

**THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF  
THE SADC PROTOCOL ON GENDER (2008): A MULTI-CASE  
STUDY OF NAMIBIA AND ZIMBABWE**

**BY**

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## **DEDICATION**

This research is dedicated to my family, without whose support, I would not have been able to successfully complete my research. To my mother, Sarah Sharon Kanengoni, thank you for being my rock and motivating me to embark on this journey towards attaining a Masters degree. To my husband, Mpehlabayo Joshua Malinga, thank you for supporting me financially as well as morally. Your love for me and our daughters Thando and Unathi kept me going when I thought I would not make it to the finish line. To all my African sisters, the journey is long but we will get there. No worthwhile battle is won in a day.

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## ABSTRACT

This study examined the influence of cultural practices on the implementation of the SADC Protocol on Gender, with reference to Namibia and Zimbabwe (2013-2016). There were four objectives in the research, which examined the provisions of the SADC Protocol on Gender, the implementation of the Protocol in Namibia and Zimbabwe, the cultural practices that hinder participation of women in leadership and to proffer options for ensuring more women representation in senior positions. The study was qualitative and data was collected from senior officials in the Ministries of Gender (Namibia and Zimbabwe), the SADC secretariat, Public Service Commission's (Namibia and Zimbabwe), former and current Ambassadors and from female legislators. The research used documentary review and key informants as research instruments. The study established that the SADC Protocol on Gender had several progressive clauses and 23 targets, the main target being to ensure that women hold 50% of decision-making positions in the public and private sectors. It was discovered that there had been a significant increase in the number of women occupying senior government positions in both Namibia and Zimbabwe. The Zebra system (quota) was one of the main strategies for increasing women representation in leadership positions in government. The study showed that African society is still patriarchal and there are a number of retrogressive religious and cultural beliefs that hinder participation of women in leadership positions. In light of the research findings, several recommendations were made. The first key recommendation was that there is need for the active participation of Heads of States and Government in the implementation of the Gender protocol because they are responsible for appointing most senior government officials. Another suggestion was that there is need for cultural revolution and a change of mind-sets on the part of both men and women. The research also recommended that there should be advocacy so that the media portrays women positively. The last recommendation was that the quota system should also be used in all leadership positions in both government and private institutions.

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

AIDS:	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AU:	African Union
CEDAW:	Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women
DIMAF:	Distressed Industries Marginalization Fund
GAD:	Gender and Development
GII:	Gender Inequality Index
HIV:	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
NGOs:	Non-Governmental Organisations
OECD:	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
SADC:	Southern African Development Community
SDGs:	Sustainable Development Goals
SWAPO:	South West Africa People's Organisation
UN Women:	United Nations Women
UN:	United Nations
UNSC:	United Nations Security Council
ZDF:	Zimbabwe Defense Forces
ZWRCN:	Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre and Network

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

The issue of women advancement is an international concern. Gender equality is enshrined as an international human right. The African Union (AU) Agenda 2063 focuses on women empowerment and seeks to advance the same objectives that other legal frameworks that have made headlines since 1979 have sought to do. These predecessors of Agenda 2063 include the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) of 1979 and the Third World Conference to Review and Appraise the Advancement of the UN Decade for Women (July 1985, Nairobi). The Nairobi conference crafted ‘the Forward-Working Strategies for the Advancement of Women during the Period 1986 to year 2000’. Other protocols are the Beijing Platform for Action (September 1989), the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSC 1325) of 2000 and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Gender and Development (2008). In addition to the legal frameworks, a number of institutions have been established in Namibia and Zimbabwe in order to promote gender equality, and they include the Ministries of Women’s Affairs (in both countries), United Nations Women (UN Women), and several non-governmental organisations. However, despite the presence of such a ‘cocktail’ of legal and institutional provisions, gender equality seems to be an elusive goal in both Namibia and Zimbabwe. One of the possible reasons for the inequality is the cultural barriers. Therefore, this study focused on the impact of culture on the implementation of the SADC Protocol on Gender.

#### **1.2 Background to the Problem**

Equality between men and women is both a human right and a development goal. It is widely accepted that gender equality and women’s empowerment are fundamental cornerstones for achieving development results (Dezso and Ross, 2012:1078). However, according to Oxfam (2012:6), despite an increasing number of global instruments and

legislative protections on gender equality that apply in most countries of the world, men's and women's conditions of participation in the economy remain woefully unequal. Unequal participation of men and women in political and economic affairs of countries is one of the reasons for the widespread conflict in the world (Beever, 2010:89).

The SADC protocol on Gender and Development sought to ensure equality between men and women in leadership positions. The protocol provided that member countries needed to have implemented measures for ensuring equality between men and women in leadership positions by the year 2015 (Rusere and Pasipanodya, 2012:8).

However, after 2015, women are still under-represented in senior government positions despite the fact that the SADC member countries made efforts towards the implementation of the protocol on gender. According to the SADC Gender Protocol 2012 Barometer, citizens gave SADC governments a score of 59% on achieving the SADC Gender Protocol targets and provisions contained in the 2008 declaration (ibid: 9). In addition, according to the Namibian Gender Policy (2010:1), the struggle for gender equality in Namibia had achieved mixed results. Women managed to excel in some sectors of economy and there were legal reforms to address gender inequalities and economic and social injustices brought about by past, discriminative cultural practices, patriarchal ideologies and historical imbalances. However, significant challenges remain and women continue to be under-represented in decision-making roles in Namibia. For instance, women constitute 25% of cabinet positions and there are only 7 female Members of the National Council out of 26. Women are under-represented in Regional Councils, where only 13 out of 107 councillors are female, and there are only 3 women amongst the 13 Regional Governors (ibid: 5). Sioka (2015:3) also states that women within the Ruling Party (SWAPO) as well as advocacy civil society organisations are advocating for 50/50 representation in decision-making positions.

In Zimbabwe, the National Gender Policy (2013-2017:4) states that the country is still ranking low in gender equality. The 2011 Human Development Report revealed that the

Gender Inequality Index (GII) was at 0.583 compared to an ideal of zero (ibid: 5). Table 1 shows the percentage of women in some of the senior positions in 2013, just before the holding of the harmonised elections.

**Table 1: Women in Senior Government Positions in Zimbabwe (2013)**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Percentage of Women</b>
House of Assembly	24%
Senate	14%
Ministers and Deputies	20%
Permanent Secretaries	26%
Public service Principal Directors	26%
Public service Directors	33%
Public service Deputy Directors	28%
Supreme and High Court Judges	29%
ZRP Deputy Commissioners	25%
Zimbabwe Defence Forces Highest Levels	0%

**Source: The National Gender Policy (2013-2017:6)**

In the post 2013 harmonised elections period, there was an increase in more women representation in the National Assembly and Senate, largely because of the adoption of the quota system. Table 2 shows the percentage of women in senior government positions after the 2013 harmonised elections.

**Table 2: Women in Senior Government Positions in Zimbabwe**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Percentage of Women</b>
House of Assembly	48%
Senate	43%
Ministers and Deputies	19%
Provincial Ministers	44%
Permanent Secretaries	28%
Principal Directors	23%
Directors	26%
Deputy Directors	26%
Councillors	24%
State University Vice Chancellors	10%
Chief Executives of Parastatals	23%

**Source: Mashangwa (2016:8)**

The statistics in Table 2 reflect an improvement in women representation at Parliamentary and Ministerial levels as compared to the situation obtaining in the preceding years. However, the targets set in the SADC protocol on Gender and Development (2008) are still to be met. Several arguments have been presented to explain the absence of gender equality. However, this research sought to conduct a detailed examination on the influence that culture had on the advancement of women in government positions in Namibia and Zimbabwe. Culture refers to the socially constructed behaviours and beliefs characteristic of a particular social, ethnic or age group (Hofstede, 2001:1). Culture also pertains to the ways of living in a particular community. In Zimbabwe, the general belief is that women are inferior to men. This position could be responsible for the lack of advancement of women.

