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**IMPLEMENTATION OF GENDER POLICIES TO PROMOTE GENDER
PARITY IN LEADERSHIP IN ACADEMIA: A CASE STUDY OF TWO
UNIVERSITIES IN BINDURA URBAN MASHONALAND CENTRAL
PROVINCE ZIMBABWE**

**A Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree
of**

Doctor of Philosophy

-at

THE UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE

By

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Supervisor

Professor T.D. Mushoriwa

DECLARATION

I hereby solemnly declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis entitled **Implementation of gender policies to promote gender parity in leadership in academia: A case study of two universities in Bindura urban Mashonaland Central Province Zimbabwe** represents my original work. It has not been submitted to any institution of higher learning for the award of any degree or qualification. Where I have used information from published and unpublished work of other scholars, I have acknowledged in text as well as in the list of references.

Name: Mandoga Edward

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Submission: Date: 2 June 2017

ABSTRACT

The study is premised on the assumptions that the under-representation of women in leadership in academia is aggravated by weak implementation of gender policies. In light of this, the aim of the current study was to assess the nature and extent of the implementation of gender policy frameworks as a way of engendering gender parity in leadership in academia. The study was informed by the socialist-feminist theory and John Rawls' and David Millers' theory of social justice. The theories were chosen on the basis of their socialist-scientific approach to gender issues and also because of their resonance with the situation in Zimbabwe's tertiary institutions. The theories were analysed within the context of Agenda 2063. The relevance of the agenda's vision for this study is its recognition of gender equality, particularly in leadership in academia, as a critical cog for Africa's development agenda. The researcher opted to use the qualitative approach which is embedded within the interpretivist research paradigm. The interpretivist approach makes use of qualitative methods of data collection, presentation and analysis. Data were generated from a sample of twenty four lecturers, two vice-chancellors, two pro-vice-chancellors and two registrars from two universities, a private church-run institution and a state university, mainly through interviews. Data were also generated through focus group discussions and document analysis. Data from documents were used to buttress data from the interviews and focus group discussions. The findings of this study showed that the male-management norm dominated in almost every strategic section of the structures of the two institutions. This was attributable to weak implementation of gender policies. The failure of the gender policies to bring a visible change to the institutional landscape in terms of gender equality was a result of an interplay of personal, cultural and organisational factors. Some of the factors that thwarted women's career progression to leadership positions included, lack of inspiration from role models, lack of support from colleagues, lack of training in leadership, and the Zimbabwe Council of Higher Education's (ZIMCHE) indiscriminate policy on recruitment of staff members. All the factors however, were encapsulated within the patriarchal

stereotypical conception of a women as fit for domesticity. Within the same conception, men were considered to be imbued with the clout and traits consistent with leadership demands. Studies carried out elsewhere in Zimbabwe and outside the borders of Zimbabwe have yielded similar results. This explains the continuing and relentless nature of gender inequality in academic institutions. In order to increase the participation of women in leadership positions, the study recommends the following: establishment of a monitoring and evaluation exercise designed to audit the effectiveness of the gender policies; establishment of a review of the university programmes with the aim of establishing or intensifying training programmes in academic leadership and management; establishment of a scholarship and research fund to encourage women to undertake higher degrees studies, and the intense application of affirmative action policies and gender mainstreaming in the universities.

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my wife Margaret and daughter Samantha and Sons Christian, Keith and Eddie Junior.

And to the memory of my late mother, Martha Mandoga who taught me the value of hard work and that, with the correct attitude, even the largest of tasks can be accomplished.

ACRONYMS

ACU:	Association of Commonwealth Universities:
AU:	African Union
CEDAW:	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CCPR:	Convention on Civil and Political Rights
CIDA:	Canadian International Development Agency
EUCWTE:	European Union Commission on Women in Tertiary Education
EU:	European Union
ERC:	Equal Remuneration Convention
GFP:	Gender Focal Points
HERS:	Higher Education Resource Services
HERQA:	Higher Education Relevance and Quality Agency
MDG:	Millennium Development Goals
MHTE:	Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education Science and Technology Development
MWAGCD:	Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development
OECD:	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
SADC:	Southern African Development Community
STEM:	Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics
USAID:	United States Agency for International Development
UNICEF:	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UN:	United Nations
UNDP:	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA:	United Nations Population Fund
WILP:	Women in Leadership Programme
ZIMCHE:	Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education
ZNGP:	Zimbabwe National Gender Policy

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CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

1.1 Introduction

The study analysed the implementation of gender policies in academia, with particular reference to two universities in Bindura urban in Zimbabwe. It interrogated the nature of the implementation of policy frameworks that were enacted to support the ascension of women to leadership posts in academia. The study is thus anchored on the conviction that women encounter a complex mix of obstacles that obstruct their appointment to leadership posts in academia (Chabaya, Rembe & Wadesango, 2009; Mapolisa & Madziyire, 2012; Zinyemba, 2013; Shava & Ndebele, 2014). Among a host of the hindrances that women face, is the absence of a coordinated and comprehensive gender policy implementation strategy to engender gender equality in senior leadership positions in academia (Mbepera, 2015). Coupled with this, is the sheer lack of will-power to implement pro-women policies due to the fact that the powers that be, exercise their authority within the gender stereotypical perception of leadership (Elmuti, Jia, Davis, 2009; Morley & Crossouard, 2015). The import of this study therefore, is that, despite the promulgation of progressive policy frameworks, academic institutions have not been ardent in the implementation of such policies as a way of addressing the under-representation of women in senior leadership positions in academia. Because of this, the under-representation of women as leaders in academia continues to exist.

According to the International Business Report (IBR), the world-wide labour-force comprises 34 % women. Within the 34 percentage band, a very meagre representation of women operates at the leadership level and this includes academia (Grant-Thornton, 2013). The results of studies conducted in various parts of the world, Zimbabwe included, seeking to examine the position of women in relation to leadership in academia, show

dominance of the male-management norm (Gaidzanwa & Chung, 2010; Zinyemba, 2013; Yinhan, Kai & Qi, 2014; Broadbridge & Fielden, 2015).

The marginalisation of women with regard to appointment to leadership posts in academia is therefore, an obstinate and enduring phenomenon (Huffington, 2013). This means that the challenges that hinder women from full participation in academia as leaders are not new and neither are they unique to Zimbabwe. They are old issues that have not yet been fully acknowledged, discussed and resolved (Mokhele, 2013). A number of studies conducted on gender equality have reported female under-representation in education in different contexts. It still remains unclear, however, whether or not unique policy set-ups in different social contexts in different countries, can succinctly explain the under-representation of women in academia in Zimbabwe. Available literature that was surveyed does not give an adequate picture of the situation in Zimbabwe.

Contemporary literature suggests a number of possible factors which explain women's under-representation as administrators in academia. The factors are a multifaceted conglomeration of cultural and organisational barriers embedded in the gendered institutions (Zikhali & Perumal, 2014). Some of the factors include; the male-management norm, gender stereotyping of roles, presence of glass ceilings and lack of motivation among women. Attendant to this, is the lack of strategic action plans, limited resource allocation and poor reporting mechanisms to ensure successful implementation of gender policies. The term glass ceilings, as highlighted above, is a generic metaphor which depicts a situation where women have high ambitions but fail to fulfil them due to intricate and imperceptible barriers that punctuate their career paths (Zikhali & Perumal, 2014; Morley & Crossouard, 2015). These subtle factors curtail women from progression to management posts in academia and to other career paths of their choice (Gaidzanwa & Chung, 2010; Zinyemba, 2013; Yinhan, Kai & Qi, 2013; Broadbridge & Fielden, 2015).

The challenges that women face are aggravated by their compulsion to create a balance between family obligations and professional demands (Weidekamm & Willer, 2010; O'neill, Shapiro, Ingols, Blake-Bead, 2013; Mokhele, 2013; Parker, 2015). The gendered-work environments and stereotyping of roles, often foster in women, a disposition which is averse to exercising the full potential in them. The gendered-work obstacles, tied with patriarchal undertones which confine women to act within culturally accepted norms, subdue the potential in women to lead. In such a situation, men emerge as more suited to leadership authority (Tickler, 2013) than women.

It is important to note that as women grapple with the patriarchal nature of society which upholds male hegemony and female subjugation, they are expected to compete with men for leadership posts on equal footing. This inherent handicap for women, leads to a persistent pattern of over-rating men and under-rating women when work-related behaviour is compared in accordance with entrenched expectations (Bilen-Green, Froelich & Jacobson, 2008). Many women are therefore, relegated to occupy intermediary positions at the work place. The few women who resist the current, and make it all the way to leadership positions, find themselves isolated within a masculine-normed institutional environment (Schwanke, 2013; Zvobgo & Farisayi, 2014).

In order to contextualise this study, it is important to give a brief Afro-centric context of the problem; since the study was carried out in Zimbabwe an African state. The African perspective of leadership is juxtaposed against Agenda 2063, a vision for Africa's structural transformation up to 2063. Within the realms of some African cultures, leadership is a preserve for men (Kariuki, 2006), and Africa is largely a patriarchal society. Ogunsanya (2007) points out that society does not expect women to be leaders. Women, therefore, do not feel motivated to position themselves to be leaders by acquiring the necessary leadership skills and experience. In her study of many African universities in countries like; Nigeria, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe, Bunyi (2003) observed

male dominance in strategic organs of the universities. The universities' leadership structures stood as a typical quintessence of the African conceptualisation of leadership (Bennet, 2002; Chauraya, 2014; Black & Islam, 2014). The underlying reason for women's marginalisation in leadership roles, within the African perception of leadership, is that women do not have the clout that is consistent with the tenacity requisite for leadership (Chabaya, Rembe & Wadesango, 2009; Gaidzanwa & Chung, 2010). This includes decisiveness, bravery to resist the abrasiveness associated with leadership, and the strength and boldness to make binding decisions. It is noteworthy, however, that many African countries have acceded to international statutes that view the development of the African continent as anchored on gender equality among many other facets (Basset, 2009; African Union, 2014). They also share Agenda 2063's vision, particularly aspiration number six which aims to attain full gender parity by 2063. The Agenda hopes to achieve gender parity through deconstruction of both cultural and organisational glass ceilings through seeing women occupying 50 % of elected offices in government and the private sector by 2063.

It is important to note that in response to the myriad dilemmas that women face, various legislative frameworks have been promulgated to facilitate more equal participation of women as leaders in academia (Bilen-Green, Froelich, & Jacobson, 2008; Chabaya, Rembe & Wadesango, 2009). The legislative policies have mainly focused on recruitment, appointment and promotion of women to attain equality with men. The slow pace at which change is coming about, suggests that the enacted policies typically serve as window-dressing instruments whose implementation has not been robust (Morley & Crossouard, 2015).

It should, however, remain clear from the outset that the study neither advocates the ascension of women to leadership posts merely on the basis of them being women, nor does it pay blind loyalty to the intonation of gender balance and gender equality. The study is informed by the need to implement policies that recognise the constitutional rights of every citizen to

‘career open to talent’, that is, leadership based on fairness. The study also recognises the potential in every citizen to meet the demands of the national development agenda, irrespective of gender. While the study argues for gender equality in leadership posts, the researcher is cognisant of the fact that women are different from men. This means that women have certain needs, dispositions and aspirations that are different from men. While the physical differences between men and women in anatomy and size are obvious, this study contends that the other differences are social and cultural. This means that they are man-made. These differences are used to disadvantage women. It is the premise of this study, therefore, that capable and skilled women in academia are not being fully utilised due to a host of societal and institutional factors which derail gender policy implementation.

The involvement of women at decision-making levels has the potential to accelerate social and economic development. Development can be achieved if women are given the latitude to exhibit their knack for creativity (Mbilinyi, 1992; United Nations, 2008). Mbepera (2015) argues that failure to utilise the knowledge, experience and expertise that women have, especially at leadership level, amounts to disregarding the potential contribution of the majority of the population. This is because women make up the larger percentage of the population in most parts of the world, including Zimbabwe (ZimStat, 2013).

Qualified and capable women in leadership naturally serve as role models and mentors for other women and young girls in society. Fewer women at senior leadership level entail that fellow women occupying lower ranks in the institutional hierarchy will have very few mentors or even none. Under-representation of women in senior level leadership positions in higher education is therefore, problematic. The paucity of women in senior level positions may give an impression to women in lower-level positions that aspiring to a senior level leadership position is unobtainable (Jarmon, 2014). This means that women who possess relevant qualifications may not bother to apply for senior level positions. In that regard, academic

institutions lose the opportunity of taking advantage of the talents and skills vested in women (Hobbler, Lemmon & Wayne, 2011). The need for more women in senior level leadership positions in higher education is therefore, critical, not only in as far as closing the gender gap is concerned, but also because of the inspiration it provides to other women (Jarmon, 2014).

Female students thus, can hope to be leaders within their careers, thereby breaking society's stereotypic and negative perceptions on them (Hobbler, Lemmon & Wayne, 2011; Mbepera, 2015). A report by USAID (2008) reaffirms the fact that educating women produces many additional socio-economic gains that benefit entire societies. These benefits include increased economic productivity, higher incomes, delayed marriages, reduced fertility rates, and improved health and survival rates for infants and children (Morley, 2013). In the same vein, having qualified women in leadership positions in academia, not only serves to broaden the quality and scope of academic discourse, but also provides downstream advantages to other women. One of the observations made is that educated women can make a difference, not only to themselves, but to the lives of many people (USAID, 2008; Morley & Crossouard, 2015; Mbepera 2015).

Women leaders jump-start the change processes placing the institutions that they lead in appropriate positions towards attaining their strategic goal. In this way, they open up space for more recruitment, retention, and advancement of other women (Bilen-Green, Froelich & Jacobson, 2008; Tickler, 2013; Akor, 2015; Coyne, 2015). It is thus, logical, to presume that greater numbers of women in the leadership hierarchy can model the desired culture-change in a visible and powerful way. It is also reasonable to believe that achieving a critical mass of women alongside men in the leadership structures is important to position an institution for positive change (USAID, 2008; Bilen-Green, Floelich, & Jacobson, 2008; Morley & Crossouard, 2015).

Notwithstanding the aptitude that some men have demonstrated within the leadership domain in academia, contemporary management studies are increasingly pointing to the unique advantages of female leadership. Coleman (2010), Morley (2014) and Yinhan, Kai and Qi (2014) note that women have proved to be brilliant corporate managers who possess unique and exceptional visions that encourage institutional transformation in academia. Current literature abounds with facts that validate women's ability to lead academic institutions as cited in Rowley, Hossain and Barry (2010) and Moges (2013). Women have exhibited abilities to set work goals and have also demonstrated the capacity to lead through exhibiting skills that are consistent with good management styles. These skills include empathy, rationality, team work and the ability to communicate effectively (Finkelstein, 2009; Knyszewski, 2010). It is in the interest of academic institutions, therefore, to engage women at managerial level to provide transformative leadership that meets the 21st century educational reform agenda.

In view of the manifold benefits of women visibility in senior leadership positions, this study, which seeks to look at the implementation of gender policy frameworks to promote gender parity in leadership positions becomes relevant. Research studies on the experiences of women as leaders in academia are therefore, essential and timely. Very few qualitative evaluations to formally probe the experiences of senior women leaders on the root causes of under-representation of women in leadership positions have been conducted. Because of this, manifestations of gender based obstacles rooted in male hegemony continue to exist at many academic institutions.

The premise of this study is that male hegemony can be smashed through ardent gender policy implementation. The deconstruction of male hegemony in academia at leadership level replacing it with "career open to merit approach" means that consideration for the right person for the leadership post is made free of discrimination, prejudice, sexual consideration or otherwise (Dahlerup & Leyenaar, 2013). Through this,

talent becomes the key performance indicator in quality audits in higher education institutions (Tsikata, 2009; UNESCO, 2009; Morley, 2013; Tickler, 2013; Akor, 2015). Women will thus be in a position to compete with men for leadership positions on a fair foothold.

