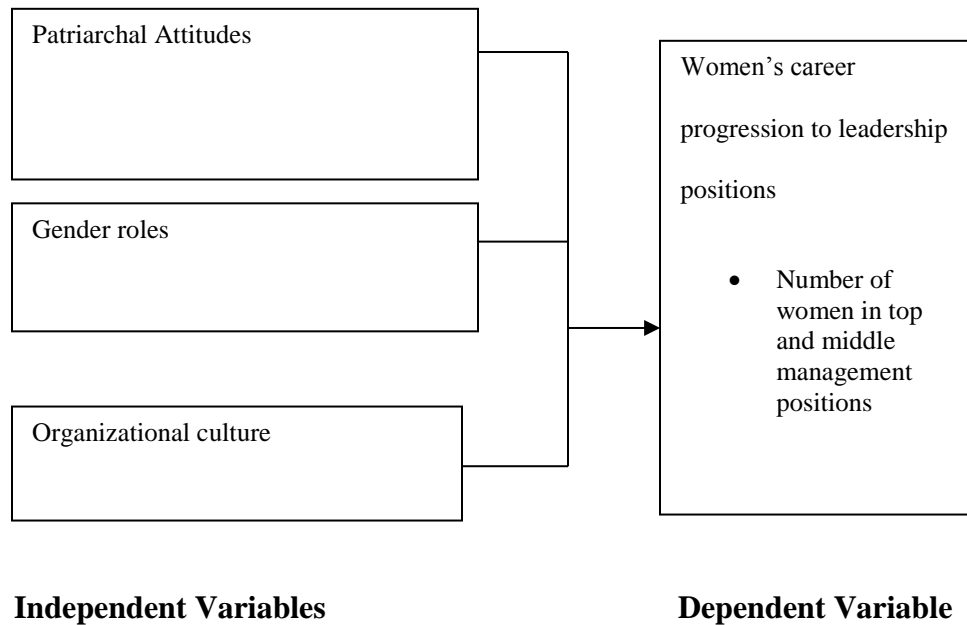
Additional assumptions from the theory are that: (a) women exhibit a unique set of leadership behaviors to leadership positions, (b) it is the only theory in current literature that includes feminine leadership behaviors or women's perspectives, (c) feminine leadership style encompasses characteristics of the transformational leader, and (d) the more feminine leadership behaviors one exhibits, the more aligned he/she will be with a postmodern organization type (Ardovini, Trautman, Brown, & Irby, 2010 as cited in Rinella, 2014).

To explain the applicability of the theory Irby et al, (2002) explain that if an individual exhibits more feminine attributes of leadership and yet the organization is a closed bureaucratic one, with external forces supporting such, then the leader will be perceived as not being successful. To alter this negative perception the leader has to first identify where there is disharmony between the four factors. The leader then may change the negative perceptions either by trying to change the organizational structure or external forces, or by adopting a new leadership style or realigning personal values and beliefs to suit that of the organization.

The SLT theory is in a better position to explain why female leaders may be perceived as not being successful in certain organizations. It brings an understanding on the dynamics that transpire within organizations which may help to explain why certain organizations, in this case the Harare City Council, may seem not to support the promotion of women into positions of leadership.

### 2.3 Conceptual Framework

The study was conducted to determine the factors affecting women's progression to leadership positions in local authorities in Zimbabwe with specific focus on Harare City Council. The independent variables are patriarchal attitudes, gender roles and organizational policies and the dependent variable is the number of women in leadership positions. The dependent variable is proposed to be affected by the independent variables. The conceptual framework is as diagrammatized as below:



**Figure 2. 1: Conceptual Framework**



## **2.4 Review of key Variables in the study**

This section entails discussions on of the main variables in the study based on the research objectives. These include patriarchal attitudes, gender roles and organizational factors as key independent variables and women's progression in leadership positions as the dependent variable.

### **2.4.1 Patriarchal Attitudes**

Patriarchal attitudes are as a result of culture. According to Wood (2007, p 29), "Culture consists of structures, primary institutions and practices that reflect and uphold a particular social order"...and these frameworks achieve the maintenance of this "social order" by defining the values , meanings, acceptable and non-acceptable forms of behaviour as well as the interactions between the various groups within society. Culture is continually changing (Zinyemba, 2013) furthermore... 'it is historical specific and ideological' (Swingehood et al, 1991, p. 26 as cited in Billington et al, 1991, p.21). This therefore means that culture is often changing and dependent upon the locality upon which the ideas and values are expressed.

Patriarchal systems have been considered because they perpetuate gender imbalances in politics and leadership positions (Zubaidi, F. R., Al-Sammerai, N.S. M. & Ahmad, F., 2010). In most Western and African cultures where patriarchal systems are common, boys are taught to exhibit masculine behaviors such as being assertive, aggressive, strong and out spoken. On the other hand, the girls are

taught to be passive, soft-spoken and compliant (Zubaidi et al, 2010). As a result of patriarchal systems women have been socialized in such a way that they accept their subordinate position and hence will not question the status quo (Tripp, 2003).

Though the subordination of women mainly occurs at household level, the effects have been seen in public life. This has resulted in women not being allowed to be actively involved in decision making even on issues that have a direct impact on them in their communities. Especially in Africa women have not been fairly represented in areas of decision making, governance and in the formulation of policies (Alabi, 2007). In rural Zimbabwe, it was discovered that women could not effectively participate as councilors as a result of the patriarchal attitudes that they faced in their communities as well as in their own parties. Women were often not taken seriously (Kurebwa, 2014).

#### **2.4.2 Gender roles**

Gender roles have been defined as those roles which are assigned to men and women based on their sex and usually define what is feminine and masculine. Traditional gender roles still have a very strong influence even for those who seek not to be classified against certain stereotypes. Inevitably, people will often find themselves acting according to their "role", in some level, whether it is at work or at home. Stereotypes such as that women work less than men or in less demanding positions or earn less, are practical in this day and age (Sandberg, 2013, as cited in Lahti, 2013).

Another crucial social feature that has affected women's participation in leadership roles has been linked to the double roles that women have to perform as mothers and career women. Hora (2014) argues that women still have to put in much more effort if they are to perform at the same level as men and that women still feel the pressure of traditional roles of men and women. Consequently women have to ensure that they balance their time between attending to their responsibilities as primary care givers at home as well as work related responsibilities. The study further revealed that lack of time is a practical barrier affecting women's interest to participate in decision making whether in political, public and economic spheres as well as civil society sectors. These findings were similar to those of Abubakari and Ayuune (2014) who concluded that the work at home did not avail the required time for women to participate in politics as compared to their male counterparts.

Lahti (2013) also notes that there is an indication of traditional gender roles determining the type of education one will acquire. She highlights that there "growing gender division in educational fields and in the clear distinction between industries in which women and men want to work in." As such women are likely to be found in working in certain professions and more so leading in those fields.

### **2.4.3 Organizational culture**

Organizational culture is defined as a way of doing things that shapes how people within an organization view things, relate and respond to situations either internal

or external and it is passed on from generation to generation (Schein 1984, Schein 2010). This culture is expressed in ‘observed behavior, group norms, standards, values- both implicit and expressed, formal philosophy, meanings, symbols, rituals and celebrations...’ and it is a determinant in the selection of a leader as it shapes the qualities that are to be considered if one is to be elected a leader. (Schein, 2010).

Organizational culture has been noted to have impact on women’s upward mobility to leadership positions and even in the recruitment and selection of job candidates. Inevitably, it has not been favorable to women especially where there is a ‘24/7 work ethic’. In most cases women are the primary care givers and such work ethics offer the challenge of trying to balance work and family life (Piterman, 2008). Since organizational culture is defined by various aspects such as norms, values and symbols among many other things, the researcher will focus mainly on organizational policies. Organizational policies are principles, rules and guidelines that are adopted by an organization and are designed to influence major decisions and actions (businessdictionary.com).

#### **2.4.4 Women’s career progression to leadership positions**

In this study, women’s career progression was measured by looking at mainly the number of women in leadership positions in Harare City Council as a result of promotions. According to Kirai and Mukulu (2012) recruitment and promotion procedures are often biased. Women as opposed to men are often subject to discrimination.

## **2.5 Critique of Existing Literature relevant to the Study**

Many researchers have explored the factors that affect women's progression to leadership positions in various organizations. The researches have indicated that women in their various settings have some factors affecting them whilst others do not seem to have an effect on their progression to leadership positions. Kurebwa (2014) looked at issues affecting women's representation and participation in local government and his focus of study was on political leadership which excluded the administrative arm of local government. Findings of the report showed that cultural beliefs, violence against women, lack of resources and lack of mutual support among women were some of the factors limiting women's participation and representation in local governance. But this study did not establish how and to what extent these factors affect women's career progression to top leadership positions.

Gender Links (2010) conducted a nationwide study in Zimbabwe to establish factors affecting women's participation in local government leadership and revealed that lack of resources, education, political violence, domestic responsibilities, lack of support and culture were the key barriers to women's participation. They went on further to reveal the statistics of women in management within local government institutions but however did not go on further to determine the factors for the gender disparities.