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

Women are not equally represented in senior government positions in Namibia and Zimbabwe. This is despite the fact that the two countries ratified the SADC protocol on Gender (2008), whose targets were supposed to be met by 2015. Cultural practices that view men as superior to women are affecting the effective implementation of the SADC protocol on gender. Therefore, this study examined the influence of culture on its implementation and the advancement of women with reference to senior government positions in Namibia and Zimbabwe.

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of the study was to examine the influence of culture on the implementation of the SADC protocol on Gender (2008) with reference to Namibia and Zimbabwe. Specific objectives were as follows:

- To examine the provisions of the SADC protocol on Gender and the proposed instruments for ensuring more participation of women in senior government positions;
- To establish the extent to which Namibia and Zimbabwe had managed to implement provisions of the SADC protocol on gender;

- To assess the cultural practices that inhibited the participation of women in senior positions in government institutions in Namibia and Zimbabwe; and
- To propose options for cultural change so that women would be able to assume higher positions in government in Namibia and Zimbabwe.

### **1.5 Statement of the Hypothesis**

This research hypothesised that a culture of male patriarchy compromised the implementation of the SADC protocol on gender in Namibia and Zimbabwe.

### **1.6 Justification of the Study**

- **Significance to Women:** Women constitute more than 50% of the populations in Namibia and Zimbabwe and they ought to be equally represented in the political and economic affairs of both countries. Findings from this study, if adopted, may lead to an increase in the number of women in senior positions in government institutions in Namibia and Zimbabwe.
- **To the Governments and the National Economies:** This study sought to strengthen the ‘weak’ national gender machineries and institutional frameworks, which posed a critical impediment to delivering on the national and regional gender equality commitments. Gender equality is a critical component of social progress and is smart economics. Women represent more than 40% of the global labour force, 43% of the agricultural workforce, and more than half of the world’s university students (Oxfam, 2012:15). Accordingly, sound economic development depends on the full participation of women in all national affairs.
- **To Academics:** This study was also conducted in order to add to the body of knowledge. Accordingly, this study was a basic research that aimed to come up with a proposition for the inclusion of women in senior government positions.

### **1.7 Theoretical and Analytical Framework**

#### **1.7.1 Theoretical Framework**

This study made use of the Women’s Empowerment Framework. Longwe (1994) cited in Laura (1998:43) propounded the Women’s Empowerment Framework, which was a

response to low understanding on the needs of women, especially in developing countries. Men in leadership positions were alleged to be having low interest towards advancing the needs of women. According to Laura (1998:47), most of the development effort needs to be focused on improving the status of women and equality is essential in all sectors of the economy. Segregation of women leaves them out of the development process, which is a move away from the recommendations of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which states that men and women are equal partners in development (ibid: 48).

The women empowerment framework identified five hierarchical levels in the women empowerment process. These are: welfare, access, conscientisation, participation, and empowerment (Macionis and Plumer, 2008:52).

Welfare is about being responsive to the needs of women. It encompasses the provision of all basic needs, which include food, water, shelter and health. Access is defined as women's access to factors of production on an equal footing with their male counterparts. It entails equal access to land, labour, credit lines, training, marketing facilities, public service and benefits (March and Smyth, 1999:21). Conscientisation is the conscious understanding of the difference between sex and gender. There is need for awareness that gender roles are cultural expectations of men and women that can be changed (Majama, 2008:11). Participation is about women's equal participation in decision-making processes, policymaking, planning and administration (March and Smyth, 1999:25). Equality of participation means involving women in the making of decisions that affect their lives. Finally, empowerment calls for women's control over the decision-making processes through conscientisation and mobilisation. Women are also encouraged to achieve equality of control over the factors of production and distribution of benefits. Equality of control means a balance of control between women and men so that neither side dominates (Macionis and Plumer, 2008:61; Majama, 2008:17).

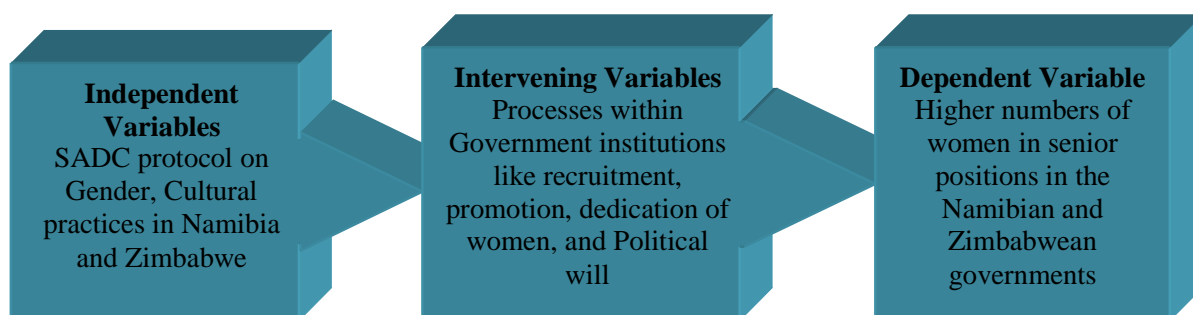


The theoretical roots of this study were also based on the Liberal Feminism Theory. According to March and Smyth (1999:30), liberal feminism provides that women are suppressed in society and they suffer unjust discrimination. The theory seeks no special privileges for women but simply demand that everyone should receive equal consideration without discriminating because of sex. Liberal feminist theory says that biological differences should be ignored in order to achieve gender equality (Williams, 2003:43). According to Majama (2008:10), the theory posits that women and men are not different and their common humanity needs supersede their biological differences. Therefore, if women and men are the same, they should be treated equality in leadership positions.

### 1.7.2 Analytical Framework

The researcher analysed the extent to which cultural practices were affecting the implementation of the 2008 SADC Protocol on Gender in Namibia and Zimbabwe. The extent to which the agreements had influenced the appointment of women to senior positions in Namibia and Zimbabwe were examined. Culture and the policies were independent variables, while the number of women in senior government positions was the dependent variable. The enactment of the SADC protocol did not automatically result in women being appointed to senior positions in Namibia and Zimbabwe, there were intervening variables like recruitment processes, dedication and commitment of women. Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework.

**Figure 1: Variables in the Study**



**Source: Self-Generated by Researcher (2016)**

## **1.8 Literature Review**

### **1.8.1 The SADC Protocol on Gender and its Implementation**

The SADC Declaration on Gender and Development (2008:1) provides that member countries should implement strategies for ensuring that there is equality between men and women in senior government positions by the year 2015. The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development is in line with other conventions that endeavour to ensure gender equality like the CEDAW and the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325. Furthermore, the SADC protocol states that there is a need to prevent the incidences of human rights abuses, especially on women and children, and that the perpetrators are brought to book (Rusere and Pasipanodya, 2012:20).

However, according to the SADC Gender Protocol 2012 Barometer, women are still under-represented (less than 30%) across the various core security institutions like defence, police and correctional services. Beever (2010:90) also believes that patriarchal attitudes towards advancing women's rights are always a hindrance when working with senior policymakers in the security sector. Traditional cultural practices can present formidable obstacles to the inclusion of women in peace processes or post-war governance unless a formal mechanism is in place to support this. It is vital to note that policy implementation is not an easy task. Understanding the nature of policy implementation is important because international experience shows that policies, once adopted, are not always implemented as envisioned and do not necessarily achieve intended results. Implementing a policy like the SADC Protocol on Gender can be complex. Policy implementation is the set of activities and operations undertaken by various stakeholders toward the achievement of goals and objectives defined in specific blueprint (May and Winter, 2009:455).

Various factors influence policy implementation, including the content of the policy, the nature of the policy process, the actors involved in the process, and the context in which the policy is designed and must be implemented. Implementation is an ongoing process of decision making by key actors who work in complex policy and institutional contexts and face pressures from interested as well as opposing parties (Makinde, 2005:3). As

such, the motivation, flow of information, and balance of power and resources among stakeholders influences policy implementation processes. Further, the manner in which a policy is implemented is not linear and may change over time for a variety of reasons, only some of which are controlled by policymakers. Policies are often redefined and interpreted throughout the implementation process as they confront the realities of implementation on the ground (May and Winter, 2009:465).

