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CITIZENSHIP, GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT IN ZIMBABWE.



BY
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OCTAVIA NDLOVU

STUDENT NUMBER: 200188305

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE, FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT, DEVELOPMENT AND COMMERCE IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF A MASTER OF SOCIAL SCIENCE DEGREE IN SOCIAL POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA.

SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR A. RAHIM

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Abstract

This study focuses on gender and development in relation to the notion of citizenship. It is an inquiry into the position that is occupied by both men and women in the society based on their gender status. It is argued that citizenship does not merely mean the voting rights of people but goes further to include issues of participation, representation and access to resources by citizens who differ in various aspects. The existing power structure in Zimbabwe has kept women in marginalized positions in social, political and economic aspects of their lives. Women continue to be treated as second-class citizens in comparison to their male counterparts.



The unequal citizenship has been promoted in various ways in the society. Discriminatory policies, cultures and practices are some of the major factors that are responsible for the underdevelopment of women in Zimbabwe. Since citizenship confers a sense of 'belonging' to individuals and further recognizes their social standing, it is therefore important to investigate why women are excluded from development process. This would then bring to light a new understanding of the key factors that are responsible for underdevelopment of women. The elimination of such discrimination will then work a long way towards creating a gender free society so as to improve the social status of women and their role in development. Development is a process of improving the quality of all human lives, which, is only achievable through relevant social, economic and political systems, and institutions that promote human dignity and respect and also expanding people's freedoms.

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Lastly, I would like to give praise to the Lord almighty for being the light, encouragement and a source of strength through out this work.

Dedication...

To my son Adrian Musa.



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Declaration

I Octavia Ndlovu declare that this dissertation is my own original work. It has not been submitted at any University for a degree.

Signature *Octavia Ndlovu*



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List of abbreviations

ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
HIV	Human Immuno Virus
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MCDWA	Ministry of Community Development and Women's Affairs
SADC	Southern African Development Community
ZANU PF	Zimbabwe National People's Union
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union



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Definition of key terms

Citizenship	Recognition of an individual's rights in the society. It goes beyond voting rights to include a wide range of social, political and economic rights.
Colonialism	Oppression of one country by another. It involves domination of settler ideologies over those of the natives.
Culture	A way of life as manifested in social institutions such as schools, church, art, language etc that a particular group of people adheres to
Development	A process of improving the quality of all human lives, through relevant economic processes, creating conditions conducive to the establishment of social, political and economic systems and institutions which provide human dignity and respect, and increasing people's freedom to choose by enlarging the range of their variables.
Equity	A system of natural justice in cases where the existing law would not allow fairness to prevail. It focuses on issues of women under representation and segregation.
Gender	Refers to socially constructed and culturally variable roles that women and men play in the society. It also refers to the structural relationship of inequality between men and women as manifested in labour markets and in political structures as well as in the households.



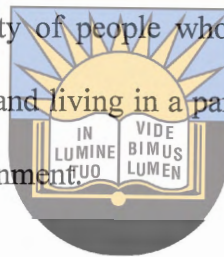
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establishment of social, political

Gender Equality It refers to a socially just system that involves elimination of sex discrimination, sex stereotyping and segregation. It goes beyond written law to include the social, political and economic relations prevailing in the society.

Lobola Money or materialistic goods paid by the prospective bridegroom to the bride's family.

Nation Community of people who share a common history, culture, language and living in a particular geographical territory under one government



Nationalism A Common goal for political freedom by a nation that is controlled by another.

Nationalists People supporting nationalism.

Sex It refers to biological differences between men and women.

Socialisation It involves teaching, learning and adaptation of certain acceptable societal values, attitudes, beliefs and norms.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction


This study examines the issues of gender, development and citizenship in the context of Zimbabwe. It looks how men and women have different access to resources based on their citizenship, which is taken in this study to mean a set of social, political and economic rights. It further investigates the restricting factors to the full attainment of citizenship by women and its impact on them. It further propounds for gender equality so as to achieve equal citizenship for women and thereby preparing them to participate in development. Gender equality is a prerequisite for just development. Gender equality in this instance refers to a socially just system that involves the elimination of sex discriminations, sex stereotyping and social segregation in the society. The elimination of gender discrimination will then create an enabling environment for people to fully exercise their rights in the development process.

The term gender is here defined as the socially constructed and culturally variable roles that women and men play in the society. It also refers to the structural relationship of inequality between men and women as manifested in labour markets, political as well as social structures. Whereas sex is natural, gender is of human construction and it continues to be reproduced socially. For example the different socialisation of boys and girls is not biologically determined but culturally specific.

In order to appreciate the problem under study, a historical perspective of Zimbabwe is important.

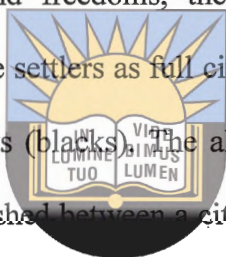
Background to the problem

Zimbabwe is located in the sub-Saharan Africa and has an agro-based economy. It has an estimated population of 12 million people however, the numbers continue being depleted each year due to the scourge of HIV/AIDS. Women are the majority in numbers, marking up about 52% of the total population.

Zimbabwe like many other African countries also has a colonial history. The British settlers colonized it in the 19th century beginning from 1890 during the period commonly known as the 'Scramble for Africa' or rather, the 'Scramble for African resources'. The targeted raw material was mainly land for agricultural purposes such as farming and mining. Zimbabwe's colonization took place at a time when capital accumulation had reached a fairly advanced stage in the west and was also spreading to other parts of the world.  The logo of the University of Fort Hare is a circular emblem. It features a central sun with rays, positioned above an open book. The book has the Latin motto 'VIVIT LUMINE TUO' written on its pages. The entire emblem is set against a blue background with a white border.
Vast fertile lands attracted the British colonizers to settle after failing to find rich gold fields as opposed to the neighboring South Africa. This land was to be used mainly for agricultural activities such as growing cash crops like tobacco and tea.

In the process, the British settlers then created a colonial state that was controlled by the British crown. To fulfill part of their objectives, the settler society introduced a new system of administration that was based on racial and gender discrimination. Social groups began to be classified according to race and gender so as to exploit cheap labour. The consequences of the new system were soon to be felt as they disrupted and distorted indigenous basic patterns of production, family life and cultural values. This distortion was consolidated through the use of political power and economic muscle.

The colonial system therefore, advanced a system of segregation based on racial grounds especially in the allocation of resources. The best and arable land was shared amongst the settlers at the expense of black people whose interests did not feature since they were not considered as equal citizens. Citizenship was racialised so as to legitimize discrimination of blacks. Racial citizenship created a dichotomy of the subject-master relations that emerged at that time. Since citizenship defines who enjoys full rights, privileges and freedoms, the racialised notion of citizenship summarized the whole story. The settlers as full citizens enjoyed certain entitlements that were not enjoyed by subjects (blacks). The allocation of resources and general social privileges clearly distinguished between a citizen and a subject. The distinction between citizens and subjects also became apparent in the state administration. Because the colonial state was governed by racial segregation, it only functioned on the rule of law and rights when it came to settlers who were defined as citizens (Mamdani; 1992). The black people on the other hand were considered as subjects in relation to the settlers and therefore had no legal rights since they were supposed to be subordinates who served the interests of the citizens. Ahluwalia (1999:313) notes that the advent of colonization entailed differentiating between peoples in the colony. The movement of administrators and settlers to the colonies necessitated that these individuals were seen to be separate from blacks. In this way, the former were accorded full citizenship and while the latter were ascribed the status of subject-hood with none of the attendant rights enjoyed by citizens. In order to dominate the blacks, the settlers adopted customary laws that were manipulated so as to match well with the policies of the then administration. The denial of basic human rights and material



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resources and general exploitation of blacks resulted from the fact that they transformed to non-citizens during this period.

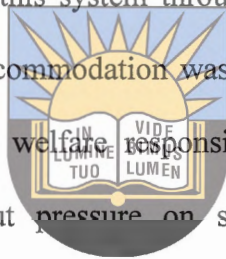
The discrimination of blacks was translated into super exploitation. This super exploitation was achieved through involuntary wage labour at farms, mines and cities. A plethora of taxes that were introduced and demanded upon blacks after their dispossession of the land, forced them to migrate from the rural areas to seek cheap labour in the mines, farms and cities. This saw a relatively significant black population of young men being transformed into a reserve of cheap labour for the settlers. Since blacks were not considered as citizens, they were deprived of civil and juridical rights. The privilege of being full citizens made it possible for the white settlers to devise a number of racially charged laws so as to further discriminate blacks, socially, politically and in the economic sense.



It should however be noted at this stage that it was only the males that were permitted to 'sell' their labour to the white settlers in the farms, mines and in the urban areas so as to be able to feed themselves in the cities, pay taxes and support their families. Although it was envisaged that the remunerations in the mines, cities and farms would be a supplementary family income, the wages and salaries turned out to be too low and therefore not sufficient to sustain individual family unit and the extended families in the rural areas.

Women remained in the rural areas in charge of the limited non-wage agricultural activities and also taking care of the children and the elderly. Those who wanted to visit their spouses at their work places had to get a special pass stating the purpose of

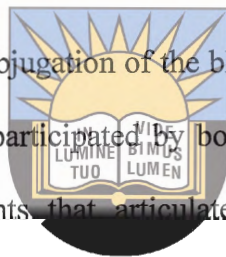
visit and duration of their stay. This was meant to avoid overcrowding in the few residential places that were designated for blacks and to prevent pressure on the meagre salaries earned by black male labourers. The housing system was also designed to accommodate male labourers only. In the second capital city of Zimbabwe, namely Bulawayo, the western suburb of Makokoba and Mzilikazi were designed to accommodate single labourers and not families. In the capital city Harare, there was Mbare high-density location also built to accommodate single males only. The security officers reinforced this system through occasional raids of residential places. This bachelor type of accommodation was also purposely designed because the state was unwilling to take welfare responsibilities. The provision of proper accommodation would have put pressure on state expenditures in health and education.



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It was from this historical background that the majority of women remained concentrated in the rural areas taking care of their families and in charge of the limited agricultural activities. It is important to note that during the process of colonization, black women had more challenges than their male counterparts. For example the customary laws denied women their adulthood and personhood. They were transformed into perpetual minors for the whole of their lives under the guardianship of a male. They had to be represented either by their fathers, adult male relatives or their husbands. They became 'subjects' in relation to both the colonial state and males. The oppressive customary laws were applied in areas of marriage, family and property relations. As a result, women had no control in any of the above.

Another feature of that period is the very limited access to the means of production available for black women. Women were confined to the homes and as a result they became dependents on men economically. Inevitably most women were locked in poverty; they were forced to go to the towns seeking employment. The system however was not accommodative to them and hence only a few of these women managed to secure some form of employment as house helpers in white residential places and were paid even lower salaries than men.



The continual segregation and subjugation of the blacks by the colonial settlers led to the liberation struggle that was participated by both men and women. This saw the formation of political movements that articulated the needs of the blacks. For example, the National Democratic Party (NDP) formed in 1960 was to result in an organized uprising of blacks that were fighting for their social, political and economic rights that were being enjoyed by a section of the society. Hence citizenship became one of the central issues of protest.

Although the Rhodesian government banned the NDP the blacks re-organized themselves under the two Patriotic parties, the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) in 1962 and the Zimbabwe National People's Union (ZANU PF) in 1963 and continued with the struggle and eventually won independence. It is important to note that all the liberation movement, the woman question featured prominently, and hence issues of equal rights were emphasised. As a result, in the struggle for independence, women played a significant role and were equally involved in the armed struggle as men. This saw a number of traditional gender roles being subverted as many women that were recruited, as freedom fighters were active participants in the guerrilla

warfare. They dressed in fatigues and were often indistinguishable from the men. Women were also essential to the survival of the troops, because they prepared food for them and provided them with clothing. These traditional duties received recognition and earned praise as essential contributions to the sustenance of the struggle. Women also played a role as educators and political commissars, in charge of educating and training the cadres.

Women did not only receive recognition for their active involvement in the struggle, but female heroines such as Mbuya Nehanda served as a rallying cry for the liberation war. Mbuya Nehanda was a powerful spirit medium and was executed in 1896 for resisting colonialism. Her spirit was invoked during the liberation struggle (2nd Chimurenga). Up to the present day, Nehanda remains a legend of brevity, courage determination and social justice.



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On the attainment of independence in 1980, the issue of citizenship became a central issue that needed urgent attention. As expected, it therefore became one of the top challenges and priorities that the new government had to tackle. The government identified the inherited Lanchester constitution as the biggest obstacle to the achievement of complete independence and as a result, it was revisited and many amendments were effected among which was citizenship. The racial concept of citizenship however became central because of the nature of the liberation movement. Hence citizenship was only deracialised and little or no attention was given other variables such as gender. Because of this, the government failed to produce a social policy to empower women in post-colonial Zimbabwe. It is noted that in the constitutional amendments women were only given the status of adulthood, which

was a correction to their earlier status. This was done through the introduction of the Majority Act of 1982. However did not address the gender problem.

Although women now have other rights in the political arena such as political rights to vote and to stand for political offices, a few women actually hold positions of influence. Thus economic and social rights are still limited. Women do have political rights, however they still face barriers in exercising their rights because of social constraints. Men on the other hand enjoy wider freedoms as a result of the patriarchal system, which is reflected in the social arrangements within the private household and public arena. Male and masculine ideologies dominate the social set up thereby placing men at an advantage than women.



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It is further noted that although the government made an attempt to address inequalities based on gender, these were met by a number of challenges. The first attempt was through the legislations that made it illegal to discriminate people according to their sex in employment. This was to give everyone equal job opportunities. However the weakness of this legislation lies in that there are no checks and balances to actually monitor the recruitment process by potential employers. The fact that the advertisements of jobs are non discriminatory does not translate to equal opportunity. There is no legislation that makes it mandatory for public and private institutions to have a certain percentage of women. Hence it is to the discretion of the employer to employ a candidate deemed to be the most qualified.

The financial constraints have posed a serious threat to the welfare of women as the state drastically cut down its expenditure on social welfare programs. Education was

one such welfare program that targeted the girl child, but the withdrawal of state funds meant that education was no longer a right but a privilege for those with money. Women therefore remain uneducated making up 60 % of the illiterate and hence with limited career choices.

The government also has limited or no control over a number of cultural specific structures that have been an impediment to women's attainment of citizenship. Family, cultures and religion continue to exert threat to freedoms enjoyed by women.

This study therefore seeks to expose the hidden elements that hinder women from equal access to the public good. It also aims at empowering women from being passive subordinated beings to that of being active and equal citizens. Therefore it advocates for gender equality in development.



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Statement of the problem

The post-independence period in Zimbabwe has presented women with new challenges as they try to maneuver their way around a system that does not recognize them as equal citizens. Citizenship entails those fundamental social and political rights that are enjoyed by members of a particular society. The social right encompasses economic welfare, security, freedoms and the right to live a civilized life in line with the prevailing standards in that society. It is the right to live and be recognized as a complete, different and unique individual with needs. Social rights also embrace a sense of belonging within the society whereas the political dimension to citizenship incorporates voting rights, and the right to be part and parcel of a safety

net. It has been largely assumed that people are born equal, however in reality, the question of gendered discrimination right from birth is the greatest challenge to this assumption. People are not treated as equal citizens in the sense that they do not enjoy same rights. This is because of various social constraints that are manifested in social pillars of the society such as in the public and private spheres. Disparities in education, health and employment are some of the limiting factors to full attainment of equal status in society. In the private sphere, the continued domestication of women, and the reproduction of the 'feminine' and the 'masculine' is a major obstacle to women's access to freedom.



This social injustice in the treatment of women continues to be one of the major challenges in development. The question of gender stereotypes is yet to be defeated in the women's struggle for democracy, freedom and equal rights and recognition. The struggle for women emancipation has not yet been won as they are still treated as citizens of lesser value. This abstract form of citizenship for women and indeed other ethnic groups remains problematic. For one to claim to be a citizen, it is to claim the entire rights one is entitled to, be they political, economic, social and legal. However, the existing notion of citizenship remains a political tool of social stratification. The rights that are embodied in citizenship favour males. Meaning that, citizenship rights are limited for women in Zimbabwe. Furthermore women are still subordinate to the patriarchal system both socially and economically. The domestication of women is still prevalent and this has been inhibiting women from benefiting from their inputs into the economy. Socially, women are still not considered as equal to men. This is emphasized through cultural practices such as in marriage, family, 'lobolo' and many

other cultural practices. As a result, men enjoy full rights as citizens of the state as opposed to women.

Social science and political theorists have of late begun to question citizenship however they have concentrated more on racial aspects giving little attention to the role it plays in reinforcing gender stereotypes which have led to the marginalisation of women in the process of development. It is therefore important to investigate why women are still being treated as 'secondary citizens' or 'second-class' citizens in Zimbabwe even though the state pledged equality for all citizens. Citizenship is still undemocratic in Zimbabwe, as it has not made it possible to equally integrate women and men in the process of development. This study is based on the hypothesis that women do not fully participate in the development process due to their unequal access to resources. Women are therefore integrated in development as junior partners who are subordinated to the patriarchal system. The differential and preferential treatment administered to 'citizens' on the basis of their gender has encouraged biased development in favour of men.

The concept of citizenship therefore remains vague, as it is not fairly administered to the citizens. It is not clear whether citizenship is multicultural or territorial. Multiculturalism refers to the recognition of differences and diversities based on gender, sex, age and ethnicity. That is, it is not clear whether citizenship means the same for all the people regardless of their races, ethnicity and religions. The vague definition of citizenship in Zimbabwe has caused racial, ethnic conflicts, tribal and engendered conflicts. Therefore until a just and democratic concept of citizenship is

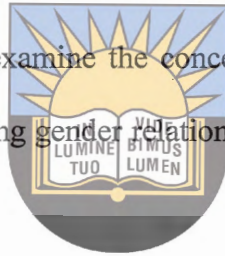
adopted, conflicts based on gender, tribal, ethnic and race shall remain unsolved and women will continue to be marginalized in the society.