It is important to state that the context of this study is academia because higher education institutions are crucial centres for change. They are the citadel of higher learning. They are thus, key actors in the production and dissemination of knowledge. They achieve this through research and instruction, and therefore, they bear a unique social responsibility of fostering values, citizenship, and civic engagement. They are also producers of human capital, which is demanded by employers in the labour market and which is also critical to social and economic advancement. When the quality and appropriateness of human capital produced align with the needs of society, employment opportunities are expanded and economic actors are better able to achieve their goals and objectives (Tanyanyiwa, 2015).

1.2 Background to the study

The world over, the enrolment of women in higher education now surpasses that of men as a result of the expansion of both capacity and opportunity. Women's enrolment in higher education increased six-fold during the last forty years from 10.8 million to 77. 4 million between 1970 and 2008 (Morley, 2013; UNESCO, 2010, 2014). Policy initiatives and gender equality legislation concomitant with changes in gender relations and targets have all contributed to increased number of women in education worldwide. The increase has also been attributed to the relative growth in higher education opportunities. The enrolment ratio for women is thus, far out-pacing that of men in two out of every three countries where statistical data is available (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005; Morley, 2014).

In terms of higher education outputs, the global situation shows a near balance between men and women who obtain Bachelor's degrees. There are however, slightly more women than men at Masters degree level at 56%. From a glance, the figures depict a very positive breakthrough for women in education. It should be noted, however, that the statistics only give a partial and quantitative angle of the women's story. Fewer women pursue their studies beyond Masters degree level. Although there are several reasons that account for the smaller number of women who register for PhD studies, one of the reasons is that, many women find the demand for greater concentration required at this level, distracting them away from their family responsibilities. At PhD level, there is thus, a recurrence of male dominance with men constituting 71% (Morley, 2013; UNESCO, 2010, 2014).

Male dominance at higher degrees level continues to manifest itself even at leadership level. UNESCO (2014) reports that women are grossly under-represented in leadership in academia with men out-numbering them at about five to one. This means that women representation in leadership in academia, is still at sub-optimal level (Gaidzanwa & Chung, 2010; Zinyemba, 2013; Dahlvig, 2013; Morley, 2014; Zikhali & Perumal, 2014). Relatively few women advance to top academic leadership positions such as deans, librarians, registrars, pro-vice-chancellors and vice-chancellors. Representation in the university committee system follows a similar pattern, with more women in lower level academic positions than in governing boards or councils (Gaidzanwa & Chung, 2010; Dahlvig, 2013; Zvobgo & Farisayi, 2014). Information available suggests that women disappear in the higher grades when power, resources, rewards and influence increase (Morley, 2013; UNESCO, 2014). This trend is almost similar in many countries. Tickler (2013) argues that the failure by higher education institutions to fully accept women into their most senior structures has slowed down the change process in academia.

Compelling evidence suggests that in terms of promotion to leadership posts, tertiary and university education, in particular, tends to be the most

inequitable, elitist and male-dominated sector of the education system (Bandiho, 2009; Gaidzanwa & Chung, 2010, Omboko & Oyoo, 2011; Zvobgo & Farisayi, 2014; Morley, 2014). The inclusion of women into academia as leaders has thus, been a daunting challenge for many universities. It is paradoxical to note that currently, ten universities which feature in the top 60 of the Times Higher Education World University Rankings are led by women (The World University Rankings, 2015; Bothwell, 2015). This is a clear vindication of the hypothesis that merit, not gender-based systems or considerations, is a fundamental principle towards achieving institutional goals and dreams (Morley, 2014; Xuhong & Gaughan, 2014; Morley & Crossouard, 2015; Akor, 2015; Coyne, 2015).

Aggregate data indicate that discrimination against women in terms of promotion to top posts in academia continues to exist in many cultures. In some countries, the discriminatory tendencies are patent whilst in others, they take more subtle forms that are difficult to see. The parameters of the challenges that women face however, differ from one nation to the other. This is due to a variety of factors that distinguish and regulate the education systems in the different countries (Tickler, 2013; Xuhong & Gaughan, 2014). It is worth noting that some nations are exercising due diligence in terms of enacting and implementing policies with a view to promoting women leadership in higher education. By the same token, others are still to realise the full benefits that emanate from co-operative engagement between men and women in pursuit of national development agendas.

Stolte-Heiskanen et al. (1991), Kantola (2008) and Hearn and Husu (2011) note that the entrenched gendered patterns in academic leadership are ubiquitous regardless of cultural differences. The under-representation of women in academia is thus a universal phenomenon. Yinhan, Wang; Qi, Yue & Kai (2013) indicate that within the Asian context, some countries like China are beginning to take a transformative trajectory aimed at redressing the under-representation of women in leadership. This is being achieved

through realigning their gender policies and the legal machinery in general, in line with the demands of the 21st century development projections.

In pursuance of this objective, the Chinese Women's Development Plan (CWDP) (2011- 2020), proposed measures aimed at promoting women's participation in decision-making and management in various fields: with education being a key priority area (The State Council of the People's Republic of China, 2011). Through this approach, China hopes to move closer to the dream of gender parity through sustained gender equality implementation programmes (UN, 2015). This endeavour is driven by the vision to incorporate women in academia as actors and leaders in their own right. The strategies being implemented in China, therefore, indicate that in order to achieve gender parity in universities at the leadership level, there is need for a resolute adoption of policy measures guided by the will-power to implement them.

Still, within the Asian context, there are some states other than China that also appear to exhibit less discriminatory tendencies against women leadership in academia. However, there is an array of factors that explain the relatively high numbers of female leaders in academia. Some of the factors are not particularly positive. In the Philippines and Sri-Lanka for instance, female academics have been able to move up the career ladder because the profession is not attractive, not prestigious and neither is it sufficiently remunerated. Men, therefore, shun the profession leaving women free from male competition (Tickler, 2013). Ironically, Sri-lanka is among the five South Asian countries with a poor record on gender equality. The country is found at the very bottom being ranked number 141 out 142 countries in the Global Gender Gap. Among some of the Asian states ranked lowly on the gender equality index are Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan (Morley & Crossouard, 2015).

Malaysia, however, stands as a paragon of gender equality in academia within the Asian region. The country is an embodiment of how policy implementation can reap positive results in national development. Gender

policy implementation resulted in a remarkable increment of women who attained pro-vice-chancellorship and vice-chancellorship positions. This phenomenal achievement was attained because Malaysia set a 30 % benchmark for women senior positions in academia and other sectors. Unlike many countries, Malaysia did not just set the 30 % benchmark for diplomatic expediency, but the country managed to provide supportive mechanisms for gender policy implementation. Through its powerful approach to policy issues, Malaysia was able to build a reservoir of qualified women from which to appoint possible leaders in academia. Malaysia's experience, therefore, epitomises how the right attitude and approaches to policy implementation can bear positive results (Tickler, 2013).

In Europe, the Nordic region is considered as the best model in terms of providing inspiration and hope to other states with regard to conquering gender inequality. The policies that regulate the education system within the Nordic states ushered in a lot of optimism towards diminishing gender inequality in leadership. The Nordic states comprise countries such as Norway, Sweden, Iceland, Denmark and Finland. Norway and Sweden are ranked the highest in terms of the gender equality index worldwide (Nielsen, 2015). The reason for this development is that the Nordic countries were the first to enact gender equality legislation and to introduce government enforcement mechanisms in the 1970s (Bergquist, 2009). This created a setting for social equality through the democratisation of the social, political and economic space for women participation. Concomitant with this development, was the deconstruction of patriarchal structures. It should, however, be noted that the level of legislative implementation and status of gender equality varies within and among the Nordic states.

Resolute implementation and strategic management of policies opened up space for women participation in all fields of national development. In Norway and Sweden for instance, societal and institutional barriers that derailed women's academic and career progression were deconstructed. In Sweden, the percentage of women vice-chancellors rose to 43 % (Bondal & Bendixen, 2012; Bergman & Rustad, 2013). In Norway, the adoption of

quota systems in mainstream practices saw the figures of women taking senior leadership positions in academia and other areas also expanding (Husu, 2001; Rogg, 2001; Bondal & Bendixen, 2012; Bergman & Rustad, 2013; Tickler, 2013). There has not been any record linking poor performance of institutions to women leadership. In fact, the increment in the number of women in leadership positions in the Nordic region has been linked to the qualitative performance of the institutions.

It is important to note that within that gleam of phenomenal achievements within the Nordic states, women continue to fight against an array of barriers. The main obstacle is the powerful male-management norm and the gendered division of labour (Bondal & Bendixen, 2012; Bergman & Rustad, 2013; Tickler, 2013). Studies have also revealed that substantial gender imbalances in academia and other corporate boards still remains notable in some states within the Nordic region. Be that as it may, some countries within the European Union, such as Belgium, Italy, Spain, France and the United Kingdom, have endeavoured to model their gender policy frameworks in line with the Nordic style (Rohner & Dougan, 2012). Austria for instance, devised programmes in which universities that appoint women to senior positions, including professorship are offered financial incentives (UNDP, 2013).

While the Nordic states' gender policies have been transformative in terms of changing women's' lives, the same cannot be said of the United States of America. Policy implementation towards gender equality in academia in the United States of America has not been as sophisticated as the nation itself (Morley, 2014; Xuhong & Gaughan, 2014). The underlying puzzle in the USA is the slow pace at which change is coming about despite the enactment of progressive legislative frameworks. The premise underlining this study is that it is problematic to treat policies as ends not means for creating a more equitable society. Instead, policies need to be analysed as mechanisms or operational conduits through which gender can be deconstructed.

Within the African context, higher education has always had a gendered element (Mama & Barnes, 2007; Chabaya, Rembe & Wadesango, 2009; Gaidzanwa & Chung, 2010; Lestrade, 2012; Mokhele, 2013; Zinyemba, 2013; Shava & Ndebele, 2014; Mbepera, 2015). The majority of tertiary institutions in Africa drafted their gender policies in line with the National Gender Policies of their countries. Bunyi (2003) cites a number of African countries such as Zambia, Tanzania, Malawi, Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia and Zimbabwe as examples of states whose universities had gender policies. What the universities lack, however, is the strategic implementation to inform and guide their appointment and promotion procedures. South Africa, for instance, enacted the Employment Equity Act No 55 of 1998 as a measure to eliminate unfair discrimination in the job market. The act sanctioned the use of affirmative action and other policy measures as keys to redressing disadvantages faced by designated groups on the job market (The South African Labour Guide, 1998). Section 15 of the Employment Equity Act, implores employers to give equal chances to designated social groups, including black people, women and people living with disabilities (The South African Labour Guide, 1998).

Sadly, Mokhele (2013) argues that affirmative action has been largely ineffective. The National Plan for Higher Education (NPHE), drawn up by the Department of Education in South Africa in 2001, with the express objective of addressing the under-representation of women in higher education, failed to live up to its purpose. As part of affirmative action, NPHE specifically outlined the need to consider women for leadership positions in academia (Mokhele, 2013). The plan obligated tertiary institutions to develop equity plans outlining clear objectives to address gender inequality in senior positions. The achievements of NPHE have however not been satisfactory. It should be noted, however, that despite the challenges, South Africa, more than any other African state, has moved significantly faster towards the dream of gender equality in higher education. The Ministry of Higher Education, (2000) reported that more than a quarter of South African universities were headed by women. This feat is more than twice the regional average.

In Kenya, the government enacted legislative measures prohibiting discrimination of women on the job market. One of the policy positions was the Employment Act, No11 of 2007 (Chisikwa, 2010). The Act prohibits gender discrimination with regard to appointments, promotions and access to decision-making positions (Chisikwa, 2010). The Kenyan government also enacted the Presidential Directive of 2006. Under this directive, 30 % of senior leadership positions were supposed to be reserved for women. Despite the existence of the 30 % benchmark, Kenya's universities remain male dominated. Olaogun, Adebayo and Oluyemo (2015) believe that rather than the enactment only, it is also the implementation of the policy measures that can bring positive transformation to an institution.

The Ethiopian government also legislated the Equal Opportunities Policy. The policy outlines measure that ought to be taken by institutions to ensure that knowledge of vacancies reaches the under-represented groups (Lestrade, 2012). In Ethiopia, higher education is regulated by the Higher Education Relevance and Quality Agency (HERQA). The irony, however, is that HERQA, just like the Employment Equity Act of South Africa and Kenya, does not have a policy document that sets out its strategies for supporting higher education institutions to reduce gender disparities (Lestrade, 2012). The absence of such operational parameters and strategies exposes women to the horrifying spectre of gender discrimination that the policies are supposed to fight against.

The situation in Zimbabwe is by no means different from the general outlook of the African continent as irradiated above. While the factors highlighted above can be true of European, Asian and African contexts, it is important for this study, to examine whether or not the same factors can explain the Zimbabwean situation.

1.3 The Zimbabwean experience

The Government of Zimbabwe endeavoured to promote gender parity in educational leadership as one of the many initiatives to fulfil the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This was with particular reference to MDG number three. The goal was to increase women participation at senior management level in all sectors to 30 % for parliament and 40 % for senior civil service positions by 2005. The year 2015 was set as the target by which a 50:50 balance was supposed to have been attained (UN, 2014). Hlatsywayo and Hlatsywayo (2014) stress that the major purpose of goal number three was to achieve gender equity and equality by eradicating gender imbalances at all levels. Chabaya, Rembe and Wadesango (2009) Gaidzanwa and Chung (2010), Zinyemba (2013), Shava and Ndebele (2014) and Jarmon (2014) however argue that the education sector has failed to meet the 40 % threshold in its leadership structures as enunciated in the MDGs.

Although the government adopted significant measures to achieve gender equality in education, the current situation depicts that greater effort must still be targeted towards increasing women participation in decision-making positions. This does not apply to education only, but also to other sectors of the economy (UN, 2014). More affirmative action is still required to promote gender equality in higher positions through legislative reform.

In order to show its commitment towards eradicating gender inequality, the Government of Zimbabwe acceded to international conventions, treaties, declarations and protocols on non-discrimination. According to the UNDP (2013), some of the conventions signed included:

- Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) 1991
- Convention on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR)
- Equal Remuneration Convention (ERC)

- Dakar Platform for Action
- Beijing Declaration of 1995
- SADC declaration on Gender and Development with its addendum on Prevention and Eradication of Violence against Women and Children (1997) (UNFPA, 2011) and
- The Millennium Declaration of 2000 (Hlatsywayo & Hlatsywayo, 2014).

The statutes obliged governments to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women by any person, organisation or enterprise. They also impressed upon governments, the need to pursue policies that realised the principle of equality in practice. This included a commitment to taking all applicable measures to eradicate cultural and social patterns, prejudices, and practices which were based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes (Chabaya, Rembe & Wadesango, 2009). Following this development, the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development (MWAGCD) was created in 1995. The ministry was charged with the task of facilitating gender mainstreaming in all ministries and to superintend over the coordination of all gender programmes (UNFPA, 2011). Zimbabwe made significant strides in amending and enacting legislation, and passed out 17 pieces of legislation to advance the gender equality and equity objective (Hlatsywayo & Hlatsywayo, 2014).

The National Gender Policy of 2004 and The National Gender Policy of 2013-2017 were established with the ultimate objective of “eliminating all negative economic, social and political policies, cultural and religious practices that hinder equality and equity of sexes”. The policy also provided the guidelines and the institutional framework to engender all sectorial policies, programmes, projects and activities at all levels of the society. Gender Focal Points (GFP) were established in all ministries and parastatals to spearhead gender mainstreaming. The government

recognised that women's progress and the attainment of gender equality were human rights and social justice issues (Mbepera, 2015).