### **1.8.2 The Importance of Having Women in Senior Management Positions**

The importance of improving the gender balance in senior positions is increasingly recognised across the world (Adams and Ferreira, 2009:291; Adams and Funk, 2010:40). Studies in European countries, like France, Italy, Norway and Spain show that having gender balance in senior management positions is beneficial for institutions (European Commission, 2014:4). Some of the advantages include improvement in performance due to less pilferages (women are less corrupt than men), access to a wide pool of talent and improved decision-making (McKinsey and Company, 2010:5). In similar vein, Dezsó and Ross (2012:1077) state that female leaders take their duties and responsibilities more seriously than men and have the ability to do multiple tasks. Women also bring different perspective to debates, which were traditionally dominated by men and gender balance in senior management improves the quality of decisions. According to Huse and Solberg (2006:113), having similar leaders (males) could lead to the problem of 'group think'.

In addition, Bhogaita (2011:240) states that, as mothers, women leaders are characterised by task orientation, sound mentorship and a concern for others. Along similar lines, Curtis, Schmidt and Struber (2012:15) argue that if there is a belief that women are largely responsible for household spending decisions and achieve results with scarce resources, the same benefits could be enjoyed by institutions who embrace women leaders. Further, females now account for a sizeable proportion of university graduates and their skills should be utilised (European Commission, 2014:3). There is a positive correlation between women participation in leadership positions and better performance

(Bhogaita, 2011:250). Therefore, the Namibian and Zimbabwean Governments need to ensure that there is gender equality in senior positions.

### **1.8.3 Possible Cultural Reasons for Few Women in Leadership Positions**

There are a number of cultural reasons that have resulted in the election and appointment of fewer women in leadership positions. Berman and Rutherford (2013:110) state that the reasons include the perception that women have less confidence than men, are risk averse and emotionally unstable. Additionally, the European Commission (2014) argues that women can be overlooked for leadership positions because of the differences in their upbringing, which give men the edge over their female peers. Furthermore, perceptions that are based on traditional practices can cause the preference for male leaders (Africa Development Bank, 2014:11). While some of the reasons for fewer women in leadership positions could be true, this study seeks to establish if they are responsible for the under-representation of women in senior government positions in Namibia and Zimbabwe.

### **1.8.4 Options for Improving Women Representation in Leadership Positions**

A number of strategies could be put in place to ensure appointment of women in senior positions. These include allocation of resources to implement the provisions of the SADC Protocol on Gender. Resources will make it easier for relevant ministries to embark on programs aimed at ensuring gender equality. May and Winter (2009:460) argue that leadership for policy implementation is vital. Strong leadership and commitment are essential to ensure the follow through, resources, and accountability needed for putting policies into practice, however, the leaders responsible for policy formulation might find their attention diverted elsewhere once the policy is adopted or the responsibility for leading implementation might shift to new individuals and groups. Beever (2010:94) also states that quotas are one of the main strategies for increasing women representation in leadership positions. Given that strategies like allocation of adequate resources for women empowerment and quotas have their limitations, this study examines the impact of cultural practices on advancement of women in Namibia and Zimbabwe. The implementation of the various policy prescriptions on gender equality could be constrained by culture.

## **1.9 Research Methodology**

### **1.9.1 Philosophical Framework**

There are a number of research philosophies to guide a researcher. However, there are two major approaches, which are quantitative (positivism) and qualitative research. This study adopted a qualitative approach because culture is a subjective concept. However, no study can be purely quantitative or qualitative (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012:43). In this regard, this study made use of some statistics on women representation in senior positions, though most of the research is qualitative.

### **1.9.2 Research Design**

This study adopted a multi-case study approach and focuses on the implementation of the SADC protocol in Namibia and Zimbabwe. A multi-case study approach was selected because it allowed for a detailed investigation to be conducted.

### **1.9.3 Subjects**

#### **1.9.3.1 Target Population**

The population is the group of interest to the researcher. Simon (2011:21) agitates that it is upon this group that the researcher would generalise the results of the study. The population includes all individuals from whom the researcher is interested in obtaining the information and making inferences about the study. The population for this study was made up of senior officials in the Ministries of Gender (Namibia and Zimbabwe), the SADC secretariat, Public Service Commission's (Namibia and Zimbabwe), former and current Ambassadors, NGO officials and women in senior government positions in Namibia and Zimbabwe.

#### **1.9.3.2 Sample Size and Sampling Technique**

A sample is a representative cross section of a population (Saunders et al., 2012:56). Purposive sampling technique is to be used to select participants. The researcher selected participants whom she believed to be good prospects for required information. Accordingly, information is to be collected from key informants, who include academics, women in senior government positions in Namibia and Zimbabwe, NGO officials,

Ministries of Women's Affairs (in both Namibia and Zimbabwe), and the SADC Secretariat. The target sample size was 30 key informants (15 from each country).

#### **1.9.4 Data Collection**

There was use of both secondary and primary data. Secondary data mainly comprised of reports by the Ministries of Women's Affairs (in Namibia and Zimbabwe), NGOs, universities and research institutes and UN Women. Primary data was collected through key informant interviews. Telephone and Skype interviews were conducted with key informants in Namibia.

#### **1.9.5 Data Analysis and Presentation Procedure**

Data analysis is a process of deriving meaning from the raw data (Kothari, 2004:45). The study used content and thematic analyses. Content analysis is a process of reviewing data in written documents while thematic analysis is a process of organising data into categories or related classes (Henning, 2004:33). Data was presented in the form of themes, arranged according to the research objectives.

#### **1.10 Limitations of the Study**

The researcher faced a number of limitations during the study. These included the availability of key participants. Respondents, especially senior officials in government institutions in Namibia and Zimbabwe, were not readily available for interviews due to work commitments. In order to interview selected participants, appointments were made in advance so that interviews took place once the participants had confirmed their availability.

Another limitation was that participants were not willing to divulge information about the number of women in government because of the issue of confidentiality and the concern for state security. However, the researcher assured them that information collected would be used for academic purposes only and would be treated with a high degree of confidentiality.

### **1.11 Delimitations**

The research focused on the extent to which Namibia and Zimbabwe are implementing the provisions of the 2008 SADC Protocol on Gender. Though there are other conventions and policies in gender, like Agenda 2063, CEDAW, Beijing Platform for Action, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), this study did not focus on them. The study was confined to the implementation of the SADC Protocol on Gender in Namibia and Zimbabwe from the year 2008 to 2016. Purposive sampling was used to select participants whom the researcher believed to be good prospects for required information.

### **1.12 Definition of Key Terms**

**Culture:** Hofstede (2001:2) defined culture as the collective programming of the mind distinguishing the members of one group or category of people from another. He also defined it as a set of values and behaviours that contribute to the unique social and psychological environment of an organisation.

**Gender:** Majama (2008:1) opines that gender refers to socially constructed identity through which roles are assigned at different levels and which can differ according to culture and can be changed by circumstances that include conflict situation. In other words, it involves social attributes that are required or learned during socialization and define activities, responsibilities, and needs connected to being male or female and not to biological identity associated with masculinity or femininity.

**Gender Equality:** It is a concept that covers more than addressing women's status, rather, it refers to eliminating any inequalities between the sexes. The essence of equality in any human endeavour is to ensure or strike a reasonable balance and create room for fair judgment (Majama, 2008:20).

**Implementation:** Implementation refers to the mechanisms, resources, and relationships that link policies to program action (May and Winter, 2009:450). Understanding the nature of implementation is important because international experience shows that

policies, once adopted, are not always implemented as envisioned and do not necessarily achieve intended results. In short, implementation is about taking action.

**SADC Protocol on Gender (2008):** It is an agreement signed by SADC member states that aimed at ensuring that more women are appointed into senior positions in government institutions.

### **1.13 Structure of the Dissertation**

This is comprised of five chapters. This introductory chapter one presents the problem and its setting and embodies the background to the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, hypothesis, significance of the study, literature review, and research methodology. Chapter two contains an examination of the provisions of the SADC protocol on Gender and the proposed instruments for ensuring more participation of women in senior government positions. Chapter three focuses on the extent to which Namibia and Zimbabwe have managed to implement the provisions of the SADC Protocol on Gender. Chapter four is an assessment of the cultural practices that inhibit the participation of women in senior positions in government institutions in Namibia and Zimbabwe as well as the options for cultural change. Chapter five presents the conclusions and recommendations.