Hora (2014) discusses major barriers hindering women from public leadership and decision-making positions. Results showed that socio-cultural attitudes and

lack of acquisition of the necessary experience for taking part in public decision-making, overburden of domestic responsibilities continuation of the negative attitudes regarding women's ability to lead and govern, lack of role models of women leaders for young women and girls as barriers.

Mbugua (2004) reviewed 4 institutions namely Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT), Kenyatta University (KU), Barclays Bank of Kenya (BBK) and National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF) and found that social cultural factors, organization policies, organization culture, limited access to advanced education and discrimination in appointments inhibit the upward mobility of women to top leadership positions. These studies were limited in their specific discussion on women's participation in leadership.

## **2.6 Research gap**

It is the researcher's conviction, that studies so far done have offered different contributions towards the understanding of factors affecting women in leadership. Some literature has tended to focus on private sectors such as banks, hospitality industries, and so on and public institutions such as Universities.

The literature reviewed has shown that effects of similar factors defer from one context to another and that women in different areas are affected differently by the identified factors. Kurebwa (2014) looked at issues affecting women's representation and participation in local government and his focus of study was on political leadership which excluded the administrative arm of local government.

The study done by Gender Links (2010) was only limited to providing statistics of women in leadership positions in local authorities. Factors leading to the gender disparities in leadership positions were not examined. It is in this regard that the researcher saw the need to investigate the influence of patriarchal attitudes, gender roles and organizational policies on women's progression to leadership positions in local authorities and thus filling the gap in research.

## **2.7 Summary**

In summary, this chapter discussed theories relevant to the study such as the radical feminist theory; role congruency theory and the synergistic leadership theory were discussed. The role congruency theory explains how the lack of fit to gender roles may inhibit one's progression to a leadership position. Radical feminist theory highlights how patriarchy influences people's perceptions and therefore behaviors. This chapter also provides the conceptual framework and review of variables also known as empirical review, highlighting what other researchers have written concerning the variables. Furthermore the research gaps were indicated showing the areas that the study dealt with.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

Kothari (2004) refers to research methodology as a systematic way explored by researchers to solve a research problem. The research methodology looks at the various steps taken by a researcher to gather data for a specific problem along with the logic behind them as well as the techniques employed to analyze the data. This chapter discusses the research design, the population, sampling techniques, data collection methods, instrument validity and reliability. Lastly, the data analysis methods were explained in this chapter.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

Research design is the conceptual structure within which research is conducted; it constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data (Kothari, 2004). The research design clearly explains the different steps that are taken during research in order to fulfil the objectives of the research in the best possible way (Sahu, 2013). The study adopted the case study approach.

According to Robson (1993) a case study involves the development of a detailed, intensive knowledge about a single ‘case’ or of a small number of related cases. Therefore, the case study approach enables one to obtain in depth information on a particular group or individuals. The common features therefore include selection of single case of a situation, individual, or group of interest or concern and the



information can be collected using observation, interview and documentary analysis.

The research design was descriptive study design using the case study to explore the factors influencing women's career progression to leadership positions in Harare City Council (HCC). The study made use of both qualitative and quantitative methods in obtaining information. This approach enabled the researcher to amass a lot of information pertaining to the research objectives. The major weakness of the case study approach is that the findings may not be generalizable to other situations (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005).

Since the study focused on establishing factors that affect women's career progression to leadership positions in local authorities and especially focusing on Harare City Council, the researcher assumed that the case study approach enables the researcher to achieve the objectives of the study. In this way, detailed information was gathered from a single group and in this case, Harare City Council (HCC).

### **3.3 Research Population**

Research population means a collection of well-defined objects which can be people, animals, books and so on (Sahu, 2013). In this study, the population was permanent staff of the Harare city council. The target population was estimated at 7 000 employees.

### **3.4 Sampling**

According to Robson (1993) sampling is a process by which a sample is drawn from the target population. The sample represents the population in terms of its characteristics and allows for inferences to be made to the population based on observations from the sample (Sahu, 2013). Purposive sampling and convenience sampling methods were used for this study. Patton (1990) explains that purposive sampling is a sampling technique whereby the researcher identifies respondents from which they can obtain the most information from thus enabling one to understand in depth the issues of central importance to the purpose of the research. It results in the researcher obtaining 'information rich case.' Purposive sampling was used to identify respondents for the interview such as the town clerk, gender focal person (GFP), and females in leadership positions.

On the other hand stratified sampling was used to identify the respondents from the various departments. This is an appropriate method as the population is then divided into a number of groups or strata. It is in this case that the strata presented by the target population were the departments which include the Corporate Services and Housing, Finance, Works and Finance department. The respondents were randomly chosen from the strata.

The sample size of 116 respondents was determined from a population of 351 people. This population was derived from the Human Resources Department where information revealed stated that the target population was made up 351 people. The researcher took 33% of the target population. These departments

were chosen because they offer high value jobs and have the highest concentration of knowledge workers and they offer a clear professional path through which employees can rise to leadership positions. This group comprised of divisional heads, middle management and other departmental staff members.

**Table 3. 1: Sample Size**

<b>Department</b>	<b>Total Number of Employees (N)</b>	<b>Sample Size (n)</b>	<b>Population Proportion (P)</b>
<b>Works</b>	197	65	33%
<b>Corporate Services and Housing</b>	112	37	33%
<b>Finance</b>	27	9	33%
<b>Town Clerk's office</b>	15	5	33%
<b>Total (N)</b>	351	116	33%

### **3.5 Data Collection Procedures and Sources**

The researcher obtained permission from the Harare City Council training department in order to have access to the respondents as well as official council documents. The letter of introduction from MS Training Centre for Development Cooperation (MS- TCDC) was presented to the relevant authorities. After receiving permission the researcher employed the drop and pick later method on the questionnaire. This was done in order to enable the respondents to acquaint themselves with the questions and give them ample time to respond to the questions. At the same time the researcher requested appointments for conduction of the interviews.

Both primary and secondary data sources were used. The primary data was gathered from the sample respondents which were chosen using the above mentioned sampling techniques. The secondary data sources were documents and books. Data from secondary sources was read and summarized in the researcher's notebook.

### **3.6 Instruments**

#### **3.6.1. Semi Structured Interviews**

The experiences and opinions of the respondents were collected using semi-structured interviews. The interviews were in the form of face to face interviews which derived questions from the questionnaire used under the study. Robson (1993) highlighted that an interview is "a conversation with a purpose". In this regard the conversation has an aim of deriving some useful information for the purpose of completing the study. Face to face interviews are advantageous in that they allow the researcher to modify the manner in which the questions are asked, allow further probing and follow up on interesting responses which other methods such as questionnaires cannot ( Robson, 1993 ).

The researcher made use of semi-structured and open ended interview guide in order to obtain a wealth of information of descriptions and experiences. Robson (1993) highlighted semi structured interview to be a process where the interviewer prepares a set of questions prior to the interview but can be changed at the discretion of the interviewer based on interviewer judgement on what seems

most appropriate in the context of the conversation where a particular question can be left out to incorporate a new one.

### **3.6.2 Questionnaires**

The researcher prepared a questionnaire with both closed as well as open ended questions. Questionnaires are very efficient in terms of researcher time and effort and also will save time when analyzing if the questionnaire has been well constructed and also if computer coding and analysis is available (Robson, 1993). The researcher chose to use this instrument as it was convenient and enabled the researcher to obtain a lot of information from different people in various departments. It also enabled the researcher to amass information on the study area to achieve the research objectives.

### **3.6.3 Instrument Validity**

Validity is the appropriateness of the instrument. Content validity was used since it focuses on the extent to which the content of an instrument corresponds with the content of the theoretical concept it is designed to measure (Amin, 2005). Clutter questions were revisited, corrected and where necessary replaced before the actual collection exercise.

### **3.6.4 Instrument Reliability**

Sekaran (2003) argues that reliability of an instrument indicates the stability and consistency with which the instrument measures the concept and helps to assess the goodness of a measure.

## **3.7 Data Analysis**

### **3.7.1 Qualitative data analysis**

Data from the semi structured interview was categorized into themes which provided narratives of the research findings. This method entails the reduction of large volumes of data in order to emerge with information relevant to the study. The findings were integrated with quantitative data during the data analysis and presentation of the findings.

### **3.7.2 Quantitative data analysis**

Quantitative data collected using questionnaire was sorted, categorized, coded and analyzed using the statistical package for social scientists (SPSS 19). The computer software generated descriptive statistics to describe the data collected. Frequency distribution tables, percentages, graphs, and pie charts were generated.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings from the study. It contains findings that are presented logically with respect to the objectives of the study. Results are presented in graphs, charts and tables for the quantitative data and qualitative data is presented in explanations.

#### **4.2 Response Rate**

The response rate of the study was 90%. This was due to the difficulties of obtaining the questionnaires from the respondents. Some of the staff was very busy and mobile during the time of data collection.