With regard to education in Zimbabwe, The Zimbabwe National Gender Policy (ZNGP) (2000) obliged all state universities to implement gender equity programmes through gender mainstreaming to ensure gender equity in higher education. Each institution, therefore, draws its own gender policy from The National Gender Policy. The irony in tertiary education institutions in Zimbabwe is the constancy and tenacity of the gender imbalance in top management positions. There appears to be a lack of keenness on the part of universities to implementing the gender policies. Coupled with the lack of keenness, is the fact that there are no functional support structures to support the principle of policy implementation in higher education. Absence of robust gender policy implementation strategies indirectly strengthens male grip on strategic organs of the university and ultimately its leadership. (Gaidzanwa & Chung, 2010; Zvobgo & Farisayi, 2014). This, therefore, brings to light the contradiction that give motivation to this study. Policies are either acceded to or crafted at the macro level, which is government but the implementation at meso-level, which are the institutions is very lethargic (Chauraya & Manyike, 2014).

With respect to tertiary education, operations within colleges, polytechnics and universities are guided by the Zimbabwe Council of Higher Education (ZIMCHE) standard operating procedures. It is rather odd that the Zimbabwe Council of Higher Education Act does not identify gender as an explicit component with regard to holding of any position at any level within the tertiary education system. The ZIMCHE Act does not have any specific clause to address issues of gender in terms of appointment of members of staff save for section 7(2) C which deals with the composition of ZIMCHE Council membership. The section upholds that 'due attention is given to the representativity of the council on such relevant grounds as gender, ethnicity, religion, arts and sciences' (ZIMCHE Act No 1, 2006).

The section recognises the element of gender with specific reference to the composition of ZIMCHE council membership. However, ZIMCHE is very specific on the need to uphold academic standards based on requisite qualifications. The absence of a strong binding clause that directs due attention to the issue of gender equality in appointments to higher offices is one of the greatest undoings of the ZIMCHE Act. Due to the flaws within the regulatory Acts and policies, progress towards gender equality in Zimbabwean institutions of higher learning with regard to leadership remains very sluggish.

Currently, Zimbabwe boasts of seventeen universities, that is ten state universities and seven private universities. Of the seventeen universities, only three are headed by women. Not even one woman is heading any of the ten polytechnics in Zimbabwe (Gaidzanwa & Chung, 2010). Of the fourteen Teachers' Colleges, only five are headed by women.

Table 1: Universities leadership by gender

Institution	Vice-chancellor by gender	Pro-vice-chancellor by gender	Registrar by gender
Chinhoyi University of Technology	Male	Male	Male
Bindura University of Science Education	Male	Male	Female
Great Zimbabwe University	Male	Male	Female
Lupane State University	Male	Nil	Male
Midlands State University	Male	Male and Female	Male
National University of Science and Technology,	Male	Male	Male
University of Zimbabwe	Male	Male	Male
Women's University in Africa	Female	Female	Female
Zimbabwe Open University	Female	Male	Male
Manicaland University of Science and Technology	Male	Male	Male
Africa University	Male	Male	Male
Catholic University of Zimbabwe	Male	Male	Male
Reformed Church University	Male	Male	Male
Solusi University	Male	Male	Female
Zimbabwe Ezekiel Guti University	Female	Nil	Male
Southern Africa Methodist University	Male	Male	Female
Harare Institute of Technology	Male	Male	Male

Source: Adapted from Africa Universities (2016)

<http://africauniversities.org/zimbabwe/>

Table 2: Polytechnic colleges' leadership by gender

Institution	Principal	Vice-Principal
Mutare Polytechnic	Female	Male
Harare Polytechnic	Male	Male
Kwekwe Polytechnic	Male	Male
Gweru Polytechnic	Male	Male
Westgate Vocational Training Centre	Male	Male
Chinhoyi Polytechnic	Male	Male
Bulawayo Polytechnic	Male	Male
Masvingo Polytechnic	Male	Male
Kushinga Polytechnic	Male	Male
Joshua Mqabuko Polytechnic	Male	Male

Source: Adapted from Youth Village Zim's youth portal (2015)

<http://youthvillage.co.zw/2015/05/top-10-colleges-in-zimbabwe>

Table 3: Teachers' colleges leadership by gender

Institution	Principal	Vice-Principal
Joshua Nkomo Teachers College,	Male	Male
Marymount Teachers College	Female	Male
Madziwa Teachers College	Female	Male
Morgenster Teachers College	Male	Female
Mkoba Teachers College	Female	Male
Nyadire Teachers College	Female	Male
Seke Teachers College	Male	Male
United College of Education	Male	Male
Belvedere Technical Teachers College	Female	Male
Hillside Teachers College	Male	male
Mutare Teachers College,	Male	Male
Bondolfi Teachers College	Female	Male
Morgan Zintec	Male	Male

Source: Adapted from list of Teachers' Colleges in Zimbabwe (2016)

[http://www.pindula.co.zw/List of Teachers%27 Colleges in Zimb](http://www.pindula.co.zw/List_of_Teachers%27_Colleges_in_Zimb)

From the Tables 1, 2 and 3, it can be noted that the pattern of the male-management norm in the Zimbabwean education system is conspicuous

across the whole gamut of the tertiary education spectrum. The inference one can make is that gender policy implementation has achieved very negligible results as the education system continues to be rigidly held under the tentacles of male domination.

The constitution of Zimbabwe, however, has a 50-50 representation in decision-making positions as a key equality provision (The National Gender Policy, 2013-2017). This constitutional mandate is a strong rationale for the development of gender sensitive policy positions in different government ministries, higher and tertiary education included (Zinyemba, 2013; Shava & Ndebele, 2014; Zanzi, 2014). Against the backdrop of the enactment of The National Gender Policy (2013-2017), which is an embodiment of gender equality as a key priority, it is clear that many women begin the climb but very few make it to the zenith in academia (Mason, 2013).

It is important to note that several studies on female under-representation in educational management have been conducted in Mashonaland Central Province in which Bindura is located (Runhare & Gordon, 2004). Most of them focused on primary and secondary school leadership. This might have led to the development of policies intended to redress gender inequality in decision-making positions in secondary and primary schools in Bindura. Success has not yet been fully achieved though. It was, therefore, of interest to identify the factors, perceptions and lived experiences of women, at two universities in Bindura to establish why their under-representation in administration still persists. This is against the backdrop of the fact that openly discriminatory laws and regulations against women on the labour market no longer exist.

Gaidzanwa and Chung (2010) argue that, within institutions of higher education, relatively few women hold professional or leadership ranks even in situations where women outnumber men. Bhalalusesa and Mboya, (2003) add that male domination in leadership posts continues to exist even in circumstances where women are more qualified than the men. The fact that women constitute 51.9 % of the total population in Zimbabwe

(ZimStat, 2013), and that male hegemony still persists in the social-cultural and economic arena, including education, provides the impetus to carry out a study of this nature.

1.4 Statement of the problem

In many institutions of higher learning, with particular reference to universities in Bindura, statistics show men strongly out-numbering women in university committees, as lecturers and in senior academic posts (Gaidzanwa & Chung, 2010; Zvobgo & Farisayi, 2014). From senior lectureship to professorial up to administrative levels, female representation decreases (Mason, 2013; Black & Islam, 2014). In Zimbabwean state universities, between 14 % and 20 % of professorships are held by women and only a quarter of senior lectureship posts are held by women (Bilen-Green, Froelich, & Jacobson, 2008; Gaidzanwa & Chung, 2010; Zvobgo & Farisayi, 2014). Experiential evidence demonstrates that there is gender bias in favour of men in the evaluation of candidates for top leadership positions in academia (Zvobgo & Farisayi, 2014). It is regrettable that there is a tendency for both male and female evaluators to exhibit this bias.

The appointment of leaders in organisations, education included, is a political process, explicitly or implicitly. The process requires heavy lobbying and the construction of highly visible public profiles. This often works against women who are excluded from influential networks and partnerships because of their sex, domestic responsibilities and codes of sexual propriety. There is a lack of a clearly defined institutional framework that drives the gender equality vision. Consequently, influential positions in academia and other institutions are occupied by men. There is, however, a reasonable increase in the number of women in top positions in politics, in both private and public sectors. Ironically, top management in higher education is overwhelmingly a male preserve (Gaidzanwa & Chung, 2010).

It is important to note that in Zimbabwe, discrimination in the employment field is prohibited by law. The Labour Act, (Chapter 28:01) prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender at all stages of employment, such as recruitment, selection, working conditions, training and promotion (Madhuku, 2001). Notwithstanding the existence of the legal Acts and policy frameworks that out-law discrimination in all spheres of life and employment, very few women occupy leadership positions in academia. It, therefore, stands to reason that there are serious obstacles that confront women who aspire to be leaders. (Kashonda, Malekia, Tendwa & Kashungu, 2000; Muro, 2003; Mukangara & Shao, 2008, Sperandio, 2011).

It is critical therefore, to analyse gender policy implementation as a way of enhancing the chances of women attaining leadership positions. To the writer's knowledge, no research has been carried out in Bindura to analyse the implementation of policy frameworks that support the promotion of women to leadership positions in institutions of higher learning, Studies that have been carried out in universities, and in other regions, mainly focussed on the merits of female leadership. Very few have focused on gender policy implementation as a way of achieving gender parity in leadership; hence the need for the present study.

1.5 Research questions

The main research question is:

How does the existing gender policy frameworks assist aspiring women in accessing leadership positions in academia?

1.5.1 Sub questions

- How functional are the existing policy frameworks in stimulating the promotion of women to leadership positions in academia?

- Why do women face challenges that prevent them from promotion to leadership positions in academia?
- How can the existing policy strategies be invigorated to facilitate the promotion of women to decision-making positions in academia?

1.6 Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study were to:

- analyse how the existing gender policy frameworks assist aspiring women in accessing leadership positions in academia.
- find out why women face the challenges that prevent them from appointment and promotion to leadership positions in academia.
- examine how the existing policy strategies can be invigorated to facilitate the promotion of women to decision-making positions in academia.

1.7 Significance of the study

Implementing policy provisions as a means of achieving gender parity in leadership in academia in Zimbabwe is very important. This is because institutions of higher learning that have adopted and implemented gender policies and strategies which provide organisational support structures for qualified women to be appointed to decision-making positions have realised immense benefits. The benefits were drawn from the academic and leadership proficiency of the women.

This study may thus assist the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development to strengthen its obligation to implement legislative frameworks designed to address the under-

representation of women in academia. This may thwart any possible impediments related to promotion practices based on discrimination.

The study may influence educational planners and policy makers to interrogate and strengthen the existing policy frameworks. The policies may be reinforced into robust pieces of legislation that support the appointment and promotion of women as administrators in academia. The appointed women, together with men would join hands in harnessing their skills towards national development. Vice-chancellors, heads of institutions of higher learning, Human Resources Departments, and heads of appointment committees may be assisted, through this study, to follow policy provisions that address gender balance issues on matters of appointments and promotions to leadership posts. This study is also important in that, it may assist in the current discourse on how to provide a model that addresses the under-representation of women in educational leadership. The study may help unlock the social and institutional gridlocks that have for long obstructed the ascension of women to top management posts in academia.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

The study analysed gender policy implementation as a way of promoting gender parity in leadership in academia. It looked at two universities, one state, and the other, a private church-run university; both situated in Bindura metropolitan. The researcher was aware that various strategies have been used to promote women in academia; however, this study focused on policy frameworks that were enacted with the objective of consolidating gender equality in education.

1.9 Limitations of the study

The sample size in this study was only two universities. This constrained on generalisability, application to practice, and utility of findings. The findings

of the study could thus not be generalised to all universities in Bindura even those that had the same leadership structures in terms of gender inequality. This was mainly because institutions may respond differently to the same social phenomenon. The researcher however hopes that transferability of the findings to universities which are in similar socio-cultural contexts could be claimed. The study, therefore, left room for further research on how other communities and universities which differ from those selected for this study could perceive and handle problems that relate implementation of gender policies with a view to promoting gender parity in leadership.

1.10 1.10 Definition of terms

Academia: It is a recognised establishment of professional scholars concerned with the pursuit of research, higher education and scholarship. In the context of this study, academia was taken to mean scholastic life at institutions of higher learning, particularly universities.

Administration: This is the process of managing an organisation giving it direction in terms of control, supervision, leadership and general superintendence. In general, leaders in higher education administration work with university faculties, staff, and students on projects related to academics, operations, and student life. For example, vice-chancellors are responsible for directing and overseeing the daily and long-term administration of the university as a whole, from academic standards to the cultivation of alumni organisations, to the development of faculties (Higher Education: Employment and career info, 2003). In the present study, the term administration was used as defined above.

Leadership post: This is a post held by officers who have executive authority in the universities such as the registrars, librarians, deans, pro-vice-chancellors and vice-chancellors. In the context of this study, the term was used as defined above.

Policy framework: This refers to a set of principles and long-term goals that form the basis of rules and guidelines, and to give overall direction to planning and development of the organisation (UNESCO, 2009). In the present study, the term policy framework was used as defined above.

Gender: Gender relates to sets of culturally defined character traits labelled as masculine and feminine (Gudhlanga, Chirimuuta & Bhukuvhani, 2012). It refers to the distinct patterns of ideas beliefs and norms which shape the way of life and relations between males and females as groups in society (Reeves & Baden, 2000). These patterns of ideas include the expectations, characteristics, aptitudes and behaviours of manhood and womanhood. Gender also relates to the classification of socially, politically culturally and religiously constructed identities of women and men that are not necessarily static (Bindura University Gender Policy, 2014). In the context of this study, the word gender was used as defined above.

Discrimination: It relates to any distinction, exclusion, limitation or preference based on race, colour, sex, language, religion, politics or another opinion, national or social origin, economic condition or birth (UNESCO, 2009). It involves unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people or things, especially on the grounds of race, age, or sex. In the context of this study, the word discrimination was taken to mean, judging someone by their race, gender, religion, sexuality, age and other factors instead of judging them for their competence. (UNESCO, 2009).

Gender equality: The concept gender equality incorporates equality between men and women in terms of outcomes, equality of opportunity as well as equality of treatment (Subrahmania, 2006 p.9). It is achieved when different aspirations of men and women are equally valued, of which there is equality of opportunities in terms of socio-economic and political participation of citizens across all sectors of the society (Chauraya & Manyike, 2014). Gender equality also relates to equality in decision-

making. Gender equality is measured by the representation of men and women in a range of roles. Thus gender equality in its wholesome sense is a human rights issue which does not only reflect equality based on gender difference but involves other aspects such as class and ethnicity (Nielsen, 2015). In this study, the term gender equality was used as defined above.

Gender inequality: This is the unequal treatment or perceptions of individuals based on their gender. It arises from differences in socially-constructed gender roles (Subrahmania, 2006). In the present study, the term gender inequality was used as defined above.

Parity: It is the quality or state of being equal. Parity can occur in many different contexts but it always means that two different things are equal (Subrahmania, 2006). In the context of this study, the word parity was used as defined above.

Management: Management consists of the interlocking functions of creating corporate policy and organising, planning, controlling, and directing an organisation's resources in order to achieve the objectives of that policy (Magretta, 2012). In the present study, the term management was used as defined above.

Glass ceiling: It is a metaphor that depicts a situation where women have high ambitions but fail to fulfil them due to intricate and invisible barriers (Zikhali & Perumal, 2014). In the present study, the term glass ceiling was used as defined above.

Higher education: An Institution of higher education, according to the ZIMCHE Act, relates to a technical or polytechnic college offering degrees; or a public or private university or university college and its associate or affiliate institutions; or an arm of a foreign institution of higher education that awards degrees. (ZIMCHE Act No 1, 2006).

Social justice: This relates to the promotion of a just society by challenging injustice and valuing diversity. It exists when all people share a common humanity and therefore, have a right to equitable treatment, support for their human rights, and a fair allocation of community resources. In conditions of social justice, people are not to be discriminated against, nor their welfare and well-being constrained or prejudiced on the basis of gender, sexuality, religion, political affiliations, age, race, belief, disability, location, social class, socioeconomic circumstances, or another characteristic of background or group membership" (The charter for compassion, 2017).

Legal framework: This refers to the legal basis which gives birth to an entity or organisation and defines parameters for its operations, that is, doing what it is meant to do (Translegal, 2017). This means that the organisation is established through an Act of Parliament. When an organisation is established by an Act of Parliament it becomes a creature of statutes. The Act provides for what the organisation is and what it can do.