## CHAPTER TWO

### THE 2008 SADC PROTOCOL ON GENDER

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the provisions of the SADC Protocol on Gender. It will also provide an assessment of the instruments for the implementation of the SADC Protocol on Gender and focus on the regulatory, economic and informative policy instruments. The chapter also interrogates the institutional framework for the implementation of the SADC Protocol on Gender.

#### 2.2 The Provisions of the SADC Protocol on Gender

SADC Heads of State and Government, with the exception of Botswana and Mauritius, signed the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development in August 2008. The Protocol, which includes several progressive clauses and 23 set targets, including the target that women will hold 50% of decision-making positions in the public and private sectors, was lauded by women and men in the region as a significant step forward for gender equality in Southern Africa (United Nations Women, 2011:1). Other key targets include ensuring that provisions for gender equality are to be reflected in all constitutions and to affirmative action clauses. The succeeding paragraphs present the major Articles in the SADC Protocol on Gender.

**Articles 4-11: Constitutional and Legal Rights:** These provide for all Constitutions in the region to enshrine gender equality and to give such provisions primacy over customary law. All laws that are discriminatory to women are to be repealed. It also provides for equality in accessing justice, marriage and family rights and the rights of widows, elderly women, the girl child, women with disabilities and other socially excluded groups (Rusere and Pasipanodya, 2012:11).

**Articles 12-13: Governance (Representation and Participation):** Provides for the equal representation of women in all areas of decision-making, both public and private and suggests that this target be achieved through Constitutional and other legislative

provisions, including affirmative action. It further stipulates that Member States shall adopt specific legislative measures and other strategies, policies and programmes to ensure that women participate effectively in electoral processes and decision-making by, amongst others, building capacity, providing support and establishing and strengthening structures to enhance gender mainstreaming (UN Women, 2011:3).

**Article 14: Education and Training:** This Article provides for equal access to quality education and training for women and men, as well as their retention at all levels of education. It further provides for challenging stereotypes in education and eradicating gender based violence in educational institutions (Sioka, 2015:8).

**Articles 15-19: Productive Resources And Employment, Economic Empowerment:** The Articles provide for the equal participation of women in economic policy formulation and implementation. The article has provisions and targets on entrepreneurship, access to credit and public procurement contracts, as well as stipulations on trade policies, equal access to property, resources and employment (UN Women, 2011:3).

**Articles 20-25: Gender Based Violence:** The Articles make provision for the implementation of a variety of strategies, including enacting, reviewing, reforming and enforcing laws aimed at eliminating all forms of gender based violence and trafficking. There are specific stipulations for the provision of a comprehensive package of treatment and care services for survivors of gender based violence, including access to Post Exposure Prophylaxis and the establishment of special courts to address these cases. (ibid: 3).

**Article 26: Health:** This Article provides for the adoption and implementation of policies and programmes that address the physical, mental, emotional and social well being of women. The specific targets are to ensure reduction of the maternal mortality ratio, ensuring access to quality sexual and reproductive health services and the provision

of hygiene and sanitary facilities and nutritional needs of women, including women in prison (Sioka, 2015:10).

**Article 27: HIV and AIDS:** This Article covers prevention, treatment, care and support in relation to HIV and AIDS. It sets specific targets to ensure universal access to HIV and AIDS treatment for infected women, men, boys and girls. It further sets a target for the development and implementation of policies and programmes to ensure the appropriate recognition of work carried out by care givers, the majority of whom are women. There is also a desire to ensure the allocation of resources and psychological support for caregivers as well as the promotion and involvement of men in the care and support of people living with HIV/AIDS (UN Women, 2011:3).

**Article 28: Peace Building and Conflict Resolution:** This Article provides for the equal representation of women in conflict resolution and peace building processes as well as the integration of a gender perspective in the resolution of conflict in the Region. According to Rusere and Pasipanodya (2012:9), this Article is in support to the UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

**Article 29: Media, Information and Communication:** This Article provides for gender mainstreaming in all information, communication and media policies and laws. It calls for women's equal representation in all areas and at all levels of media work and for women and men to be given an equal voice through the media. The Protocol calls for increasing programmes for, by and about women and the challenging of gender stereotypes in the media (UN Women, 2011:3).

The SADC Gender protocol is a comprehensive document that covers the major aspects of life and seeks to ensure women participation in all political, economic and social affairs. The implementation of the Protocol requires vibrant policy instruments. The next section focuses on the issue of policy instruments, in general, and the tools for the implementation of the SADC Gender Protocol, in particular.

### **2.3 Regulatory, Economic and Informative Policy Instruments for the Implementation of the SADC Protocol on Gender**

The implementation of a policy is made possible through policy instruments. According to Salaman (2002:2) a policy instrument refers to the means of government intervention in society in order to accomplish goals or to solve problems. The behavioural assumption underlying a policy instrument is that it attempts to get people to do things that they might not otherwise have done. In short, policy instruments are tools at the disposal of governments for public action. Policy instruments are said to be effective if they influence behaviour towards the desired direction (Gunningham and Grabosky, 1998:45). They are intervention mechanisms for dealing with policy problems and they depend on the problem to be resolved. Governments have several types of policy instruments at their disposal. Traditionally, three main types of policy instruments are distinguished in the policy instrument theories and these are regulation instruments (sticks), economic policy instruments (carrots) and information instruments (sermons).

#### **2.3.1 Regulatory Policy Instruments**

Regulatory policy instruments are also called command-and-control policies. Regulations are laws that should be complied with, failure of which sanctions or penalties follow (Stone, 2001:10). Sticks are used for gaining compliance and embody use of law enforcement agencies. Examples of regulatory policies include traffic enforcement rules on speed limits in which non-compliance results in motorists paying fines or being taken to court.

In addition, command-and-control instruments have dominated environmental policies and governments directly intervene in the activities of individual firms by prescribing or forbidding certain activities. Examples of command-and-control instruments comprise the requirement to install catalytic converters and other legislation to reduce atmospheric pollution as well as the international ban on chlorofluorocarbons (Hackett, 2011:223). In many cases, regulations do not directly focus on emissions but specify measures which will eventually lead to an emission reduction, as for example minimum energy efficiency standards for buildings or obligations to cover a certain percentage of energy

consumption (e.g. of residential buildings) through renewable energies. Another example of regulatory policy is the ban on the use of methyl bromide in the preparation of tobacco seed beds (ibid: 224).

The major advantage of command-and-control instruments consists in their ability to ensure compliance because of the threat of sanctions. However, sticks could be viewed as less legitimate as they force people to do things against their will (Endres, 2011:141).

The SADC Gender Protocol, in Article 2 (General Principles), makes mention that member countries need to harmonise their national legislative policies and programmes so that they embrace the issue of women empowerment. However, there are no specific penalties or sanctions for the failure to implement the SADC Protocol on Gender. Moreover, reading through the protocol, there is use of the word ‘shall’ instead of ‘must’, which implies that the member countries are not under any obligation to implement the provisions of the Protocol. It is also essential to note that the SADC Protocol on Gender is part of international law and regulatory policy instruments are difficult to implement. This is because of the fact that the application of international law by national courts depends on a decision by domestic legal systems. At present, there is no general rule of international law providing how States should incorporate international law into municipal legal systems. In fact, there is not even a general obligation that States should make international law enter into the national realm (Yamali, 2009:31). Nevertheless, Shaw (2008:76) argues that international law seems to supersede domestic law when it comes to fundamental human rights, as is espoused in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

### **2.3.2 Economic Policy Instruments**

Economic instruments could be in the form of incentives or rewards that help to reinforce desirable behaviour. For example, in Zimbabwe, there are policies promoting the use of renewable energy sources, for example allowing free importation of solar equipment. According to Endres (2011:141) financial incentives are frequently used by governments to stimulate the diffusion of new, less polluting technologies. While economic costs are

generally higher for these than for other instruments, financial incentives are often critical to overcoming the barriers to the penetration of new technologies. In addition, in the member countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), direct and indirect subsidies for fossil fuel use and agriculture remain common practice (Hertin, Berkhout, Wagner and Tyteca, 2004:122).