Development policies in Zimbabwe therefore continue to be dominated by males as they are better privileged in terms of rights that are extended to them as 'primary citizens'. Men enjoy political, economical and social rights that are extended to them in a better manner than women. The constitutional laws of Zimbabwe seem to have played an important part in reinforcing the existing pattern in gender relations, as it does not condemn discrimination on the basis of gender. The numerical gender imbalances in parliament results in biased social policies. The discriminatory nature of the judiciary laws of the country is affirmed by the decision that was taken by the supreme court in Zimbabwe in 1990 to reverse most of the laws that protected women, ruling that "the nature of African society" dictates that women are not equal to men especially in family relationship. The court referred to the centuries old African cultural norms, which do not recognize the adulthood of women (www.wlo.org).

The relationship between citizenship and development can only be meaningful if a neutral environment, where both males and females possess equal citizenship is created. The manner by which people are integrated in development as citizens is very crucial as it determines the extent of their involvement in development. It is argued therefore that the state has played a major role in distinguishing between what is perceived as privileged and under privileged. The privileged citizens have full entitlements to their rights whereas the under privileged who are women are discriminated and therefore do not have full entitlements to their rights. As a result,

they continue to be dominated by the privileged in all national affairs since they continue to occupy marginal positions in the society. The contributions of the underprivileged to the welfare of the country and development in general are not acknowledged.

This study recognizes the significance of gender equality and equal citizen rights in development as it plays an important role in ensuring basic rights for all and brings about equal access to basic needs of life such as education, shelter, and food. This study shall therefore attempt re-examine the concept of citizenship showing how it has served to legitimize the existing gender relations that discriminate against women in development.



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Justification of the study *Together in Excellence*

In the post-colonial situation, most scholars have mainly politicized the question of citizenship. Their main focus has been on the racial citizenship thereby overlooking the gender dimensions to citizenship, which inevitably leads to gender biased development. Such limited focus to the attainment of citizenship has largely been a result of the nature of liberation movements in Africa and Zimbabwe in particular. The citizenship question was premised on racial discrimination in these movements, and hence at independence, it was generally assumed that citizenship for blacks had been achieved. By deracialising the state, it was concluded that this action had uniform consequences for all blacks.

However, it has become apparent that the deracialisation of the state did not address yet another problem of differentiated access to resources based on gender. Women continue to be discriminated in the society. This then calls for an inquiry of the factors that have inhibited women from achieving full citizenship.

The limitations of political citizenship in the total emancipation of women makes this study of paramount importance since it attempts to fill in the gaps that have been left by other scholars. Political citizenship fails to address the issues of women subordination in the society and its impact on development. The social aspects of citizenship however have not received much attention. Although women do not have the same access to citizenship as men, the significance of, and reasons for this are rarely explored (Walby, 1994:379). Because gendered social citizenship remains unquestioned both in the political circles and amongst the academics in Zimbabwe, the gender disparities remain. This research aims at probing how the unequal citizenship status bestowed women has impacted on women, accelerating women underdevelopment in Zimbabwe. This would assist in unearthing some of the key factors that are embodied within citizenship and are responsible for gender and development patterns in Zimbabwe. As rightly observed by Marshall (1992:68), any discussion of citizenship today is obliged therefore, to consider specifically the social position of women- whether they are still, in many countries, and in certain respects (if decreasingly), 'second-class' citizens- and this poses new questions about the scope and content of human rights and social justice.

The principal purpose of this study, then, is to make a contribution to the on going debate on citizenship, gender and development within the field of social sciences and

its implications on national development. This study would be valuable to those that are associated with formulating social policies. It would be a feed back to the policy makers on some of the issues that might have been by-passed by other researchers in their inquiries into the real problems that are a major concern to women. This study would make an effort to explore some of the factors that contribute to gender disparities in Zimbabwe. It is also envisaged that the research findings would be useful to the general populace in the society as a way of influencing their attitudes positively so as to build a gender sensitive approach to development.



In exploring the relationship between citizenship and development, the study would discuss contemporary/ dominant theories of citizenship and their relation to women and development. There is a growing need for policy makers to carefully look at these factors and improve on some of the policies.

Significance of the study

The treatment of males as “primary citizens” with full claim to all their rights as opposed to women who are treated as “secondary citizens” has contributed to the existing gender inequalities in development. Although both men and women have contributed to development, men seem to benefit more. It is envisaged that the findings from this study will enable identification of areas that need specific attention and in particular gender disparities.

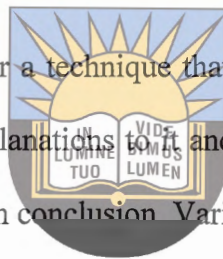
The question of citizenship is probed so as to address the problem of gender inequalities in development. As observed by Hassim (1999:7), citizenship does not only create a formal framework of rights and obligations, but it also defines the

relationship between individuals and the state. Although the notion of differentiated social equality based on gendered citizenship has been given little attention, it is very important as it plays a major part in gender relations. Citizenship has been used as a tool of both inclusion and exclusion. Both men and women stand in a different relationship against citizenship. This study shall probe why there is such a differentiation.

Methodology

A methodology is an approach or a technique that uses a set of methods to study a certain problem so as to find explanations to it and gain better understanding of that problem so as to arrive at a certain conclusion. Various methods are adopted by social scientists to gather data for the purpose of inference and interpretation, for explanation and prediction. The aim of methodology is to describe and analyse methods, throwing light on their limitations and resources, clarifying their presuppositions and consequences, relating their potentialities to the twilight zone at the frontiers of knowledge (Cohen and Marion, 1980:42). Methodology helps us to understand not only the products of the scientific enquiry but the process itself.

Researchers employ different approaches or methods depending on the nature of the problem under study. Some researchers use surveys to gather information. They sample a section of the representative population and then use questionnaires and interviews to obtain data. The use of questionnaire to gather information has weaknesses in that it requires fairly literate respondents thereby discriminating against the illiterate. Open-ended questionnaires are subject to misinterpretation whereas structured questionnaires limit the choices of the respondents. Interviews on the other



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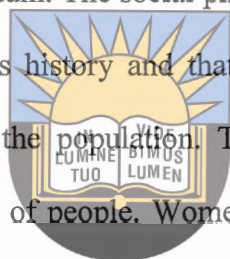
hand are likely to provide unreliable and inconsistent data. The respondents may not be willing to provide sensitive personal information thereby compromising on the reliability of the findings. Some researchers use experimental designs, however this approach is inappropriate for the problem under study since it does not require a strict laboratory scheme, observation and field work.

This study therefore adopts the historical structural approach or the historico-structural approach, which is basically text based to study this complex issue on Citizenship, Gender and Development in Zimbabwe. The structural analysis looks at the different structures in the society and also shows how such structures are related to one another. It also looks at particular positions and roles that exist in different structures, as well as the implications of the structures on the social relations of people. It further focuses on how people contribute in the reproduction of social structures in the society. According to Sayer (1992:96), the structures that are existent in the society do not endure automatically, they only do so where people reproduce them; but, in turn, people do not reproduce them automatically and rarely intentionally. The structures are however a necessary condition for their activity. For example a capitalist economy is necessary for discriminatory accumulation. For the capitalist economy to continue existing there has to be continuous accumulation. Sayer (1992:96) further points out that, while certain actions are only possible within particular social structures, the existence of the latter depends upon the continued (contingent) execution of those actions.

The historical structural approach helps to show how the changes that have taken place in Zimbabwe over the years have failed to transform certain structures in the

society. The social structures continue to be reproduced by certain actions. It is important to note that social structures are historically specific. The structural approach therefore takes Zimbabwe as a society that evolved in response to the colonial needs.

Zimbabwean history also evolved in response to certain colonial needs and demands. The structures that exist today in our society are a product of history. History in this case is not being studied in a vacuum. The social phenomenon is of much prominence in this study. The society creates history and that history has varied and different impact on various segments of the population. The colonial legacy had different impact on different social groups of people. Women as a group found themselves at the bottom of the ladder because they were the most disadvantaged.



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This study therefore uses the historical research so as to investigate why women are still denied their social citizenship. The social status of women was largely eroded during the colonial times due to the new economical relations and this has continued up to the post-independence period. Cohen and Marion (1980:48) define a historical research as the systematic and objective location, evaluation and synthesis of evidence in order to establish fact and draw conclusions about past events. It is an act of reconstruction undertaken in a spirit of critical enquiry designed to achieve a faithful representation of a previous age.

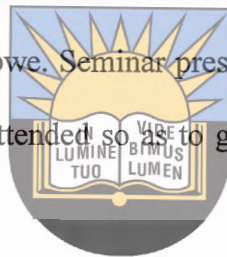
The historical research involves the identification and limitation of a research problem or an area of study; sometimes it involves the formulation of a hypothesis, collection, organisation, verification, validation, analysis and selection of data; testing the

hypothesis and writing a research report. This sequence leads to a new understanding of the past and its relevance to the present and future. The re-examination of the concept of citizenship using the historical method would assist to unearth how citizenship has evolved historically and how it has contributed to the existing gender discrimination in Zimbabwe. The historical method shall help show how women and men came to possess different citizenship status.

Therefore the assumptions of this research shall be tested through an inquiry into the historical texts that focus on social history, economic history and the political economy of the country. The historical research is valuable in the sense that it allows one to dig into the past so as to get solutions of the present problems. It also reveals the trend that the present and the future are likely to follow. It also allows for the revaluation of data in relation to selected hypotheses, theories and generalizations that are presently held about the past. (Cohen and Manion, 1980:48-49). In historical research, the researcher systematically investigates and analyses documents and other sources of facts about a given problem, behavior or event in the past so as to project and predict the future (Cates, 1985:104).

Historical research uses two types of information sources, and these are the primary sources and secondary sources. Primary sources used here are government publications, United Nations publications and archival information. This research therefore relied on both primary and secondary sources with related and relevant information on the subject. The information was obtained from various sources ranging from books, journals, published and non-published articles, magazines and newspapers. The other information came from the presented seminar papers on

gender. Some of the information was collected from the national archives. The government publication on various policies was also used. Other information was gathered from the Non-governmental organizations in Zimbabwe that deal with issues related to gender such as the Musasa project and Women's Action Group (WAG). The choice of these organizations was necessitated by the fact that they have done a wider research on gender related issues and have published some of the information. These organization work hand in hand with other arms of government that are responsible for gender issues. Therefore these organizations assisted with relevant information on gender in Zimbabwe. Seminar presentations hosted by the Zimbabwe Women Resource Centre were attended so as to gather more information on related subjects.



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Delimitations of the study *Together in Excellence*

The time frame of this study was a limiting factor since knowledge is limited by time and space. It would not allow for the full coverage of aspects that are responsible for the marginalization of women in the society. The focus was therefore limited to aspects of citizenship, gender and development. The notion of citizenship, gender and development is a fairly new discourse in Zimbabwe, having received attention in the late 1980s; therefore it is impossible to cover all dimensions in a single study. However this study is an attempt to contribute meaningfully to the discourse by revisiting issues of citizenship and gender that are still inhibiting women from fully asserting themselves in the society.

The foregoing discussion tends to show that women in Zimbabwe bear an inferior citizenship status in comparison to men. This is reflected in the limited social,

political and economic opportunities that are held by women. Men continue to get preferential treatment in the society. Since they continue to be considered as full members of the society, they fully benefit from the existing social, political and the economic set up.

To explicate this intricate relationship between gender and citizenship, this study is divided into six chapters, chapter 1 is the introductory section to the research problem and it comprises of the statement of the problem, justification of the study, significance of the study, methodology, sources of data and delimitation of the study. Chapter 2 reviews literature related to the study and covers a wide range of citizenship, gender and development issues. Chapter 3 looks at the social status of women in three historical periods, the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial. Chapter 4 focuses on Economic, Social and Political Reforms in post-independence Zimbabwe and their impact on women. Chapter 5 is Summary and Conclusion.

The following chapter critically evaluates various theoretical perspectives that have been put forward by other scholars and in the process come up with an alternative theory that will be relevant to women in Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER 2

Citizenship, Gender and Development: Theoretical Perspectives

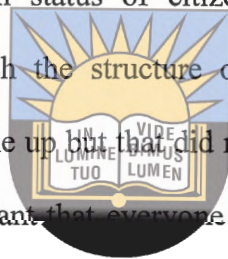
Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to examine some of the theories that have been put forward by other scholars to explain issues of citizenship, gender and development. The literature review assists in highlighting the contributions that have been made by other scholars on related works. The contributions of these scholars will assist this study in building knowledge on the foundations that have already been laid. The review of literature is also undertaken so as to fill in the gaps that have been left by other scholars. Meaning that not all aspects of citizenship, gender and development have been exhausted by scholars, hence a need for this study. Although the reviewed literature is not necessarily focusing on the Zimbabwe situation, with most of it originating from the west, it is used comparatively so as to understand the situation within the Zimbabwe context.

Citizenship and Social Classes

One of the major pioneers of the theory of citizenship is Marshall (1992) who in the 1950s traced the origins of citizenship within a mixed capitalist economy. He identified the origins of citizenship in Britain concurrently with the emergence of capitalism in the late 17th century. He then developed a theory of citizenship, which he saw as both socially progressive and politically moderate, believing in the possibility of justice and rights in a mixed capitalist economy. Marshall's interest was mainly rooted in the changing structure of the society in the view of citizenship and capitalism. He observed that citizenship was distributed differently among various

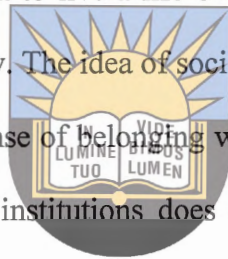
social classes, as it became a status that was bestowed on those who were considered to be full members of a community. Social class however became a system of inequality based on a set of beliefs and values and these created conflicts between opposing principles. Marshall further noted that class differences that were emerging were from a variety of factors that were related to the institutions of property and education and the structure of the national economy. He also argued that the differential status that was associated with class, function and family were later replaced by this single uniform status of citizenship, which then introduced a foundation of equality on which the structure of inequality could be built. For example new property rights came up but that did not mean that everyone had a right to possess property, it simply meant that everyone had a right to acquire property if they had the means to do so, and to protect it if they could get it. Marshall went further to note that even though people had a right such as freedom of speech, that has little real substance if, from lack of education, one has nothing to say that is worth saying and no means of making oneself heard after saying it.



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Citizenship in essence defines the fundamental rights and freedoms that each individual is entitled to in the society. These rights range from the civil, political and finally social rights. It is a status bestowed on those who are full members of the community and all who possess the status are equal with respect to the rights and duties with which the status is endowed. Whereas there is no universal principle that determines what those rights and duties are, in societies in which citizenship is a developing institution create an image of an ideal citizenship against which achievement be measured and directed. In his analysis of citizenship and the emergence of social classes he described citizenship as encompassing three elements.

These were the civil, political and the social rights. The civil element is composed of the rights necessary for the individual freedom- liberty of the person, freedom of speech, thought and faith, the right to own property and to conclude valid contracts, and the right to justice. The political element is the voting rights, the right to vote and the right to be elected. It is the right to participate in the exercise of political authority or as an elector of the members of such a body invested with political authority or as an elector of the members of such a body. The social element encompasses economic welfare and security and the right to live a life of a civilized being according to the standards prevailing in the society. The idea of social citizenship thus captures the full dimensions of an individual's sense of belonging within society. The social inclusion and participation in democratic institutions does only depend on the guarantee of formal civil and political rights, but also on socio-economic rights.



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Marshall's thesis however has weaknesses in that it failed to address other variables of discrimination such as gender and ethnicity. He failed to account for the subordination of women. Citizenship is not neutral as it is distributed differently based on gender. Minority ethnic groups also stand in different relationships to citizenship as compared to major ethnic groups. Marshall also never thought of the colonized people in his discussion of citizenship. He however raised three interesting points on how class could be a hindrance to effective access to citizenship. In the similar vein, gender has been an obstacle to effective access to citizenship. In as much as Marshall viewed citizenship as being distributed to various social classes in a differentiated manner, this still has relevance in this study since women in Zimbabwe are considered here as a social group of the disadvantaged. Women form the least of all the social groups within a capitalist economy. Their denial of full rights in the

society is a hindrance to their effective participation in the development process. Citizenship is interpreted in this study as those fundamental social and political rights and freedoms that women need in order to be treated fairly and be judged justly as full citizens and have their personhood bestowed back to them. It is argued in this study that women have been denied full citizenship because of the existing social institutions, which are patriarchal in nature.

Some scholars have identified diverse interests of social classes as the root cause of social inequalities. These inequalities stem from segregated access to modes of production. What is interesting however is that most theorists on social change and social classes failed to locate and account for the oppression of women. This point can be explicated through Marx's class analysis. For example, Marx came up with a theory that was basically intended to explain the emergence of social classes in Western Europe. He then explained the formation of classes as a response to a capitalist mode of production. In his argument, he divided the society into two parts, one representing the owners of the means of production and the other forces of production. The workers are those who had been dispossessed of the means of production and hence had to work as wage labourers under exploitative capitalist conditions. Under capitalism, human labour became a commodity that could be sold in an open market. The workers by selling their labour got alienated from themselves and the society.

The Marxist also believed that the state was not a neutral player within a capitalist economy since it failed to protect the rights of the workers. The state was believed to reflect the relations of power between different social groups, and especially between

the classes. The state is held to act in the interests of the ruling, or dominant social classes. The interests of the ruling class are expressed in specific state policies, as well as in state maintenance of the social system from which the ruling class derives its privileges (Cheal, 1991:106).

Marx however also failed to locate the question women within these classes. That is, he failed to appreciate the role of women in the society as an oppressed group. He generally assumed that the “women question” could be resolved by economic means.

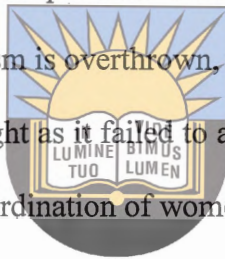
Marx assumed that when capitalism is overthrown, a classless society would emerge.