#### **4.3 Respondent's Profile**

The study revealed that the respondents consisted of 63.5% males and 36.5% females. This shows that the departments under study had more males than females who were above grade 9 which was considered for promotions to leadership positions. The predominant age category was found to be 40-49 years constituting 39.4%. The study revealed that 77.9% of the respondents were married and 53.8% of the respondents had between 3-5 children. This implies that there majority of the respondents have both work and family commitments and therefore able to relate with the questions under study. The study also shows that

the sample was comprised of highly educated respondents with 53.8 % have attained a bachelor's degree and 33.7% being holders of master's degrees. This implies that education plays a role in the recruitment and promotion of staff within the organization. The study also shows that 10.6% of the respondents had worked in the organization for a period of 5 years or less whilst 32.7% had been in the organization for a period of between 21-30 years in Table 4.1. This implies that the study has respondents that are knowledgeable about the organization and thus provide information that gives a snapshot of factors affecting women's progression to leadership positions.

**Table 4.1: Respondent's Profile**

Variable		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender of respondent	Male	66	63.5	63.5	63.5
	Female	38	36.5	36.5	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
Age of respondent	Below 40 years	32	30.8	30.8	30.8
	Between 40-49 years	41	39.4	39.4	70.2
	Above 50 years	31	29.8	29.8	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
Marital status	Single	15	14.4	14.4	14.4
	Married	81	77.9	77.9	92.3
	Divorced	4	3.8	3.8	96.2
	Widowed	4	3.8	3.8	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
Number of children	2 children or less	44	42.3	42.3	42.3
	3-5 children	56	53.8	53.8	96.2
	6 or more children	4	3.8	3.8	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	



Academic Qualifications	PhD	3	2.9	2.9	2.9
	Masters	35	33.7	33.7	36.5
	Bachelors	56	53.8	53.8	90.4
	HND	7	6.7	6.7	97.1
	Diploma	3	2.9	2.9	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
Duration worked in organization	0-5 years	11	10.6	10.6	10.6
	21-30 years	23	22.1	22.1	32.7
	11-15 years	17	16.3	16.3	49.0
	16-20 years	19	18.3	18.3	67.3
	21-30 years	34	32.7	32.7	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
Department	Works	53	51.0	51.0	51.0
	Corporate Services and Housing	37	35.6	35.6	86.5
	Finance	9	8.7	8.7	95.2
	Town Clerk Office	5	4.8	4.8	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

#### **4.4 Influence of patriarchal attitudes on women's progression to leadership positions**

##### **4.4.1 Opinions on working women**

The study revealed that 92.3% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that the woman's place is at home and not the workplace. A very small proportion of 7.7% agreed that the woman's place is at home and not the workplace (Table 4.2). These results indicate that women are viewed and accepted as working professionals within the local authority. This further suggests that women have meaningful contributions that they provide within the professional circles.

**Table 4.2: Women acceptance at the workplace**

Variable	Response		Sex of respondent		
			Male	Female	Total
The woman's place is at home and not the workplace	Yes	n	6	2	8
		%	9.1%	5.3%	7.7%
	No	n	60	36	96
		%	90.9%	94.7%	92.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>104</b>	
	<b>%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

#### 4.4.2 Men's leadership in the workplace

It was noted that 50% of the respondents strongly disagreed that men should always lead and women to follow in the workplace. Also 35.6% disagreed with this statement, and only 7.9% of the women were of the view that men should always lead and women to follow (Table 4.3). These results suggest that leadership positions are not regarded as men's positions only in the local authority. It further implies that there is an expectation that women also should occupy leadership positions. This is supported by interview responses which revealed that there was implementation of gender mainstreaming programs that sought to ensure that women have the opportunity to take up leadership positions. It was also revealed that women do apply for leadership positions that they view they are qualified for.

**Table 4.3: Men’s leadership in the workplace**

Variable	Response		Sex of respondent		
			Male	Female	Total
Men should always lead and women to follow	Strongly Agree	n	4	0	4
		%	6.1%	.0%	3.8%
	Agree	n	6	3	9
		%	9.1%	7.9%	8.7%
	Neutral	n	2	0	2
		%	3.0%	.0%	1.9%
	Disagree	n	27	10	37
		%	40.9%	26.3%	35.6%
	Strongly Disagree	n	27	25	52
		%	40.9%	65.8%	50.0%
<b>Total</b>		<b>n</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>104</b>
		<b>%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

#### 4.4.3 Zimbabwean culture and men in leadership positions

The findings from the study show that 62.5% of the respondents agree that the Zimbabwean culture favors men more to be in positions of leadership. On the other hand 9.6% of all the respondents strongly disagreed. Noteworthy is that 65.8% and 23.7% of the women agreed and strongly agreed respectively, that the Zimbabwean culture favors men more to be in positions of leadership (Table 4.4). This implies that societal culture often see men as the suitable candidates for leadership positions. This may suggest that biases may occur in selecting candidates for leadership positions, in favor of the men.

These findings were supported interview responses that revealed that the respondents acknowledged that the Zimbabwe society was characterized by a patriarchal system. These include the following, “This society is such that even your younger brother will be called the head of the house after your father passes

away and you would have to give him respect as head of the house and respect his view,” “The woman is placed in a difficult position because the from child hood she is taught that her male counterpart is above her,” “This is the natural order of things, God ordained it before time that the woman must submit to her husband.” However, it was revealed that in the local authority, most influence of the patriarchal nature of the Zimbabwean society was mostly witnessed in the legislative arm, where councilors are voted in by the electorate and the majority of councilors being men, as opposed the administrative arm where appointments to leadership positions were based on experience and qualifications and therefore merit based.

**Table 4.4: Zimbabwean culture and men in leadership positions**

Variable	Response		Sex of respondent		
			Male	Female	Total
The Zimbabwean culture favors men more to be in positions of leadership	Strongly Agree	n	8	9	17
		%	12.1%	23.7%	16.3%
	Agree	n	40	25	65
		%	60.6%	65.8%	62.5%
	Neutral	n	3	1	4
		%	4.5%	2.6%	3.8%
	Disagree	n	8	0	8
		%	12.1%	.0%	7.7%
	Strongly Disagree	n	7	3	10
		%	10.6%	7.9%	9.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>104</b>	
	<b>%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

#### 4.4.4 Women support to take up leadership positions

The findings from the study revealed that 26.9% and 56.7% strongly agreed and agreed respectively, that women do not support each other to take up leadership positions. 60.5% of the women and 54.5% of the men agreed that women do not support each other to take up leadership positions. 2.6% of the women disagreed that women do not support each other to take up leadership positions (Table 4.5). This suggests that women do not motivate each other or mentor one another so that they aspire to take up positions of leadership. Furthermore, it suggests that the women in leadership positions do not make efforts to ensure that other women rise to positions of leadership.

**Table 4.5: Women support to take up leadership positions**

Variable	Response		Sex of respondent		
			Male	Female	Total
women do not support each other to take leadership positions	Strongly Agree	n	14	14	28
		%	21.2%	36.8%	26.9%
	Agree	n	36	23	59
		%	54.5%	60.5%	56.7%
	Neutral	n	9	0	9
		%	13.6%	.0%	8.7%
	Disagree	n	5	1	6
		%	7.6%	2.6%	5.8%
	Strongly Disagree	n	2	0	2
		%	3.0%	.0%	1.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>104</b>	
	<b>%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

#### 4.4.5 Influence of negative criticisms by men on women leadership

It was noted that 39.4% of the respondents agreed and 29.8% of the respondents disagreed that women do not like to take up leadership positions because of

negative criticisms from male counterparts. Whilst 55.3% of the women agreed, 21.1% disagreed that women face criticisms from their male counterparts that makes them not to like taking up leadership positions, only few women 7.9% strongly disagreed (Table 4.6). This infers that the majority of women have been exposed to some form of criticism from men which has affected their willingness or drive to aspire to take up leadership positions. Interview responses revealed that women have to go an extra mile to gain acceptance as efficient leaders. “I had to put twice as much effort to prove myself,” revealed one female participant.

**Table 4.6: Influence of negative criticisms by men on women leadership**

Variable	Response		Sex of respondent		
			Male	Female	Total
Negative criticisms by men make women to hate taking up leadership positions	Strongly agree	n	2	3	5
		%	3.0%	7.9%	4.8%
	Agree	n	20	21	41
		%	30.3%	55.3%	39.4%
	Neutral	n	4	3	7
		%	6.1%	7.9%	6.7%
	Disagree	n	23	8	31
		%	34.8%	21.1%	29.8%
	Strongly disagree	n	17	3	20
		%	25.8%	7.9%	19.2%
<b>Total</b>		<b>n</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>104</b>
		<b>%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

A further analysis of the responses revealed that 55% of women in the Department of Works felt that negative criticisms by men had an influence on their motivation to take up leadership positions (Table 4.6b)

**Table 4.6b Women’s responses on whether negative criticisms by men affect motivation to take up leadership position**

Sex	Variable	Response		Department				Total
				Works	Housing	Finance	Town Clerk	
Female	Negative criticisms by men make women hate leadership positions	Strongly Agree	n	2	1	0	0	3
			%	10.0%	8.3%	.0%	.0%	7.9%
		Agree	n	11	5	1	4	21
			%	55.0%	41.7%	50.0%	100.0%	55.3%
		Neutral	n	0	3	0	0	3
			%	.0%	25.0%	.0%	.0%	7.9%
		Disagree	n	4	3	1	0	8
			%	20.0%	25.0%	50.0%	.0%	21.1%
		Strongly disagree	n	3	0	0	0	3
			%	15.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	7.9%
<b>Total</b>			<b>n</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>38</b>
			<b>%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

#### 4.4.6 Women’s willingness to take up leadership positions

The study revealed that 39.4% and 33.7% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively, that women do not like to take up leadership positions, whilst only 17.3% agreed that women do not like to take up leadership positions in the local authority (Table 4.7). These results indicate that women are willing and want to take up leadership positions.