Economic instruments can also be in the form of government support through financial contributions, for example, in Zimbabwe, there was the Distressed Industries Marginalization Fund (DIMAF), a fund meant for the resuscitation of companies based in Bulawayo. Also, taxation measures, standard setting and market creation is important to the promotion of technology development, innovations and transfer (ibid: 123).

The SADC Gender Protocol calls for gender sensitive national budgets, which are part of economic policy instruments. Also, Article 37 (Withdrawal) mentions the rights and benefits that member countries forgo when they decide to withdraw from the Protocol. However, the rights and benefits are not clearly articulated in the Gender Protocol document.

### **2.3.3 Informative Policy Instruments**

Informative policy instruments are also referred to as knowledge tools. They are mainly aimed at providing information so as to change or encourage certain behaviour. Sermons or soft policy instruments rely on cooperation and reduce the need for coercive action. Sermons can be in the form of advertisements, leaflets, and posters, for example, advertisements encouraging men to get circumcised, those that encourage the use of condoms, and awareness campaigns on the need to practice proper hygiene so as to prevent water borne diseases (Hertin et al., 2004:123).

According to Bax (2011:32), sermons are based on the cooperation principle and try to induce modifications in the behaviour of economic agents through incentives and the provision of information relying on voluntarism, learning processes and procedural change. Most importantly, information campaigns, voluntary agreements (that are not

legally binding), and environmental product labelling, public disclosure requirements, best practice dissemination and environmental management systems are counted in this category (Hertin et al., 2004:123).

The informative or exhortation instruments seem to be growing in popularity in many countries because they are seen as democratic (ibid: 123). Sermons are also seen as a modern way of influencing people and an opportunity to discourage undesired behaviour and to encourage desired behaviour, mainly by providing an understanding of the consequences of behaviour (Bax, 2011:32).

The informative policy instruments for the implementation of the SADC Gender Protocol include advocacy campaigns. According to UN Women (2011:2), the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development is a useful tool in planning for and implementing advocacy campaigns. Since it has been signed by most Heads of State and Government and ratified by several countries, the Protocol provides a springboard for advocacy to ensure that the clauses are legislated, that existing legislation is implemented and also, as a pressure point, becomes a tracking tool or basis for comparison with other countries (ibid: 2).

#### **2.4 Institutional Framework for the Implementation of the SADC Protocol on Gender**

According to Salaman (2001:23) effective policy implementation requires an appropriate institutional framework to be in place. Similarly, Beever (2010:45) argues that the attainment of gender equality is a change process fraught with resistance and there is need for vibrant institutions for the implementation of gender protocols. According to Article 34 of the SADC Gender Protocol, there are three institutions responsible for implementation (SADC, 2008:23). The first entity is the Committee of Ministers Responsible for Gender in the member countries. The Committee of Ministers has the overall mandate of overseeing the implementation of the Protocol. It supervises the other institutions involved in the action process. The second institution is the Committee of Senior Officials in the Ministries of Gender. Senior officials work under the Ministers and are responsible for the implementation of the plans made by Ministers. The SADC

Secretariat is the third entity responsible for the implementation of the Gender Protocol. It is responsible for monitoring, coordination and provision of technical assistance to the Ministers' and Senior Officers' Committees (ibid: 23).

Establishment of the institutional framework for the implementation of the SADC Gender Protocol is commendable. However, the institutional framework seems to be weak. The Presidents were responsible for the promulgation of the SADC Gender Protocol but, it would have been better if they had assumed a supervisory role in implementation. Participation of the Heads of States in the implementation of the Protocol is a sign that the issue is important. For instance, the Presidents are actively involved in the affairs of the SADC's Organ on Peace, Defence and Security because peace and security are essential in the Region. Therefore, if gender equality is as critical as peace and security, Heads of States ought to be actively involved. It is also essential to note that gender inequality is largely responsible for conflicts (Beever, 2010:33). Rebel leaders are males and females are more vulnerable to conflicts than men (Ibid: 33). Accordingly, women empowerment ought to be a priority and the Heads of States should lead the process. Most, if not all, senior appointments in government entities are made by the Presidents and their active involvement in the implementation of the SADC Gender Protocol is important.

## **2.5 Chapter Summary**

This chapter focused on the provisions of the SADC Gender Protocol, which covers diverse aspects on women empowerment, including educational and health rights. Focus was also on the instruments for the implementation of the Protocol and it was mentioned that the regulatory and economic tools are weak. It was also noted that the institutional framework is not strong enough and there might be a need for the active participation of the Heads of States. The next chapter examines the implementation of the SADC Protocol on Gender in Namibia and Zimbabwe.



## CHAPTER THREE

### IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SADC GENDER PROTOCOL IN NAMIBIA AND ZIMBABWE

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the extent to which Namibia and Zimbabwe managed to implement the SADC Protocol on Gender. The Gender Protocol aimed at ensuring that there is 50:50 representation of men and women in senior government positions. This chapter established the extent to which Namibia and Zimbabwe attained that objective. The strategies used for ensuring more participation of women in senior government positions were also examined.

#### 3.2 Implementation of the SADC Gender Protocol in Namibia

The researcher used telephone interviews to collect data from women in senior positions in Namibia. Data was also collected from the Ambassador of the Republic of Namibia in Zimbabwe. The study found out that Namibia prides itself for having attained 47% gender equality at political and decision making levels. Quotas were one of the main strategies used for increasing women representation in leadership positions. There was use of the 50:50 'zebra' representation that was introduced by the ruling SWAPO Party, which cascaded to all levels of governance. Table 3 shows the representation of women in selected senior positions in Namibia.

**Table 3: Women in Senior Leadership Positions in Namibia**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Total Number of Posts</b>	<b>Number of Women</b>	<b>Percentage of Women</b>
Parliament	104	48	47%
Ministers	26	7	27%
Deputy Ministers	32	15	47%

**Source: SADC (2015)**

Table 3 shows that Namibia is closer towards the attainment of 50% women representation in parliament. The percentage rate of women representation in parliament (47%) is the highest in the SADC Region. Nevertheless, the number of women in the

executive arm of government is still very low. Further, the Namibian Ambassador to Zimbabwe pointed out that gender equality remains a challenge at regional governance level. Despite the challenge, Namibia tops the list with the highest women representation at policy level followed by South Africa and Seychelles with 44% representation. Therefore, SADC requires a more robust instrument for ensuring women's participation in senior government positions. Documentary review showed that, in countries such as Angola, Mozambique, Rwanda and Uganda the quota system proved to be effective.

However, while gender quotas ensure representation, they have their weaknesses. They may crowd out other marginalized ethnic or socio-economic groups. By reserving certain positions for women, there will be fewer positions open for candidates from other groups that are also under-represented. Crowd-out may occur, further limiting their voice in both descriptive representation and in areas of substantial representation. Men may also be negatively affected (Okolie-Osemene and Udike, 2012:13).

Despite their limitations, quotas have led to an immediate and substantial increase in female representation. The use of corporate quotas has led to a clear increase in female representation in senior management, even in European countries like Norway. Norway is the only country with a legislated corporate quota that has attained its target deadline, though it took over four years from the passing of the law for all companies in Norway to comply (Norwegian federal Bronnoysund Registration Centre, 2012:11).

The other strategies that have been implemented by the Namibian government to encourage female participation in leadership positions include supporting women's education, training and employment creating. There is also a need to promote and ensure women's equal access to all areas and levels of human development. More so, promotion of women's full and equal participation in the media is vital. Women pressure groups and professional organisations should play a pivotal role in helping to shape opinions and encouraging more analysis of media content. Given that the ownership of various media continues to be in the domain of men, women's true image is distorted. Women's access

to important information for planning and management of their activities is also compromised by the male domination of the media.