Private institution: It is an institution of higher learning such as a university or university college that is not established by the state (ZIMCHE ACT No 1, 2006).

1.11 1.11 Chapter summary

This chapter presented the introduction to the study which comprised the background to the study, the problem statement, study objectives, research questions, sub-research questions, the significance of the study, delimitations of the study and definition of terms. A chapter outline which puts into perspective the trajectory that the study wishes to take has also been presented below. The next chapter reviews literature which serves to contextualise the research arguments based on contemporary bodies of knowledge.

1.12 Structure and outline of chapters

Chapter 1. Introduction

This chapter presents the background, the problem statement, the research questions, sub-research questions, the significance of the study, and delimitation of the study as well as the definition of terms.

Chapter 2. Review of related literature

This chapter presents a review of related literature and endeavours to position the research within the contemporary bodies of knowledge on issues of policy implementation in academia. The chapter presents the theoretical and conceptual frameworks as well as empirical studies. These issues are discussed in the context of the social justice framework as espoused by John Rawls and David Miller and the feminist theories in line with the African agenda 2063.

Chapter 3. Methodology

The chapter includes the research paradigm, the research approach, research design, and justification of the case-study design, population, sample and sampling procedures, research instruments, data collection procedures and analysis.

Chapter 4. Data Presentation, Analysis / Discussion

The chapter presents data gathered through focus group discussions interviews and document analysis.

Chapter 5. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

The last chapter of the study presents a summary of the major findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

1.13 Ethical considerations

Ethics are the most important and significant aspects considered for the sake of both the participants and the researcher because they ensure

respect of the participants' privacy. Research has an ethical dimension in that the researcher has a moral and professional obligation to be ethical even when the participants are unaware of ethics (The European Union, 2009). Confidentiality and anonymity of the participants are at the centre of any research and they ought to be guaranteed and assured to the participants. The essence of anonymity is to guarantee that information provided by participants should in no way reveal their identity. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) assert that the principle of anonymity is to protect the identity of the participants when they volunteer information. Participants were not asked to identify themselves or to write their names or any other form of personal identification. Furthermore, the participants were asked to sign consent forms, indicating their willingness to participate in the study. Participants were informed of their right to, or not to, take part in the study. They were also informed that the data gathered would only be used for the purpose of this study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews related literature specifically focusing on the theoretical and conceptual frameworks of the study. It discusses literature on the implementation of gender policies to promote gender parity in leadership in academia. It also reviews related literature based on the research questions in order to see what is known and what is not known around the questions. The chapter finally discusses the empirical studies that were conducted in this area of study, in order to bring out the gap(s) that this present study fills.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

A theory is 'a set of interrelated constructs, definitions and propositions that present a systematic view of a phenomenon by specifying relations among variables with the purpose of explaining and predicting phenomena. A theory, therefore, provides a model or map of why the world is the way it is and why and how things work as they do (Merriam, 2001; Anfara & Mertz, 2015). Theories give the bigger picture of the study, provide a rational explanation of the relationships in related factors of the study and direct study objectives as well as data gathering and research findings (Ritzer, 2006; Runhare, 2010). This means that theories do not only inform and assist in keeping the sequence and direction of a study, but also explain human actions and behaviour. According to Anfara and Mertz (2015), theories provide an appropriate framework which adds depth to the understanding of the issue at stake. In the case of this study, the issue at stake was the implementation of gender policies to promote gender parity in leadership in academia.

A theoretical framework is the researcher's pre-conceived conceptual judgment. It affects almost all aspects of qualitative research since it provides a lens for making sense of what to do in the design and conduct of the research (Anfara & Mertz, 2015). It provides the researcher with the correct bearing, interpretation and comprehension of the research process at every stage. It is inconceivable for a researcher, even in qualitative research where there may not be a hypothesis to prove, to embark on a study without any assumptions. The assumptions must be informed or guided by a theoretical framework (Merriam, 2001). The theoretical framework immerses the researcher into the holistic picture of the study. Balanced and coherent explanations and interpretation of the relationships among phenomena often emerge from the theoretical framework. The theoretical framework thus, guides the study in terms of the research objectives, data gathering procedures and the research findings. Thus, in the quest to explain and explore social phenomena, and relationships among variables, it is imperative that the study be located within a relevant theoretical framework (Merriam, 2001).

2.2.1 Brands of feminism as a theoretical framework

There are numerous feminist theories that developed between the 19th and 20th centuries in the United States of America and Europe (Lorber, 2001). These include the first, second and third wave feminisms. The first wave feminism agitated for property and women suffrage. Passionate about issues of social justice, a stern conviction in principles of equal rights and a craving to contribute to community life, the women challenged the injustices around systems in which the only people who could not vote were those in prison, those of unsound mind and women (Summers, 2003). The notable principle that characterised this period was the fight to fight the scourge of racism (Lorber, 2001). This model of feminism may not be an accurate tool for explaining the gender relations in Zimbabwe. This is because issues of property ownership and the right to vote are being, and have since been rationalised. In the face of these developments however, gender inequality

continues to manifest itself in various forms and ways. Racism that characterised the 19th and early 20th century, though still overtly and covertly being practised in some parts of the world, has since been replaced by a more sophisticated type of exploitation. This kind of exploitation sustains itself through culturally in-built ubiquitous and segregatory mechanisms that are made to appear natural yet they are social constructs (Mokhele, 2013).

The second wave of the feminist movement came around the 1960s preponderantly focusing on equality in career and educational opportunities, as well as equal pay for equal work. The movement was also concerned with issues such as social welfare, divorce, domestic violence, family planning, abortion, child-care and rape in marriage. The idea of policies and legislation as the means to redress injustices began during the second wave feminism (Bernard, Chambers & Granville, 2000; Lorber, 2001).

The third wave feminism preponderantly focused on gaining an equal share in power and positions of decision-making between men and women as a way of helping shape the future of a nation. The ideas of the second and third wave feminists are consistent with the focus of this study as women are increasingly agitating for more influence in politics and decision-making positions in various organisations and enterprises, including the education sector. Within the ideology of the two waves lies the conviction that gender inequality is a social, not a biological construct (Lorber, 2001). Lorber (2001) identifies three basic types of feminisms based on their prescribed solutions to gender inequality. The feminisms are, gender resistance feminisms; gender reform feminisms and gender rebellion feminisms.

The nature of the current study was consistent with the views of the gender reformists. The focus of gender reform feminisms was to expose the pervasive nature of gender inequality and discriminatory practices against women, within the social and professional institutions (Lorber, 2001). Gender reform feminists were cognisant of the potential of women to

effectively contribute towards national development alongside their male counterparts based on the principle of equality and social justice.

Gender reform feminism includes socialist-feminists, liberal feminist, Marxist and post-colonial feminists. Liberal feminists argue that women's position in society is viewed in terms of inequality. They believe that men ring-fence their territories and create 'artificial' barriers to women participation in the public world, beyond the family and household (Summers, 2003).

Marxist and socialist-feminists argue that the capitalist system forms the base upon which men's dominance over women is anchored (Bryson, 1993). The basis of their argument is that there is a very close collusion between capital, class structure and the oppression of women. The theory is informed and founded on the ideas of Karl Marx, whose assumption was that the hierarchical class relations provided a foundation for control and domination of one group by the other (Bryson, 1993; Lorber, 2001). The post-colonial feminist theory focuses on worldwide human rights in relation to developing countries with particular emphasis on girls' education, maternity, child health, and distribution of economic resources for women whose contribution in terms of family support is very heavy (Lorber, 2001).

Post structural feminism, which is another strand of feminism, focuses on gender as a complex set of social relations enacted across a range of social practices that exist both within and outside formal organisations. The conviction of the theorists is that gender is not the 'axis of power' that forms social structure, identities and knowledge (Moorosi, 2007). The theory stresses plurality rather than unity and is concerned that by declaring the existence of a universal 'woman,' there is, by implication, a set of characteristics that make up that concept which becomes the norm, for that group (Bernard, Chambers & Granville, 2000).

Inter-sectionality feminism is the other brand of feminism which argues that a conglomeration of sources of discrimination like gender, ethnicity, class,

race, and other relations inter-connect to produce domination and subordination. This theory's primary focus is on the oppression of poor women and black women in white societies (Yuval & Davis, 2006).

The explanations above attest to the fact that there is a multiplicity of feminist theories that focus on gender inequality and discrimination on which this study could have been based. However, given the nature and context of the study, the researcher found it more suitable to use the socialist-feminist theory because of its emphasis on patriarchy and the flexibility to combine it with other theories. This makes the theory fit more congruently into this study than the other theories presented above.

2.2.2 The socialist-feminist theory

This study was informed by the views of the socialist-feminists. Socialist-feminism is a political, ideological and sociological theory concerned with issues of gender difference. It is a philosophy and a movement that advocates gender equality by way of campaigning for the rights and interests of women. According to Steward (2014), the term socialist-feminism relates to theories and practices whose express objective is to deconstruct the collusion and inter-sectionality between male dominance and socio-economic exploitation of women (Welch, 2001). The socialist-feminist philosophy is a critique of male supremacy combined with efforts to combat the oppression of women. Its agenda has informed and underpinned feminists' ideological strategy for fighting for their rights. Some of the chief proponents of socialist-feminism are Charles Fourier, Friedrich Engels and Sheila Rowbatham (Dhyani, 2014).

Socialist-feminists recognise that women are divided by class, colour and political belief, but they experience a common oppression as women. Their assumption is that the oppression of women emanates from two distinct and relatively autonomous systems; the first of which is the patriarchal system. Patriarchy is a system that is predicated on female subjugation and

male dominance. They argue that men do not only hold similar biologies, but they are also bound together by a similar political appeal which is maintained by the institution of patriarchy. The institution of patriarchy according to the socialist-feminists, manifests itself as a culture of male-centred economics, that is, capitalism. Like Marxism, socialist-feminism recognises the oppressive structure of a capitalist society. Capitalism is an economic system that thrives on inequitable distribution of resources among the people. In this context, capitalism colludes with patriarchy, as both systems survive on the principle of inequality. Within this matrix, men and capitalism are the beneficiaries of women's subordination (Dhyani, 2014). Socialist-feminists believe that capitalism is only one of many intertwined factors such as race, ethnicity and class, which contribute to women oppression.

According to the theory, within a just, egalitarian and classless system of government, driven by the socialist ideology of equality of all the people before the law, patriarchy and capitalism do not survive because the two systems (socialism and capitalism) cannot exist side by side. Capitalism and patriarchy operate as mutually reinforcing units of an exploitative system (Rosser, 2005; Hoffman, 2014). Their conviction is that equality between men and women is achievable, but not until capitalism is deconstructed and replaced by a system that regards all people as equal. In such a system and ideology, based on democratic ideologies and values, inequality at all levels, will not be sustainable.

The second system relates to the mode of production and class relations, which they believe, give rise to class oppression and work alienation of most women (Shetterly, 2014). Socialist-feminists believe that the only way to win the fight for women's rights is to connect it up with the larger global campaign for human rights in all their forms. They contend that women's liberation cannot be achieved in isolation, but in conjunction with the social and economic justice of all the people. They take a holistic picture in which the fight against male supremacy is not the only factor that is crucial to the

achievement of social justice, but is just one of many forms of oppression that are mutually reinforcing (Lapovsky, 2008; Napikoski, 2014).

Within the realm of the principle of social justice, the socialist-feminist theory offers a critical analysis of the workplace and suggests tangible and practical strategies that could be effective in resolving workplace inequities (Haning, 2006). They argue that the unequal power relations between men and women that characterise the work place are responsible for obstructing women's professional growth. Within the scope of this study, male dominance in leadership positions is a product of structured institutional frameworks. This structured inequality results in perpetual and unmitigated under-representation of women in senior leadership positions hence; the focus of this study, to examine the implementation of gender policies to bring gender parity in senior leadership positions in academia.

The objective of socialist-feminism has been, and still is, to make that structure observable and understandable. The more visible that structure is, the greater the likelihood of gender inequality being eliminated at the work place. They also argue that occupational segregation and the differential statuses accorded to men and women at the work place is attributable to differential evaluations and different categories. They affirm that the organisational structures on which societies are formed assist in shaping the relatively low sense of personal entitlement that women exude at the work place (Haning, 2006). They see the prominence of the fingerprints of the patriarchal system in the design of women's subordination and devaluation of their self-worth.

With regard to education, feminist theories assume that the education system benefits men more than women. Within academic institutions, feminists believe that men hold positions as gate-keepers and they tend to defend the principles that legitimise their own positions. The socialist-feminists argue that sexual division of labour, which locks men and women into stereotypical occupational categories, is responsible for the dearth of women in senior leadership positions in academia (Rosser, 2005; Haning,

2006). Through the family institution, members are socialized into a sexual division of labour where men are taught to be combative and to be leaders of the family while women are socialized into submission. This gets consolidated at the workplace, in which men's supremacy becomes almost natural, justified and immutable. Because of this, not much consideration is given to women's potential to handle leadership positions, hence the under-representation of women in such positions (Haning, 2006).

In the light of the challenges encountered by women in respect to education, socialist-feminists advocate the enactment and implementation of policies specifically targeting the needs of women as a disadvantaged group. The under-pinning objective is to protect the interests of the women through legislative representation (Haning, 2006). They advocate the repealing of policies that are in conflict with the interests of women as a social group while supporting provisions that uphold principles of social justice and fairness in addressing discriminatory tendencies with regard to appointment and promotion to senior positions within organisations (Haning, 2006). Their determination has occasioned a significant paradigm shift in terms of the enrolment, appointment and promotion procedures followed by universities worldwide. The gender parity index, that is, the ratio of the number of female students enrolled at tertiary level to the number of male students is skewed in favour of female students in many parts of the world mainly to the feminist resoluteness (Ratcliff, 2013).

Though the feminists acknowledge the positive concessions in terms of the increased enrolment of female students in schools and the sub-optimal increase in women as leaders in education, the script is still not yet a success story to them. They envisage a situation where women can have equal access to the full gamut of the available jobs, to promotion and leadership within organisations, and to respectful interpersonal treatment. The definitive hope of the socialist-feminist movement is to see women having equal work-related power alongside men, whom they would compete with for promotion and appointment to posts on an equal footing.

Women would presumably, be equally likely to be promoted into leadership positions and get paid salaries that are commensurate with their positions. Organisational structures that exempt women from accessing senior leadership positions through sex-centred attitudes, in their view, can be eliminated.

The vision espoused by the socialist-feminists is to develop the best possible strategies to bring about change. The strategies are designed in an inclusive manner, such that they reconcile the interests of both men and women, and at the same time lobbying for policies that bring transformational change to the existing male hegemony. They are guided by the philosophy that the genuine needs of both sexes must weigh equally in any consideration. In this way, the subordination of women can be abolished and a new system where females are not automatically associated with lower status than males will emerge. The burdens of a gendered culture and work environment can be eliminated. In this way, authority and subjugation, that underpinned the relationship between the sexes within the work place can be positively altered (Haning, 2006). In their vision, the education sector and academia, in particular, can benefit from the implementation of gender policies that guarantee the appointment of women to senior management positions on the basis of fair competition with their male counterparts.

2.2.3 Justification of the socialist-feminist theory

This section gives a comprehensive analysis of how the socialist-feminist theory was found relevant and applicable to the interpretation of the issues that this research sought to examine on the topic under study. The focus of this study was the implementation of gender policies to promote gender parity in leadership in academia and to determine the efficacy of existing policy frameworks as strategies for stimulating the promotion of women to leadership positions at two universities in Bindura urban. The socialist-feminist theory was chosen for this research because of its socialist-

scientific approach to issues of gender and also because the ideas of the socialist-feminists resonate with what is obtaining within the education system around the world and Zimbabwe in particular. The socialist-feminist theory informs this study because, within the academic, religious and economic circles, patterns of strong institutional male dominance inherited through patriarchy tend to persist. They believe that men use social systems and other methods of control to subjugate women (Rogers, 1998). In the context of this study, men use the social institutions of education to keep their dominance over women in check. Within the eyes of the socialist-feminists, it is possible to create a more equitable society but not until patriarchy is deconstructed.