**Table 4.7: Opinions on women’s willingness to take up leadership positions**

Variable	Response		Sex of respondent		Total
			Male	Female	
Women don’t like to take up leadership positions	Agree	n	14	4	18
		%	21.2%	10.5%	17.3%
	Neutral	n	8	2	10
		%	12.1%	5.3%	9.6%
	Disagree	n	25	16	41
		%	37.9%	42.1%	39.4%
	Strongly Disagree	n	19	16	35
		%	28.8%	42.1%	33.7%
<b>Total</b>		<b>n</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>104</b>
		<b>%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

#### 4.4.7 Leader preferences

It is noted that 37.5% of the respondents disagreed whilst another agreed that women prefer to be led by men. A further 18.3% strongly disagreed that women prefer to be led by men. The majority of women (42.1%) interviewed disagreed that women prefer to be led by men (Table 4.8). This implies that there is no major preference as to whether a man or a woman should be in a leadership position. This view was supported by interview findings which stated that interview responses showed that the all the women interviewed did not prefer to be led by men and that is why they were pushing the quick implementation of the SADC Protocol on Gender.



**Table 4.8: Leader preferences**

Variable	Response		Sex of respondent		
			Male	Female	Total
Women prefer to be led by men	Strongly Agree	n	2	1	3
		%	3.0%	2.6%	2.9%
	Agree	n	29	10	39
		%	43.9%	26.3%	37.5%
	Neutral	n	2	2	4
		%	3.0%	5.3%	3.8%
	Disagree	n	23	16	39
		%	34.8%	42.1%	37.5%
	Strongly Disagree	n	10	9	19
		%	15.2%	23.7%	18.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>104</b>	
	<b>%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

**4.4.8 Leadership as the responsibility of men only**

The study showed that 95.2% of the respondents revealed that leadership should not be the responsibility of men only. There was a consensus among women that leadership should not be the responsibility of be the responsibility of men only (Table 4.9). This suggests that leadership should be a shared responsibility and therefore women should be considered to fill in leadership positions.

**Table 4.9: Leadership as the responsibility of men only**

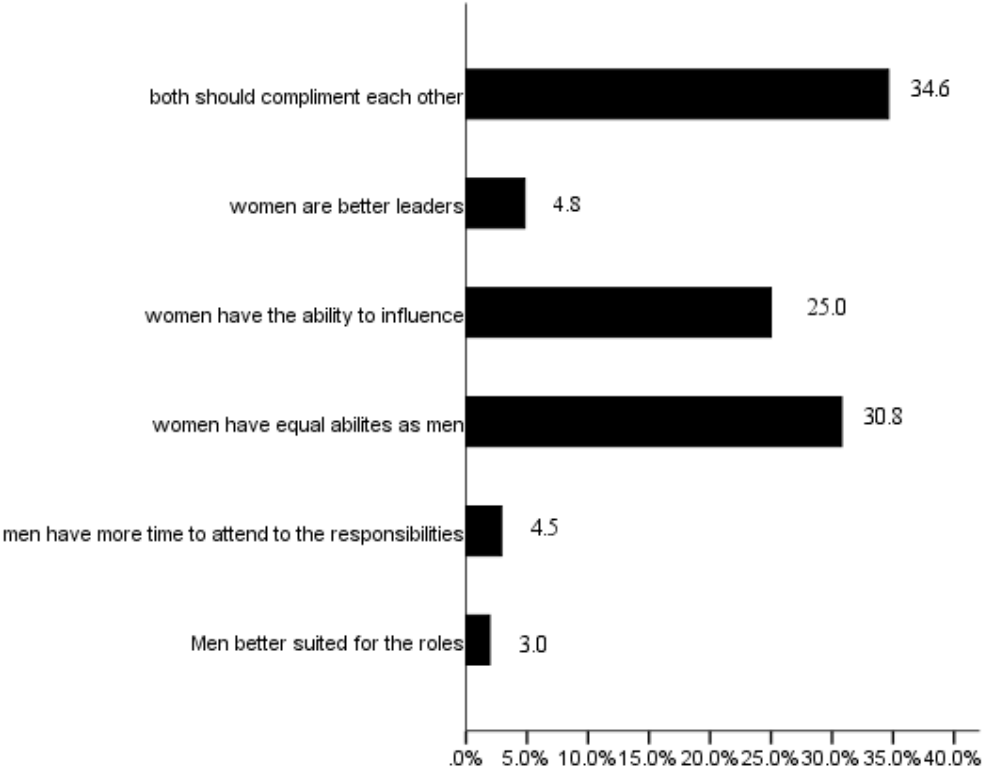
Variable	Response		Sex of respondent		
			Male	Female	Total
Leadership is the responsibility of men	Yes	n	5	0	5
		%	7.6%	.0%	4.8%
	No	n	61	38	99
		%	92.4%	100.0%	95.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>104</b>	
	<b>%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

#### **4.4.8b Reasons explaining why leadership should or should not be the responsibility of men only**

The study revealed that of those whose view was that leadership should be the responsibility of men only 3.0 % felt that men are better candidates for the leadership roles and therefore should be in positions of leadership whilst the other 4.5% were of the view that men have more time to attend to the responsibilities that were associated with the leadership position. On the other hand, the main reasons as to why leadership should not be the responsibility men only was that men and women should complement each other 34.6%, women have equal abilities as men to be effective in leadership positions (30.8%) and that women also have the ability to influence (25.0%). Other reasons reported were that women were better leaders as highlighted by 4.8% of women of which none of the men (0%) suggested that women are better leaders (Figure 4.1). This implies that women are viewed as an important component in the workplace whose functions bring a balance in the workplace. Furthermore, the results show that women are considered to be able to handle the duties and responsibilities that are associated with the leadership position.

During the interviews, participants were asked why women should be in leadership positions and responses supported some of those revealed in the questionnaire, these included responses such as, “Women, like men also have the ability to influence people to take action as well as ability to make sound decisions that ensure that the organization performs effectively and efficiently,”

“Women also offer different perspectives that are beneficial to both the organization and the society at large,” “ Just because I am a woman it does not mean that I am not able to take up a leadership position,” “Women also possess the qualifications, experience and attributes required for most of these positions, so it would be unjustifiable not to offer them leadership positions.”



**Figure 4.1: Reasons explaining why leadership should or should not be the responsibility of men only**

#### 4.4.9 Inherent acceptance of subordinate position by women

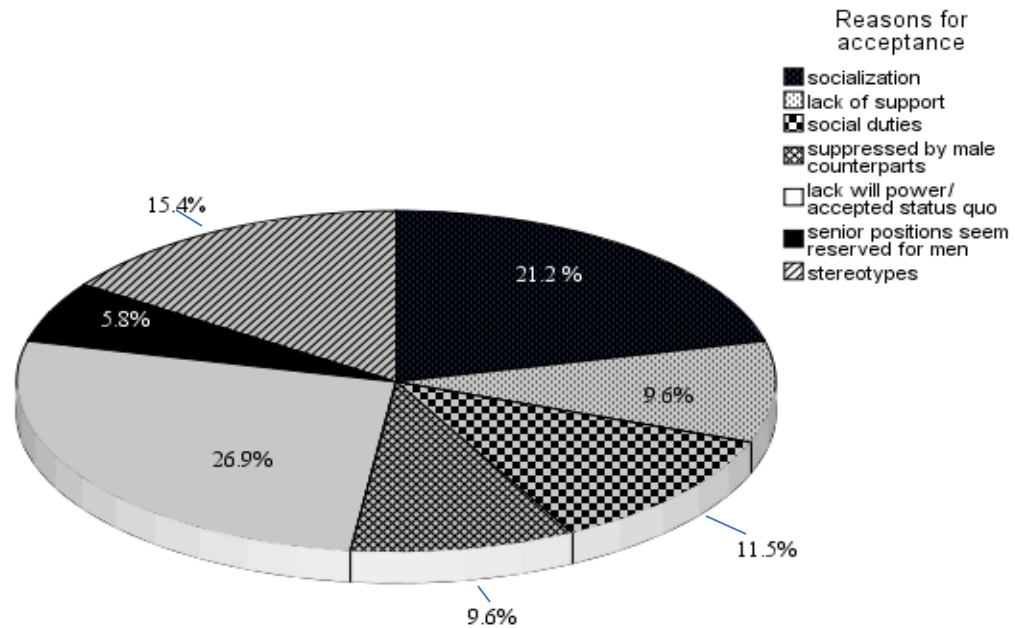
The study revealed that 50% of the respondents were of the view that women have an inherent acceptance of a subordinate position. However the other 50% did not agree that women have an inherent acceptance of a subordinate position. Furthermore the study revealed that 55.3% of women were of the opinion that women have an inherent acceptance of a subordinate position (Table 4:10). This implies that women to some extent have naturally accepted a subordinate position. It is within them to accept a subordinate position.