The study found out that if women are going to make significant headway on the economic and other fronts, they need to have a physical presence in legislative and other political institutions. The legislative framework is there but political will seems to be lacking. The researcher noted that, in the 1990s many countries saw an unprecedented degree of mobilization of independent women's organizations to support women electoral candidates. There were also efforts towards training women leaders; carrying out civic education; pressing for legal changes in the status of women and in the constitution-making process; lobbying parties to endorse more women candidates; and developing strategies to get more women into leadership.

Another possible way of ensuring women participation in leadership positions is compliance with international policy frameworks. The researcher noted that the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995, drew attention to the persisting inequality between men and women in decision-making. The Beijing Platform for Action reaffirmed that women's persistent exclusion from formal politics, in particular, raises a number of specific questions regarding the achievement of effective democratic transformation, in practice. It undermines the concept of democracy, which, by its nature, assumes that the right to vote and to be elected should be equally applied to all citizens, both women and men. The absence of women from political decision-making has a negative impact on the entire process of democratization. In addition, democratic institutions, including parliament, do not automatically achieve gender equality in terms of representation, or in terms of policy agenda setting and accountability. The Beijing Platform for Action emphasized that women's equal participation in decision-making is not only a demand for justice or democracy, but can also be seen as a necessary condition for women's interests to be taken into account. Without the perspective of women at all levels of decision-making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved. In addition, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination

against Women, in its Article 7, called upon State parties to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the countries. If companies respect these international policy frameworks, more women would participate in leadership positions.

### **3.3 Implementation of the SADC Gender Protocol in Zimbabwe**

In Zimbabwe, the researcher interviewed senior officials in the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development, former Zimbabwean Ambassador to Namibia, a senior Public Service Commission representative, female academics and female legislators. Commenting on the appropriateness of the SADC Gender Protocol, a female legislator (proportional representation) said,

“...it is not new because it builds on to other protocols like CEDAW. The issues are not new because they have been there in other protocols. The difference is that it fits within the regional context, which makes it much more different. It sits within an executive arm of SADC. Therefore can be implemented at governmental level. There are issues with the issue of 50/50. There is a problem in the way it was drafted. It is drafted more as an aspirational and not necessarily as a parental. Something that is not mandatory. It calls upon governments to ensure that there is a 50/50 representation and that in itself is problematic because it does not force governments, it does not hold governments to account in terms of coming up with domestic laws that will ensure that there is a 50/50 representation.”

Furthermore, a senior official in the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development said the Gender Protocol has not been fully implemented. She said;

“...the protocol does not force governments to comply. Unless one has crafted the protocol in such a way, for example if one looks at the human trafficking protocol. It is clear that governments can be sanctioned for not implementing the human trafficking law. What is not clear is whether there is the same tight crafting and

drafting of the protocols that are to do with creating instruments for making sure that we have more women. This is why in the SADC region now that we have lost Joyce Banda (former President of Malawi) and there are very few women in Presidium and Ministerial positions. So what will be the impact of that for a SADC protocol that talks about increasing the number of women when at one strata of that level there is no woman sitting on that level. As long as we have the first-past-the-post system within the political structures it is difficult to attain 50/50 representation. Firstly, we need to designate certain constituencies as women only constituencies, which is difficult for most countries because it violets the principle of equity that is within most national constitutions. So governments have to deliberately remove the first-past-the-post electoral system to a proportional representation system because in that way we have to first create an electoral system that allows for the entrance of women.”

The study showed that Zimbabwe is on course towards the attainment of gender equality. After ratifying the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, Zimbabwe went on to enshrine the Gender Equity Clause in the new Constitution of 2013. The government of Zimbabwe is currently seized with the harmonisation of all the laws, including those promoting gender equality in line with the current constitution. One female legislator interviewed said;

“Zimbabwe has been commended for initiatives towards attaining gender equality. For example, within the senate where there are 6 people that are coming from each province, the electoral system states that number one would be a woman and number two should be male. This ensures 50/50 representation. Thus whether we like it or not we are ensured to have equal representation because political parties are forced to do so as well.”

The research showed that Zimbabwe has done well in terms of ensuring representation in Commissions. The Twelve Commissions are required, in terms of the Constitution, to

have a 50/50 representation between men and women. Therefore, in certain areas, Zimbabwe has done well but in other sections there is need for more effort.

The findings of the study show commitment and political will from the Zimbabwean government to fully implement the provisions of the SADC Protocol on Gender. Zimbabwe also set aside 60 seats for women in the National Assembly through a proportional representation system. In the Senate, a ‘zebra’ system is used to select Senators starting with a woman in the quest to achieve 50:50 representation. Table 4 shows women in leadership positions in the Zimbabwe as of May 2016.

**Table 4: Women in Senior Leadership Positions in Zimbabwe (May 2016)**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Number of Women</b>	<b>Number of Men</b>	<b>Total Number of Posts</b>	<b>Percentage of Women</b>
House of Assembly	87	183	270	48%
Senate	35	46	81	43%
Ministers and Deputies	10	44	54	19%
Provincial Ministers	4	5	9	44%
Permanent Secretaries	12	31	43	28%
Principal Directors	12	41	52	23%
Directors	78	226	304	26%
Deputy Directors	137	391	528	26%
State University Vice Chancellors	1	9	10	10%

**Source: Research Results (2016)**

Table 4 shows that women representation in the House of Assembly and Senate is close to 50% and these positive developments were largely due to use of the quota system. However, in senior civil service positions (permanent secretaries and directors), where the quota system is not applied, women are still under-represented. One wonders whether women do not have the requisite qualifications because the appointment of senior government officials is guided by fair labour practises as stipulated by the Labour Act and the Constitution. The Labour Act states that there should be no discrimination based on gender when recruiting and appointing people to positions. The legislation is clear that there should be equality between men and women at work, and protects all employees

against forced labour, discrimination and provision of the rights to fair labour practices. Both men and women are given equal opportunities when appointments for senior positions are made, but priority is placed on merit, achievement, amplitude, confidence and experience. However, women are still fewer than men in leadership positions. Therefore, where women can compete in terms of job requirements, they think they should then be considered on an equal footing with men. The best Zimbabwe can do is to encourage qualified women to apply in the form of a statement at the end of a job advertisement.

The research showed that Zimbabwe is making a number of initiatives to ensure that women assume higher positions. Firstly, there is gender sensitivity in recruitment and further training. For instance, in the Zimbabwe Defense Forces (ZDF), the President of Zimbabwe, who is the Commander in Chief of the ZDF has, in recent years, promoted a number of women to senior positions. In this regard, the years 2014 and 2015 saw the appointment of the first woman brigadier generals. In addition, women are also encouraged to take challenging responsibilities.

However, the research showed that, in the executive arm of government, there are very few women. In fact, Zimbabwe has actually gone down in numbers. Zimbabwe used to have a female Vice President but this is now history. Zimbabwe should have improved the number of women in cabinet and should have maintained the earlier arrangement of having one of the Vice Presidents as a woman. In this regard, one female legislator interviewed said; “Zimbabwe seems to be going backwards instead of forward. At executive level, Zimbabwe has dismally failed. However, in the parliament there is an improvement.”

#### **3.4 Lessons on the Implementation of the SADC Protocol on Gender**

The study showed that there has been a significant increase in the number of women occupying senior government positions in both Namibia and Zimbabwe. Participants said that quotas are one of the main strategies for increasing women representation in leadership positions in government. In addition, strategies to be taken by government to

encourage female participation in leadership positions include supporting women's education, training and employment creation. In particular, the zebra system was used to ensure that more women occupy senior positions in the National Assembly in both Namibia and Zimbabwe. However, despite the progress towards the advancement of women in leadership, gender inequality in governance is rampant, including in political parties. Therefore, there is a need to promote and ensure women's equal access to all areas and levels of human development. More so, promotion of women's full and equal participation in the media is vital.