The researcher took cognisance of the fact that functions of universities in Zimbabwe, private or state controlled, are guided by the constitution of the Republic of Zimbabwe and their operations are regulated by ZIMCHE. Although the policies and statutes that guide university operations are in sync with the world's best practices with regard to gender equality as a fundamental human right, the implementation of gender policies in Zimbabwean universities has not been satisfactory (Gaidzanwa & Chung, 2010; Zvobgo and Farisayi, 2014). This study was, therefore, grounded on the need to examine the implementation of gender equality policies as a way of attaining equality between men and women in the senior leadership of academic institutions. The study, therefore, did not presume that the existence of policy documents in the universities was tantamount to their implementation or that the stakeholders at the universities had a uniform approach to policy implementation. In the light of the above, data gathering, interpretation and analysis were approached on the assumption that there were multiple meanings and realities which originated from university stakeholders' socio-cultural and historical contexts.

The study was premised on the social constructivist phenomenological and interpretivist paradigm. The paradigm suggests that knowledge and action are context-bound and that human action can be influenced by social and

cultural factors (Berger & Luckman, 1974; Argyris, Putnam & Smith, 1985; Anderson, 1997; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). According to this view, the historical and social situations into which individual members of social groups find themselves, as well as their belief systems, guide their perceptions, attitudes, actions and understanding of their world (Berger & Luckman, 1974; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). This means that despite the legislative and proximal commonality that bound the universities together, there was no common interpretation of gender issues in terms of appointment of women to senior positions in the universities. The study, therefore, required a theoretical framework that took a holistic and interpretive approach to issues of gender. The socialist-feminist theory was thus examined within the context of John Rawls' (1971) and David Miller's (2003) theory of social justice, in line with Africa's projection of a continent founded on the principles of gender equality and social justice by the year 2063, as espoused in Agenda 2063. It was absolutely necessary to view the theoretical framework within the African context because the study was carried in Zimbabwe, an African country.

Although socialist-feminism originated in the USA, the theory is applicable in Africa or any part of the world that experiences inequality on the basis of domination and subordination. Mannathoko (1992) believes that it is a misconception to view feminism as a western ideology propelled by western values because feminist theories, just like other theories, have been influenced by external pressure resulting from colonisation and imperialism. The argument is that the roots of feminism can be traced in the African conditions, as women in Africa have been conscious of their prevailing repressive gender relations and have been challenging them throughout history. Therefore, the assumptions of the socialist-feminist theory are still applicable to the Zimbabwean context today.

The theory has, however, been criticised by some sociologists for underplaying the significance of capitalist forms of exploitation. The socialist-feminist theory is criticised for its subtle approach to issues of women emancipation and gender parity, failing to be revolutionary and

radical enough to create lasting solutions to the problem of female economic and social exploitation. Be that as it may, the socialist-feminist theory was found to be suitable in explaining issues of policy and the conditions that women find themselves regarding their under-representation in senior leadership positions in academia.

The socialist-feminist theory was, therefore, instrumental in making the researcher come to grips with policy provisions regarding the promotion and appointment of women to senior leadership positions such as vice-chancellors, pro-vice-chancellors, deans and registrars in academia. It also assisted the researcher to understand the challenges confronting female lecturers with regard to promotion to leadership positions. The researcher was thus, able to make theoretical interpretations of human actions and behaviour based on the theory.

2.2.4 John Rawls and David Millers' concept of social justice

John Rawls (1971) is widely regarded as one of the most important political philosophers of the second half of the twentieth century. He is primarily known for his theory of justice as fairness, which develops principles of justice to govern a modern social order. Rawls' (1971) theory provides a framework that explains the significance of political and personal liberties, equal opportunity, and co-operative arrangements that benefit the more and the less privileged members of society. Rawls is chiefly concerned with the political association known as the modern nation-state (Garrett, 2005). He developed a conception of justice from the perspective that people are free and equal. Their freedom consists in their possession of two moral powers, that is, a capacity for a sense of justice and a capacity for a conception of good. In so far as they have these, to the degree necessary to be fully cooperating members of society, they are equal (Garrett, 2005). Rawls (1971) argues that the political conception of justice points to a notion of reasonable citizens. Citizens are reasonable when they view one

another as free and equal in a system of cooperation. The citizens are prepared to offer one another fair terms of social co-operation and agree to act on those terms, even at the cost of their own interests (Oppenheimer, 2002). What is important is that others also accept those terms. In this study, the cooperation of the citizens in dismantling male hegemony through the implementation of policies to promote gender parity in leadership, is in Rawls' eyes, tenets of social justice.

Social justice is premised on the principles of challenging injustice by way of promoting a just society. The concept is strongly rooted in the principle of diversity. According to the Charter for compassion (2017), social justice exists when all people share a common humanity and therefore, have a right to equitable treatment, support for their human rights, and a fair allocation of resources. In broad terms, social justice is grounded on the principle of equality or equal opportunity in society (Robinson, 2016). The relevance of this perception to this study is its complementarity to the socialist-feminist ideology of non-discrimination. Conditions of social justice are averse to discrimination. Robinson (2016) argues that in conditions of social justice, people are not discriminated against on the basis of gender, sexuality or any other characteristic, background or group membership. Discriminatory approaches, according to Gaidzanwa and Chung (2010), Zinyemba (2013), Yinhan, Kai and Qi (2014) and Broadbridge and Fielden (2015), create a situation where women are grossly under-represented in management positions.

Rawls' (1971) analysis of equality is that it may not always bring equal outcomes in society. He believes that inequality is inevitable and acceptable in society on condition that every person in society has a reasonable chance of obtaining the positions that lead to the inequalities. Socialist-feminists share this ideology in line with the Marxist framework of thought by exploring the intersection between race, class, and gender. In the second analysis, Rawls (2003 p.43) specifies that 'equality of opportunity requires, not merely that public offices and social positions open in the formal sense, but that all should have a fair chance to attain

them'. Women remain under-represented in senior leadership positions in academia because of the nature of the selection process as well as the pre-conceptions about their leadership potential and effectiveness.

In David Miller's analysis, justice can only be realised by taking into consideration whether or not advantages and disadvantages have been distributed appropriately in society. He contends that when a social group criticises a policy or some state of affairs as socially unjust, the indication is that the social group is enjoying fewer advantages than what it ought to enjoy or that the group is enduring a greater burden than it ought to endure in comparison with other members of the social group in question. Miller (2003) says that social justice involves the way society handles the poor, the needy, and the entrepreneurially successful. He conjectures that the potential for social justice lies in the shared normative concerns of citizens for one another. This potential is realised only in so far as their political institutions have the capacity to deliver a shared conception of justice (Rogers, 1998). The shared concern for justice usually emanates from culture. Miller (2003) feels that individuals' identity with one another is usually generated by shared membership in a common ethnic group. One of the major issues which he discusses in this work is multiculturalism or cultural pluralism. He wonders about pluralism's possible effect on the moral judgments of individuals. He puts forward, as one of his conjectures, that different cultures will contain such different values that they will project competing conceptions of justice.

Miller (2003) contends that in the formulation and implementation of policies, consideration must not be on how the policies must serve the interests of one social group over the other. Thus, policies must be blind to personal preferences. Miller (2003) argues that justice should be understood in terms of what a social group would agree to in advance. This means that social justice efforts should not be viewed in terms of merely validating self-interests (Miller, 2003). Social justice goes beyond egocentrism. It is a social virtue. This does not mean that there should be consensus on the modalities to bring about social justice. This is because

there is a general understanding among the people on what justice demands (this is called the stability of justice) (Miller, 2003). In the context of this study, there is need for a more dynamic and consolidated approach to the implementation of the policies at the institutional level as a way of upholding principles of equality and social justice. Non-implementation of policy frameworks is the most proximal component of a complex web of causes that lead to the under-representation of women in leadership positions. The need, therefore, for continued effort to unlock and address this challenge, is crucial, hence the present study.

2.2.5 Positioning the socialist-feminist theory into Agenda 2063

The socialist-feminist theory was also analysed within the context of Agenda 2063. Agenda 2063 is a comprehensive fifty year endogenous Pan-African developmental initiative and projection which takes cognisance of the need to harness the full potential of women in matters to do with national development. The relevance of the Agenda's vision for this study is its recognition of gender equality, particularly in leadership in academia, as a critical cog for Africa's development agenda (Basset, 2009; African Union, 2014). While the feminist theory is holistic in nature, it was also crucial to domesticate the feminist views within the African context since the research was carried out in Zimbabwe. Agenda 2063 was thus, considered a suitable vision since it espouses values of social justice and equality of sexes in all aspects of development. Aspiration number three of the Agenda focuses on guaranteeing the fundamental freedoms of women where they are set to assume a leading role in matters of development (African Union, 2014). Within this realm, Agenda 2063 aspires to achieve full gender parity through empowering women, so that they have equal access and opportunity in all spheres of life. Of interest to this study, is the Agenda's projection of a 50/50 ratio between men and women in managerial positions in government and the private sector, by 2063. Agenda 2063 affirms:

Africa of 2063 will have full gender parity, with women occupying at least 50 % of elected public offices at all levels and half of managerial positions in the public and the private sector. The economic and political glass ceiling that restricted women's progress would have been shattered..... the critical role of women in Africa's transformation will be recognised and their potential proactively harnessed (The African Union, 2014 p.20).

This parity, in terms of managerial positions between men and women, includes leadership in education at all levels. The Agenda affirms its commitment to breaking glass ceilings that have for long barricaded the advancement of women in many spheres of development, including education (African Union, 2014). The vision espoused by Agenda 2063 resonates with the socialist-feminists that women's liberation cannot be achieved in isolation but in conjunction with the social and economic justice of all the people (Schwanke, 2013). Just like John Rawls and David Miller's ideas, Agenda 2063 seeks to empower women and to bring about the African renaissance in the context of social justice. The Agenda contends that, relative to other developing regions, gender parity at secondary and tertiary levels in Africa, is less impressive. This is despite the fact that the rate of enrolment for women is surpassing that of men at tertiary level.

The Agenda concedes that there is a lack of political will to follow-up on policy pronouncement on issues of gender equality with regard to access, participation and advancement of women in all spheres of national development. This observation justifies this study on the basis that the policies that guarantee the appointment of women to senior leadership positions have been crafted in terms of the constitution of Zimbabwe. What remains silhouetted are the circumstances that obstruct policy implementation at an organisational or institutional level to accord women with ambition the opportunity to show their leadership skills (Gaidzanwa & Chung, 2010; Schwanke 2013; Zvobgo & Farisayi, 2014). As highlighted elsewhere in the study, the principle of the inclusion of females on the gender equality matrix is not anchored merely on the need to dilute

composition in terms of sexual orientation, but is pivoted on the need to expose the potential of qualified women to showcase their leadership skills. Through that, women demonstrate their potential alongside their male counterparts, as equals. This is the basis upon which the feminist ideology was built. There is thus, an obligation, as a principle of social justice, for tertiary institutions to adhere to fairness and inclusivity in the appointment and selection of office bearers to senior leadership positions. Agenda 2063 recognises that women constitute 52 % of the population, yet in comparison to men, they have lower access to educational and leadership opportunities (Basset, 2009; African Union, 2014). Despite the fact that gender composition in the world is almost equal, as indicated in the Central Intelligence Agency Report (2010) and by Grant-Thornton (2013), there are few women than men in top leadership posts worldwide with particular reference to academia. Aspiration number six of the Agenda reaffirms the Agenda's perception of development premised on the potential of men and women being harnessed to achieve Africa's transformation. The view is shared by the socialist-feminists that, sustainable and transformational development must encompass the interests of both men and women.

2.2.6 Theoretical analysis

The above discussion has shown how the two theories and Agenda 2063 complement each other in the way they explain the under-representation of women in leadership positions and the need to implement policies that promote equality of men and women in all aspects of development. The discussion also highlighted the differences among the theories but also stressing the areas of convergence in terms of tackling issues of gender discrimination within the global context, sub-Saharan Africa and Zimbabwe in particular.

2.3 Conceptual framework

This section looks at the conceptual framework. It discusses some of the key concepts that under-pinned this study. The study aimed at analysing

the implementation of gender policies to promote gender parity in leadership in academia. It is important, therefore, to explore some of the key concepts such as leadership, gender policies, gender equality, and gender inequality in order to place the discussion in the proper context.

2.3.1 The concept leadership in relation to academia

O'Neil, Plank, and Domingo (2015) believe that leadership is a problematic term to define. Some research has pointed to leadership as comprising personal traits such as the ability to bring a constituency together, charisma and vision. Another school of thought, has characterised leadership as the process of managing groups for the purpose of achieving a goal. Leadership, however, has been defined by Northouse (2007) as a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals or people to achieve a common goal. It is conceived of as a globally competitive enterprise with austerity cultures and performance audits. This makes leadership a generally all-consuming activity (Bilen-Green, Froelich, & Jacobson, 2008; O'Neil, Plank, & Domingo, 2015). Devine et al. (2011 p.645) argue that “effective leadership at senior management level requires an unyielding commitment to the strategic goals of the organisation and an implied assumption of availability to duty any time that one might be needed”. The observation above is consonant with Shava and Ndebele's (2014) characterisation of leadership as a demanding, exhausting and unending bureaucratic process.

A leader in tertiary institutions usually refers to anyone with leadership duties such as vice-chancellor, pro-vice-chancellor, dean, librarian and registrar. University leadership requires versatility. It involves a multiplicity of complex tasks and responsibilities, including management of finances, staff, strategic resources, policy development, operational planning, improving student outcomes, quality assurance processes, and community outreach programmes, among many other responsibilities (Kloot, 2004; Chauraya, 2012; Akinsanya, 2012). Leadership occurs at different levels of the organisational structure, thus, the roles and duties of the leader differ

according to the level of leadership. Bilen-Green, Froelich and Jacobson (2008) observe that leader identity is constituted through power relations. Leaders are expected to possess excellent interpersonal and communication skills and to demonstrate authority and affective agency. Within leadership circles, women are viewed as lacking the necessary precepts that define leadership (Ogunsanya, 2007; Obura et al., 2011). Leadership is defined within certain cultural images that leave the leadership arena suitable for men. Leaders also have to negotiate intersections with other concurrently held and dependent identities, and this is where some conflicts occur with cultural scripts for leaders, combining or colliding with normative gender performances. This, according to Shava and Ndebele (2014), may result in women having a credibility or legitimacy challenge in an organisation. In the context of this study, women under-representation in leadership positions is a result of the social construction of a leader. Leadership is associated with the male norm while female leadership is not valued as a result of perceptions associated with the subjugatory role of women. Table 4 below highlights some perceptions and illusions that define male and female leadership.

Table 4: Illusions about the leadership attributes of males and females

Illusions about men's leadership attributes	Illusions about women's leadership attributes
They were born to be leaders	They were born to be subordinates
They have the ability to control subordinates	They cannot control subordinates
They can make decisions which are binding	They cannot make sensible and binding decisions
They are strategists	They cannot strategize
They can withstand leadership pressure	They cannot withstand leadership pressure
Men are self-sufficient as leaders so they can lead without any problem	Women need men to lead them in order for them to function properly thus, they cannot lead
Men use facts in their leadership	Women depend on gossip in their leadership
Men enter leadership through their ability	Women need men to enter leadership

Source: Adapted from Rutoro, Jenjekwa, Runyowa, and Chipato (2013) *International Journal of Education and Research* 1(10) 1-14

2.3.2 Gender Policies

A Policy is a concise formal statement that outlines non-discretionary governing principles and intentions in order to guide university practice. Policies are a formal statement of intent that mandate principles or standards that apply to governance. They also spell out the mode of operation, practice and conduct of staff and students. In short, policy provides members with the approved way of operating in relation to a particular matter (Victoria University, 2014).