This view was supported by one respondent who highlighted that they observed that patriarchal attitudes seem to have influenced the attitude of some women that they seem content with their current positions. “They do not see anything wrong with the status quo, they are content with men being their leaders, but it is not the same for some of us who continue to aspire for the higher positions. If I believe I can do it...I will pursue it,” she explained.

**Table 4.10: Inherent acceptance of subordinate position**

Variable	Response		sex of respondent		
			Male	Female	Total
Women have an inherent acceptance of subordinate position to the extent that they are not motivated to take up leadership positions	Yes	n	31	21	52
		%	47.0%	55.3%	50.0%
	No	n	35	17	52
		%	53.0%	44.7%	50.0%
<b>Total</b>		<b>n</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>104</b>
		<b>%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

The reasons put forward by those that had the view that women had an inherent acceptance of a subordinate were that women have been socialized to accept that position (21.2%) This was due to the fact that Zimbabwe had a patriarchal society where women had been taught from the past that it was natural for the men to have dominance in all spheres of life. On the other hand, women had to submit and follow the guidance of their male counterparts. Some however suggested that women had accepted the subordinate position (26.9%) because they lacked the will power to rise above status quo. Other reasons included lack of support (9.6%) from both men and women to rise up to leadership positions. Social duties (11.5%), suppression by male counterparts (9.6%) and gender stereotyping (15.4%) were also cited as contributors as to why women had accepted the subordinate position (Figure 4.2). It was noted that social duties such as raising children and looking after the family often resulted in pressure which some could not handle. Thus it was difficult to strike a balance between family life and being in a leadership position, hence why some women were comfortable with their subordinate position. Some saw senior positions as being reserved for men.



**Figure 4.2: Reasons why women have accepted an inherent subordinate position**

#### 4.4.10 Acceptance of women in leadership positions in local authorities

Results from the study showed that 68.3% of the respondents were of the opinion that there is an acceptance of women in leadership positions, however 31.7% highlighted that there was no acceptance of women in leadership positions in local authorities. This implies that women are accepted in leadership positions.

During the interviews it was also asked whether there was an acceptance of women in leadership positions. Responses were varied but confirmed the opinions given in the questionnaires. The responses were as follows “ Our acting town clerk is a woman and she is highly respected by almost every employee,” “We have a

few women leaders but there has not been any complains about it.” “We have women in leadership positions constituting about 15% of the management positions, but I have not witnessed serious efforts to increase this figure.”

**Table 4.11: Acceptance of women in leadership positions in local authorities**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Cumulative Percentage</b>
Acceptance of women in leadership positions in local authorities	Yes	71	68.3	68.3
	No	33	31.7	100.0
<b>Total</b>		<b>104</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

#### **4.5 Influence of gender roles on women’s progression to leadership positions**

##### **4.5.1 Gender differences in disruptions at the work place**

The results revealed that 74% agreed that women face more disruptions at work to attend to home emergencies or problem. The majority of women 86.3% concurred with this statement. (Table 4.12). This implies that women take off days or hours away from work more than their male counterparts in order to attend to family emergencies and issues.

**Table 4.12: Opinions on who faces more disruptions at work due to home emergencies**

Variable	Response	Sex of respondent			
		Male	Female	Total	
Women face more disruptions at work to attend to family emergencies or problems	Yes	n	44	33	77
		%	66.7%	86.8%	74.0%
	No	n	22	5	27
		%	33.3%	13.2%	26.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>104</b>	
	<b>%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

#### 4.5.2 Responsibility to attend to family issues

The study showed that 39.4% of the respondents agreed that it was the woman’s responsibility to attend to emergencies at home, 52.6% of these were women. On the other hand 33.3% and 16.7% of the men disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively, with the statement (Table 4.13). This implies that women view home issues as their responsibility, this is supported by the fact that it was noted that women face more disruptions at work to attend to family issues.

Also it was noted through the interviews responses that 5 out of the 7 respondents reported that it was only natural for society to expect a woman to be the first one to attend to a home emergency. “If a child gets sick, it is usually the woman who is expected to first attend to the situation at home; some people just do not understand it when you do not. They start questioning your motherhood and you are seen as an uncaring mother” expressed one respondent.



**Table 4.13: Opinion on responsibility to attend to family emergencies**

Variable	Response		Sex of respondent		Total
			Male	Female	
The responsibility to attend to family emergencies and issues at home lies with the woman	Strongly Agree	n	7	6	13
		%	10.6%	15.8%	12.5%
	Agree	n	21	20	41
		%	31.8%	52.6%	39.4%
	Neutral	n	5	1	6
		%	7.6%	2.6%	5.8%
	Disagree	n	22	11	33
		%	33.3%	28.9%	31.7%
	Strongly Disagree	n	11	0	11
		%	16.7%	.0%	10.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>104</b>	
	<b>%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

#### 4.5.3 Pregnancy and women’s ability to lead

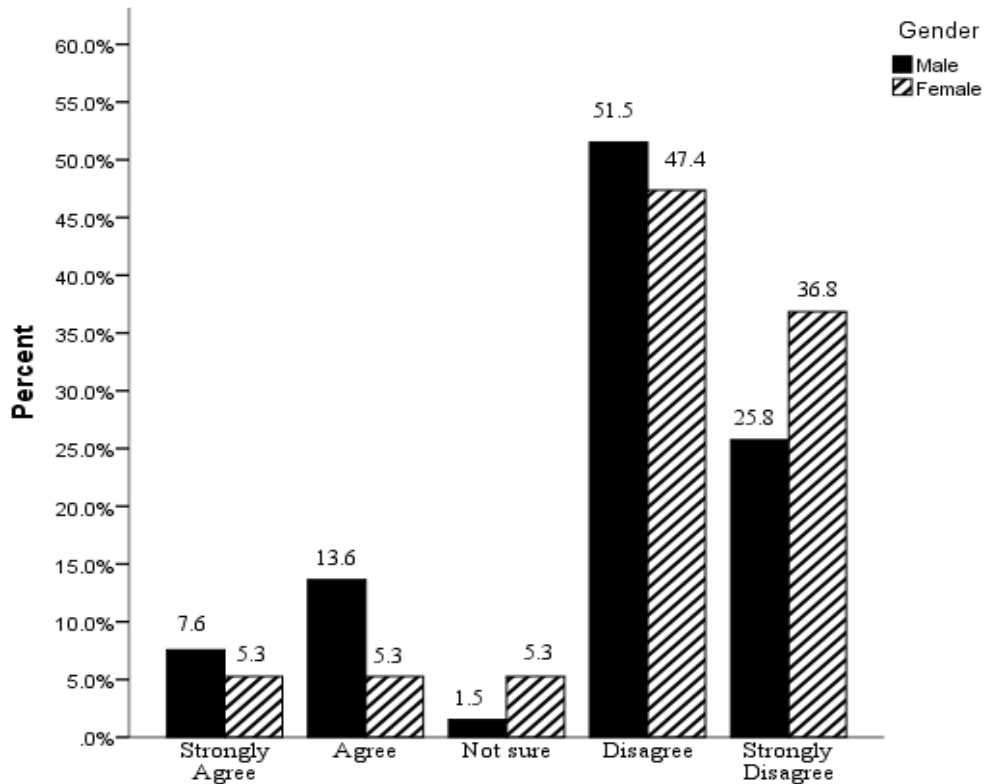
It was noted that the majority of the respondents disagreed with the statement that pregnancy limits women’s ability to lead. The results showed that 49% disagreed whilst another 24% strongly disagreed. Of those that disagreed 50% were men and 47.4% were women. Only a small percentage of women (7.9%) strongly agreed (Table 4.14). This implies that pregnancy and raising children is not seen as an impediment to women’s duties and responsibilities at the workplace if in leadership positions.

**Table 4.14: Opinion on whether pregnancy limits women’s ability to lead**

Variable	Response		Sex of respondent		
			Male	Female	Total
Pregnancy and raising children limits women's ability to lead	Strongly Agree	n	4	3	7
		%	6.1%	7.9%	6.7%
	Agree	n	8	7	15
		%	12.1%	18.4%	14.4%
	Neutral	n	5	1	6
		%	7.6%	2.6%	5.8%
	Disagree	n	33	18	51
		%	50.0%	47.4%	49.0%
	Strongly Disagree	n	16	9	25
		%	24.2%	23.7%	24.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>104</b>	
	<b>%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

**4.5.4 Men as reliable leaders because they have less responsibilities at home**

The results of the study revealed that 50% disagreed and 29.8% strongly disagreed that men were reliable leaders because they have less responsibilities at home. Of these respondents 51.5% men disagreed and 25.8% strongly disagreed (Figure 4.3). These results indicate that regardless that men face less disruptions due to home responsibilities, few have acknowledged that they are reliable leaders. This implies that there are some factors that hinder men from effectively undertaking their roles and responsibilities that are associated with the leadership.



**Figure 4.3 Opinions on whether men are reliable leaders because they have less responsibilities at home**

#### **4.5.5 Departments/sections with more women**

Findings from the study revealed that there were more women than men in some departments and sections. The results showed that the health department (94.2%) and the amenities section (74%) had more women than men. Other departments mentioned included the social services department with 26.9% of the respondent (Table 4.15). Responses from the interviews also indicated that the health department and amenities division was observed to have the most number of women.