This was however a gross oversight as it failed to account for non-economic relations that were responsible for the subordination of women. Marxist theory of social classes

has shortfalls in that it ignores the issues of gender, race and ethnicity. It considers the transformations that occurred in Western Europe to have had the same impact amongst all the people.

Women found themselves being segregated with the rise of capitalism. The capitalist economy could not absorb them on equal basis like men. Women therefore found it more and more difficult for them to penetrate the public sector. As noted by Kent (1987), gendered discrimination was exercised within the public sector so as to force women off the scene into the private sphere.

Kent traces the period beginning from the late 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century. This was a period when Europe was experiencing rapid industrialization and the emergence of capitalism. Gender inequalities came out clearly during this time. In the similar vein, Pateman (1980) contends that women were excluded from



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enjoying their social citizenship, as they were perceived to be posing a threat to the political order. Only men were seen as suitable citizens with all the qualities and capabilities. She observed that women were in the new social order as the inhabitants of a private sphere that is part of civil society and yet were separated from the public world of freedom and equality, rights, contract, interests and citizenship.

It is therefore important to note that women's citizenship differed from that of men. Women's citizenship lay mainly in their sexuality and their reproductive capabilities, whereas, men attained citizenship through what was perceived as political discipline. For Pateman, citizenship remains a masculine contract and borrowing Marx's words she calls it a "political lion skin", worn only occasionally, however this lion skin is a costume for men and does not fit the female body. It is for this reason that women have always found themselves in the private sphere controlled by the so-called "politically mature men". Men also control the public political sphere although women do most of the work. At the public institutions, patriarchy demonstrates its intolerance through various forms of abuse against women. The coalition between the state and the work place structures has served as a screening agent for those who are to participate in the public. Men have a bigger economic muscle because citizenship and work come together around the criteria of citizenship. Women tend to be discriminated in the formal work place and hence the majority of them are absorbed in the informal sectors of the economy.

Pateman (1999:10) further argues that women are yet to be recognized as citizens because their contribution is not seen as part of, or as relevant to, their citizenship, but a necessary part of the private tasks proper to their sex. This contribution is relevant

and valuable to this study as it raises important aspects that are relevant to this study. In Zimbabwe although women carry a lot of burden in agricultural production and other parts of the economy, that has not earned them equal respect and equal rights. This sexual domination and subordination of women to patriarchy is their major oppressor.

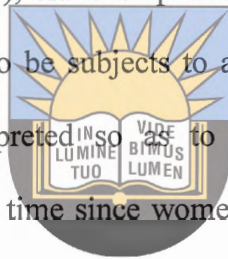
Pateman (1999:197) calls for a new definition of citizenship if equity in all the aspects of life is to be attained. She argues that the existing citizenship represents male only and therefore should be ignored, as accepting the inclusion of women in such citizenship is to embrace the patriarchal meaning of “citizen”, which is constructed from men’s attributes, capabilities and activities. Citizenship for women should therefore be geared at eradicating the existing disparities that are political, social and economical. Most of these disparities emanate not only from the emergence of the capitalist mode of production but also from the conditions that were created by the colonial and post-colonial situations in Africa. Pateman however does not address the colonial question which created a dichotomy between citizens and subjects hence the following is an analysis of Mamdani’s thesis on the colonial question in Africa.

Citizens and Subjects

In the colonial context, the colonial conditions coupled with capitalist interests created what came to be known as citizens and subjects. The system mainly had to do with racial and gendered discrimination in the allocation of resources. As noted by Mamdani (1996), the colonial state was from the onset not based on equality of all the citizens. People were discriminated on the basis of their race. The major categories of racial segregation were the whites and blacks, the latter being commonly referred to

as the 'natives'. The colonial government sought to deal with the "native question" through racial discrimination in the allocation of resources and in all the other aspects of life. He therefore argues that the colonial state was a historical creation meant to discriminate the natives who were seen as uncivilized. The colonial state created what came to be known as the subjects and the citizens. The subjects had no civil and social rights whereas the citizens were fully entitled to their rights.

According to Mamdani (1996:17), citizenship was to be a privilege of the civilized only, and the uncivilized were to be subjects to an all round tutelage. The African traditional culture was re-interpreted so as to suit the colonial administration. Patriarchy was reinforced at this time since women were not represented politically. Meaning that the female gender was defeated during the consolidation of the colonial state. The colonial state not only promoted patriarchal domination of women but also sponsored tribalism so as to further divide people. The rights given to people were based on race and they varied from one race to the other. The customary laws that were targeted at the black population did not guarantee any rights but only enforced the custom. Controversial customary laws were applied in many areas ranging from the family, marriage and property rights. In order to achieve the goal of discrimination, the colonial administrators worked closely with traditional leaders such as the chiefs. Their role was to enforce the oppressive laws that were meant to deny blacks their citizenship. The chiefs were not meant to be transmitters of African traditions but rather they were to act as cultural imperialist. Only those individuals that were submissive to the colonial authority were elected to be custodians of the new customary laws.



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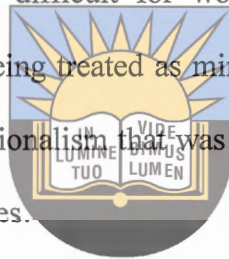
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Mamdani made a very important observation by noting how the colonial state was consolidated. Citizenship therefore emerges from such roots as the colonial capital accumulation that discriminated against the native by denying them access to the means of production. This however had more impact on the well being of women as they were transformed into perpetual minors during colonialism. This theoretical perspective shall be used to show how the colonial state in Zimbabwe divided its citizens according to both race and gender and also to show for what purposes this had to be done.



Karl (1983) argues in the same vein as Mamdani by further elaborating on how the colonial citizenship excluded women through wage employment whereby only men benefited. The colonialists maintained African beliefs on the nurturing role of women and therefore excluded women from wage employment. The immigration of only males to the cities and farms accelerated the burden of women. It also increased their dependence on man as they could hardly produce anything from the barren soil. Zimbabwe also shares the same history. Women were denied all their rights during the colonial era as the system could only absorb male labourers. The development path seem to have been totally ignorant of the women factor as shall be seen from the discussion of the theories of development. Development only concentrated in the economic sense and did not attempt to tackle the non-economic relations that inhibited women from equally benefiting from development. The discrimination of women has extended into the post-colonial era as solutions to the problems faced by women are yet to be found.

Although Mamdani and Karl observed how the colonial situation was based on racial discrimination, they however had over sights in that they did not allude to the continual gendered segregation of women in the post colonial times. They generally assumed that the blacks carried the same burden under colonialism and hence failed to appreciate that women had more burden not only as a race but also because of their sex. Women also continue to face discrimination in the postcolonial time because of the patriarchal nature of the society. The issue of women discrimination in the postcolonial times has made it difficult for women to be equally integrated in development. Women are still being treated as minors in postcolonial times and this reflects badly on the goals of nationalism that was expected to improve the condition of women in the postcolonial times.

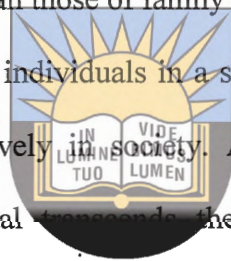


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The postcolonial condition *Together in Excellence*

The post-colonial situations in newly independent states have not really transformed the discriminatory conditions that women have always been subjected to. As has been observed by scholars such as Einhorn (1993), the goals of nationalism in most parts of the world have failed to emancipate women since some of the state structures and social institutions have only been deracialised rather than democratized. The state has only concentrated on creating a racial free society but has paid little attention to democratize the society by providing a suitable environment for both males and females. Women still fail to exercise their rights because of barriers in areas of education, employment, legal system and other social institutions as manifested in some cultures.

Citizenship in the post-colonial period should entail democratization of all social institutions so as to guarantee active participation of all citizens in the political, economical and social sphere. Citizenship in a new democracy as propounded by Einhorn (1993:3), should not simply mean the formal voting rights, nor even the right to call upon the state for certain forms of social provision, as in the social democratic welfare model of society. It should rather imply active agency, the assertion of full individual autonomy within a community dedicated to the well being of its members, who are bound by broader ties than those of family or kinship. Citizenship should also describe the extent to which the individuals in a society are endowed with the right and capacity to participate actively in society. Active agency here refers to the situation where-by an individual transcends the status of being a recipient of economic, social and political change and instead become an active agent of social transformation. This condition could only come by if the enabling conditions are extended to each individual in the society on an equal basis.



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It is however regrettable that women have been denied the full and effective titles of citizen for much of history, ancient and modern. Citizenship has emerged as a historical tool of inclusion and exclusion. It is evident that citizenship was not formulated on an equal basis as men and women have been incorporated differently within the concept of citizenship. Citizenship differentiated people according to their sexual differences. Men were accorded full citizenship whereas women were denied citizenship for much of their history. In the case of Zimbabwe, women were denied their citizenship at first as a race, then as a group and finally on the basis of their gender. The society recreated women as lesser or minor beings that needed male guidance.

Einhorn argues that the process of social change can be evaluated through the concept of gender; and the concept of citizenship sharpens this focus. She further notes that the goals of nationalism are a threat to women's citizenship, as they tend to subordinate women's citizenship rights. She also propounds that women's citizenship should not be interpreted only in political terms, that is, the formal voting rights and welfare services but should instead challenge the passivity status of women, and transform them into active agents that are able to fully participate in the society without any form of hindrance. A full citizen has to be able to exercise freedom of choice.

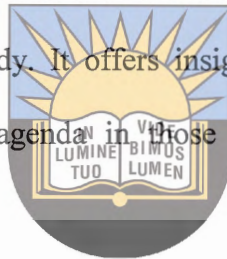


In the postcolonial times, most governments have not been able to emancipate women because of a number of cultural constraints. For example, the social institutions such as polygamy and bride price, specialisation, and ownership of property, women have fewer or no choices resulting in their subordination and subsequent violation of their rights as citizens. Most states have no control over such practices and do not categorise them as oppression. The current nationalists actually idealise the role of women as mothers. The maternal role by contrast prioritises women's reproductive responsibilities within the family at the expense of their citizenship rights within the wider society. There has to be some restructuring of gender relations within the private sphere, as failure to do so would render women powerless to exert their citizenship rights to the public domain. (Einhorn, 1993: 46- 62).

Citizenship for Einhorn is that transforming agent that would transform the status of women from that of being subjects and recipients of economic, social and political

change and become agents of social transformation. It is then that women would be able as “full citizens” to shape their lives and determine their own destiny.

Einhorn’s contribution on citizenship and gender is very significant to this study as it addresses some fundamental aspects that are addressed in this study. For example, she notes that the goals of nationalism put the citizenship status of women at stake by encouraging the gendered roles of women. Although her study addressed specifically the East Central Europe situations at the time of state socialism, it still remains an important guideline for this study. It offers insights into how women are usually excluded from the nationalist agenda in those states that adopt socialism as a framework for development.



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The universal citizenship has been critiqued for being male-centric in nature. Many feminist movements in the post-colonial times have objected to this universal citizenship as it is made in the image of a male. As observed by Webner and Yuval-Davis (1999), women have for a larger part of their life been denied their citizenship. Citizenship has also excluded many other classes of potential citizens including indigenous minorities, slaves, colonial subjects, and working classes, on grounds of ‘difference’. Women in many countries have been violated of their human rights and this has made it very hard for them to participate and benefit from development. Citizenship in the post-colonial period comes embodied symbolically in particular arenas in which the state, civil society and individual particularly intersect. Education is one of such spheres. Women continue to be denied their social rights. This needs to be addressed in order to improve the status of women and in order for them to benefit equally in development. Social and economic policies should therefore be inclusive of women and other minorities that are denied citizenship. The social institutions that

perpetrate the discrimination of women have to be reformed so as to be multicultural and thereby accommodative of differences. What then should citizenship mean in a new democracy? Hassim (1999) argues that citizenship should not be male norms that are used to measure the society. She also observes that women are hampered in their quest to exercise their citizenship because of their illiteracy among other issues.

Hassim contends that citizenship debates should encompass social and economic rights. She also observes that citizenship is always used to portray an equal society made of adults but in practice, it can be used to create insiders and outsiders. It should also be noted that the state has not really played its role in enforcing sound policies that would solve the question of gender disparities in development. The state, although it is central in its nature has only occupied itself with economical growth at the expense of other pressing social issues. The civil society has not been very vibrant leading to the accumulation biased against the elite. The poor women have not benefited much from the centrality of the state, as their concerns have not yet been addressed.

Meena (1992) in reviewing the situation in the sub-Saharan Africa also concluded that there is a need for new development paradigms that will reflect and prioritise the needs of African women. She argued that the existing gender disparities are being fuelled by the states in Africa as they have failed to commit themselves to the total eradication of gender disparities in development. The state apparatus are the most oppressive weapons that have been an obstacle to the acquiring of full citizenship for women, as their institutions have remained patriarchal. The discrimination and the denial of citizenship for women is still being entertained by the state structures.

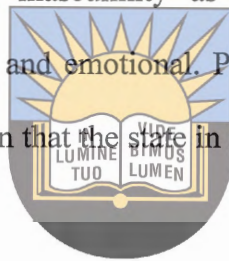
Meena also acknowledged that the lack of power of basic production and reproduction has hindered women from being equal citizens. She also observed that in the case of Zimbabwe, the enactment of the Majority Act by the government in 1982 did not empower women as they are still treated as minors. Meena (1992:17) argues that in this region and particularly in Zimbabwe, there is discrimination against women in citizenship rights of their children or spouse when married to foreigners. It is also the state's arms such as the police that still harass and treat women as though they were not full citizens. She also appeals to media to transform the gender stereotypes it has created about women as these have far reaching implications on them. Women however deserve better treatment taking into consideration their role in African history. Equal treatment should entail equal opportunities for women development. Such kind of investment in women would not only improve their economic status but also their social standing will be elevated.



Yuval-Davis and Werbner (1999) contended that women were cheated out of independence as they still form the oppressed group of citizens. They noted the significant political role that was played by women in the liberation struggles in many Third world countries. Women have always been active anti-colonial activists in the struggle for independence. They also observe that women throughout the history of the struggle believed nationalism to be an emancipatory movement for autonomy, popular sovereignty and universal citizenship. Ironically the very movement after independence turned out to be an oppressor. The nationalist project of liberation did not emancipate women as they found themselves excluded from the public office and power. Women were demobilized and then re-domesticated in the private space of the family. Sakala (1998) also argues in the same vein by noting that the political involvement of women in the liberation struggles did not emancipate them as they

still carry the tag of a 'second class' citizen. For Sakala, women have not yet attained democracy.

Prinsloo (1999) challenges the existing concept of citizenship, which glorifies masculinity. She challenges nationalism and its creation of a hegemonic masculine position, that the inscriptions (or representations) of citizenship (or nationhood) are articulated within the terms of powerful and varied masculine identities (Prinsloo; 1999:45). Nationalism presents masculinity as powerful and rational, whereas femininity is passive, dependent and emotional. Prinsloo's work is relevant for this study as it argues in the same vein that the state in Zimbabwe remains patriarchal and nationalism only benefits man.

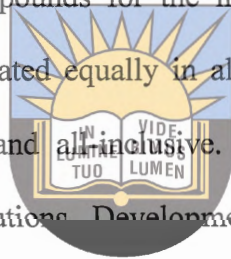


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Jirira (1995:3) also made very important observations as highlighted in her article entitled "Gender, Politics and Democracy" where she elaborates on the colonization of the public space by men, as it is coded "male monopoly". Jirira observed that Zimbabwean women are still considered as "secondary citizens" in the public affairs that are of national interest. Like in the West; Africa is trailing on the same footsteps of perceiving women's world as that of nurturing in the reproductive domestic sphere. This whole process has been naturalized and hence the oppression of women and their denial of social rights remain unquestioned as it is attributed to nature. For Jirira, the citizenship of women is a dream yet to be accomplished. She also argues that the denial of social rights to women is not coincidental but a well-calculated patriarchal strategy of domination. This agenda for such a move is simply to re-enforce paternal power via the institutionalization of patriarchy.

Chiriga (1998) highlights some problems that are still faced by women when trying to claim their citizen rights in post-colonial times. She observes that the re-domestication of women after independence destroyed any prospects of women being considered equal citizens and enjoying the same rights like men. Women's involvement in the liberation struggle went without rewards. Chiriga argues for equity in the political sphere and in decision-making. For her, this could only be achieved through affording women the same opportunities in various executive, judicial and legislative bodies. She also propounds for the intervention of the government in ensuring that all citizens are treated equally in all spheres of life. She asserts that development should be plural and *anti-inclusive*. This could be achieved through democratisation of social institutions. Development should therefore be aimed at extending human capabilities. According to Chiriga (1998:111-112) human development should:



Take greater note of the role of women, both on grounds of equity and because they bear a disproportionate share of poverty, and also on grounds of growth because they play a vital role in the productive activities and in maintaining their families and households. It is not sufficient merely to provide resources and formulate development objectives with women in mind. What is needed is a gender-sensitive culture. This involves changing traditional perceptions of women and in particular rejecting cultural arguments for the subordination of women.

It is therefore the responsibility of the government to ensure that women's needs are catered for. As their nationalist ideologies had clearly spelt that equity for all was an issue of human rights, this should be reflected in the equal treatment of all citizens. Nationalist ideologies should transcend gender and rally for the establishment of an egalitarian society that adheres to values of equity. The nationalist projects should strive to address the root causes of gender problems such as gendered socialization that is imbedded in a number of social institutions. The persistent discrimination of

women calls for new approaches that will put women in the forefront and assert them as agents of social change not as objects. Although the above discussion alluded to the problems that women are still faced by, they however failed to offer tangible solutions. There is a growing need to view women from a different perspective that will appreciate the need to liberate women. For women to be fully incorporated in development, it is paramount to notice that the question of women, citizenship and development are interlinked. Women need a variety of freedoms so that they can freely take part in the development not as objects but as subjects of change. The foregoing discussion therefore attempts to reconstruct and appraise a new perspective or approach that could be used as a strategy to emancipate women.