In the case of universities, policies relate to issues where the institution requires a certain line of action to be followed. A policy sets out the university's position on a specific matter but does not necessarily prescribe in detail how to perform certain functions. Zimbabwean universities are guided by gender policies which direct appointment committees on

procedures to follow in matters relating to recruitment and promotion. It should be noted that the main characteristics of policies are that they are formally documented, approved and reviewed. Compliance is required, and non-compliance may be sanctioned through appropriate conduct policy documents. Policies are, therefore, clear statements of how universities ought to conduct their services, actions and business. They provide a set of guiding principles to help with decision-making (Victoria University, 2014).

The policy principles are derived from, and shaped by laws and regulations as guided by the National Gender Policy. The policies are also directed by the need to uphold national standards, community expectations and the values and mission the university articulates in its strategic plan. It is the role of policy to:

- translate values into operation;
- ensure compliance with legal and statutory responsibilities;
- guide the university towards the achievement of its strategic plan;
- provide a framework for action
- set standards; and
- improve the management of risk.

Policies are intended to be long term in the application. They are reviewed on a regular basis but less frequently than procedures or guidelines. In the context of this study, gender policies were enacted to regulate functions of the university in terms of gender balance. They also seek to eliminate all types of discrimination in relation to appointments and promotions to leadership positions. Affirmative action, gender quotas and gender mainstreaming are examples of some of the gender policies to be discussed in this study.

2.3.3 Affirmative Action

Affirmative action, known as employment equity in Canada, reservation in India and Nepal, and positive discrimination in the UK, is the policy of favouring members of a disadvantaged group who currently suffer or have historically suffered from discrimination within a culture (Jaffrelot, 2003). Often, these people are disadvantaged for historical reasons, such as oppression or slavery (Fullinwider, 2014). Historically and internationally, affirmative action has sought to achieve goals such as bridging inequalities in employment and salary gaps, increasing access to education, and promoting diversity. It has also aimed at redressing apparent past wrongs, harms or hindrances. Affirmative action has also aimed at removing obstacles that prevent women's active participation in different sectors. It is designed to increase women's chances of greater participation in different decision-making situations. Their knowledge base, skills acquisition and confidence in a wide spectrum of occupations is also broadened through participation in women empowerment programmes. In the eyes of the feminists, John Rawls (1971) and David Miller (2003), upon whose theoretical framework this study is hinged, affirmative action is a fight against injustice.

In countries that have passionately implemented affirmative action policies, such as Sweden, Finland, and Norway, there has been a significant reduction in gender disparities, as women who had the requisite qualifications were promoted to leadership positions. It should be noted that the key essential pillars to the success of any affirmative action are the laws to support its programmes. Affirmative action policies have seen a significant improvement in terms of access to education between men and women at all levels, in many countries around the world (Morley, 2006). The growth in access to education has, however, not translated into an increase in female leadership in academia. While some women have risen to managerial positions in some sectors such as politics, the same cannot

be said in academia, where there is a tendency of female representation to decrease with seniority.

Affirmative action policies have thus, been subjected to criticism by some researchers as solutions that do not address the institutional basis of the problem, but merely the symptoms. According to Chinyoka (2013), it is an undeniable fact that women are marginalised, because, institutionally, society does not give the same access to opportunities for women as it does to men. Affirmative action policies have thus, been criticised for proffering cosmetic solutions to enduring social problems. Chinyoka's (2013) argument is that affirmative action policies do not build institutional respect for the beneficiaries, but rather, allow the perpetuation of a belief that women need help that by their own industry, they cannot achieve. Conversely, Muponda (2008) and Coleman (2011) contend that the intervention of politicians and amendments to the affirmative action laws resulted in inaccurate and often misleading conclusions that affirmative action is undesirable when in actual fact it is indispensable. Despite the different viewpoints, it is clear that there is need for a keen implementation of the current affirmative action policies as a way of enhancing the chances of women accessing senior leadership positions in academia.

2.3.4 Quota system and targets

Quotas and targets were designed as a means of compensating for and addressing issues relating to gender bias in the recruitment and selection of boards, parliamentarians and leaders for various organisations and institutions (OECD, 2008; Pande, 2011). Quotas and targets are regarded as very vital and appropriate especially when looking at areas where gender segregation is entrenched. Countries such as India use quota system, whereby a certain percentage of jobs or school vacancies are reserved for members of a certain group. In other regions, specific quotas do not exist. Instead, members of minorities are given preference in selection processes. Morley et al. (2006) however, argue that quotas and targets have the risk of causing backlash and accusations of tokenism as

they can be perceived as discriminatory against men. A report on women on boards in the United Kingdom indicated a resentment to the quota systems and targets in 2011 (Morley, 2013).

Overall, however, there are immense benefits that far outweigh the risks with regard to the implementation of quota systems and targets. Quotas are good tools through which equitable representation of policy and decision-making can be achieved. There is no evidence in academia to show that equal representation between men and women has come at the cost of efficiency. Gender quotas in education have not created any sustained backlash within the education circles (Pande, 2011). It is the premise of this study, that resolute implementation of quotas and targets, as policy frameworks, can promote gender parity in terms of leadership in academia.

2.3.5 Gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is a strategy that takes into account the interests of men and women as an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes (UN, 2008; Chauraya, 2013; 2014). It is a policy intervention that was promoted in the Beijing Platform for Action (PLAN) in 1995 and in the European Union Treaty of Amsterdam 1997. The purpose of the policy intervention is to work towards re-designing and opening up institutional systems so as to accommodate the interests of women, on an equal footing with men.

Within the Zimbabwean context, gender mainstreaming emerged as a key strategy for embedding equality between men and women. Following Zimbabwe's acceptance and domestication of the international treaties as in many African nations, gender mainstreaming was translated into national policies, programme strategies, and plans. Gender mainstreaming became a process for assessing the implications of legislation programmes and activities on matters concerning equality between men and women. It also sought to address inequalities in roles between men and women as well as catering for their needs in development intervention. This development

necessitated modification of policies regarding institutional cultures, resource allocation and the nature of intervention for promoting gender equality in Zimbabwe (Oladunni, 2014).

Morley (2013) and Chauraya and Manyike (2014) however, believes that a serious impediment to the success of gender mainstreaming in many states around the world, Zimbabwe included, has been the lack of policy implementation. This has led to the sturdiness of male dominance in leadership positions (UNESCO, 2014; Gaidzanwa & Chung, 2010; Zinyemba, 2013; Dahlvig, 2013; Morley, 2014; Zikhali & Perumal, 2014).

2.3.6 Gender equality

Gender equality is achieved when women and men enjoy the same rights and opportunities across all sectors of society, including economic participation and decision-making. It is also recognisable when the different behaviours, aspirations and needs of women and men are equally valued and favoured. Gender equality is measured by looking at the representation of men and women in a range of roles. In the context of this study, non- implementation of gender policies results in male dominance in leadership positions, a situation that is not consistent with the precepts of gender equality (Todd, 2000). A number of international comparative gender equality indices have been prepared and these proffer ways to compare gender equality achievements from various countries. Zimbabwe stands at number 116 out of 148 countries and number 156 on the global gender index, in terms of gender equality (UNDP, 2013; Legal Resources Foundation, 2016). The concept of gender equality is enshrined in the constitutions of almost every nation around the world but despite the provisions, there is little done to ensure that gender equality becomes a reality, particularly for women who have been marginalised for centuries (Legal Resources Foundations, 2016).

2.3.7 Gender inequality

Subrahmania (2006) sees gender inequality as the unequal treatment or perceptions of individuals based on their gender. Gender inequality is a product of unequal power relations between men and women. Through patriarchy, men and women are socialised through a process that reinforces gender differences. Inequality between men and women is regularised and made to appear normal because societies themselves are patriarchal. The Gender Inequality Index (GII), (a measure of social inequalities) highlights that through this system, women and girls are discriminated against in health, education and the labour market with negative repercussions for their freedom (UNDP, 2013). Figure 1 below summarises the concept of gender inequality.

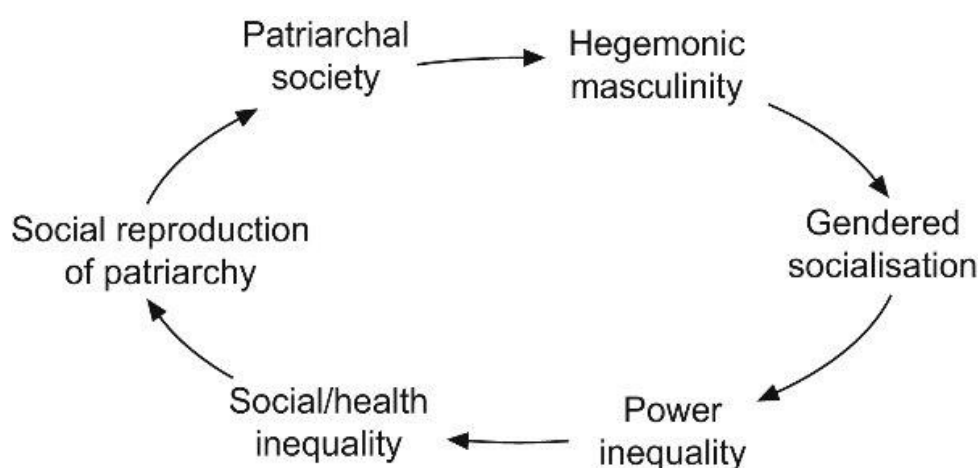


Figure 1: The concept gender inequality

Gender inequality is rooted at the family level and manifests itself both at the organisational and societal level. Figure 2 below shows gender inequality from family, organisational to societal level.

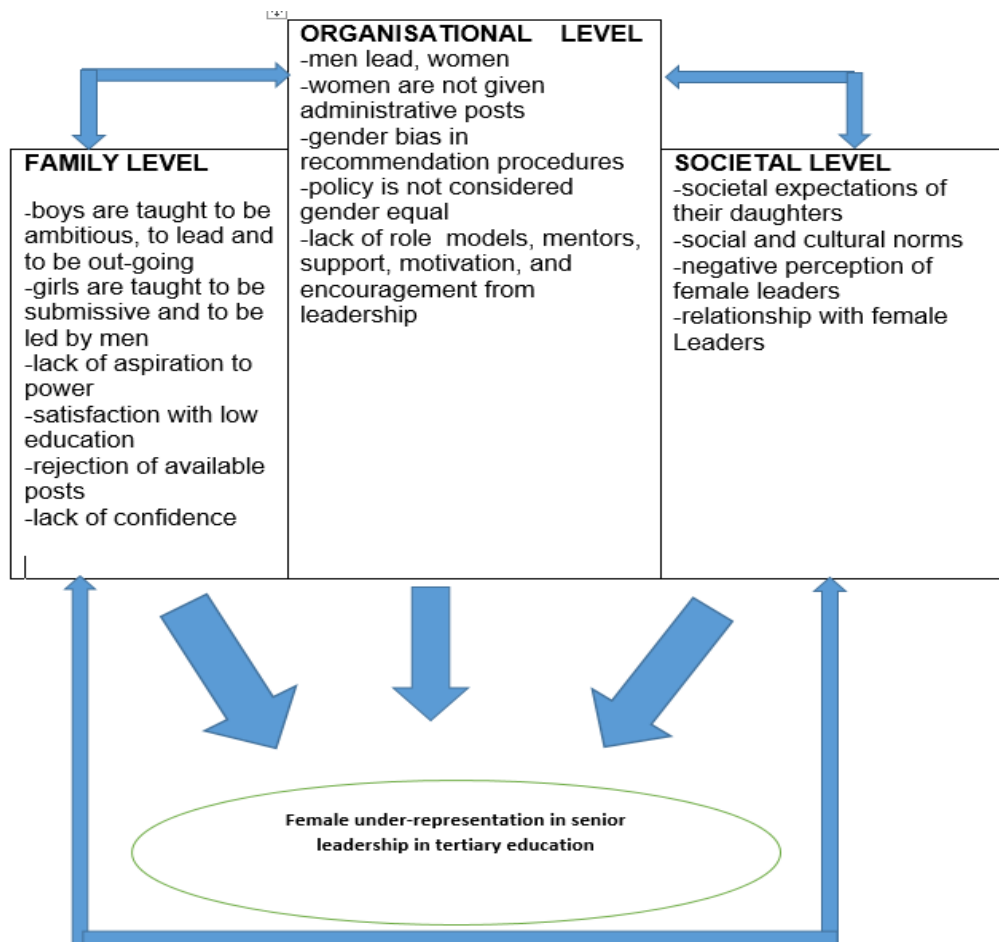


Figure 2: Conceptual framework for gender equality in senior leadership positions at tertiary institutions

Source: Adapted from Mbepera (2015) PhD thesis: An Exploration of the Influences of Female Under-representation in Senior Leadership Positions in Community Secondary Schools (CSSs) in Rural Tanzania.

2.3.7.1 Family level

Figure 2 above attests to the fact that gender inequality as a product, has its roots in the family and gets consolidated at organisational and societal levels (Marinova, 2003). Literature and theories have shown that the under-representation of women as leaders in institutions of higher learning is a result of inappropriate cultural behaviours that emanate from the socialisation process within the family (Morley, 2014; Mbepera, 2015). This study assumed that the socialisation process has a lifelong bearing on

women's way of behaviour and their identities. The behaviour that women exhibit, as ascribed by culture and the society, may be a great impediment to their prospects of attaining senior positions in their chosen careers in life (Marinova, 2003). The lack of aspiration for power is one of the behavioural dimensions that are rooted within the family influence.

2.3.7.2 Organisational factors

Studies have also shown that organisational factors are very critical in explaining women's under-representation in leadership in tertiary institutions. The literature and theories suggest that while family factors are important in explaining women gender inequality, organisations reinforce the male dominance syndrome that emanates from home. The assumption of this researcher is that the policies used by university authorities to recruit and appoint women to senior leadership positions have a great risk of gender bias and are therefore, open to discriminatory tendencies. Mama, Barnes, and Tsikata (2007) point out that behind the quantitative gender inequalities in African higher education, lies the institutional dynamics and processes that produce them.

2.3.7.3 Societal expectations

Society has certain cultural expectations for men and women, some of which, discourage girls from getting an education and becoming leaders. Society has certain expectations for girls regarding marriage and family life, and the position of the girl or woman in marriage life. The woman is generally expected to submit herself to her husband. Inequality, therefore, is a cyclic process that sustains male hegemony both in and outside the family.

2.4 Review of related literature: Implementation of gender policies to promote gender parity

This section reviews related literature on the study at stake in which important and related issues on the implementation of gender policy

frameworks to promote gender parity in leadership in academia is discussed. Key issues such as equal representation at university management level, the prevalence of under-representation, intervention programmes, disparities in leadership approach just to mention a few are discussed.

2.4.1 Equal representation at university management level

One reason for the growing interest in the rights of women to equality in terms of leadership in education is the realisation that tertiary institutions continue to be discriminatory in the appointment of women to senior leadership positions (Gaidzanwa & Chung, 2010; Odhiambo, 2011; Engwall, 2015). This has led to the growing disparities and severe under-representation of women, not only at the top management levels, but also at lower levels within the leadership structures of the institutions. This trend is evident in sub-Saharan Africa and on the international scene as well. The result is that correspondingly smaller numbers of women eventually occupy policy-making positions in the universities.

The trend has recently become of great concern as the agitation for equal representation of men and women in top leadership positions in academia escalates (Gaidzanwa & Chung, 2010; Zinyemba, 2013; Yinhan, Kai & Qi, 2013; Broadbridge & Fielden, 2015). Not only is gender equality a vital element from a human rights perspective, but also failure to recognise the potential in women as leaders creates serious distortions and barriers to development. Therefore, there are pragmatic reasons for engendering policies and strategies to promote women to positions where their contributions can be more visible. An indication that women can transform the education system as managers, are the successes that they have achieved in leading some of the top universities around the world (Bothwell, 2015). Embracing women leadership may therefore provide transformational leadership that every university requires for its growth. The scale below shows that the gender index is heavily tilted in favour of men in terms of leadership positions with particular reference to universities.