**Table 4.15 Departments/ sections with more women than men**

Variable	Response	Frequency		Percent of Cases
		n	Percent	
Departments/ sections with more women than men	Health	98	44.7%	94.2%
	Amenities	77	35.2%	74.0%
	Social Services	28	12.8%	26.9%
	Town planning	1	.5%	1.0%
	Human capital	8	3.7%	7.7%
	Town clerk	1	.5%	1.0%
	Legal	3	1.4%	2.9%
	Public safety	1	.5%	1.0%
	Finance	2	.9%	1.9%
<b>Total</b>		<b>219</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>210.6%</b>

#### **4.5.6 Reasons why there are more women than men in other sections/departments**

The reasons cited for this observation were that there were socially constructed stereotypes thus women were applying for jobs in those specific departments because that is what society has defined as jobs appropriate for women (49%), nature of duties in the sections were more suited for women than for men (26.9%), behavioral traits of women suit the job (26.9%) hence women have been considered more for the jobs. For example, women are considered as caring and nurturing and this has been associated with their role as nurses. Some of the respondents noted that they were more women in some of the departments due to deliberate work policy to recruit women in those departments (13.5%) (Table 4.16). This implies that women have been to some extent conditioned to apply for those specific jobs because they are socially acceptable and it would be easy for them to fit in, furthermore these stereotypes have also influenced their choice of

qualifications which then affect the jobs that they select. On the other hand, it was also noted that men shun from these jobs because they are too feminine (5.8%).

Further interrogation through interviews on the reasons why there were more women than men in these sections revealed that stereotypes have been perpetuated as to what women can and cannot do. This is to the extent that even their abilities are defined for them. One male respondent explained by stating that often women are not expected to operate heavy machinery and as such people are shocked when they see them operating heavy machinery. This is because they think that they are unable to do it.

Some highlighted that these gender role expectation had influenced women's academic choices and hence their careers paths. "I guess this is why we have more female nurses and less female engineers. But I see this is slowly changing," mentioned one participant. Others also mentioned that their earlier generations had been greatly influenced by these gender role expectations but were looking forward to change as the current generation was having more women undertaking academic courses that were previously male dominated such as engineering.

From the interview responses, the health department, social services section as well as the amenities section stood out to be the sections where there were more women than men. Reasons for this status were almost a consensus. It was explained that the amenities section required minimum entry points and furthermore since it involved a lot of cleaning, women by virtue of their domestic duties at home, those with low educational qualifications would naturally apply

for those jobs. Men on the other hand were few in this section because some of them would shun from it and say that it is mostly a woman's role. One participant elaborated by saying that men would opt for more masculine sections like the quarry and roads. Thus, in the end one would progress in their career based on the section they would have started in. One male participant, indicated that few women were now breaking the barrier and entering into these male dominated sections. Another participant acknowledged that there was deliberate exercise under the Centers of Excellence program to incorporate women in previously male dominated divisions within the local authorities.

Most women were identified to have joined the health department as a result of their caring, nurturing and motherly qualities which were associated with nursing profession. These fields were rated as feminine and therefore more suitable for women, and also explaining why the male nurses had been few. Another participant also commented that the gender disparities witnessed in the local authorities divisions could be attributed to deliberate action of the colonial fathers that placed women in the health departments.

It was interesting to note that some felt that it was deliberate work policy to recruit more women in the health section and social services as opposed to some sections in other departments. As result of this, pattern would still follow that women's career progression was often limited to the departments they had more access to join in.

**Table 4.16: Reasons why there are more women than men**

Variable	Response	Frequency		Percent of Cases
		n	Percent	
Why there are more women in those departments or sections	socially constructed stereotypes	51	42.5%	49.0%
	behavioral traits of women	17	14.2%	16.3%
	suit job			
	nature of duties	28	23.3%	26.9%
	offensive to men/men shun them	6	5.0%	5.8%
	light duty	2	1.7%	1.9%
	minimum education qualification required	2	1.7%	1.9%
	deliberate policy to recruit women	14	11.7%	13.5%
<b>Total</b>		<b>120</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>115.4%</b>

#### **4.5.7 Opinions on whether there are some departments that are not suitable for women**

The study revealed that 56.7% were of the opinion that there are no sections or departments that were not suitable for women to work in, whilst 43.3% were of the opinion that some sections are not suitable for women to work in (Table 4.17) These results suggest that the majority view women as capable of working in every department and section.

As to the question of whether there are some departments or sections that were not suitable for women to work in, the responses were varied. Points were made as to what entry level the women were going to join the department. In the department of works, in some divisions, where employees were subject to heavy manual work were deemed unfit for women due to their lack of physique.

**Table 4.17: Opinions on whether there are departments/ sections not suitable for women**

Variable	Response				Cumulative Percent
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	
Are there any departments/ sections that are not suitable for women to work in?	Yes	45	43.3	43.3	43.3
	No	59	56.7	56.7	100.0
		104	100.0	100.0	

#### **4.5.8 Selection of women to be in leadership positions in those departments**

Findings from the study revealed that 46.2% were of the view that it is to a moderate extent that women will be selected for a leadership position. Of those that noted that it is to a moderate extent that women will be selected, 52.5% had noted that there were no departments that women cannot work in. On the other hand, 60% of those who were of the opinion that there were other departments that were not suitable for women in revealed that it was to a low extent that women would be selected for leadership positions in those departments (Table 4.18). This implies that it is unlikely that a woman will be considered for a leadership position in sections that are viewed as not suitable for them to work in. This may be as a result of bias in favor of men or it would seem unusual for a woman to be in a leadership position in male dominated section or department.

Interview responses also indicated that it was possible to a moderate extent in the case of external recruitment to a supervisory position. Ascending from the lowest rank to leadership position was viewed as a big challenge, as promotions were merit based and chances were that the men would do better in those sections.



However, one female respondent was of a different view, stating that women can do all the jobs that men can do in that local authority.

Another female respondent was of the view that a woman should not take up leadership positions in some divisions not because they are incapable but because of the nature of the work environment. She was of the view that women might not be able to handle the kind of “workshop language” that was used in those sections. Furthermore, she was of the impression that a woman would face more resistance or lack support from her subordinates because her presence would take away their freedom of expression.

**Table 4.18: Opinion on whether women will be selected for leadership position**

Variable	Response		Are there any department that are not suitable for women to work in?		Total
			Yes	No	
Extent to which they will be selected for a leadership position	Great Extent	n	1	19	20
		%	2.2%	32.2%	19.2%
	Moderate Extent	n	17	31	48
		%	37.8%	52.5%	46.2%
	Low Extent	n	27	9	36
		%	60.0%	15.3%	34.6%
<b>Total</b>		<b>n</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>104</b>
		<b>%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

#### 4.6 Influence of organizational policies on women’s progression to leadership positions

##### 4.6.1 Sensitivity of work policies on women’s unique roles as mothers

The study findings revealed that 35.6% agreed that work policies were sensitive

to women’s unique roles as mothers, 47.4% of these were women. On the other hand 26.9% of the respondents disagreed that workplace policies were sensitive to women’s roles mothers, furthermore 13.5% highlighted that they were not sure whether workplace policies were sensitive to women’s unique role as mothers (Table 4.19). There are more women that agree that workplace policies are sensitive to women’s unique roles than those that disagree thus suggesting that there are measures put in place to accommodate women’s needs as mothers.

**Table 4.19: Sensitivity of workplace policies to women’s roles as mothers**

Variable	Response		Sex of respondent		Total
			Male	Female	
Workplace policies are sensitive to women's unique roles as mothers	Strongly Agree	n	8	0	8
		%	12.1%	.0%	7.7%
	Agree	n	19	18	37
		%	28.8%	47.4%	35.6%
	Not sure	n	9	5	14
		%	13.6%	13.2%	13.5%
	Strongly disagree	n	14	3	17
		%	21.2%	7.9%	16.3%
	Disagree	n	16	12	28
		%	24.2%	31.6%	26.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>104</b>	
	<b>%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

#### **4.6.2 Influence of workplace policies on women’s progression to leadership positions**

The results from the study revealed that 45.2% of the respondents disagree and 36.5% strongly disagree that workplace policies hinder the advancement of women to leadership positions. Women that disagreed constituted 44.7% of all women (Table 4.20). From the results we can infer that workplace policies do not hinder women from advancing to leadership positions.

From the interviews it was established that Harare City council was supportive of women's leadership. Discussions were centred on organizational policies. This is because the researcher was of the impression that policies play a very critical role in the manner in which the local authority conducts its affairs and governs its employees.

From the study it was revealed that the Harare City Council had achieved most of the stages of the the Centre of Excellence (COE), a programme that sought to ensure that gender mainstreaming is undertaken in all activities of the council.

The council has made progress in terms of supporting women to advance in their careers. This council established a gender policy and has a gender focal person and departmental gender focal person and this has helped promote gender issues. These programs have resulted in women taking up positions of authority in once considered male fields. These fields include those that are considered as risky jobs such as heavy vehicles drivers. The city health department is one department that has the highest number of females in executive positions. Last year, we had one female replace a manager that had retired. (Participant 1)

Responses were to the effect that all the participants recognised that the local authority had started to engage in programmes (COEs) in line with the SADC Gender Protocol. "Efforts are being made. The COEs program seems to be taking shape, we have not achieved equality or equity yet but we are making progress."