Women, development and citizenship University of Fort Hare *Together in Excellence*

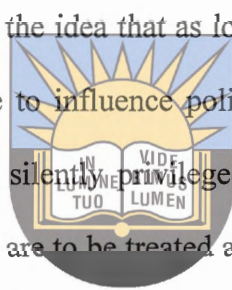
This section attempts to reconstruct a new notion of citizenship by advocating for gender equality and balanced development. There after alternative theories that are more sensitive to full citizenship attainment by women and their fair incorporation in development are postulated. There is need to fully integrate women as equal partners in development so that they fully benefit. Issues of equality are central in the emancipation of women. Democratic institutions will create an enabling environment for women to be fully engaged in development.

Development, democracy and equity for women

Phillips (1993) contends that equity is a feature of democracy and should therefore be made a social priority. She believes that equity is a procedure that involves a number of interconnected stages. These range from legal to electoral equalities. Phillips built her theory on the contributions of liberalists such as Thomas Hobbes and John Locke who advanced social equity. They argued that people should be treated as equal

citizens regardless of the social status, wealth and power. Phillips also argued that equal right to vote was not in essence equal distribution of power. She argued that the access to political influence was profoundly shaped by the distribution of wealth. However she noted that the rights to equal treatment before the law will not translate into legal equality, for the laws incorporate the privileges of property, while those with money can ensure more favourable terms.

Phillips' contribution centers on the idea that as long as women are denied economic muscle, they would not be able to influence politically. She also observes that the discourse on gender equity has silently privileged the male body in the sense that equity between men and women are to be treated as if they were men, and when there is differentiation, the man remains the norm against which women are scrutinized and condemned.



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Democracy for Phillips becomes meaningful if it is applied on a homogeneous society. However when democracy is imposed on an unequal society, it loses its essence and value as it privileges a section of the population and oppresses the other. Democracy has to be an equalizing catalyst by ensuring fair treatment of all citizens. Phillips advocated for legal and electoral equality but this is unlikely to translate to democracy if applied to an unequal society. The ignorance that women are perpetually denied their citizenship in the society makes her thesis weak. Central to her argument was also the issue of wealth redistribution, however, as long as the social instruments of discrimination are left intact, the imposed economic power will not liberate women from their inferior social status. Phillips' theory is in agreement with McCormack's theory (1981), which also propounds for economic emancipation of women so as to

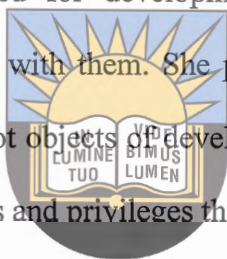
integrate them in development. She therefore puts forward 'Development with Equity for Women' as the way forward.

Development should improve the application of human resources through the provision of human rights. This also includes securing women rights as a way of improving the social status of women. As observed by McCormack (1981) the problems of women and their grievances have for most part of history not been taken seriously by new regimes. Women only gain verbal praises for their contribution in bringing about democratic institutions but only minimal reforms that best coincide with the political and economic goals of the new government are introduced. Women find it extremely difficult to exercise their democratic rights because the society remains largely male oriented. An example is that of the Eastern Europe where Marxist rhetoric resounded with concepts of social justice and denunciations of decadent bourgeois lifestyles, however in practice Soviet practice turned out to be selective and conditional: equality for women only if it did not interfere with the important work of the male elites. She further questions if the goals of modernization have equally benefited all the people equally. Her main concern is that most development policies have considered women as passive objects of change rather than active agents of change. As a result, it has become increasingly difficult for women to direct their own history.

McCormack criticized the development policies for their Eurocentric approach to problems faced by developing nations. The modernization theories were criticized for their narrow analysis of problem faced by the Third World yet failing to address the patriarchal character of social institutions. These theories only concentrated on the

economic aspects of development and non-economic relations were totally ignored. This, she equated it to the “modernization of patriarchy”. She also castigated Marxist theorists for occupying themselves with economic relations and ignoring the non-economic relationships.

McCormack proposed a new approach to development with equity for women. Her appraisal began by acknowledging that gender inequalities exist within the process of development. She then advocated for development that would recognize these disparities and subsequently deal with them. She proposed that women should first and foremost be seen as agents not objects of development. This should then involve entitling women to the same rights and privileges that are enjoyed by men.



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She further questioned the role played by states in protecting the rights of all its citizens in an equitable manner. She then concluded that the state was not democratic and therefore, there was a need to transform it. McCormack strongly condemned the state and described it as patriarchal and hence the problem of gender discrimination. She contended that the state was perpetrating the oppression of women as it was only advancing the interests of men. She further observed that the state was strategically structured so as to serve the interest of males through a number of its institutions. The policies that were adopted within such a state were patriarchal and hence ignored the cause of women. This then calls for democratization of those social institutions that are biased towards male ideologies. Democratization is a system of creating equal opportunities in the society through transparent wealth redistribution and fair and equal access to social institutions such as education, primary medical care, nutrition

and the market. Democratizing such institutions will then involve the creation of gender free curriculum and learning environment.

For McCormack, there is an urgent need to democratize the modern state through a thorough revision of the state bureaucracies. The state is called upon to democratize these institutions so as to make them accessible to women. The social institutions that promote patriarchy need to be transformed through political will so that women get equal treatment.



Although McCormack acknowledges the problems faced by women, she however fails to appraise solutions to the problems identified as hampering women's effective participation in development. Her thesis also tends to be one sided as it hammers all theories of development but fails to note their positive aspects. This requires an alternative explanation for women and development. Hence Clark's theory of 'Just development' could be adopted as it not only identifies problems faced by women but also tries to eliminate the social causes of such injustices.

Just development for women

Clark (1991) advanced the notion of "Just Development" as an alternative approach to problems of social inequality. Just development seeks to create a more egalitarian society, whereby both men and women have equal opportunities. This requires democratizing institutions in the society. Development in this sense is interpreted not only in the economic sense, but also as an improvement in the social, cultural, political and other dimensions of human life. It is a process of improving human life and also expanding capabilities.

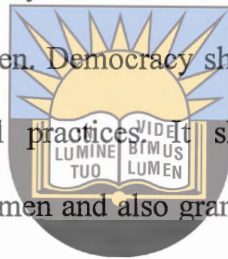
Just development cuts across gender, ethnicity and race and attempts to create a politically, socially and economically stable environment through application of democratic means of governance in the society. It provides a platform for democracy. Democracy is not just the right to vote in a government- important as that is- it is about a whole set of rights which citizens must be afforded if a government is to be open, accountable and participatory (Clark,1991:16). Such rights incorporate freedom from discrimination, whether on the grounds of sex, race or creed. Because of the existence of unequal relations in the society some members of the society are more vulnerable than the others because of the discriminatory social institutions. To this, he propounded that for democracy to dawn there is need to focus attention on those weaker members of the society so as to improve their situations.



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Just development calls for social equality in all sectors of the society. This translates to equal opportunities and equal access to all social institutions. Democracy should be a process of expanding peoples' rights and that all democratic institutions had to be void of biases and focus attention on attacking the webs of social injustices. Social justice involves granting women and other oppressed groups of people equal access to political, economic and social institutions. An increase in political participation by women would enhance their position in decision-making bodies and other influential positions that could enhance their social status. Better access to economic means would also improve the lives of women and increase their influence in decision making.

Clark also calls for social justice in the society, which is a matter of human rights in the sense that it involves eradication of all forms of discrimination targeted at weaker members of the society that could be on the grounds of race, creed, tribe or sex. For sustainable and trusting partnership between governments and people to be possible, full human rights must be guaranteed (Clark, 1991:30). He further noted that a country where social justice is impaired is a divided country and this is likely to hamper the use of human assets to their full potential. Social justice has to fight the secondary citizenship status held by women in the society and grant them the same privileges as those enjoyed by men. Democracy should therefore entail protection of all citizens from unjust social practices. It should also combat exploitation, particularly the oppression of women and also grant them freedom that could expand their human capabilities.



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This approach could therefore be used as a way forward since it is not only concerned with the economic welfare of women but goes beyond to encompass a wide range of social and political dimensions of freedom. To reinforce Clark's argument on 'Just Development', Sen's (1999) theory of 'development as freedoms' is also adopted. Freedoms are essence to human beings. Freedoms make it possible for people to assert themselves in the society and in the development process. The denial of such right hinders one from being a full member in the society, and subsequently limits one's participation in development.

Sen (1999) articulates that 'development as freedoms' should entail expanding real freedoms that people enjoy. He argues that development has to expand freedoms that people enjoy by guaranteeing them their economic, social and political rights. If these

rights are not extended to the people, then there is no democracy nor development. Development should be people centered; it has to recognize the importance of equally extending these rights to the people. There could not be any progress if a section of the population is denied these rights. Development has to be an equalizer and this could only come by if there is an existence of just social structures.

Sen further propounds that development should eradicate the major causes of unfreedom, poverty and the systematic social deprivation. He also argues that there should be equality between men and women as inequality sometimes afflicts and prematurely ends the lives of millions of women and also substantively restricts the substantive freedoms that women enjoy. Gender inequality therefore has to be fully engaged as a social problem and should feature in public debates so as to force the authorities to tackle this problem. Such dialogue would not only improve the situations of women but also would develop and strengthen a democratic system, which is an essential component in the process of development.

The active participation of women in development is largely depended on a number of variables such as the eradication of social, economic and political inequalities. As observed by Sen, the active agency of women cannot, in any serious way ignore the urgency of rectifying many inequalities that blight the well being of women and subject them to unequal treatment (Sen, 1999:190). He further alludes that women should to be treated as mature responsible people, who are capable of shaping their own destiny.

Sen further propounds that the provision of equal employment and education opportunities could enhance the status of women. Through education, women could be enlightened enough to determine their own destiny through informed decision-making. The ownership of property by women can also make them powerful in family decision-making since men's dominance in the household stems from their position as "breadwinners" as they continue to possess more economic muscle. Therefore freedoms are widely influenced by social and economic arrangements as well as political and civil rights (for example, liberty to participate in public discussion and scrutiny) (Sen, 1999:3).



Sen also emphasizes that developing and strengthening a democratic system is an essential component of the process of development and that requires the removal of major sources of unfreedom such as systematic social deprivation. Democracy should also entail empowering women through education, property ownership and employment opportunities. The nature of employment needs to be scrutinized so as to make sure that women are given equal access and opportunities. Family attitudes and those of the society have a great bearing on the social status of women, and therefore there is also a need to democratize the unjust social systems through adoption of policy and legal reforms.

Sen's contribution is valuable as an alternative approach and bears much relevance to the Zimbabwean situation. Women need to be empowered through freedoms that would allow them to be assertive in the society. Howard (1995:310) asserts that, African women could become active actors in the national politics through the exercise of freedom of speech, press and association. Such participation is necessary

to ensure that development enterprise does not undermine the economic rights women already have and that the ideological and political, as well as the economic bases of women's subordination are addressed. These freedoms however are dependent upon judicial protection. They are also dependent upon a reasonably high degree of education, which is necessary so that women can articulate their rights claims both against male members of their own families and against the state.

Women therefore need to be mobilized on a broader spectrum so that they could fight together for a common goal. The development initiatives that are likely to transform the status of women should not be trickle down but should come from below. The very despised and oppressed women could change their status if they are given an opportunity to make their own initiatives. This would then entail development whereby women are agency of change. Women could then be able to freely assert themselves and campaign for a positive change in their lives. Democracy and development are inseparable. Therefore the combination of the two has to continually aim at bringing about development that offers equal opportunities to all citizens and in particular to women. The provision of a free and fair atmosphere for women to exercise their rights will work a long way towards empowering them. A free environment will also provide a platform for women to assert themselves as agents of change. This active agency of women however prerequisite rectifying many inequalities that blight the well-being of women and subject them to unequal treatment.

Central to the recognition and understanding the role of women as active agents of social change is the issue of their total and complete person hood. Women should be

recognized as responsible persons who can be in charge of their own destiny. The active agency of women has to transcend the social, cultural and religious confines and assert women as mature individuals who can act or refuse to act in certain ways but yet be responsible for their actions.

The respect and regard for women's well-being however does not come on a silver plate but is dependent on other variables such as enlightenment through proper employment outside the confines of home. This will to some extent contribute positively to the women's economic emancipation and independence. Undoubtedly, working outside the home and earning an independent income tend to have a clear impact on enhancing the social standing of women in the household and society (Sen, 1999: 191). Women's education similarly is likely to strengthen women's agency and also to make it more informed and skilled. The ownership of property could also make women more powerful in the family decision-making. Economic independence coupled with social emancipation would go a long way towards re-organising principles that govern the polity and society.

The following chapter therefore discusses the position of women in three historical epochs. These are the pre-colonial, colonial and post independence period. The aim of the chapter is to show the social position of women and the factors that have contributed to their limited participation in development.

CHAPTER 3

Gender and Social Transformation: A historical overview

Introduction

This chapter looks at three historical periods in Zimbabwe so as to examine the social, economic and political positions occupied by women. It shows how the patriarchal domination of women in the pre-colonial period was taken to new heights in the colonial period and how it also continues to influence the social set up of the society in the post independence period.

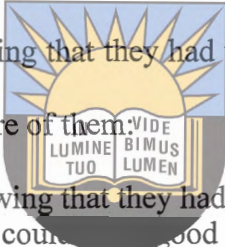
The pre-colonial period and the status of women in Zimbabwe

The pre-colonial period refers to the traditional and patriarchal societies that existed in Zimbabwe before the advent of the British settlers. These traditional societies were organized in tribes and relied heavily on hunting and gathering and agricultural activities for their subsistence. All the members of the society were actively involved in agricultural economic activities. The family units and ties were very strong at this time. All the family members, both men and women played complimentary roles for subsistence. There were specific roles and duties that were played by each particular sex at home and in the society at large. Men were largely confined to the areas of national defense and hunting. Women on the other hand concentrated on the domestic duties. Bwakali (2001:271) also observes that the roles of each sex were clearly defined and stipulated in the traditional African culture. As a result, boys and girls grew up knowing what the society required of them. He also observes that the traditional roles that were played by each sex were not seen as oppressive but had one major goal, which was that of building successful homes and stable societies. Hence no roles of a particular sex were seen as inferior to those of another sex. Motherhood

was dignified as it symbolized nation building. Motherhood was however not left for women alone but was a shared societal responsibility. The society participated in the grooming of children and in instilling acceptable social norms in them.

As the children grew, they came to know what was expected of them as either girls or boys. Boys grew up knowing that they had to be strong and show leadership qualities as it was anticipated that they would become leaders in their own families and in the society. It was only men who could make political decisions. Bwakali (2001:27)

contends that girls grew up knowing that they had to be submissive so as to get good husbands who could take good care of them.



Boys grew up knowing that they had to be strong, hard working and wise so that they could take good care of their wives, children and society. Girls grew up knowing that they had to be hardworking and submissive so as to find good husbands who would take good care of them.

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The pre-colonial societies therefore expected women to be subordinate to their husbands and men in general. The subordination was not only confined to private home but was also extended to the public sphere of politics. The husband however in consultation with his wife was responsible for decision-making in the family. In the public sphere of politics, men were the major players as was their duty to fight and defend the nation. Women were not allowed to fight in the war during the pre-colonial tribal wars. They were considered too weak to participate in the war. It was also naturalized that women were not strong enough and therefore could not participate in the war. However their role in the society as midwives enhanced their status. They also got credit for their active role in the agricultural activities .

Culturally, during the pre-colonial period, women were considered to be significant. To acknowledge the significance of women, “Lobola” (bride-wealth) was paid for them by the groom’s family at marriage. “Lobola” (bride-wealth) symbolized respect, gratitude and appreciation to the bride’s family as it also sealed the family ties of the two families.

In largely agrarian pre-colonial societies, women had their own share of wealth. The basic means of production such as the land was still in the hands of the indigenous communities. Women were actively involved in agricultural activities. The produce from the agricultural sector was channeled into feeding the family. Cattle were a symbol of wealth and both men and women had cattle. Women benefited from the “Lobola” that was paid for their daughters through a symbolic cow that was called “Inkomo yohlanga”(Cow offered to the mother of the bride by the groom’s family). This cow was given to the mother of the bride as her gift for the role she played in the upkeep of the bride.

In the pre-colonial societies, gender was too pronounced. According to Bwakali (2001:271), gender inequality was not important in the African traditional societies because there were clear division of labour. However, this is not to claim that there were no gender inequalities during the pre-colonial societies, but women labour did not translate to their inferiority status in the society.

Colonialism and the status of women

The British settlers colonized Zimbabwe during the period beginning from 1890 up to 1979. Colonisation was an oppressive system that targeted the indigenous population and their resources. Colonialism was a larger project of dividing Africa into European run colonies. The major aim was to extend the European sphere of influence across Africa. The colonies were to act as satellites, channeling all profits to the mother country.



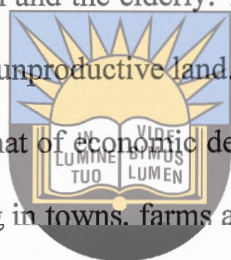
The British settlers in Zimbabwe initially were after the mineral deposits that had been discovered in South Africa. To their disappointment, they failed to secure any substantial mineral deposits such as gold. As an alternative source of wealth, they resorted to land. This sparked some conflicts with the major ethnic groups that were inhabitants of the land. These ethnic groups were the Shona and the Ndebele people. The British army defeated the Ndebele warriors in 1893. The defeat of the Shona people in 1896 marked the end of resistance and the beginning of a long process of colonisation. According to Mhloyi (1998:13) the defeat of the indigenous population was followed by the land alienation effected by the white settlers. This land alienation was legalized by the Land Apportionment Act of 1930 that was super ceded by the land tenure Act of 1969. The former allocated more than 50 percent of the land to 5 percent of the population, which comprised of whites. The blacks were re-located to unproductive lands, which were semi-arid or arid unsuitable for agricultural activities such as farming. These areas were referred to as the “native reserves”. This status quo left the indigenous people vulnerable without basic means of production.