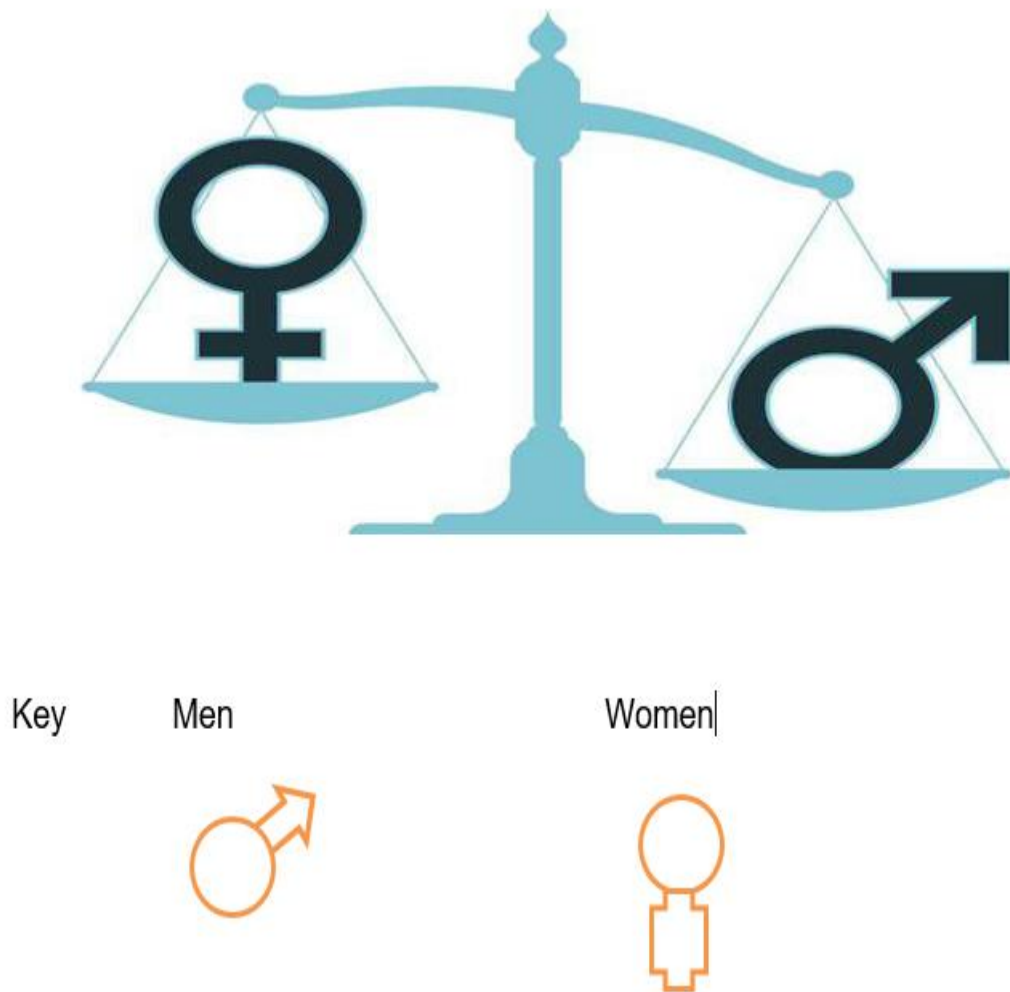


Figure 3: Gender imbalance in favour of men

Source: Adapted from Bothwell (2015). *The world University ranking*

As indicated in figure 3 above, there is persistence of structured and formidable institutional and organisational inequities in university management structures. Within the Zimbabwean context, academic leadership in most universities is collegial. This means that the administrative responsibilities are taken over by one member of the faculty or department at a time on a rotational basis (Chiuraya, 2012; Segesten, 2013). White (2012), however, shows that there is a clear prejudice between men and women in assuming the administrative leadership position, in favour of men. This is an indication of marginalisation of women in leadership roles. It is important to note that professionalism and

efficiency of women in leading academic institutions at times overrides that of the men yet the occupational and leadership status of women is still lagging behind.

2.4.2 Women under-representation in university management: A global perspective

Tables 5 and 6 below indicate that the high rates of women's participation in tertiary education have yet to translate into proportional representation in the labour market in terms of women's employability at senior leadership and decision-making level. From the statistical data as presented by Singh (2008) and She Figures (2003, 2009), it is clear that the global gender gap is still prevalent in tertiary education at senior leadership level. (She Figures are the main source of pan-European, comparable statistics on the state of gender equality in research and innovation (European Commission, 2015). Figures from the European Union Commission on Women in Tertiary Education (EUCWTE) data sets, indicate that 13 % of all the institutions offering tertiary education and 9 % of universities awarding PhD degrees in the European Union were headed by women. The highest figures of female vice-chancellors were recorded in Norway, Finland, Sweden, Iceland, and Israel. Conversely, in countries such as Cyprus, Denmark, Lithuania, Hungary and Luxembourg, not even one university was headed by a woman, according to She Figures reported in 2009. The proportion of female vice-chancellors was also very low, reaching a maximum of 7 % in Austria, Romania, Slovakia, the Netherlands, Italy, the Czech Republic, Germany and Belgium. This under-representation reflects, not only continued inequalities between men and women, but also missed opportunities for women to contribute to the development of universities. This situation does not only reflect a business, skills and talent wastage as propounded by the feminists, but it also raises issues of social justice as reflected in John Rawls and David Millers' concept of social justice (Morley, 2013).

Table 5: Women professors and heads of higher education institutions (1997-2003)

No	1997		1998		1999		2000		2001		2002	2003	
Region/Country	P	H	P	H	P	H	P	H	P	H	P	H	P
Region													
European Union					13		15.2				15		16
Americas													
Sub-Saharan Africa							10						
Asia													
Australia	4.5												
Commonwealth	9.9	8.3	9.9	6.9			13.1	9					
Country													
Australia	4.4	14.8	9.4		15.4		3.1		3.3		3.5		3.6
Austria							6.2						
Canada	11.8	15.7											
Ghana	10						15						14
India	10.5		10.5				18						
Nigeria	5						15		12		23		23
Norway					7		13.3		10		16		13
South Africa	8		8	8			7						
Sweden							13.8				14		
Tanzania	8.6										8		8
Netherlands					5		6.3				8		
Uganda	16.7												
UK	8.6	6.7			13		12.6				15		
USA	19.8			19.3	20.8				27.7	21.1			23.7

Source: Adapted from Morley (2013) *Inspiring leadership: Leadership foundation for higher education*.

Table 6: Women professors and heads of higher education institutions (2004-2010)

No. Region/Country	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008		2009		2010	
	P	H	P	H	P	H	P	H	P	H	P	H	P	H
Region														
European Union	15.3				18		19	9						
Americas														
Sub-Saharan Africa														
Asia														
Australia														
Commonwealth					15.3	9.8								
Country														
Australia	3.8		4.1		4.5	24	4.3		4.4		4.7		4.9	
Austria	9.4						14							
Canada						15.7								
Ghana	7		18		7		7		10					
India						9.3								
Nigeria	24		15							16				
Norway	15.7		14				18				20			
South Africa				42.3		0	19							
Sweden	16.1						18							43
Tanzania	7		9		8		10							
Netherlands	9.4						11							
Uganda	6.1								12					
UK	15.9				16		17		22		15.7		19.8	14
USA			25.1		24	23	26.5	36			28			

Source: Adapted from Morley, (2013). *Inspiring leadership: Leadership foundation for higher education*

Key

P= Professors

H= heads of Institutions e.g. vice-chancellors, rectors, presidents

The pattern of male dominance in terms of senior leadership positions is more pronounced in countries that have diverse policies and legislation for gender equality. For instance, between 2009 and 2010, women comprised 44 % of all academics in the United Kingdom. Similarly, women who were university vice-chancellors in the UK in 2012 constituted 14.2 %, while males constituted 85.8 % (Mbepera, 2015).

Male staff in professional roles stood at 80.9 % as compared to women who were at 19.1%. Men comprised 55.7 % of academic staff in non-managerial roles and 72 % of academic staff in senior management roles (Singh, 2008). The higher education report for 2010-11, indicated that male academics dominated at 57 % as compared to female academics who were concentrated in less senior roles. In a study carried out at the Russell universities in the UK, that is a group of 24 universities formed in 1994, Stead (2015), found that only three vice-chancellors were female and the rest were male. This reflected, not only the lack of diversity in top management at the top universities in the UK, but also the failure of the academy to deal with gender inequity.

Universities in the UK, renowned globally as high-quality institutions that foster ground-breaking research and innovation, are disappointingly persistent in their failure to address fundamental issues of gender equality. This is in stark contrast to the achievements of women entering and leaving higher education. Only one in five professors in UK higher education is female. The professorial gender gap also varies significantly from one institution to another with many falling below the average of 20%.

The European Union (2009) Report indicated that throughout the 27 countries in the European Union, there was still very strong vertical segregation that characterised women's careers. In terms of enrolment patterns, female students stood at 55 % and 59 % at graduation level in the European Union, exceeding that of the male students. Conversely, women represent a paltry 18 % of the professorial academic staff. Singh (2008) and Morley (2014) indicate that in 2007, all the universities were led by men and this constituted 70 % of the 54 commonwealth countries.

An observation by Morley (2013) points to the fact that women enter adjunct roles but do not access the most senior positions in the organisations. While new managerial positions have been created in higher education such as quality assurance, innovation, community engagement and marketing management, many women still find themselves in 'ivory

basements'. Women also find themselves in the 'velvet ghettos' of finance, communication and human resource management (Bell et al., 2002; Thomson, 2008; Zikhali & Perumal, 2014; Jarmon, 2014). Ivory basements and velvet ghettos metaphors depict the low level occupation that women find themselves in within organisations. These observations corroborate research findings in Zimbabwe that women occupy lower levels of the administrative hierarchy (Chabaya, Rembe & Wadesango, 2009; Mapolisa & Madziyire, 2012; Zinyemba, 2013; Shava & Ndebele, 2014; Zvobgo & Farisayi, 2014).

There is differential selection for men and women for rewarding and unrewarding organisational tasks. As noted by Ryan and Haslam (2007), women are often relegated to unpopular and precarious management areas known as "glass cliffs" whose leadership roles are often associated with an increased risk of negative consequences. In some countries, there has been a feminisation of penultimate leadership posts. An example is found in Australia as noted by Bagilhole and Woodward (1995) where women constitute 40 % of the pro-vice-chancellors but only 18 % of the vice-chancellors.

While the under-representation of women in senior leadership positions is a recurrent theme in studies in the global north, (Husu, 2001; Bagilhole & Woodward, 1995; Teigen, 2012), studies have shown that the same picture of women under-representation is also a reality in the global south.

Research from Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan, South Africa and Sri Lanka (Morley, 2013) carried out in the past two decades, points to under-representation of women in all strategic and decision-making positions. This trend continues to manifest itself with regard to representation in committees, recruitment panels, boards and the executive (Zvobgo & Farisayi, 2014). What this situation entails is that, currently, the skills and expertise of a significant part of tertiary institutions are being under-utilised. It, therefore, stands to reason that, for successful organisational

transformation, as perceived by the socialist-feminist theories, leadership reform is an essential ingredient.

2.4.3 Different approaches to leadership between men and women

Devine et al. (2011) argue that men can practise “care-less” masculinity without moral disapproval since, to them, their perception of masculinity is not equated with caring in the way femininity is. This has an impact on how women conceptualise leadership identities. In institutions that have masculine cultures, women tend to view themselves as the institutional “other” and have to manage their otherness in order to succeed. This compromise can involve lessening their gender difference in order to be treated equally to men (Devine et al., 2011). One of the factors that deter women from applying for highly visible senior positions relates to managing discrimination, identity and negativity from other people. This may actually be an additional affective workload (Tickler, 2013; Morley, 2014).

Some researchers have pointed to innately different managerial dispositions between men and women. This assertion is highly debatable and problematic because it stereotypes male and female characteristics and suggests that some women’s highly developed skills, such as effective communication, are innate. Rowley, Hossain and Barry (2010) and Moges (2013) postulate that women have certain advantages in leadership traits such as receptiveness and rationality. It is, however, problematic to postulate that women leadership traits are different from men as such propositions have the effect of painting women with the same brush whether they fit the gender script or not. To this end, Coleman (2010), Morley (2014) and Yinhan, Kai and Qi (2014) critique the compartmentalisation of leadership into feminine and masculine categories. Rowley, Hossain and Barry (2010) and Moges (2013) recommend more robust models of analysis and questions the logic behind work practices and norms still replicating the life situations and interests of men.

2.4.4 Women as agents of change in academia

It would be misleading and incorrect to depict women as pawns and victims in an all-powerful patriarchal organisation of knowledge production. Women can make meaningful and life changing initiatives and innovations as institutional leaders (Bagilhole & Woodward, 1995). Many nations have reported positive changes in institutions that are led by women. The involvement of women in organisations has focused on three things that are; fix the women, fix the organisation and fix the knowledge (USAID, 2008; Morley & Crossouard, 2015; Mbepera 2015). In this context, fix the women relates to the enhancement of women's self-esteem, confidence, empowerment, capacity-building, encouragement of women to be more competitive, assertive and risk-taking.

Fix the organisation relates to institutional transformation, that is, gender equality policies, gender mainstreaming, challenging discriminatory structures, gender audits, review processes and practices, gender impact assessments, introducing work-life balance schemes as well as flexible working conditions. Fix the knowledge relates to curriculum change and to the introduction of gender as a category of analysis in all disciplines.

Approaches that focus on one area, such as fixing the women, without addressing organisational cultures that reproduce inequality and identifying bias, are fundamentally flawed. Gender scholars have pointed out that rather than citing lack of agency among the women, the organisations themselves have to undergo transformation (Bondal & Bendixen, 2012). It is the conviction of this study that, women under-representation in leadership positions is, therefore, an anathema to the education system, as women have proved capable of making vital contributions that have brought a difference to the academic outlook of many academic institutions (Bothwell, 2015).

2.4.5 Intervention programmes

As a way of addressing the challenge regarding women under-representation in leadership world-wide, various programmes have been initiated to hone the leadership skills for women. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) initiated programmes designed to enhance women participation in policy-making and top executive posts. Workshops were also held in Bombay, India, between 1986 and 1988 under the auspices of the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) to consolidate the gains of the initiative started by CIDA, whose sole purpose was to equip women with skills to manage universities.

Since 1985, the ACU has been running gender programmes (ACU, 2010). The programmes include offering training workshops, modules and international networking support. The programmes are underpinned by the values and principles of commitment to natural justice, as propounded in the theory of social justice by Miller (2003) and Rawls (1971). The other values are a commitment to the principle that universities should carry outreach programmes within their societies; commitment to helping universities access the entirety of their human resource potential; commitment to having senior women as role models and commitment to encouraging more young women into Science, Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). There is also a commitment to the realisation of the need to make ACU play a leading role in encouraging women to bid for and assume leadership and management positions. In the context of this study, the integration of women in all the leadership structures is fundamental to the overall development of universities in terms of both quality and equality. This is evidenced by the thrust of this study which is to analyse the gender policy implementation procedures to promote gender parity in university leadership. The need, to equip women with leadership skills towards achieving gender equality in university leadership cannot be overemphasised.

South Africa also runs a similar programme whose objective is to encourage women's active participation in academic leadership programmes. Over 900 women from South Africa and other countries have attended the annual Higher Education Resource Services HERS-SA academy programmes. The programme continues to attract women from all over sub Saharan Africa. South Africa also carries out exchange programmes with the USA with the prime objective of enhancing networking of women in academic leadership through national and international conferences (Moorosi, 2007). HERS institute was also responsible for the provision of leadership development opportunities to more than 4,300 women in the USA (White, 2012). In New Zealand universities, an initiative called Women in Leadership Programme (WILP), charged with the task of offering leadership training to prospective women leaders, was also set up.