From the interviews it was also established that policies aimed at promoting women to leadership positions were very good on paper but lacked proper implementation to enable their success.

However there were responses to the effect that there lacked transparency in the promotion processes. "I think that somehow their selection criteria are flawed.

“Clearly, you cannot say that the women are inexperienced or are under qualified for these senior posts,” It was revealed that there seemed to be biases also when it comes to the people who are chosen to be supported financially in terms of pursuing studies. “There is lack of transparency in the system. I believe women apply to advance their education in the same manner as men but most of the time you will see that more men are availed this privilege.”

**Table 4.20: Influence of workplace policies on women’s progression to leadership positions**

Variable	Response	Sex of respondent			
		Male	Female	Total	
Workplace policies in the organization hinder the advancement of women to positions of leadership	Strongly agree	n	0	5	5
		%	.0%	13.2%	4.8%
	Agree	n	3	9	12
		%	4.5%	23.7%	11.5%
	Not sure	n	0	2	2
		%	.0%	5.3%	1.9%
	Disagree	n	30	17	47
		%	45.5%	44.7%	45.2%
	Strongly disagree	n	33	5	38
		%	50.0%	13.2%	36.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>104</b>	
	<b>%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

#### 4.6.3 Encouragement of women to advance in education in order to take up leadership positions

Findings from the study revealed that 71.2% of the respondents noted that women are encouraged to advance in education in order to take up leadership positions; on the other hand 28.8% were of the view that the organization did not encourage women to advance in education in order to take up leadership positions (Table

4.21). The results point out that women are encouraged to advance in education so that they will be qualified and well suited to fill in leadership positions.

From the interviews, it emerged that employees were encouraged to advance in education to such an extent that permanent employees would receive financial support to advance in education under specific conditions. To qualify one had to meet the minimum years of service within the organization.

**Table 4. 21 Encouragement of women to advance in education**

Variable	Response	sex of respondent			
		Male	Female	Total	
Does the organization encourage women to advance in education in order to take up positions of leadership?	Yes	n	52	22	74
		%	78.8%	57.9%	71.2%
	No	n	14	16	30
		%	21.2%	42.1%	28.8%
<b>Total</b>		<b>n</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>104</b>
		<b>%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**4.6.4 Opportunity to take up leadership positions**

It was revealed from the study that 82.7% of all the respondents noted that women are offered equal opportunities as men to take up leadership positions. Only 17.3% of all the respondents did not think that women were offered equal opportunities as men to take up leadership positions (Table 4.22). This shows that the organization does not discriminate women from taking up leadership position.

It was further revealed from the interviews that promotions to leadership positions were based on merit. If the female candidate had the right qualifications, experience and attributes required for the leadership post they would be selected

as a suitable candidate and nominated for interviews, their only task would be to pass the interviews. It was however, it was also revealed that this system was not exempt from favoritism and bias which saw some men being offered leadership positions despite the fact that the women that had been interviewed had passed and stood a very high chance of getting the job. Therefore, it was concluded that discrimination in appointments towards women was still a reality.

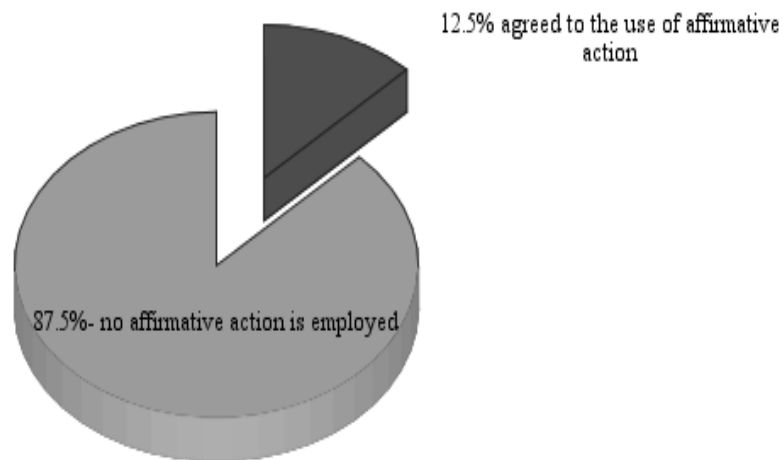
**Table 4. 22: Opportunities to take up leadership positions**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
Women are offered equal opportunities as men to take up leadership positions.	Yes	86	82.7	82.7	82.7
	No	18	17.3	17.3	100.0
Total		104	100.0	100.0	

#### **4.6.5 Employment of affirmative action during recruitment, selection and promotion in the organization**

The findings revealed that 87.5% of the respondents were of the opinion that no affirmative action in favor of women was employed during the recruitment, selection and promotion within the organization. On the other hand 12.5% of the respondents noted that affirmative action was employed in recruitment and promotion processes (Figure 4.4). This implies that both men and women are treated equally during recruitment and promotion. There is no favor towards women. Therefore candidates are evaluated with the same guidelines irrespective of their sex.

However, interview responses were varied. Further probing on the question on whether affirmative action was used during recruitment and promotions in the organization, it was revealed that only 2 of the 7 participants were of the view that affirmative action was used during promotion. These participants revealed that gender quotas had been established for the executive positions which will see women been given preferential treatment to access these positions. 5 of the interview participants did not think that affirmative action was used during recruitment and promotions. They reiterated that recruitment and promotions within the organization was merit based. Merit was given on the basis of possessing the required work experience, qualifications as well as the right attributes required for the post.



**Figure 4.4: Employment of affirmative action in favor of women**

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents a summary of the key findings from the study. It also provides conclusions based on the findings and recommendations as well.

#### **5.2 Summary of key findings**

##### **5.2.1 Patriarchal attitudes and women's career progression to leadership positions in Harare City Council, Zimbabwe**

Patriarchal attitudes are based on a system that observes male dominance over women (Giddens, 2009) in other words it views men as the rightful candidates for leadership positions. Study findings revealed that women's progression to leadership positions in Harare City Council was not directly influenced by patriarchal attitudes as recruitment processes were governed by the Labor Act and various statutory instruments.

The study also found that women hardly support each other to take up positions of leadership. In addition, women who tend to show better leadership traits than men are often negatively criticised by their male counterparts –this discourages other women in the process. It was the general perception of the respondents that women were willing to take up leadership positions, but lacked the necessary support to advance to those positions. It was also revealed from the study that



some of the women have been exposed to some form of criticism from men which has affected their willingness or drive to aspire to take up leadership positions.

Furthermore, it was acknowledged that leadership positions should not be reserved for men only (95.2%) as women had the abilities to be effective leaders, they could exert influence on their subordinates as well, women also offer different perspectives that are beneficial to the organization and society at large and that they also have the qualifications, experience and attributes that qualify them to take up leadership positions.

The study showed that there was an acceptance of women leaders in local authorities. This was further supported by various interview responses that came as follows, “ our acting town clerk is a woman and she is highly respected by almost every employee,” “We have a few women leaders but there has not been any complains about it.” It was also revealed that institutional mechanisms had been put in place in order to promote women to leadership positions as highlighted by the implementation of the centers of excellence program and the establishment of gender quotas.

### **5.2.2. Gender roles and women’s career progression to leadership positions in Harare City Council, Zimbabwe**

The study revealed women often face more disruptions at work to attend to family issues and responsibilities at home and that it was viewed as women’s responsibility to attend to issues at home. As such women’s greatest challenge

was the need to balance the domestic responsibilities as well as the work responsibilities. As a result women would end up prioritizing family over work. Research findings also revealed that because men faced fewer disruptions it did not mean that they were reliable leaders. Interview responses clearly showed that balance between work and family demanded a lot of courage and support if one was to excel in their careers. Traditionally expected roles for women at home therefore posed as a limitation if one could not balance the two. Also it was revealed that women at the end of the day would end up prioritizing their families at the expense of focusing on career advancement.

Findings from both interviews and questionnaires also revealed that there were more departments and divisions that had more women and these departments include the health department (94%), the amenities division (74%) and social services division (26.9%). This observation was attributed to socially constructed stereotypes of what was deemed fit for men, nature of duties, behavioral characteristics of women suiting the job description as well as deliberate policy by the organization to recruit women in those departments.

It was further revealed in the interviews gender role expectations had also influenced women academic choices and resultantly their career paths. For example, because of the caring nature of women and gentleness it was more acceptable for women to be in the health sector and because there were more women in those sections it was highly expected to find them in leadership positions. It was therefore expected that the same pattern would follow that

women's career's progression to leadership positions was often limited to the departments they had more access to join in. The study findings also showed that 60% of those that were of the opinion that there are some departments that were not suitable for women to work in expressed that it was to a very low extent that a woman will be selected for a leadership position.

### **5.2.3 Organizational Factors and women's career progression to leadership positions in Harare City Council, Zimbabwe**

The study revealed that, workplace policies were sensitive to women's unique roles as mothers and that the majority of respondents 81.7 % did not think that the workplace policies hindered women's advancement to leadership positions. It was also established that women are encouraged to advance in education in order for them to enhance their chances to be selected for leadership positions and that they were offered equal opportunities as men to take up leadership positions.