The research reaffirmed the arguments by scholars like Edwards (2001:1) and De Ryter et al, (2008:9) who state that policy implementation is not an easy task and can be quite complex. Additionally, Makinde (2005:3) points out that implementation of policies is affected by political, economic, socio-cultural and technological context. Additionally, the content, nature of the policy process and the actors involved in the implementation process influence the success of the policy. Therefore, policy implementation entails adaptation and there is a variance between a policy and how it is implemented. Therefore, the SADC Protocol on Gender cannot be executed as religiously as is stated in the document. It is essential to note that the SADC Protocol on Gender seeks to change the status quo on gender equality and change is naturally resisted. One of the reasons for resistance to change is the deep-rooted cultural practices in African societies. The next chapter examines the cultural practices that hinder women empowerment in Africa, in general, and in Namibia and Zimbabwe, in particular.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### CULTURAL PRACTICES THAT HINDER WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the cultural practices that have hindered the participation of women in leadership positions. The chapter has three main sections. In the first section there is a general discussion on the cultural practices that perpetuate gender inequality in Africa. The second section examines the cultural practices in Namibia while the last section focuses on Zimbabwe.

#### 4.2 Cultural Practices that Perpetuate Gender Inequality in Africa

According to Oxfam (2012:3), from 2000 to 2010, Africa has experienced strong growth, an average of 5% a year. Yet this economic growth has not automatically translated into increased well-being for everyone; African countries have missed opportunities to lift their women and men out of poverty. In Africa, inequalities between women and men are among the greatest in the world. African women and girls are among the world's poorest, and they have the highest rates of illiteracy. Women's participation in the formal labour sector is low, and in many parts of the continent discrimination against female entrepreneurs, workers and managers negatively affects their productivity and results in large disparities in income between women and men. Even in agriculture, which is heavily dominated by women, women's productivity is 30% lower than men's because women lack access to vital inputs (ibid: 4). Unless Africa invests heavily in gender equality, it will neither sustain its growth nor meet its development goals (World Bank, 2012:13).

Traditionally, women looked after children and did agriculture while men were out hunting. These cultural arrangements have been passed on from generation to generation and men are expected to be the bread winners.

#### **4.3 Namibian Cultural Practices that Compromise the implementation of the SADC Gender Protocol**

The research showed that, culturally speaking, girls were brought up to serve a more reproductive purpose as opposed to men, who from a very young age, were raised to play productive roles. Namibia is no exception to the practice and women, particularly in rural areas still tends to be submissive and would rather opt for less challenging positions even if the opportunities avail themselves. The issue of bride price also make women inferior partners to men.

Nevertheless, through awareness raising, education and gender advocacy, there are clear signs that women are fighting to overcome the cultural barriers. The main challenge remains in rural areas, where the majority are still respecting traditional practices.

#### **4.4 Zimbabwean Cultural Practices that Compromise the implementation of the SADC Gender Protocol**

The study showed that society in Zimbabwe is patriarchal. Therefore, there are a number of challenges that hinder women participation in leadership positions. Issues that affect women reaching senior leadership positions during the course of their careers are complex. These include religious and cultural beliefs that promote child marriages, sexual harassment, performance management systems, conscious or unconscious bias and limited access to challenging career opportunities. One female legislator interviewed said,

“It is culture, culture in terms of how people are socialised. In terms of how people are born, how they live. It is usually very difficult for men to understand that through times, through movement, women are being thrown into certain spaces. They can deal with a few of us because they can define you in a particular manner. Men think that if a woman stands for her rights they would assume that the woman is not in the acceptable mode of being a woman. Men would actually think that one has gone beyond what a woman is. A woman is perceived in a particular way where one is expected not to shout or argue or engage in political debates. Women are viewed as child bearers. In Zimbabwe one of the first women to take on leadership

was Mbuya Nehanda. But they argue that Mbuya Nehanda was different. Men argue that she was possessed by a male spirit. Thus men argue that politics is not for women”

The portrayal of women as sex objects in Africa leads to a problem of sexual harassment. All participants argued that there is sexual harassment, especially name calling in politics and this discourages women. Successful women leaders are usually labelled as prostitutes and are given a lot of bad names. Moreover, participants said that one of the main challenges is the negative portrayal of women by the media. The media is a major tool for development and is, obviously, among the most powerful means of education. Negative portrayal of women results in subjectivity of a woman’s sense of identity. Participants argued that women are objects of patriarchal discourse and narratives. It was held that women are portrayed in stereotyped images that emphasize passive, submissive qualities and this influences them to play a subordinate role in society. Most respondents argued that women are viewed as sex and reproductive objects. More so, it is believed that women focus much on their domestic roles thereby reducing their zeal to self-actualization.

Moreover, all participants agreed that marriage is an obstacle for women’s participation in leadership positions in government. At the strategic management level, being a leader often involves travel, spending nights away from home, going to workshops and conferences, all of which put women leaders at risk of being thought of as ‘loose women’ or ‘unfit mothers’. One senior official in the Ministry of Women’s Affairs said;

“There is the issue of gender roles within our culture. Women are expected to balance work and life. Women have a motherly role as well. Women should ensure that their children are looked after and they grow well. If a child does not behave in an acceptable manner the mother is always to blame. Women can be insulted when their children misbehave. This is because women are supposed to be the homemaker. Shona people have the saying ‘*musha mukadzi*’. If one runs around going to work from 8am-4pm or sitting in Parliament from 8-9pm or 10pm she will

not be able to fully perform her to perform her household functions. This is because this kind of woman will always be an absentee mother of wife. Thus, the concept of '*musha mukadzi*' will not apply to her. The family and reproductive roles limit the participation of women in business, political or any activities like these. For example, if a husband gets sick the woman is supposed to take care of the husband. A woman is not expected to go to work. Nevertheless, the case is different with men. When a woman is sick one of her relatives is called to take care of the woman. This is because people believe that the husband is a breadwinner and he needs to go and work. These roles are expected even if they are unreasonable. Given that the economy is not stable women have to work as well."

The researcher also established that, not only may women find themselves and their families under attack or the subject of malicious gossip, but husbands will sometimes forbid their wives from being away from home for a long period. Some husbands are threatened by the possibility that their wives will be influential than themselves and that their wives' leadership pre-occupations will divert their attention away from the home. This state of affairs entail that females have few role models to emulate and are less motivated to take part in leadership positions. Commenting on this issue, a female legislator interviewed said;

"One finds out that most women who hold public offices are either divorced, widowed or they are single because they are freed somehow from these expectations because they are not accountable to anyone. If there is a funeral the single women are not necessarily expected to be there rather than married women. If one does not perform the roles she becomes an outcast. Therefore, all roles that limit women in participating in executive roles are situated in what has been defined as gender roles. Women cannot wash themselves from them. Therefore, women juggle between gender roles and the work that is out there. At the end of the day one has to balance them."

The research also established that women in leadership positions are given bad names. One female legislator interviewed had this to say;

“...people forget that when women walk into Parliament, they do not cease to just be women. They are carrying with them baggage of socialisation, baggage of culture, the expectations that are put upon them. There is need for a particular kind of woman who thinks they do not have much to lose by being defined as a ‘party chiller’ woman. Other women might even begin to question the behaviour of their fellow women in parliament. For instance, when Honourable Priscilla Misihairambwi Mushonga brought a baby, pads and used panties in Parliament, some women questioned her agenda. They asked why is she bringing pads and second hand panties to Parliament? Is not that babies go to church as well? Nevertheless, it is all about the fact that most women do not want to come out of their comfort zones. Therefore, when women do not do anything about certain negative situations, it is not a deliberate sabotaging. It is just a feeling that there is no reason for talking and taking action about the challenges. They feel some issues should not be dealt with in public. They think it is taboo to discuss such issues with men around.”

Religion was also found to be hindering women participation. The respondents argued that leadership positions in government, just like politics are viewed by some as a violent arena and churches discourage women from participation in violent activities. Therefore, some women are reluctant to run for leadership for many reasons. The reluctance of women to participate in leadership stems from cultural prohibitions on women being seen and speaking in public in front of men. The moment one mentions about women participation in politics.

The lower number of fewer women in senior leadership positions was also attributed to lack of support from family, fellow employees and friends. The role played by family friends and co-workers in career development and advancement should be considered in the rise of women to the top. They support career development through motivating,

guiding and giving advice. Co-workers' support is of major importance as colleagues serve as referees of one's good work. Above all, the people one has to lead, manage and supervise are capable of positively influencing or totally destroying one's career. Praises, following orders, adhering to rules and regulations, positive attitude help to build the confidence of the leader. However, hate speech and negative attitude towards the leader compromise one's ability to manage others.