The new settler government then began to re-formulate a new political, economic and social order. This new order was supported by the mother countries that had the same goal of profiteering from the whole project.

The new colonial order was racist politically, economically and socially. The indigenous population could not participate in the new political order as they were not considered as full citizens and hence their denial of all civil, political and social rights. Ahluwalia (1999:313) contends that colonialism brought with it the concept of divide and rule. The people of the same colony were differentiated according to race, class and gender. The indigenous people could only participate in the new economic dispensation as low wage earners in the farms, urban areas and mines. The indigenous people were to be exploited so as to maximize profits for the settlers whilst on the other hand, undermining the indigenous way of subsistence. This was a period of rapid expansion of capitalism. Gordon (1996:28) also observes that with the expansion of capitalism in Africa during the colonial period, heterogeneous modes of production and patriarchies were brought together.

The colonial government introduced various tax demands on the local indigenous people so as to force them to surrender to cheap labour. Taxes such as the hut tax were to be paid by every male adult in form of cash. A combination of the unproductive land and tax demands forced men to sell their labour for cash in the rapidly developing modern sector, in the urban areas, in mining and commercial farms usually as unskilled or semi-skilled low-wage workers (Mhloyi, 1998:14). From these meager salaries, the migrant workers had to support their families and also pay taxes.

At the onset of migration from the rural areas to the urban centers, mines and farms, only men were to be absorbed as labour force. Women were discriminated from acquiring work because of the imperatives of their biological sex. According to Margaret and Tadesse (1995:22) the colonial official visualized women in terms of a Victorian image of what a woman should be. From that perspective, they envisioned women's responsibilities as largely limited to nurturing and conserving the society while men were engaged in political and economic activities. Women had to remain at home looking after the children and the elderly. The agricultural activities were no longer sustainable because of the unproductive land. Women's roles were transformed from that of being producers to that of economic dependents. They now depended on their husbands who were working in towns, farms and mines. For Moyana, (1988:20) the dependency complex creates a sense of non-being in the individual.



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The colonial government could not afford to employ families, as their main aim was to maximize profits with a small labour force. Only men could therefore be employed as they were considered to be having minimum responsibilities as opposed to women who had to look after the children. This could have been an extra burden on the colonial officials. Women were therefore discriminated against in the cities, mines and farms. In order to prevent women from coming to look for work, the settlers devised a system of accommodation that was only suitable for single male labourers. Mhloyi (1998:14) asserts that the housing system in the mines and farming enterprises were the “dormitory type” which was meant for the working men excluding their families. The employment arena was therefore labeled a male space where women had no role to play. Women were to remain in the private sector of the home taking care of the children. Jirira (1995:4) notes that:

In the development of the Western thought, women's world was largely perceived to be that of nurturing: in the reproductive and household or domestic sphere. And because of the so-called 'naturalness' of this activity, the question of being oppressed or subordinated was not conceived of as possible.

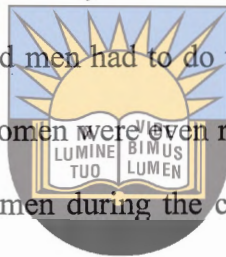
The cities and the rural areas began to be seen as parallel and representing the "darkness" and the "light" respectively. The "light" was to be despised as it was interpreted traditionally as a place of loose morals and therefore a place, which had to be avoided at all cost by the African women who were largely confined to the rural areas. The "darkness" representing the rural areas was portrayed as a traditional place where the acceptable values and the norms of the society were still intact. Since the cities could not accommodate women at that time, women who tried to force their way into the cities in search of jobs were portrayed as people of loose morals and thereby social deviants. The city became a no go area for women as the system isolated them.



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Although colonialism was oppressive all the indigenous people, women experienced more discrimination. They were treated as an inferior group of people and were denied their rights. Women were discriminated racially, then for their sex and finally on the basis of gender. They were denied all the rights and were given minority status for the rest of their lives. They were minors in relation to every male adult in the society. During the colonial period, women could never reach maturity and therefore could never act independently. Women had to be subordinate to their husbands and other males and they were categorized in the same bracket as children. In order to emphasise the minority status of women, the state invoked grossly manipulated African culture by claiming that women had always held a minority status in the

African context. This was done in order to subjugate women towards patriarchal hegemony. Because of this, women were to be denied any of their rights throughout their lives. The girl child was therefore treated as non-citizen in the sense that she did not possess rights of her own. The girl child was therefore supposed to be under the guardianship of her father until she got married and thereby transferring that responsibility to the family of the groom. The women were made to appear as if they could not live without men. Men were made central to their well-being. The few rights that women could enjoy were only attainable through males. Women could not make decisions independently and men had to do this on their behalf. Jirira (1995:6) also makes an observation that women were even regarded as secondary in relation to their own male children. All women during the colonial period whether married or single had no citizenship rights in the sense that they were socially confined to the private sector of their homes where unequal gender relations took place. The women's place in the kitchen and nurturing came to be naturalized as acceptable.



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Women were also denied their economic rights in the sense that after the dispossession of the land, they could not be absorbed in the employment sector. Women were made to depend on men. They were also stripped of their property rights. Women could not own assets. All the property had to be registered in the name of the husband or any male relative. In case of the deceased estates, women could not inherit such property. It was only a first-born son of the deceased or any male relative that could take over such property in case whereby the woman had no male relative, the state forfeited such property. Women could not sign any valid contracts. Walby (1994:380-381) asserts that, married women until late in the nineteenth century did not have the right to own property and to conclude valid

contracts. They did not have the right to justice in that they did not have the right to be free from the coercion of the husband. Women were denied both public and private citizenship during the colonial period. The denial of such rights was meant to further subordinate women to the patriarchal order. In the private institution, men had total control of women, dictating the pace of life to them. In the public arena, women were not welcomed at all. The combined forces of both the private and the public oppression and discrimination of women put them in a difficult position where they could not assert their potentials.



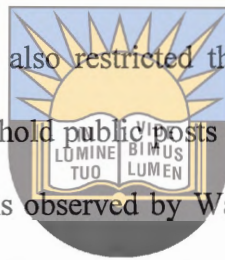
The colonizers and the missionaries came to settle in Zimbabwe at almost the same time. Education was rapidly spreading throughout the country. The kind of education that was taught in mission schools reinforced the beliefs of the colonizers. It complimented the system through cultural imperialism. People were taught to accept their condition and to admire their masters. The educational system was also discriminating, it was worse for women. The missionaries were not really interested in enlightening the blacks through education; they only wanted to teach them how to read so that they could understand the bible. Later it came to be a tool of empowerment since those who got educated could join the education system or the health sector as nurses.

Women were denied their right to education and this automatically limited their opportunities in the job market. The minority of women that managed to access education at the later stage of colonization were offered inferior subjects that emphasized their domestic roles. Most women were given subjects such as food and nutrition, sewing and hygiene. This was done so as to prepare them for future

domestic careers such as housemaids, which were not paying. Such inferior career was meant to reinforce the idea that the natural place for women was in the kitchen. Domestic work was also meant to keep women in the private sphere of the home where their rights were compromised. Rogers (1980:25) also argues in the same vein with the above assertion that the restriction of educational opportunities for women was rationalized in the sense that the future career of women was that of being wives and mothers, something that awaited all girls.

The women's lack of education also restricted their chances of venturing into the public sphere. Women could not hold public posts of political significance because of their lack of proper education. As observed by Walby (1994:380-381), women were denied civil rights to work at the occupation of their choice since there were various restrictions on the forms of employment open to women. Women were restricted because of their limited exposure to education, lack of skills and the mere fact that they were women and therefore citizens of less value. The overall portrayal of women was therefore that of passive objects that men acted upon. Rogers (1980:30) concludes that, because women were denied equal civil rights to enlightenment, they could not act on their own environment or behave as agents of change in their relationship with men or with the society in general.

The colonial government used whatever mechanism was within their jurisdiction to subjugate women. They also invoked the oppressive customary law so as to justify the discrimination of women. The customary law was recognized as law that only affected the natives. According to Mamdani (1996:22), the customary law was state ordained and state enforced. It was distorted so as to subordinate and discriminate



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women. Customary law was meant to oppress not to guarantee any rights. This customary law was enforced in marriage related issues, family and property rights. In marriage, women were seen as perpetual minors who had no rights of their own. Therefore the husband was the legal guardian.

The colonial injustices that lasted for nearly a century sparked a resistance movement. This resistance then developed into a full-scale war against the colonial government. The following sub-section shall focus on the period of the war of liberation. The aim is to describe how both women and men viewed the war, the ideologies of the war and the participation in the war.



The Liberation War

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The liberation war was fought in the early 1960's up 1979. The blacks organized themselves and revolted against the oppressive colonial government. The spirit that guided the war was that of bringing about human dignity and to bring an end to all the discriminatory policies that were directed against all the blacks. The nationalist leaders mobilized by the natives to join the war so as to end all the racial and gender discriminatory policies of the colonial government.

Both men and women participated in the war of liberation. The mobilization cut through the gender barriers. Women were also actively involved as they were among the most oppressed. They were also keen to participate so as to bring about democratic rights. The war was waged in the rural areas where the bulk of women were concentrated. Most men were in the urban areas, mines and farms. Women

therefore were actively involved in the struggle as it is them who provided the guerrillas with shelter, food and clothing. They also provided intelligent information and some of them actually went to the bush and fought in the struggle.

The question of gender had no role to play during the liberation struggle as everyone participated equally. The issue of domestication was overshadowed by active involvement of women in the war. Women were needed as much as men for the success of the liberation struggle. The nationalist leaders therefore emphasized the idea of equity during the war.



Women performed a number of important roles in the liberation struggle. They also played an active part in the war by providing the guerrillas with food, shelter and clothing. This was an important contribution to the success of the troops. They also had a special role to play as spirit mediums. The guerrillas consulted them for luck charms and future predictions. A female spirit medium by the name of “Nehanda” played a significant role in the first revolution called “Chimurenga” in Shona. Nehanda resisted the white oppressive rule leading to her execution. Nehanda was accused of influencing the other blacks to rebel against the white man’s rule. She became a symbol of brevity and was executed for her belief in social justice. The fighting spirit of Nehanda did not perish with her death. She became an icon of courage and determination. She also became the guiding spirit of the second revolution called the “Second Chimurenga”. The guerrillas actually believed that Nehanda had resurrected as she had once said symbolically that her bones would rise and fight again even if she was executed. The female guerrillas therefore played a significant part in bringing

about democratic rule. The war of Liberation ended with the signing of the Lancaster Agreement Accord in 1979.

The next sub-section shall focus on the post-independence era, its gains and losses. The main focus would be on women and their citizenship status after independence. This would be done so as to weigh whether or not the non-citizenship status of women was improved after the independence.

The post-independence era and the social position of women

Zimbabwe attained independence from Britain on 18 April 1980. At the helm of the leadership of state was a Black Nationalist government, which described itself as Marxist-Leninist and therefore inherently opposed to the discrimination of any form (Maboreke; 1991:217). The new government under the leadership of ZANU (PF) was faced with the task to solve a lot of imbalances that existed in the society. The state and the civil society had to be de-racialised and the economy redistributed. In order to deal with this task, the government adopted socialism as its framework for economic development. The economic assets were to be centralized and re-distributed by the state, which was seen as neutral.

The new government pledged to look seriously into the existing gender disparities in development. They acknowledged that the status of women had to be uplifted so as to integrate them in development. The role of women in the liberation struggle was acknowledged and praised. Unfortunately, as observed by Jirira (1995:22) it was not long before the female ex-combatants were re-domesticated through an emphasis on their motherly domestic roles. Nationalism did not emancipate women. Their

situations did not change significantly as opposed to their male counter-parts. McCormack (1981:15) commented on the false promises of nationalism as the patriarchal ideologies still dominated the post-war period. She argued that the:

New regimes praise the contributions of women, celebrate their acts of courage, reaffirm the party's commitment to full liberation, but introduce only minimal or at best expedient reforms that coincide with the political and economic goals of the new government.

The new government of the independent Zimbabwe failed to honour all the promises that were made prior to independence. The economic conditions of women did not really improve after independence and only minimal changes were effected. For example a ministry was set up to look at the issues of women. It was named, the Ministry of Community Development and Women's Affairs (MCDWA). This Ministry was established mainly to facilitate the involvement of women in national development through the removal of all legal, cultural and socio-economic barriers that could hinder the full participation of women. This Ministry was later abolished and replaced with the Ministry of Youth Development, Gender and Employment Creation.

In an attempt to improve the status of women in the society, the government introduced amendments to the legislation. The major one was establishment of the legal Age of Majority Act (LAMA) in 1982. This act conferred the adult status on all citizens of Zimbabwe at the attainment of the age of 18 regardless of their gender. The LAMA made it possible for women to make their own decisions after attaining 18 years old. The Maintenance Act was also passed so as to allow women to sue their spouses for the maintenance of their children.

The government also focused more on issues of education by making it free but not compulsory. Parents were therefore free to either send or not send their children to school. There were disparities in education as more men were educated than women. This gap was not closed even in the post-independence era. By the late 1980's the government was already having second thought regarding free education. This policy was finally scrapped with the introduction of Western sponsored Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP).



The following chapter evaluates some of the policies that were adopted by the government in its endeavor to eradicate discrimination of women in the society. The aim is to show how most of the policies have failed to emancipate women. Social and cultural barriers still play a major part in maintaining the inferior status of women.

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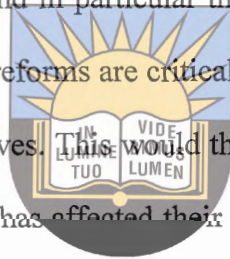
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CHAPTER 4

Economic, Social and Political Reforms in Post-independence Zimbabwe

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the social status of women in the post-independence period in Zimbabwe. Much attention is paid to the economic, social and political reforms that the state in Zimbabwe attempted to implement so as to address a number of inequalities after independence and in particular those policy reforms that had direct impact on women. Those policy reforms are critically analysed so as to show whether or not they achieved their objectives. This would then bring to light the current social position of women and how this has affected their access to development. The social and cultural constraints to women's citizenship are also critiqued.



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Economic reforms and the status of women

Zimbabwe attained its political independence from the British settlers in 1980 after the signing of the Lancaster Agreement. This agreement laid down the procedures for the political and economical power transition from the hands of the settlers into the hands of the blacks. The country inherited one of the most unequal economies of the world. In order to eradicate these inequalities, the Nationalist leaders made a commitment to adopt socialism as a policy framework. Socialism was aimed at creating an egalitarian society through economic means (Batezat and Mwalo, 1989:iii). The political leaders believed that all the inequalities that existed in the society were a result of capitalism and colonialism. Therefore their major task was to replace capitalism with socialism. Colonialism had encouraged the growth of a white minority elite class; socialism on the other hand was to be an equalizing factor

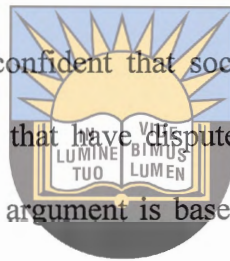
through central re-distribution of wealth. The state therefore was to be central in this endeavor. According to Seidman (1984:427), ZANU PF leaders believed that socialism would not only emancipate from colonial imbalances but also from culturally charged discrimination. Socialism was therefore viewed as the only means to provide the material basis for equality between women and men by giving women a foundation from which to challenge the cultural institutions that oppressed them.

The independence was therefore celebrated in socialist rhetoric with the government promising to transform the economy of the country to a socialist one. It also promised that all the citizens would benefit from a more Zimbabwean means of production. The government however was not very clear on how this change was to be brought about since they had inherited the colonial apparatus and institutions. The agro-based economy of the country still remained in the hands of 74% of the white minority as was agreed in the Lancaster House. One of the major agreements was that the land redistribution exercise would take place after ten years of independence with the British sponsoring the exercise, which was to be based on a willing seller, willing buyer.

The new ZANU (PF) led government went ahead to prove what they described as their commitment to socialism by offering social services during the first few years of independence. These social services covered the educational, health and production sectors, wage policies, industrial relations and nationalization of industry (Gambahaya, 1998:22). The government offered free primary education and free health services. Secondary level education and tertiary education was highly subsidized. The public service was expanded and more people were employed in the

civil service. The government put up legislation meant to protect the employment rights of women in the public service. Affirmative action was introduced in education so as to promote female student participation especially at higher institutions of learning such as universities and tertiary colleges. However it should be noted that although there was a rapid expansion of educational facilities and promotion of quantity education, there were little changes that were effected in school syllabuses as most promoted settler ideologies.

Although the government was confident that socialism would bring about desired change, there are some scholars that have disputed the authenticity of the socialist programme in Zimbabwe. Their argument is based on the fact that, the programme reflected a lot of parallels with the social services provided in most advanced capitalist societies. According to Gumbira (1998:20)



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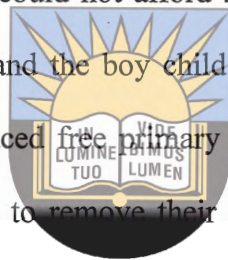
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Such action must however be distinguished from those of a social-democratic party in a welfare capitalist economy. In this case the intervention is designed to improve the welfare of the oppressed within the confines of a capitalist economy. In a transitional economy the intervention must go further to promote development of the oppressed into a self-conscious revolutionary class.

Socialism in Zimbabwe however did not address the gender question. Its main aim was that of developing the economy in a racially equitable manner. Gender disparities that existed in the economy were not one of the priorities that were to be treated with urgency. All the disparities that existed based on gender were to be solved through economic means. As argued by many Marxist theoreticians such as Friedrich Engels and August Bebel, after the abolition of private ownership of means of production, women's participation in the labour force was not only the necessary but also the

sufficient condition for their 'emancipation' from the tyranny of patriarchy and their confines of the family (Einhorn, 1993:5).