However, it was revealed that there is need to ensure more transparency in the promotion processes as system was not exempt from favouritism and bias which saw some men being offered leadership positions despite the fact that the women that had been interviewed had passed and stood a very high chance of getting the job.

Findings from the questionnaire revealed that 87.5% of the respondents were of the opinion that no affirmative action was used during recruitment, selection and promotions implying that candidates from both sexes were evaluated using the

same criteria. However, it was revealed from the interviews that there was a lack of transparency in the system with regards to recruitment and promotion processes and that the promotion process was subject to bias and favoritism.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

The study revealed that there was an acceptance of women in leadership positions in local authorities despite the fact that they were still few in numbers. This is based on the fact that men acknowledged the acceptance of women in leadership positions. Based on the findings patriarchal attitudes were not considered as directly affecting women's progression to leadership positions. However findings that indicated that negative criticisms from men made some women to hate taking up leadership positions led the researcher to conclude that individual characteristics and personalities of the women also influenced their decisions to want to take up leadership positions. The study findings also led to the conclusion that some women's self-esteem and confidence is affected by the attitudes of male counterparts. This implies that women's career progression can be negatively affected in cases where women lack the confidence to take up a leadership position.

The study also showed that gender roles influenced women's progression to leadership positions. It was revealed that societal expectations of the role of the woman at home placed women in position whereby they found it difficult to balance between work and family life. Some domestic responsibilities were

overwhelming to the extent that women would forego aspiring for leadership positions which are more demanding in their responsibilities.

Another dimension of gender roles were also revealed from the study. The current outlook of Harare City council in terms of gender distribution in various departments was also ascribed to traditionally expected gender roles as indicated by women's career choice and a deliberate exercise to have women in those particular departments. As a result they were few women in some divisions the ripple effect was that a man was selected to be in the leadership position.

The findings from the study showed that organizational policies were supportive of women's advancement to leadership positions, by offering women opportunities to advance in education. Despite that the policies were good on paper, they lacked proper implementation which reduced the effectiveness of the policies. As such, it has resulted in a few women accessing these leadership positions. Proper implementation of organizational policies. It was also established that there were no measures in place to guard against biases and favoritism in leadership appointments. These biases therefore affected women's advancements to leadership positions.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

The following recommendations are based on the findings of the study:

- i. There is need to establish clear mentorship programs that recognise sociocultural bottlenecks which affects women's self-esteem. Programs

should be directed towards encouraging behaviour and attitude change amongst men especially those sections that are male dominated such that they do not express criticisms towards their female counterparts and thus encouraging women to take up leadership positions.

- ii. There is also need to implement formal gender deconstruction programs aimed at creating awareness amongst employees that women are as much capable as men to be employed in any section and furthermore to be in leadership positions in those sections. Furthermore, policies aimed at addressing gender imbalances should be properly and consistently implemented to ensure that they yield results.
- iii. Strengthen intersectoral collaboration through fostering public/private partnerships for career rights advocacy for both men and women. Organizations should implement gender deconstruction programs in societies such that women will not be confined to the traditionally expected roles at the expense of their careers and men should not take such a precedence over women. The researcher's expectation is that it will lead to society accepting the concept of *gender role sharing*, thus encouraging the acceptance of women to take up more challenging job positions.
- iv. The balance between family and work life has been identified to be a challenge towards women's progression to leadership positions. The researcher suggests that family friendly policies should be put in place in

order to minimize the pressure that women experience in trying to balance between work and family. These policies should enable employees especially women to work from home without being physically present at their workplace but monitoring mechanisms should be in place to ensure that work deadlines are met. Furthermore, women are encouraged to implement personal strategies that will help them minimize the pressure of trying to balance between work and family life.

- v. There is need for the organization to institute monitoring mechanisms to ensure that selection of candidates for job promotion is free from bias and discrimination. Furthermore gender quotas should be established to ensure that women have access to leadership positions in male dominated divisions. There is also need to institute systematic but temporal affirmative action strategies across all departments in order to address the gender imbalance in leadership positions. .

## **5.5 Areas of further research**

- i. There is need for further in depth studies that seek to establish women's character attributes as an influence their career progression to leadership positions in local authorities in Zimbabwe.
- ii. Another area for further research can be inclined towards exploring women's socio-cultural coping mechanisms in leadership advancement amidst a patriarchal society they find themselves in.

- iii. Lastly, to determine the effectiveness of Non Governmental Organizations working with local authorities in promoting women's leadership in the administrative arms of local authorities. Questions can be centered on what NGOs have done to ensure that gender imbalance in leadership positions in local authorities is addressed, what impact has been made on programs, if any, aimed at promoting women's leadership in local authorities.



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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1

#### **FACTORS INFLUENCING WOMEN'S PROGRESSION TO LEADERSHIP POSITIONS IN LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN ZIMBABWE: CASE STUDY OF HARARE CITY COUNCIL, ZIMBABWE**

I am ANELLA MACHIRIDZA a student at MS-TCDC doing Masters in Governance and Leadership. I am doing my field research on the above stated topic for Academic purposes only. I would like to ask you some questions which will be kept confidential or disclosed upon your consent.

I kindly request your cooperation in answering the following questions below;

#### Part 1- Personal information

Please tick where appropriate

- 1.1 a) Gender: Male  Female   
b) Age: Below 40 years  40-49 years  above 50 years   
c) Marital status: Single  married  divorced   
d) Number of children: 2 children and less  3-5 children  6 children<sup>+</sup>

1.2. What is your highest academic/ professional qualification?

- PhD  Masters  Bachelors degree  Higher National Diploma   
Diploma  Certificate  Secondary School

1.3. How long have you worked for this institution?

- 0- 5 years  6-10  11-15  16-20  21-30

1.4. Please indicate current positions

- HoD  DHoD  supervisor  deputy supervisor  line staff

Other  Please

specify.....



1.5. In which department are you working?

.....

**Part 11: MAIN ISSUES OF THE STUDY**

**PATRIARCHAL ATTITUDES**

Please tick where appropriate

Questionnaire item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2.1 The woman's place is at home and not the workplace					
2.2 Men should always lead and women to follow					
2.3 The Zimbabwean culture favors men more to be in positions of leadership					
2.4 Women do not support each other to take leadership positions					
2.5 Negative criticisms by men make women hate leadership positions					
2.6 Women don't like leadership positions					
2.7 Women prefer to be led by men					

2.8 Do you think that leadership is the responsibility of men only?

Yes [ ]

No [ ]

Explain your answer

.....  
 .....

2.9 Do you think that women have an inherent acceptance of a subordinate position to the extent that they are not motivated to take up leadership positions?

Yes [ ]

No [ ]

Please explain your response

.....  
.....  
.....

2.10 In your opinion do you think that there is an acceptance of women leaders in local authorities?

Yes [ ]

No [ ]

### GENDER ROLES

Please tick where appropriate

Questionnaire item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3.1 Women face more disruptions at work to attend to family problems					
3.2 The responsibility to attend to family issues and emergencies at home lies with the woman					
3.3 Pregnancy and raising children limits women's ability to lead					
3.4 Men are reliable leaders because they have less responsibilities at home					

3.6 Please mention three departments where there are more women than men.

.....  
.....  
.....

3.6 Why are there more women in these departments?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

3.7 Are there any departments/ sections that are not suitable for women to work in?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

3.9 To what extent do you think that women will be selected to lead in these departments?

a. Great extent [ ] b. Moderate extent [ ] c. Low extent [ ]

**ORGANIZATIONAL POLICIES**

**Please tick where appropriate**

3.1 Workplace policies are sensitive to women’s unique roles as mothers

- 1. Strongly Agree [ ] 2. Agree [ ] 3. Not sure [ ] 4. Disagree [ ]
- 5. Strongly Disagree [ ]

3.2 Workplace policies in the organization hinder the advancement of women to positions of leadership?

- 1. Strongly Agree [ ] 2. Agree [ ] 3. Not sure [ ] 4. Disagree [ ]
- 5. Strongly Disagree [ ]

3.3. Does the organization encourage women to advance in education in order to take up positions of leadership?

1. Yes [ ]

2. No [ ]

3.4 Are women offered equal opportunities as men to take up leadership positions?

1. Yes [ ]

2. No [ ]

3.5 Affirmative action is employed during recruitment and promotion in the organization

1. Yes [ ]

2. No [ ]

**APPENDIX 2**  
**Interview guide**

1. In your view do you think that the Zimbabwean culture favors men more to be in leadership positions more than women? Why?
2. Should leadership be the responsibility of men only? Explain
3. What are social-cultural characteristics that limit women's career progression to leadership positions?
5. What are the family characteristics that limit women's career progression to top leadership positions?
6. What individual characteristics limit women's careers progression to top leadership positions?
7. Which department or sections have more women and why do you think this is the case?
- 7b. Do you consider any sections not suitable for women? Explain your response
8. What, if any, organizational policy do you have in place to promote women to advance to top leadership positions?
9. Are there any work policies that you think hinder the advancement of women to top leadership positions?
10. What can women do in order to overcome perceived barriers to career progression to top leadership positions?

11. What institutional mechanisms can be put in place in order to assist women to advance to top leadership positions?