There are also cultural practices that result in the exploitation of women and girls. In Zimbabwe there is customary law and general law on the other side and this is problematic. Under customary law there are certain things that are acceptable while under general law they are not. For example, general law says that one does not have to pay lobola when one wants to marry while under customary law one is required to be married. Lobola comes with many expectations because if it is paid, one cannot just walk out of marriage, there are certain steps that are followed when cases like divorce are being considered. These militate against decisions of walking out of a marriage and it is difficult for women. When one is married under both laws, that whole mixture then is problematic, it has to be dealt with.

Another challenge is that Zimbabwe has no roadmap on how to implement the SADC 2008 Protocol. A roadmap becomes the strategic plan to meet our objectives. It will make it clear who the major stakeholders and implementers are, and the resources for the roadmap can then be made available (Rusere and Pasipanodya, 2012:31). The Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre and Network (ZWRCN) also noted that after ratifying the SADC Protocol, not much will be done to implement its articles unless the government commits resources. The Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development, which should play a leading role, has no capacity in terms of resources and personnel for it to commit itself to the development of a roadmap (ibid: 13). Additionally, the most saddening fact is that gender equality meets stiff resistance from men. While women have reproductive powers to conceive and bear children, men cast a blind eye to women's reproductive rights as well as their other human rights. Women struggle day-to-

day to make ends meet in their lives. Therefore, there is need to level the playing field in terms of economic participation, which needs urgent prioritization.

#### **4.5 Chapter Summary**

The study showed that African society is still patriarchal. There are a number of retrogressive religious and cultural beliefs that hinder participation of women in leadership positions. African women share common experiences as far as cultural discrimination is concerned. Therefore, there is need for a cultural revolution and a change of mind-sets on the part of both men and women.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter concludes the dissertation. It presents the conclusions, in line with the research objectives. There were four objectives in the research, which were to examine the provisions of the SADC Protocol on Gender, the implementation of the Protocol in Namibia and Zimbabwe, the cultural practices that hinder participation of women in leadership and to proffer options for ensuring more women representation in senior positions.

#### **5.2 Conclusions**

Conclusions were made for each research objective. However, the last objective is addressed in the recommendation section.

##### **5.2.1 The Provisions of the SADC Protocol on Gender**

The study showed that the SADC Protocol on Gender has several progressive clauses and 23 targets. The main target is to ensure that women hold 50% of decision-making positions in the public and private sectors. The Protocol also covers diverse aspects on women empowerment, including educational and health rights. However, it was established that the regulatory and economic instruments for the implementation of the Gender Protocol are weak, so is the institutional framework.

##### **5.2.2 Implementation of the SADC Protocol on Gender in Namibia and Zimbabwe**

The study showed that there has been a significant increase in the number of women occupying senior government positions in both Namibia and Zimbabwe. The Zebra system (quota) was one of the main strategies for increasing women representation in leadership positions in government. In addition, strategies taken by government to encourage female participation in leadership positions included supporting women's education, training and employment creating.



### **5.2.3 Cultural Practices That Hinder Participation of Women in Leadership**

The study showed that African society is still patriarchal. There are a number of retrogressive religious and cultural beliefs that hinder participation of women in leadership positions. These practices include the perception that women were largely created to fulfil reproductive roles, and the issue of early marriages and sexual harassment. African women share common experiences as far as cultural discrimination is concerned.

## **5.3 Recommendations**

### **5.3.1 Active Participation of Heads of States in the Implementation of the Protocol**

The study showed that the institutional framework for the implementation of the SADC Protocol on Gender is weak. Therefore, there should be active participation of the Heads of States. Heads of States are responsible for appointing most senior government officials and their active participation would ensure that more women are appointed to leadership positions.

### **5.3.2 Cultural Change**

The research showed that the African culture promotes male domination. Therefore, there is need for a cultural revolution and a change of mind-sets on the part of both men and women.

### **5.3.3 Positive Media Portrayal**

The research showed that women do not want to assume higher positions because of the negative portrayal they receive from the media. Even though some strides have been made in how the media portray women in film, television, magazines and newspapers, female stereotypes continue to thrive in the media that people interact with the world over. Many women's potential is hampered by the media to the extent that they are outclassed, marginalized and reduced to neones in the public sphere thereby thwarting their upward mobility. Women are given a second-class status by the media that portrays them negatively. Therefore, there should be advocacy so that the media portrays women positively.

#### **5.3.4 Awareness Campaigns**

There is need for awareness campaigns that advance the issue of gender equality. The legislature performed its role of ensuring that laws to ensure equality are there but implementation lagged behind. Therefore, awareness campaigns can increase the knowledge and understanding of gender equality issues at work. Awareness campaigns can also help in educating societies about the advantages of having women in leadership positions and this can be one of the strategies for overcoming existing cultural barriers to gender equality in Africa.

#### **5.3.5 Women to Support one Another**

It is very important for women to support one another. Support in all spheres of development is critical. Women also need to actively participate in developmental issues and debates.

#### **5.3.6 Government Institutions**

There is need to ensure gender balance in all managerial positions. Policies should ensure equality between men and women. There is need to promote and ensure women's equal access to all areas and levels of human development.

#### **5.3.7 Expansion of Quota System to other Institutions**

The quota system helped to increase the percentage of women in parliament in both Namibia and Zimbabwe. Therefore, the system should also be used in all leadership positions in both government and private institutions.

#### **5.3.8 Disclosure of Promotional Policies**

There is need for the disclosure of gender policies in as far as the appointment to senior positions is concerned. Meaningful public disclosures to shareholders, employees, customers and other stakeholders can act as a tool of attaining gender balance on boards and top management. Bearing in mind that women have shown concern over not being given a fair chance to assume leadership positions compared to men, it is imperative for the processes to be as transparent as possible.

#### **5.4 Suggestions for Further Research**

The study found out that there are many cultural barriers that limit female participation in leadership positions. Therefore, there might be need for a study on how to overcome these barriers, some of which include multiple responsibilities of women (as leaders and mothers), limited 'political' influence, and few role models. A research on strategies for facilitating cultural change in African countries is also necessary.

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## **APPENDIX I: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE**

### **THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SADC PROTOCOL ON GENDER (2008): A MULTI-CASE STUDY OF NAMIBIA AND ZIMBABWE**

My name is Tabetha Kanengoni-Malinga, a student studying towards the attainment of a Masters in International Relations Degree at the University of Zimbabwe. As a partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree programme, I am conducting a study on the influence of culture on the implementation of the SADC Protocol on Gender (2008): A multi-case study of Namibia and Zimbabwe.

I have identified you as a key informant who could help me with answers to the questions that I have. Your participation in this study is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the research any time should you feel uncomfortable. The ethical principles of anonymity and confidentiality are respected in this research, therefore, your names or contact details are not required. Feel free to ask any questions.

1. What is your understanding of Gender issues and how do you define Gender?
2. What are your comments on the provisions of the SADC protocol on Gender?
3. How adequate are the SADC protocol's instruments for ensuring more participation of women in senior government positions?
4. What strategies have been implemented to ensure that there are more women in leadership positions in government?
5. Are women are given the same opportunities to lead as their male counterparts?
6. Comment on the extent to which Namibia has managed or failed to implement in full the provisions of the SADC Protocol on Gender?
7. Comment on the extent to which Zimbabwe has managed or failed to implement in full the provisions of the SADC Protocol on Gender?
8. Comment on the level of support and encouragement given to women by family and community members to venture into leadership positions



9. What challenges do women face when they endeavor to occupy leadership positions?
10. What are the major cultural practices that inhibit the participation of women in senior positions in government institutions in Namibia?
11. What are the major cultural practices that inhibit the participation of women in senior positions in government institutions in Zimbabwe?
12. What options can be adopted to facilitate cultural change so that women are able to assume higher positions in government in Namibia and Zimbabwe?
13. Do you have any additional information regarding the implementation of the SADC Protocol on Gender?

Thank you for your time and effort