The socialist programme ran up to 1990 and did not achieve much in redressing the social inequalities based on both race and gender. Although free services were offered in primary education, gender disparities remained a major constraint for women as the number of female students attending school dropped from one grade to another. This is primarily because the parents could not afford secondary education and therefore had to choose between the girl and the boy child. It is also important to note that, although the government introduced free primary education, it was not compulsory making it easy for some parents to remove their children from school so that they could probably help at home without any intervention by the state. In 1990 however the state abandoned the socialist programme because of urgent need of funds from the international financial organizations- the International Monetary Funds (IMF) and the World Bank (WB). The withdrawal of the socialist programme meant that all the previously free services and those that were highly subsidized were to be fully paid for by the users. Those who could afford to pay for the services were to have access to them; this had a negative impact on gender equity as women found themselves on the receiving end with the introduction of Economic Structural Adjustment programme. For example, health services that were previously free meant that women had to ask for money from their partners for family planning and other related issues. This made the economically disadvantaged women vulnerable. To exacerbate the situation women found little or no protection in the constitution.



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The Constitutional position of women

Women were in much of their history not recognized constitutionally as ‘belonging’ to the larger society on their own right. Women had to be represented by a male figure for all their lives. Such treatment of women had roots in the colonial period. Women could not make their own decisions that could be recognized by law. They could not sue under the law. They had to get permission from either their husbands or fathers in order to get employment. They also could not open their own bank accounts in order to keep their savings. The constitution did not protect the rights of women and therefore women remained vulnerable to abuse and oppression perpetrated by their male counterparts.



The constitutional position of women however has not changed much. The inherited Lancaster constitution forbids discrimination on all other grounds except sex. Section 23 of Chapter 3 in the constitution reads as follows;

A law shall be regarded as making a provision that is discriminatory and a person shall be regarded as having been treated in a discriminatory manner if, as a result of that law or treatment, persons of a particular description by race, tribe, place of origin, political opinions, colour or creed are prejudiced...(Constitution of Zimbabwe)

The discrimination on the grounds of sex is not mentioned in this important clause, making it easy to discriminate women. Maboreke (1993:218) contends that, by not implicitly forbidding discrimination on the grounds of sex, such leaves room for discrimination. She therefore concludes that, it appears like it is quite constitutional in Zimbabwe to discriminate against women for no other reason than that they are women. The parliament could have protected the rights of women through constitutional amendments targeted specifically at protecting the fundamental rights of women. As further noted by Maboreke (1993:218), it is within the absolute

discretion of the legislature whether to enhance or detract from women's status. Women therefore continue to be vulnerable to a number of social ills because the constitution does not protect them as a group of the oppressed. This is further proof that the rights of women are not really prioritized by the state in Zimbabwe. It is therefore difficult for women to invoke the constitution for protection in those areas where they are discriminated against (UNICEF, 1995:7).

Although the constitution of Zimbabwe has been subjected to various amendments, women have not been privileged enough to get serious consideration. This could be because of the fact that there are few women in the parliament thereby making it difficult for the social status of women to be elevated. Therefore there is an urgent need for the government to introduce affirmative action even in the parliament so as to increase female participation that is apparent in the constitution is the personal pronoun "his" that is used through out. There is no mention of "her/she". "His" therefore could not be interpreted to be representing women as well. This is the same vocabulary that was used by the discriminatory colonial oppressors who had no regard for women. Women continue to be viewed from the male lenses. The constitution still needs to be democratized and be equally inclusive of women. The constitution as it remains therefore, does not improve the citizenship status of women. The constitution as a legal document should be just and thrive to promote equity for peace and unity.

Voting rights of women

Citizenship rights have in most countries been interpreted politically as the voting rights that are extended to all citizens of legal age. Although this is partly a correct

interpretation, it is not the complete description of what citizenship entails. The voting rights are not the only rights that citizens require in order to be fully integrated within the democratic institution. Such political rights have to go hand in hand with the economic and social rights.

It is noted that at independence, women were able to make their own political choices through voting in the party candidates of their choice. During the first general elections in 1980, only a few women were voted into political offices. Although women are the majority in Zimbabwe, making up 52% against 48% males, most political parties did not field in women to contest. Although women were a fundamental part of the struggle, they were denied opportunities to totally assert themselves politically. This shows that, even at the highest political offices, the patriarchal ideologies still dominated. Women were viewed as incapable of carrying political responsibilities within the public realm. It is argued therefore that the voting rights of women could only be significant if they are enabled to vote in the other female candidates that will champion their cause. The statistics provided by UNICEF in 1995 show the extent of disparities that existed in the Zimbabwean political arena where women formed an insignificant minority from the period beginning in 1985-1995. The following table shows the number of female candidates against their male counterparts in legislative bodies:

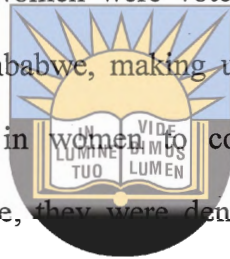


Table 1

Participation in Legislative Bodies

	1980-1984	1985-1990	1990-1995
House of Assembly	100	150	150
Men	92	133	129
Women	8	17	21
Percent Women	8.0	11.3	14
Senate	40		–
Men	37		–
Women			–
Percent Women	3	–	–
Total Parliamentarians	140	150	150
Men	129	133	129
Women	11	17	21
Percent Women	7.9	11.3	14



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UNICEF, Zimbabwe's First Report on CEDAW, Harare: UNICEF, OCTOBER 1995, p19.

The above statistics show that women are the minority in political offices thereby making it difficult for them to make any substantive changes in legislation. The total number of women parliamentarians is not convincing up to date, as they are only 15 out of the 120 that were voted in the 2000 parliamentary elections. There are also few

women who have held ministerial positions. Although the president of the country appoints Ministers, the gender issue appears to have been ignored. As the table below shows, there is need to look at issues of women representation seriously.

Table 2

Executive office by Gender

	1985		1990		1995	
	F	M	F	M	F	M
Ministers (including Minister of state)	2	25	3	29	2	21
Deputy Ministers	2	14	67	4	11	
Governor/Resident Ministers	0	7	1	7	1	7

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UNICEF, Zimbabwe's first Report on CEDAW, Harare: UNICEF, October 1995,p19.

Women form a minority group in most political party position hierarchy. For example in the ZANU (PF) Politburo, participation of women in the Politburo and central committee remained insignificant from 1985 to 1994 the biggest number of female representation was in 1994 with only 3 female members in the politburo as opposed to 21 male members (UNICEF, 1995:19).

The legal status of women

Women in the colonial era were not accorded the status of adulthood. They were considered as minors and classified together with children. Take for example the Ndebele term for women 'Abesintwana' (children) although it originated prior to colonialism, it also shows what women were thought of culturally.

However with the coming of independence, the new government attempted to change the status of women through legal instruments such as constitutional and policy reforms. The new government however adopted a dual legal system that is the general law and the customary law. Maboreke (1993:219) noted that the customary law of the indigenous people operates side by side with the general law of the land. The Customary Law and Primary Courts Act 6 of 1981 replaced the African Law and Tribal courts Act (Cap 287) and amended inter alia, the Maintenance Act (Cap 35) (Batezat and Mwalo, 1989:51). The Primary Courts took over the functions previously performed by chiefs, headmen and district commissioners in the administration of customary law. The amended Customary Law and Primary Courts Act empowered community courts to approve claims of maintenance from divorced and deserted women and children regardless of the type of marriage (Batezat and Mwalo, 1989:51). This assisted many women to up bring their children without much financial burden. The new law also enabled the court to decide on the person who gets custody of children, as men could no longer gain automatic custody as in the past. Maboreke (1993:219) however views this new customary law with different lenses and criticizes it for entrenching the objectifications, control and quasi-ownership of women by men. She further argues that it is clear that its continued application legitimates and perpetuates women's subservience to men.

Although the new government had watered down the powers of traditional leaders such as chiefs in being the custodians of the customary law, the past three years have witnessed a major shift from the ideology that the chiefs needed to be relieved of their powers because of their abuse of such privileges especially in the colonial era. The

very government that was bitterly against oppressive powers of traditional leaders has of late re-asserted the need to have powerful chiefs. The president of Zimbabwe recently started emphasizing the need for cultural consciousness and the need to recognize the significance of the chiefs in the society as custodians of traditional values. A number of chiefs were therefore appointed to the parliament by the president in 2002. In the recent cabinet reshuffle, one chief was elevated to a Ministerial post of Deputy Minister in Local government and Housing (Dailynews, 20 September 2002). The sudden emphasis on traditional leaders is likely to accelerate the subordination of women through a re-emphasize on customs that infringe on the rights of women.



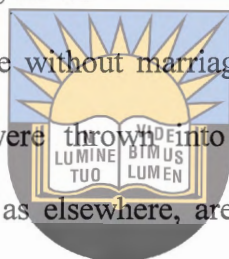
The legal age of Majority Act, 15 of 1982

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Prior to independence, only whites regardless of sex could obtain the majority status at the age of twenty-one years. African men were culturally regarded as mature and could also obtain adult hood after undergoing some initiation ritual at adolescent. The African women were however not considered as adults by both the colonial government and African culture. In 1982 however, the government sought to improve the status of women through the enactment of the new law on Legal Age of Majority Act (Act 15: 1982), which gave all Zimbabwean men, and women of all races full rights upon attaining the age of eighteen. Both men and women can decide for their lives upon attaining this age. At the age of 18 years, one can register to vote, marry the person of their choice with or without parental consent, be gainfully employed, become guardians of their children, sue and be sued.

Whilst many applauded passing of legal instruments such as the Legal Age of the Majority, certain actions by the government began to undermine this positive point. The actions of the government took a twist in 1983 after the government had authorized the arrest of women country wide on the pretext that these women who were walking around at night were all prostitutes (Gaidzanwa, 1992:115). The government also authorized its security personnel, the army and the police, to demand upon the arrested women marriage certificates in order to prove that they were decently married. This meant that, all women had to carry marriage certificates all the times to avert prosecution. Those without marriage certificates were deemed to be social deviants and therefore were thrown into prison. Howard (1995:306) too observes that women in Africa, as elsewhere, are divided clearly into “good” and “bad”. This division is reflected in the belief that all single, unattached women in the cities are prostitutes; in the frequent attempts by the government to expel single women back to the rural areas, sometimes with orders to get married, and in physical attacks on urban women.



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The same government that had pledged its commitment to improving the social status of women through eradicating gender disparities in development, was once again re-affirming what it felt was the right place for women. It re-emphasised the dominance of patriarchy over women. It is important to note with special attention that the arrests that were sanctioned by the government were biased against women, the law enforcement agents did nothing to males who loitered around at night. There were no demands of marriage certificates from males so as to prove their decency. The government by so doing made it clear that they expected all women to be married and to be under the control of men so as to prove that they lived according to male norms

in the society. Gaidzanwa (1992:115) further contends that, the arrests and round ups of beggars, squatters and women who were unfortunate enough to be walking on the streets to and from work or from movies, visiting friends and doing other business, were an attempt to reassert the social dominance of men, as well as the elders who were smarting from the perceived threats to their dominance over women within and outside households.

Some of the conservative saw the freedom that women seemed to attain through the Legal Age of the Majority Act of 1982 as a severe threat and a blow to some of the oldest standing traditional institutions such as 'lobola'. The elders of the society did not take the newly found freedom that allowed women to be freelancers in their decision-making kindly. Some felt that it was meant to liberate children from parental control, they further blame the Act for social ills and delinquencies among the young generation (UNICEF, 1995:8). As noted by Gaidzanwa (1992:114), the new freedom of young women deprived male elders of cash for damages levied against the seducer of an unmarried woman over the age of 18 years and also threatened bride wealth income that elderly men controlled by making it possible for young men and women to marry with the payment of bride wealth.

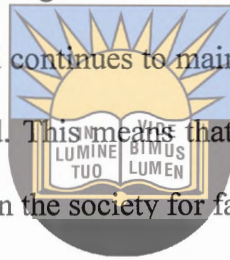
It could therefore be concluded that by arresting all women walking alone at night, the government was reacting negatively to the legislation it had passed. The sudden change by government was a clear testimony that even in the post-independence period, women had not yet attained their full independence and were still regarded as citizens of lesser value in relation to men. Their prosecution a year after passing the Majority Act was a clear panic and loud statement denouncing the freedom of women

and a new campaign towards their subordination to the patriarchal institutions. Since the same demands were not pressed upon men, this reasserted the new government position that only men were to fully enjoy the fruits of independence. The struggle for women independence however remained an illusive goal.

The perpetual torture of women and their denial of rights and freedom is still a feature in Zimbabwe today, 22 years after independence. The Law enforcement agents still round up women who are seen walking around the city at night. The males who also loiter around for various reasons at night are set free. This confirms that there is a differential treatment of citizens and also a preferential treatment of one segment of the population. The government has not fully attempted to root out the root cause of social ills such as prostitution. Although there are some women who take part in such activities, they are forced to ~~together their Exodence~~ *together their Exodence* status. Most women engage in such practices so as to feed their families since the government failed to put up reasonable social security to cater for disadvantaged women. It is therefore necessary for the government to gear itself towards seriously tackling the gender disparities that still exist in the society. This could only come by if the government commits itself towards prioritizing women's issues within development.

It is also important to note that the Legal Age of the Majority Act has been faced with cultural constraints. For example, parents still expect to be consulted for approval when their daughters are getting married. Failure to do so leads to many threats based on African superstitions. For example in Shona culture, if a daughter disobeys her parents and marries against their disapproval, the anger of her parents is believed to lead to complications during pregnancy and at delivery. In the event that these

complications lead to death the parents of the deceased daughter would expect to be paid large sums of money before they could take part in the burial. If the sum of money charged upon her death is not paid, that is further believed to lead to many deaths in the groom's family. The majority Act therefore did not significantly transform the status of women culturally since they are still expected to be subordinate to men. This subordination is at times enforced violently, for example in Bulawayo, women are beaten up, tortured and have their clothes torn if they do not dress or behave in a way that is thought to be decent by men. The government has not done anything to address this and continues to maintain that women should behave in ways that are culturally accepted. This means that the government somehow agrees with the way women are abused in the society for failing to conform to male norms.



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There is a need for the government to come up with working solutions so as to address those issues that women feel are responsible for their desperate situations. The failure by the government to address the social issues affecting women has led some of them to engage in illegal activities such as operating shebeens (illegal beer selling points operated from home). The government has only showed hostility towards shebeen operators but has not attempted to tackle the root cause of the problem, which lies mainly with the economical status of women. The government has instead labelled such places as harbors of prostitutes, drug dealers, thieves and other social deviants. The shebeens although they supplement income earned by women, they have not been spared in many African literal works allegedly for promoting social disorder. A number of prominent scholars such as Sigogo have castigated women who run shebeens in their literally works for promoting ill behavior in his work entitled 'Eshebeen'.

The Succession Bill/ Matrimonial Causes Act (15:1982)

The African culture recognizes a male first-born child as the heir to the family estate. In the event of death, this male child is expected to take over the responsibility over the deceased estate. The colonial government also made it a law that African women could not own or inherit any property such as the land. Women therefore had a double burden, emanating from their own culture and then coded as customary law by the colonial powers. Although women contributed immensely in the procurement of the family property through their unpaid domestic labour, at death or divorce, they walked away with nothing.



In 1982, the government adopted the Matrimonial Causes Act so that both men and women could have equal rights to the family property. According to Batezat and Mwalo (1989:51), the Matrimonial Causes Act, overrides any customary law on the distribution of property on divorce and it gives the courts powers of distribution that extend to all general law marriages that are out of community. Unscrupulous relatives can no longer just take marital property according to this new law away from the matrimonial home.

It is however important to note that the level of consciousness among women in Zimbabwe especially those in the rural areas is still very low. Most of these women are not aware of the laws to protect them as most still subscribe to oppressive cultural norms. The level of consciousness is low in the rural areas because most of these women lack education. In the event of the death of the husband, most women are told to choose between remaining in the family by marrying one of the brothers of the

deceased who is not necessarily single and by so doing keep the property or to leave the family and get nothing in terms of property. This practice is rampant amongst both the Shona and the Ndebele people in Zimbabwe. The movie that was cast in Zimbabwe entitled 'Neria' depicted the extreme abuse that the widows are subjected to at the death of their husbands. Culturally, women are not expected to be economically empowered and therefore are seen as dependents of men, it is this belief that leads to the ill treatment of the widows. With the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS pandemic in Zimbabwe, women's lives are put at severe risk of contracting the deadly disease through the practice of wife inheritance. Such practices need to be discouraged through government intervention and the awareness programmes that could be carried out by Non Governmental Organisations (NGO).



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Citizenship Act

Although the government of Zimbabwe attempted to implement a number of constitutional reforms to the inherited Lancaster constitution, the citizenship Act, 1984 remained with a lot of loopholes in the sense that it did not offer women the same rights as that of men in determination of one's nationality. The Constitution and the Citizenship of Zimbabwe Act, 1984, govern nationality in Zimbabwe. According to the Constitution, citizenship in Zimbabwe is acquired by birth, descent or registration. However Zimbabwean women still cannot pass citizenship to their children and foreign spouses. In contrast, the wives of Zimbabwean males are granted automatic citizenship by registration after marriage. A foreign man married to a Zimbabwean citizen does not have such right and has to qualify for citizenship through the normal way like any other alien wishing to acquire Zimbabwean citizenship. At present the foreign spouses of Zimbabwean women living in the

country with their families are required to have a residence permit and a work permit otherwise they are treated like visitors, whereas foreign women married to Zimbabwean citizens automatically get the right to apply for a citizenship and a work permit (UNICEF,1995:22). It should however be taken note of that male foreign spouses are not just granted work permits as that depends upon their skills being evaluated as scarce or unavailable in Zimbabwe.

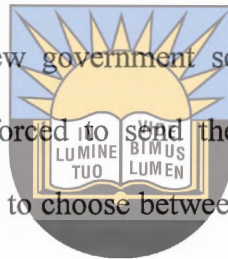
Zimbabwean men are also in a position to pass citizenship to children born to their foreign spouses. Citizenship of a legitimate child depends on the citizenship of the father. However a legitimate child born in Zimbabwe to a citizen mother and a non-citizen father residing in Zimbabwe cannot acquire citizenship. In terms of the Constitution, an unmarried woman can pass on her citizenship to her “illegitimate” children, meaning that an unmarried mother can register the birth of the child herself and obtain birth certificate for the child. This only applies where the father’s name will not appear on the child’s birth certificate, otherwise the law requires the consent of the father as guardian of the child.

The citizenship Act therefore remains discriminatory to women and also fails to elevate them from their low social status. Men on the other hand are granted full entitlements to their citizenship rights. Zimbabwean women are not placed in the same footing with men when it comes to the transmission of citizenship to their children and foreign spouses. This law is clearly biased towards men. This act also works hand in hand with traditional perceptions that children born within customary marriage belong to the husband whilst illegitimate children belong to father of the mother. As shall be seen in the following sections, women are either under the

guardianship of their father prior to marriage and automatically transfer hands after the payment of 'lobola' thereby granting the husband full rights over the wife.

Education and employment

Education and employment during the colonial period was very limited for blacks. The white settlers were determined to maintain their hegemony over other races through monopolization of formal education and employment. Education for whites was made compulsory and free from 1930 whilst that of the African child was neither compulsory nor free. Only a few government schools were available for blacks. Because of this, parents were forced to send their children to expensive mission schools. This forced most parents to choose between educating a boy and a girl child., in most cases parents preferred sending the boy to school over a girl. This was based on the assumption that educating a female child was a waste of resources since she was going to join another family through marriage.



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Because girls remained relatively uneducated in comparison to boys, they also had limited opportunities for vocational training and as a result they landed in unskilled low paying jobs. It should also be noted that girls faced a lot of discrimination in paid employment on the basis of their gender.

After independence, the government introduced new policies on education and employment. The state began by attempting to de-racialise education, providing equal opportunities for all Zimbabweans. The government then embarked on expansion of educational facilities and introduced free education for all up to 1990 when ESAP was introduced. From this time, education became very expensive as government

subsidies were withdrawn. In light of this parents began sending their children inferior schools where education was still affordable leading to poor quality education. In some cases, parents were forced to choose between educating a boy and a girl child thereby disadvantaging the girl child as it is generally believed that investing in a girl education is a waste of time since she is going to join and work for another family after marriage.

The government also attempted to remove discrimination against women workers through legislative measures. The private sector is governed by labour relations Act while the public service is governed by the Constitution, a number of regulations and several acts of Parliament (UNICEF, 1995). Although employees are governed by different enactments according to the sectors they serve, those different Acts all prohibit discrimination on the ~~the~~ spirit of non discrimination, in 1981 the Equal Pay for Equal work Regulation was introduced, superceding the Industrial Conciliation Act (Cap 246) which had regulated minimum wages for women between 56% and 67% of male earnings in the same grade (Batezat and Mwalo, 1989:28). In 1980 new maternity leave and breast feeding regulations were introduced and Labour relations Act (LRA) of 1985 improved the maternity leave provisions by allowing women a total of ninety days paid maternity leave at 75% of normal salary. However, the payment of three quarters salary shows that the government does not view maternity leave as a right for women but rather treats it as a favour.

Although a number of legislations were introduced as a way of curbing gendered discrimination in employment, women continue to occupy inferior jobs that

emphasise their re-domestication such as teaching and nursing. Women also represent a large percentage of people involved in the informal sector where they sell various goods in order to supplement their incomes. Women are largely involved in cross border trading because most of them can not be absorbed in the formal sector because they have a relatively lower education in comparison to males. Because of limited educational opportunities, women have often been forced into illegal activities such as beer brewing and prostitution.

Social cultural barriers to citizenship



This section would focus on the family and the traditional practices such as ‘lobola’ so as to show how these have contributed to the current citizenship status that women hold. A number of scholars have argued that the family institution is responsible for the subordinate positions of women since it has socialized them to be ‘secondary class’ citizens in relation to men. The traditional practice of ‘lobola’ has also been criticized for commodifying women into assets. It is also criticized for contributing to their vulnerability. ‘Lobola’ has also encouraged the privatization of women and their treatment as non-citizens.

The agency of socialisation

Gender socialization is a system that involves the teaching of certain socially acceptable values and morals to boys and girls. Boys are taught that which is expected from them and girls too are taught certain values and morals that differ from what is expected from boys. This socialization is one of the major impediments to women citizenship. The patriarchal domination of women that is encouraged through certain

forms of socialization has led to the violation of citizen rights that women are entitled to. Women are subordinated to males not only in the privacy of the family but also in the state public institutions where they are largely denied their social and civil rights. They are exploited in both private and public spheres because of the unequal division of labour emanating from certain forms of socialisation. Society has been socialized according to certain societal norms. The society has certain expectations upon people and these have often resulted in gendered socialisation whereby people are expected to do certain tasks and to behave in certain ways because of their gender. Family values, education and wealth distribution are a reflection of socialisation.



The greatest impediment to women's emancipation is the commodification of their labour. Males have had an advantage in regard to both legal freedom and citizenship because of commodification of women's lack of legal power in households controlled through patriarchal practices. The socialization of women in the privacy of the family is partly responsible for the situation of women. In most cases women are socialized to endure hardships and pain. They are treated as people without rights. This treatment does not only end in the family but is imported to the public sphere as well. Women are therefore denied their social citizenship through this method of patriarchal socialization. Women are socialized to feel inadequate (incomplete beings) and hence, their denial of certain rights is justified as such. They socialized to believe that household chores and the role of nurturing is naturally for women. As a result women spend most of their time occupied in unpaid domestic labour.

The unequal division of labour in the private sphere of the home has denied women equal status of citizens in the same way as men. This results from the socialization

that takes place within home. The family is actually a unit of reproduction. Certain relations define who does what in the family and these are based on gender. Women spend most of the time burdened with unpaid domestic work that eats up the time they could productively use in the public sphere to influence policy matters. It is only when women get empowered socially that they would be able to be in control of their lives. It is important to note that social citizenship implies that everyone is able to participate in the political, economical and social institutions of the society. The unequal relations have hampered women's effort to gain social equity so as to lift up their standards. The family also tends to be an inhibitor in the emancipation of women.



Within the family the male child is always shown preference as a permanent member of the family. Girls are treated as temporary members. They play practice games that would make them grow up accepting their domestication like playing with dolls and cooking in the kitchen. Girls are socialized like 'secondary citizens' in the family and hence their resultant occupation of the private sphere- family. Boys on the other hand are prioritized within the family. The parents treat them as 'primary citizens' and hence they are groomed to occupy important positions in the public sphere. This distinction is carried over and applied to all the state structures. Women therefore find it difficult to be accommodated in the public sphere.

In an African setting, a boy child becomes economically empowered at an early stage as he usually gets part of his inheritance as an heir and therefore the future leader of the family. As for the girl child, her future is usually determined at an early stage as she is usually commodified and made to feel like a visitor in her natural family since

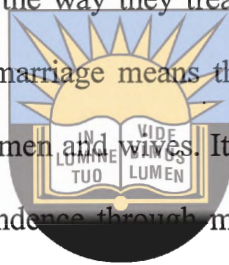
sooner or later she is to join her husband's family through marriage. The girl child is socialized to endure unfriendly and unjust environment that she is expected to endure for the rest of her life. The family institution needs to be re-organised, as it is also responsible for the gender disparities that still exist.

Marriage and Family institution

Women have always been an integral part of the society. Prior to colonialism, women were valued for their labour in agricultural production and their reproductive capabilities. Women were also valued for their healing powers. Although the family institution was undoubtedly patriarchal, there seems to have been a clear division of labour between women and men. The division of labour was fair as the activities of both men and women were complimentary. The colonial period however introduced new economical relations which split both the public and the private sphere. Women suffered more economical loses than men. They were transformed into economical dependents. The new property relations meant that women could not own property of their own.

The family was destabilized due to the migration from the rural areas to urban areas during colonialism. The sexual division of labour was severed as women had to remain looking after the family under harsh economic conditions. As observed by Batezat and Mwalo (1989:53) women played a great role in caring for the future labour force with less resources but more work. Their status was also declining and women were continuously seen as attachments to men rather than vital to the household survival.

Although women remained heads of households, this did not change their subordinate position in the society. Culturally, men own the labour of women because of the payment of 'lobola' at marriage. Women continue to lose a number of their rights through marriage. The cultural songs that are sung at wedding ceremonies confirm this. Gender equity is a non-issue as these traditional songs testify. Women are encouraged to be brave and to persevere in marriage, as they are likely to be faced with some difficulties and other harsh conditions. The same is not told to men at marriage thereby legitimatising the way they treat women. The unequal division of labour that follows soon after marriage means that women have to work extra for them to be regarded as good women and wives. It is therefore considered cultural for women to give up their independence through marriage as they join the husband's family. Culturally, marriage is interpreted as a way of introducing more labour to the groom's family. Therefore, women who wish to succeed in their marriages are culturally expected to sweat and toil and to be submissive to the husband and his family. As observed by Batezat and Mwalo (1989:54), this labour of women is not recognized as work but as the natural role of women- hence it's under valuation.



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Domestic labour does not elevate the status of women, it actually represent their subordination to males. Equality in this case is not premised on the extent of the labour that one does within the patriarchal household, but it is based on who is the husband and wife. The husband as the head of the family has the power to decide on the welfare of all the individuals in the family and his word overrules all. This male control over women's labour and sexuality within the household is reinforced through religious beliefs, cultural practices and educational systems both traditional and modern that assign to women lesser status and power (Batezat and Mwalo, 1989:55).

Male control of women within the family institution has in most cases been perpetrated through the use of violence. In order to exert power over women, violent acts such as rape, physical battering and psychological abuse have been exercised with little or no intervention from the state. For example, nothing has been done to stop the physical and psychological torture of women that takes place on the streets.

The relations between men and women in the household have been identified as the major determinant of the behavior of women in a larger social set up. The subordination of women has roots in the family institution. Batezat and Mwalo (1989:56) propound that, the men's ability to develop organizational structures beyond their households grew out of their superior position within the family and the sexual division of labour in the home. Cultural traditions have been consulted to the active agency of women since it has always barred them from public decision-making. This begins in the family institution whereby women are denied an opportunity to make decisions in the family. Male control of women in the household therefore remains a major barrier to women's effective participation in the public affairs.

Women are still expected to seek permission from their husbands before they join professional organizations that hold meetings at night. Husbands in some cases have the right to decide whether their wives should work or not basing their authority on the fact that large sums of money would have been paid for their wives in the form of 'lobola' (Batezat and Mwalo, 1989:56-57). If the positions of women are to change, there is an urgent need of transformation of sexual relations within the family.

The following section shall discuss the ‘lobola’ institution so as to show how it has contributed to the current social status of women.

Lobola as an Institution

‘Lobola’ (Bride wealth) is a cultural marriage practice that was practiced by both the Ndebele and Shona and other tribes in the pre-colonial society. It was in form of a gift that was presented to the bride’s parents by the groom’s family as a way of uniting the two families. It also symbolized the appreciation that the grooms’ family was extending to their in-laws for extending a hand in marriage. It was paid in form of cattle, which were a valuable possession and many other valuable gifts. ‘lobola’ was also a way of appreciating the additional labour in the family and the reproductive ability of women.



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‘Lobola’ however changed its meaning during the colonial period. It gained a new meaning within the confines of the capitalist economy. It was re-interpreted as ‘buying’ the women and her rights. This practice began to be measured in economic value of exchange. Parents began to change large sums of money as their economic status began to be eroded. Batezat and Mwalo (1989:53) also reaffirm the above point in that the payment of ‘lobola’ has increasingly become a commercial transaction with parents charging exorbitant rates for educated daughters.

During the colonial period, women had no rights and had to be represented by males at all times. Just like property, they could change ownership through the payment of ‘lobola’. Prior to marriage, the total ownership was in the hands of the father. ‘Lobola’ meant that the woman moved from the hands of the father to the direct

control of the husband. This practice became very detrimental to the rights of women as they were expected to subordinate to men through out their lives.

The lobola practice remains intact even in the post-independence era. The state has however not been able to tackle this issue. ‘Lobola’ still has to be paid prior to marriage. The practice has been subjected to more abuse especially in these harsh economic times. Astronomical charges are levied against prospectus son-in-laws. At times luxurious items such as cell phones and cars are being demanded as payment for ‘lobola.’ The state has not intervened to control the abuse of such traditional customs. Women’s rights are therefore at stake because of the abuse of this traditional practice that has continuously eroded their social status. Culturally, women are still expected to be submissive to their husbands. They are expected to be obedient and not to challenge them as their freedom and intelligence payment of ‘lobola’. Mertus (1995:79) also contends that the payment of ‘lobola’ means that husbands regard their wives as part of their property. This usually leads to abuse of women by their husbands or the husband’s family on the ground that ‘lobola’ was paid for them (UNICEF, 1995:13). There are no guidelines as to what is standard for ‘lobola’, therefore each family charge according to the economical value they attach to their daughters. Since this practice is an oral tradition, it is very difficult to regularize it. As long as this practice continues to be abused, the status of non-citizen would continue to be attached to all women.

The payment of ‘lobola’ has also entailed that men are able to control the productive health of women. Men decide on the number of children that a woman should have. Most men also subject against the use of family planning methods by their wives.

Although many children become a burden to women as it increases workload, erodes meager financial resources and at time put women's health at risk, no such consideration is taken into account. Since women have no control over their sexuality due to 'lobola' payments, this puts many women at risk of contracting the deadly HIV/AIDS from irresponsible husbands.

Religion and the Social Status of Women

Religion is a social institution of people who share the same belief in the existence of a greater spiritual being with powers that affect the whole universe. It embodies cultural beliefs of particular people and is central to the spiritual beliefs of the people. In Zimbabwe, the indigenous people are linked to the African traditional religion. Central to their religious beliefs was a mighty being referred to as 'Nkulunkulu' (The greater one) in Ndebele and 'Mwari' in Shona. They believed that they could access the blessings of this greater being by appeasing their dead ancestors called 'Amadlozi' in Ndebele. The spirit mediums therefore became very prominent in the society. It is these spirit mediums that could link the living and the dead.

Both men and women could become spirit mediums after undergoing intensive training in the field. The spirit mediums were highly regarded in the society. Their contribution to the society as healers greatly transformed their social status. Their capabilities made them to be regarded as sacred, and this earned them a lot of respect. The spirit mediums became both healers and mediators. When problems arose in the society, they were called upon to mediate on the behalf of the living so as to escape calamities. The spirit mediums therefore stood between the living and the spiritual realms. They had great influence in the society. Women who were possessed by

ancestral spirits were regarded as very powerful and this elevated their social status. For example Mbuya Nehanda, a female spirit medium was highly respected in the society.

The coming of colonialists and the introduction of different religions such as Islam and Christianity changed the traditional perception of religion. The new religions negated the traditional religions of the indigenous people. It was labeled as demonic and therefore evil. These new religions that were being rapidly spread by the missionaries eventually destroyed the power and influence previously held by the spirit mediums. As noted by Adeyi (1995:5), the new religion had serious implications not only on the spirit mediums whose influence and power were undervalued but also on the lives of ordinary women. This is because; both Christian and Islamic traditions preach female subservience and their withdrawal from the public sphere. For example, wealthy Muslim women are segregated and expected to retreat into purdah as a symbol of their husbands' success (Howard, 1995:307). It is therefore difficult to integrate women into development when certain belief systems include the notion that women should subordinate to men.

Christianity also brought with it a new doctrine on sexual relations. The subordination of women was emphasized. Christianity, which was largely influenced by the Jewish traditions that discriminate against women, adopted similar traditions. In Jewish tradition, women were never regarded as equal to men in all spheres of their lives. Women were always treated as Gentiles (Non-Jewish) and like the other outcasts in the society.

Christianity, which draws much from the Old Testament traditions, did not emancipate women from their low status. The Old Testament is actually a powerful transmitter of patriarchal ideologies. The introductory scriptures of the Old Testament dwell much on the creation stories emphasizing that God created man first in his image and later created a woman from the rib of a man to help him. The first man Adam is portrayed as an honest being until the creation of a woman- Eve who then corrupted him. These biblical traditions further account for the subordination of women as God ordained. In Genesis 3v16, Eve is punished for having disobeyed God and also for misleading Adam into sinning. As part of the punishment for this sin, God gives Adam the mandate to rule over Eve. This later translated to men's rule over all women.

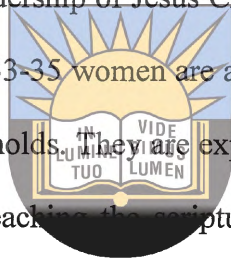


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The Old Testament also emphasise the need for men to take charge over women. Women are expected to be subordinate to males and prior to marriage, fathers are given responsibility to control their daughters until they get married. After marriage, it is the responsibility of the husband to rule over the wife. Prior to marriage, the role of mothers is overshadowed, as they do not feature in the upkeep of their daughters. Their role as mothers is watered down meaning that men have control not only over their daughters but also over their mothers (Numbers 30 v 3-16). In Kings 11 v3, polygamy is celebrated. Women are depicted as creatures created for the sexual gratification of man. Women are further portrayed as evil hearted and having bad influences on men. Solomon is not made to take responsibility for his sinful ways; the blame is put on his wives, princesses and concubines for influencing him to sin against his God.

Although Christianity downplayed extreme discrimination of women in churches, it still maintained in some of the New Testament scriptures that women had to be subordinate to men. In 1 Corinthians 11 verse 3, 7-8 draws from the Old Testament arguing that man was created in the image of god whereas the woman was created from a man. It further says that man was not created for a woman whereas the woman was created to be a servant of a man. The apostle Paul preached that women had to be subordinate to men in the family and in the church. The leadership of men in the family was equated with the leadership of Jesus Christ in the church. In Timothy 2 v 11-15 and in 1 Corinthians 14: 33-35 women are also expected to be submissive both in the church and in their households. They are expected to take orders from men and they are also forbidden from teaching the scriptures or to have any authority over men. These scriptures are justified through creation stories where it is said that God created men first not by mistake but purposely. The nurturing role of women is emphasized and childbearing is identified as the only way that can save women.



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Christianity therefore did not bring about the salvation of women from the patriarchal oppression but rather continues to encourage it. The social injustices against women are in most instances justified through biblical interpretations. Christianity therefore justifies the secondary status of women.

Dilemma of Gender and Development

The foregoing discussion tends to suggest that the position of women in relation to development has not changed. Consequently, the position of women to 'Just development' as propounded by Clark (1991) has not materialized. The racial approach in redressing social injustices has not emancipated women in development.

Women continue to have limited freedoms due to their inferior social positions that is reinforced through numerous cultural and social norms. It is important therefore for all approaches to women empowerment to start by addressing the web causes of women underdevelopment.

Just development is one such approach that could be applied to improve the situations of women in Zimbabwe. This approach could be applied to poverty alleviation programmes as it targets the weaker members of the society through provision of social services such as free education, health care, shelter and equal employment opportunities. The inclusion of women in the economic and political arenas on equal footing could work a long way towards equal integration of women in development.



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Conclusion

The position of women has not really improved in the post-independence Zimbabwe as gender disparities continue to strive. The status of women remains inferior, as they have not benefited much from the post-independence economic reforms that were introduced by the government guided by socialist ideologies. Constitutionally, women continue to face a lot of discriminations since the constitution does not make it a crime to discriminate on the grounds of sex. This has put women in vulnerable positions, as they have no special protection from a lot of injustices. Although women were accorded political rights of voting and to stand for political positions, this too has not improved their status as only a handful of women are actively involved in politics. Those that are involved tend to be overshadowed by male political ideologies since men tend to dominate in numbers. The legal status of women improved with the introduction of the majority Act, however women often do not enjoy their rights as

adults because of cultural constraints that are embedded in social institutions such as marriage and religion. Women's rights however require a change in the legal system and in the cultural beliefs in all the societies. Those systems that promote the subordination of women should be transformed so as to champion the emancipation of women.

The following chapter proposes some policy reforms that could be adopted in Zimbabwe so as to improve the status of women.



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CHAPTER 5

Summary and Conclusion

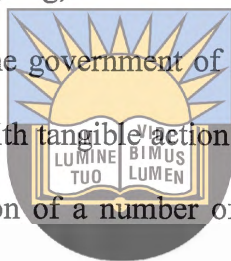
The major purpose of this chapter is to support the objectives of this study and also to come up with some policy frameworks and reforms that could be adopted so as to improve women's participation in development. As observed in the previous chapters, women in Zimbabwe do not possess the same social resources as that of men in the society. Women continue to face discrimination in several ways in the society. The state policies, cultural and religious beliefs are some of the factors that are responsible for the present status of women.



Women continue to be marginalized in the public sphere because of their inferior social status. This inferior status inhibits them from being full beneficiaries of development. It also places them in a marginalized position where it becomes difficult to exercise their rights. As a result, women do not have full entitlements of their political, economic and social rights. Although women participated equally in the liberation war that was meant to bring about an equitable social transformation, women did not benefit much as their status remains inferior to that of men.

Gender discrimination still plays a prominent role in determining the social position of women. This social categorization based on gender is institutionalized in a number of state structures, cultural and certain religious beliefs. Within the state apparatus, women still do not possess full political rights because the majority of them do not hold any influential political positions. Men largely dominate the parliament of Zimbabwe. The problems that are faced by women in various aspects of their lives

have not been of much concern to these politicians since no political projects have been undertaken so as to address the present status of women. The Minister responsible for gender issues is male and hence his ministry has not achieved much as far as women are concerned. Discrimination of women in the society still persist, it is therefore women themselves who are subject of this discrimination who can best articulate this issue and also propose a way forward since they are participants and not observers. It is only women who must speak for themselves and decide for themselves who they are, where they are going, what obstacles face them and how to remove them (Susan Bazili, 1991:7). The government of Zimbabwe through the Ministry of Gender has failed to come up with tangible action plan aimed at improving the social status of women. The imposition of a number of economic projects to address the economic status of women has failed to elevate women to the same social status as that of men. Hence there is *Together in Excellence* those social institutions that still perpetrate discrimination of women.



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Women are a pillar of the society and indeed development, however their contribution in the development process has not emancipated them. Gender stereotypes are still being promoted in development. The patriarchal domination of women, which dates back to the pre-colonial and colonial period, is still a feature even today. Although many changes were effected after independence so as to improve the status of women, these changes were not very effective because they were done within the same patriarchal framework. As a result women are still expected to be subordinate to the patriarchal system. Women are expected to accept male ideologies and also to support them as the natural way of things. The social and economic rights of women continue to be violated. The social structure remains largely patriarchal and cultural beliefs

stand in as obstacles in the emancipation of women. Religious beliefs have also confined women in inferior positions in the society.

It has been noted that women form a high percentage of the economically deprived, and this has had a negative impact on both their well-being and social status. The colonial economic principles sidelined women and the present state has also failed to fully incorporate women into the broad national economic projects. A point of highlight could be drawn from the ongoing land redistribution exercise were the gender question appears to be a silent factor. Of prominence in the whole exercise is the racial issue. It appears the whole exercise has just been racialised but gendered citizenship does not feature as another form of discrimination since women were not considered in the re-distribution exercise as part of the oppressed. Since the present status of women is partly ~~due to their dependence~~ on men economically, their economic status could have been improved through affirmative action programme in the land re-distribution exercise.

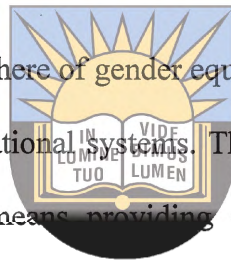
The state policies in education, health and employment among others continue to be restrictive to women. In education for example, the curriculum tends to be suffused with gender biases and leads girls into stereotypical “feminine” jobs in teaching, nursing and clerical work. Few women are found in scientific or technical education where they are likely to develop better skills to secure better paying jobs (www.un.org). Although education plays a significant role in the enlightenment and empowerment of women, the nature of education has to be thoroughly evaluated so that it provides purposive and informative education.

The curriculum should be gender sensitive and should be aimed at meeting the basic needs of women. Since most educational systems were inherited from colonialism and were discriminatory to women, most states have tended to simply adopt the same system without analytically restructuring it to be all inclusive. Informative and empowering education should be aimed at addressing the present status of women. Meaning that education should raise the level of consciousness among women. As noted by Anand (1983:7), the educational systems in most developing countries are relics of their colonial past, and irrelevant to the needs of most people especially women.



The present state in Zimbabwe also adopted the Economic policies that were detrimental to the lives of women. The Economic Structural Adjustment that was adopted in 1991 to spearhead the country's economic growth forced most parents to choose between educating a boy and a girl. Most parents preferred to educate boys in situations where they could not afford the payment of school fees. The privatization of most services that the state previously owned and subsidized made it tough to educate all the children and the government did not offer any protection to the girl child. The boy child on the other hand was given preference as he is considered to be a better asset in terms of financial returns. For the affluent, educating women is usually interpreted as an exercise that will increase their price in marriage market (Anand, 1983:7). Education should however be a conscientizing tool if it is to have any value for women. It should make women aware about the oppressive structures that keep them in positions of powerlessness. Education should give women choices, it should enlighten them about their rights and it should also give them choices about their own sexuality through health education.

The existing educational systems have not provided women with adequate tools to understand and analyze the true nature of social, political and economic systems that govern their lives and oppress them. Anand (1983:3) asserts that, if women are to be change agents in their societies, then, the education offered to them must be a tool for consciousness raising and action. Education should also aim at eradicating gender biases if sustainable development is to be achieved. Purposive education has to be disseminated to women through all possible communication channels.



It is essential to build an atmosphere of gender equality for women through influential social institutions such as educational systems. This kind of social change has to be built from childhood, which means providing girls with equality education that includes equal condition for accessing all areas of study (www.undp.org). Recognizing girls as citizens means giving them the same rights to participation and freedom of expression in school, the family and the community as well as assuring them protection against all forms of violence. The state should provide an enabling environment for the development of the girl child at school so that she grows up fully empowered and is easily integrated in the public sector and the society. Non-governmental organizations could also be handy in disseminating information and also conscientizing women about their rights.

The legal structures of the state have also been biased against women. The constitution of Zimbabwe does not protect women against gendered discrimination and oppression. Unlike constitutions of other African countries for example Uganda and South Africa which strongly speak against gender discrimination in their constitutions, the Zimbabwean constitution on the other hand does not proscribe

discrimination based on gender part of which is a serious omission on the constitution. Muli (1995:78) contends that, this silence ensures that, where such discrimination occurs no existing law can challenge it. The constitution of Zimbabwe only gave women limited rights like the Legal Age of Majority, Maintenance of children and property rights but such rights continue to be violated through gendered discrimination.

It is therefore a challenge to the state to take up the problems of gender discrimination seriously so as to rethink development. This could be done through appropriate legal actions and policy reforms. Women could organize themselves and press for a new constitution that would be created within a gender sensitive framework. There is a need for a new constitution that will be free of patriarchal ideologies with regard to the land ownership, family and the judicial system.



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The constitution should also be able to protect women against oppressive cultural and religious practices, instrumental and expressive patriarchy. The law should enable women to have full control over their bodies so that they are able to make their own choices.

Cultural practices have also played a prominent role in the oppression of women. Due to the abuse of cultural practices such as “lobola”, women have been subject to abuse because they are viewed as property belonging to men who pay money in order to marry them. Customary law treats women as minors in the household and in the society. The cultural socialization that takes place through out the growth of children teaches them that the rightful place for women is at home under the guardianship of

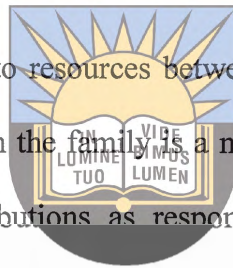
men. Butegwa (1993:40) observes that some of the cultures are actually used by the government as excuses for not amending national laws to recognize women's rights.

Gendered socialization usually takes place within the private family institution and this is carried over to the public sphere. Cheal (1991:91) propounds that a low level of access to the interior of family life by outsiders renders physical or other abuse against women practically invisible, and thereby insulates oppressive power relations from social pressures and sanctions. The cultural practices that are oppressive to women need to be discouraged through legal instruments.



Women should also be conscientised about their rights within the family institution and the options available to them. As observed by Molokomme (1997:4) certain socio-cultural and legal systems of our societies reinforce and entrench patriarchal relations by giving men control over productive resources such as land and other valuable property through marriage norms which subordinate wives to their husbands and inheritance laws and customs which declare males the principal beneficiaries of the family property. Patriarchal relations are therefore upheld by means of a web of laws both public and private. Religion, traditional practices, ideological apparatus such as schools and the media are some of the elements that actively promote patriarchy. It is through law that such relations could be changed. As noted by Bazili (1991:15), law typically incorporates a community's customs and values, whether domestic, economic, religious or moral, and law acts primarily, as a means of social control, which entrenches these values in the interest of the society's dominant class. However, common law that equally protects the interests of all citizens has to be devised.

There is need to find ways of dealing with oppressive culture that marginalizes women. Jaising (1995:55) contends that, as long as cultural assumptions about the inferiority of women continue to exist, equality for women and freedom from discrimination based on sex will remain distant dreams. In order to change the cultural practices that are oppressive to women, there is need to engage the whole community in dialogue through education so as to alert them about the need to respect the rights of women.



Equal rights and equal access to resources between men and women should start at family level. Equal treatment in the family is a matter of fully recognizing women's personal and economic contributions as responsible adults to family well-being, without conferring them solely to roles within the family (Freeman, 1995:150). Socialization within the family should not be on the basis of gender but should be premised on equal division of labour.

Women participation within the public sector should also be encouraged. The government has a duty to provide an enabling environment to all citizens. As observed by Gordon (1996:121), state intervention is necessary to the promotion of gender equality both by breaking down institutionalized patriarchy and by facilitating or creating new institutions based on equal rights. The state plays an important ideological role by informing women and men of women's rights, spreading the ideals of gender equality through educational system and media under its control, and expanding women's participation in government and other decision making roles. It is only when all citizens, including women are truly empowered, gaining real access to political representation that they will be able to sustain and direct their interests,

formulate agendas and overcome common obstacles towards the full development of society (www.undp.org).

The issue of gender equality and equal access to development should be treated with urgency as a matter of basic human rights and democracy. Molokomme (1997:6) propounds that contemporary democracy requires full participation of all sections of the society not just in casting the vote, but also in the decision-making processes and allocation of resources. The social status of women should transcend politics, and reassert them as full economic beneficiaries and also elevate their social status. Clark (1991: 16) also contends that democracy should not be the right to vote in the government- important as that is- it should be about a whole set of rights which citizens must be afforded if a government is to be open, accountable and participatory. For Clark (1991:28) equality should not be projected as charity but should be pursued because the nation as a whole runs more efficiently and becomes better off when its productive assets are broadly distributed. Social justice should therefore aim at eradicating all forces of injustice and all forms of discrimination, whether on grounds of race, creed, tribe or sex.

Gender equality in development could be realized if the political, economic and social status of women is improved. Affirmative action policies have to be applied to all sectors of the economy so as to improve the social status of women by bringing them at par with men. The government of Zimbabwe, which subscribes to various international conventions aimed at improving the status of women through various reforms should be at the forefront and protect the rights of women. The Zimbabwean government ratified the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All forms of

Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1991 and by so doing became part of the convention. The government committed itself to observe and respect the rights of women as set in the convention. The convention advanced the interests of women through calling for legal, policy and programme development to promote equality as a means to justice. As observed by Freeman (1993:93), the basic premise of the convention is that women have a right to the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on the basis of equality with men.



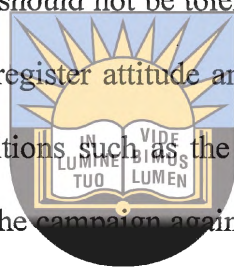
The recommendations that could be adopted so as to improve the citizenship status of women are; state intervention through implementation of gender free development policies. These policies should be implemented in key development areas such as in education, health sector and in the resource allocation. The government should also consider prioritizing women in the land re-distribution exercise so as to empower them economically.

There is a need for the government to facilitate the provision of neutral legal instruments so as to equally protect the rights of every citizen. The constitution of the country should be amended so that there is a provision for the protection of the rights of women and gender discrimination should be condemned in the strongest terms. Alternatively, women and other interest groups could lobby for a new constitution that is created within a gender free framework.

Affirmative action in favour of women should be introduced in areas of education so as to uplift the education standards of a girl child. Women have been disadvantaged for most part of their history by being denied equal education opportunities.

Improving the education standards of women will go a long way in improving their social status and also involve them more in decision-making bodies. Education could improve the social status of women by opening a room for their participation in development. Informative education could also raise the level of consciousness among women thereby making them aware of their rights. The government should provide a room for more female participation in politics and decision-making.

Oppressive culture and religion should not be tolerated by the state. There is need for informative education so as to register attitude and perception transformation in the society. The custodians of traditions such as the chiefs and other traditional leader need to be actively involved in the campaign against oppression and discrimination of women. The non-governmental organizations in Zimbabwe should address the question of gender; speak against the discrimination of women and conscientize the society about the rights of women.



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Summing up our discussion, it was noted in this study that women do not possess the same social rights as that of their male counterparts in the society. Women continue to be denied their citizenship through various social institutions. Schools, churches and cultural practices are some of the social institutions that are responsible for the present status of women. It was noted in chapter 3 that the discrimination of women dates back in the pre-colonial period where the social order was patriarchal. Although there was equal division of labour in the pre-colonial societies that were nomadic in nature, this seems to have changed with the advent of colonialism. The introduction of the new means of production and new economic relations eroded the status of women thereby transforming them into perpetual minors. The post-independence period in

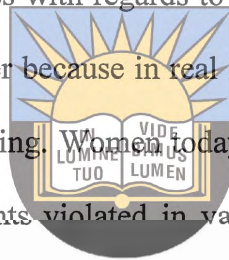
Zimbabwe presented women with new challenges, as they were not recognised as citizens of equal value despite their active participation in the liberation war. This then calls for alternatives so as to improve the conditions of women. Affirmative action and other state interventions are some of the ways that could be implemented so as to elevate the status of women.

This study revealed that women in Zimbabwe have not yet attained their full citizenship status because there are being discriminated in various ways. Because women continue to be denied their citizenship, they continue to occupy marginal positions in development. The continual denial of rights for women is not a new feature it has a long history with roots both in the pre-colonial and colonial period. Women were subordinated to the patriarchal institutions of the society in the pre-colonial period with the father acting as the head of the household and thereby having a final say in all issues that pertained the family.

The discriminatory nature of the patriarchal relations however became more pronounced during the consolidation of the colonial state. It was noted that it was during this time that the black women became deprived both as belonging to what was deemed as the inferior race and secondly, they were discriminated for being women. It was at this time that women lost the social, political and economic rights as the new monetary economy had no place for them. Women lost their social status largely because of the introduction of a dual legal system, which had the customary law governing the blacks. Women lost power and influence both in the household and in the society and were eventually transformed into minors without any rights. As a result women became dependent on men economically. The colonial government

clearly did not consider women as equal citizens since it encouraged gender discrimination.

It was further noted in the study that although women thought they could emancipate themselves by taking part in the liberation war that was wedged by the nationalist leaders, their situation did not change much in the post independence period, as they still do not enjoy full rights on equal footing with men. Although the nationalist leaders in made a lot of promises with regards to the problems faced by women that seems to have remained on paper because in real life the problems of women are not decreasing but they are multiplying. Women today appear to be a forgotten factor as they continue to have their rights violated in various ways ranging from the state policies, cultural confines and oppressive religious doctrines.



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There is a need to take the problems that are faced by women seriously so that they could also benefit from their contributions in the development process. In order to improve the citizenship of women, there is a need to promote gender equality in the society so as to fully intergrate them in development. This could be done through policy reforms and affirmative programmes.

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