In line with the mounting of programmes to increase women participation in leadership, Australian universities implemented a programme called Excellencia in 2005 with the express objective of doubling the percentage of female professors from 13 % to 26 % at its universities by 2010. By 2011, Australia had increased its women professoriate to 20 %. An annual budget of over a million United States dollars was allocated to the programme and an extra financial incentive for the appointment of female professors to senior leadership positions was offered.

2.4.6 Gender policy implementation

With regard to the education system in Zimbabwe, each tertiary institution has its own gender policy but there is no consistency in terms of how the policies are applied at each and every institution. This situation is further exacerbated by the fact that ZIMCHE, which regulates higher education in Zimbabwe, does not have a clause on its Act which guides academic appointment committees on gender equality issues on matters of recruitment or appointment of university staff. This study, therefore, assumed that this organisational glass ceiling inform of an obscure gender

policy implementation process in appointing women to senior leadership in academia, is among the factors that are responsible for female under-representation in academia in Zimbabwe. As Michelle Obama put it across in her speech at the 2016 Democratic National Convention, women should have 'the guts and the grace to keep coming back and putting those cracks in that highest and hardest glass ceiling until they finally break through' (NPR, 2016 p.1). The study was therefore, predicated on the assumption that females encounter an indifferent system at the organisational level, characterised by both the 'sticky floor' (which prohibits women from leaving the ground level' and moving forward in terms of professional growth) and the glass ceiling which prohibits them from accessing leadership positions (Morley, 2014; Zikhali & Perumal, 2014; Morley & Crossouard, 2015). Literature also reveals that the under-representation of women in leadership at the tertiary level is caused by the lack of role models. This means that aspiring young girls do not have successful women leaders from whom to emulate leadership concepts.

2.4.7 The gendered pattern of socialisation and education

Through the process of socialisation, boys are socialised to be assertive, strong, out-going, ambitious, independent, breadwinners and household decision-makers. Conversely, girls are developed into less ambitious, less out-going individuals more inclined towards domesticity (Chabaya et al., 2009; Gaidzanwa & Chung, 2010; Chauraya, 2013). The school takes over and reinforces values and norms which are in congruence with societal beliefs, thus; portraying inequality between men and women as natural and immutable. This leads to social reproduction; a concept put forward by Karl Marx and developed by Pierre Bourdieu, in which the structures and activities in society transmit social inequality from one generation to the next. Bourdieu believed that the education system was a primary cause of social reproduction (Bourdieu, 1977). Schools, for example, do not create equal opportunity, but structurally perpetuate social inequality. Male dominance is thus, consolidated at school and at the work place where men occupy more influential roles than women. Behaviour that is exhibited

by both men and women is thus influenced and regulated by certain stereotypical expectations which have deeply embedded notions of gender-appropriate behaviour and roles.

Studies carried out in Pakistan by Shah (2001) and in South Africa by Smit (2006) and Mangwiro (2013) and corroborated by earlier scholars in the global north, including (Bergquist, 2009; Bergman & Rustad, 2013), found that femaleness is often perceived as incompatible with the general principles of intellectualism and management authority. The observations suggest that women in senior management positions challenge a gender stereotype.

The enactment of gender policy frameworks and programmes to promote gender parity in leadership in academia is, therefore, important for the integration of women into leadership positions. This is because the traditional conception of a leader is averse to women leadership. The implementation of gender policies is designed to serve the realisation that gender inequality in leadership in academia, needs serious consideration. Odhiambo (2011) argues that universities stand to benefit from diversity in terms of academic leadership roles. The irony is that while the universities profess to value the diversity of thought, experience and personhood, women remain under-represented in key positions along academic and professional career ladders. The need to implement gender policies to stimulate the appointment of women to senior leadership positions is, therefore, critical.

2.5 Literature based on the research questions

In this section, an endeavour is made to address the research questions that guided this study. Addressing the research questions assisted the researcher to illuminate the research gap. The first research question aimed at finding out the efficacy of the existing gender policy frameworks in stimulating the promotion of women to leadership positions in academia.

2.5.1 Functionality of the existing gender policy frameworks

Existing literature points to the fact that, in many countries around the world, under-representation of women in senior leadership positions in academia is rooted in a lack of proper policy implementation programmes (Powell, 1999). Amondi (2011), Akinsanya (2012) and Chauraya (2012) argue that the irony is that, extensive researches on gender disparities have been done in many countries, yet the gender policies in those countries still fail to sufficiently address the concerns of women. Morley (2006) and Onsongo (2004) point out that within academic institutions, obstructions to women progression to senior management positions take the form of rules, laws and practices. This means that rules that are not documented work to the detriment of women, and to the advantage of men in terms of appointment and promotion to senior leadership positions (Ruijs, 1993). In Dahlerup and Leyenaar's (2013) view, it is vital that institutional policies and practices that are not gender sensitive are reformed in order to completely eliminate inappropriate discrimination in the institutions.

The under-representation of women in leadership positions in institutions of higher learning is also exacerbated by the fact that there is a lack of standing policy positions and practices that encourage females to aspire for the higher posts. In Weidekamm (2010) and Stead's (2015) view, the rules and regulations are designed by men in the interests of men. This entails that any promotion and selection procedures are geared to the stereotypical male image of a leader. In Zimbabwe, for instance, the ZIMCHE Act, though very clear on quality issues, that is, proper conduct and operation of institutions of higher learning, is silent on gender implementation processes. The Act's emphasis is on meeting the requirements in terms of qualifications and standard operating procedures (SOPs) (ZIMCHE Act No1, 2006). The absence of a clear policy framework and the lack of a coordinated approach among all universities, with regard to tackling gender disparity at the leadership level, places women at a serious disadvantage.

The second research question sought to find out why women face the challenges that prevent them from promotion to leadership positions in academia. Besides the issue of policies raised, above women face a plethora of organisational and socio-cultural factors that work against them in their quest for appointment and promotion to senior leadership positions in academia. The challenges that women face are discussed in detail below.

2.5.2 Organisational challenges

Bond (1996) upholds that the under-representation of women in positions of leadership in academia is exacerbated by a multiplicity of structural factors which include, discriminatory appointment and promotion practices, male resistance to women in leadership positions and limited opportunities for women to acquire leadership training (Amondi, 2011; Chauraya, 2012; Mokhele, 2013; Morley & Crossouard, 2015). Women also experience sexual harassment, lack support from fellow women and also fail to get opportunities to demonstrate their competence as discussed below.

2.5.2.1 Discrimination in the appointment and selection process to leadership positions

One of the challenges that women face with regard to appointment and promotion to leadership positions in academia is sex discrimination in the recruitment exercise (Onsongo, 2004). In a study carried out by Bell, McLaughlin and Sequeira (2002), the observations were that there was a lack of commitment by top university management to address the issue of gender discrimination in the recruitment and selection of women for possible appointments to senior positions in the institutions. Thus, in the eyes of (Bell et al., 2002), indifferent attitudes towards women's participation in leadership, from senior leaders within the organisation, is a factor that retards women's career progression. In the recruitment, selection and promotion exercise, men usually prefer their favourites who, unfortunately, are not women. Due to patriarchy, men tend to prefer

working in a masculine environment (Shakeshaft, 2007; Bassett, 2009; Black & Islam, 2014). In addition, Al-Jaradat (2014) argues that males are likely to recruit new leaders who resemble them in deeds, philosophy attitudes, appearance, club membership and hobbies. Women are thus left with very little prospects of gaining the necessary experience required in the organisation. Experience is, however, a vital element for ascension to leadership positions (Bell, McLaughlin, & Sequeira, 2002; Akinsanya, 2012).

The fact that most organisations have been created by, and for, men and are based on the male norm in terms of leadership expectations, creates structural barriers to female advancement in organisations. This leads to the existence of a particular form of masculinity in organisational leadership (Acker, 1990; Blackmore, 1999; Amondi 2011). Men's competency therefore, is defined in terms of male traits (Kariuki, 2006; Ogunsanya, 2007).

Mulkeen, Chapman, DeJaeghere and Leu (2007) make a strong claim that selection and promotion of leaders to top positions is not transparent. This leaves the whole system predisposed to corruption and favouritism starting from very low levels right up to the highest offices. Gaus (2011) adds that some of the factors that explain the under-representation of women in leadership positions can be traced to the recruitment procedures which are dictated by nepotism, corruption, ethnicity, and discrimination. Onsongo (2004) and Engwall, (2015) also cite gender bias, ethnicity, nepotism and political affiliation, among many other factors why qualified women fail to be appointed to leadership positions.

Research by Celikten (2009) and Coleman (2009) observes that there is a conscious disregard of the formal rules by the appointing committees. The committees uphold their informal rules, criteria and regulations in order to accord preference to men for top leadership appointments. In her study of a sample of Tanzanian schools, Mbepera (2015) points out that, conscious of the manifestations of personal emotions in the recruitment and selection of office bearers to senior positions, Tanzania devised a Public Leadership

Code of Ethics (PLCE) of 1995. The ethics code stipulates that public leaders shall not have private interests, other than those permitted by the Code and that would be affected particularly or significantly by government actions in which they participate (The United Republic of Tanzania, 1995). The Code thus forbids conducting any selection exercise based on personal interests, perceptions and stereotypes. Despite the existence of the Code, Mbepera (2015) reports gender bias, bribery and sexual harassment as endemic in the appointment procedures.

2.5.2.2 Gender composition of appointing committees

The other reason why women encounter challenges with regard to appointment to leadership positions is the reliance on stereotypical leadership norms exercised by appointing committees (Bartol, 1999; Graves, 1999; Powell, 1999; Zvobgo & Farisayi, 2014). This stems from the fact that there is a gender imbalance in terms of the composition of the appointment committees (Obura et al., 2011; Gaus, 2011). Ruijs (1993) discloses that some of the interview questions posed to women were rather irrelevant as they required information about their husbands and the number of children they had. This male leader syndrome in the appointing committees means that fewer women meet the expectation resulting in the chronic under-representation of women in leadership positions (Obura et al., 2011).

Further to that, due to their superiority in terms of numbers, men's voices are louder and they tend to make binding decisions which further entrench themselves in the dominant position over women. Burke and Mattis (2005), Bandiho (2009) and Broadbridge et al. (2015) concur that selection committees carry their negative perceptions of female leaders due to stereotypes under the belief that females do not accurately fit into the organisational culture.

2.5.2.3 Inspiration from role models

Women also face challenges in accessing senior leadership positions because they lack mentoring. Coleman (2011) believes that mentoring is essential for every beginner. It provides inspiration to all aspiring leaders. The mere availability of women in an institution whether in leadership positions or not is a crucial aspect in generating gender role models and mentors. Women feel empowered by the presence of female role models (Morley, 2006). In this regard, Otieno (2001) and Jarmon (2014) agree that role models play a very vital role but it is unfortunate that many young female professionals lack role models and mentors. This affects their future professional and career development (Mulkeen et al., 2007). The European Commission (2015) makes a similar observation that women who get into power often find it difficult to work hard towards acquiring the highest positions because of the absence of role models to inspire them since they are surrounded by males. (Sperandio, 2011) argues that such a situation makes it difficult for women to internalise the leadership concept.

Shakeshaft (2007) says that apart from lacking role models and mentors, there is also the very important element of formal and informal networking at institutions. Networking is very critical in terms of broadening one's conceptual horizon in the profession and getting access to important information that can enhance one's career development. Women often lack this vital element, making them remain locked out in terms of access to information. Unlike their male counterparts, women's lack of formal and informal networks at the institutional level distances them from the power matrix. Akinsanya (2012) however, posits that networking between men and women is often very delicate and difficult to handle as there are chances of them being wrongly suspected of engaging in unorthodox relationships with men.

2.5.2.4 Lack of training

Research carried out by Bilen-Green, Froelich, and Jacobson (2008), Gaidzanwa and Chung (2010), Tickler (2013) and Zvobgo and Farisayi (2014) observed that organisations do not adequately reinforce the aspirations of women to be leaders by giving them adequate skills necessary to handle highly demanding jobs. Women's aspirations are continually frustrated because of the absence of properly laid out systems to hone their talents. The dilemma is further compounded by the fact that some organisations do not have robust in-service training programmes, a situation that may require the women to undergo training elsewhere away from their families. This discourages women who might have harboured aspirations to be leaders. This observation is consonant with Peters (2012), who indicates that women leaders lack support from top leadership in terms of pecuniary resources, training, human resources, and time for implementation. This, more often than not, frustrates the endeavours that women make, resulting in them feeling unequal to the task. It should be noted, however, that lack of training results in women's under-representation due to limited access to employment and promotion opportunities. This leads to the reproduction of cultural messages to young women and the wider society that suggest that women are unsuited for leadership (Morley & Crossouard, 2015).

2.5.2.5 Lack of support from fellow women

Coleman (2011) and Valerio (2009) observe that one of the reasons why women face challenges in their leadership endeavours is a lack of support from fellow women. The challenges often manifest themselves in the 'queen bee' syndrome or in failure by women to get support from fellow women. The queen bee syndrome describes women in positions of authority who view or treat female subordinates more critically. This approach dents the egos of fellow women who aspire to be leaders as they expect much of their support to come from their ilk. This means that aspiring female leaders do not expect discouragement from their male counterparts only, but also from fellow females. In support of this

observation Akuamoah-Boateng, Bolitho, Carr and Rugimb (2003) note that there is a tendency among women to discourage fellow aspiring leaders from fulfilling their ambitions. Akuamoah-Boateng et al. (2003) stress that hardworking and potential female leaders do not get the necessary support from fellow women leaders as they do not want to see them flourishing. They observed that female leaders had a tendency of setting unachievable goals for their fellow female colleagues resulting in the subordinates getting frustrated.

What makes the whole issue more complex is that, in comparison to women, men tend to support women better than their female colleagues. Observations by Akuamoah-Boateng et al. (2003), Shakeshaft (2007), Valerio (2009) and Coleman (2011) point to the fact that some males, unlike females, are more supportive of women in terms of developing their talents. Based on gender specific needs, research by the authors cited above, found that some men were increasingly becoming conscious of the need for gender balance, and hence supported women in developing their career needs. However, Cubillo and Brown (2003) found peer support from men to be low, an issue mostly likely attributable to the effects of competition.

2.5.2.6 Sexual harassment

Apart from the factors discussed above, sexual harassment is an issue that women have to grapple with, in their quest to ascend to positions of authority. Sexual harassment is a very complex issue which manifests in a variety of ways. Improper use of authority within an organisation constitutes sexual harassment. In Morley (2006) and Gwirai's (2010) perceptions, sexual harassment is exploitative, coercive and regards women as sex objects. Despite laws that seek to prevent sexual harassment, it is regrettable to note that sexual harassment continues to be a serious problem at the work place. Sexual harassment, as a form of sex discrimination, is one manifestation of the larger problem of employment-related discrimination against women. Akinsanya (2012) notes that it now appears obvious that sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination.

In the eyes of the feminists, the relationship between men and women is a power relationship. This idea is supported by Runhare (2010) who observes that power plays a key role in sexual harassment. The power to distribute rewards and punishments lies with the leaders who also make decisions regarding appointment and promotions. Sexual harassment by supervisors is counter-productive and it has the ability to put a dent on the integrity of the organisation. Women may fail to get certain posts or promotions as the superiors use their power to sexually harass them (Bell et al., 2002; Akinsanya, 2012). As a way of refraining from possible harassment, some women prefer lower paying jobs than opting for higher positions which may expose them to the possibility of being sexually harassed (Bell et al., 2002; Akinsanya, 2012). Runhare (2010) also says that, during the course of their careers, women are bound to suffer sexual discrimination in one way or the other.

Coleman (2009) observes that in England, half of the female leaders experienced discrimination or sexism during the process of their appointment and career progression. Chabaya et al. (2009) also confirm that women are sexually harassed and discriminated during the appointment process. The harassment contributes to the persistence of work-related sex segregation (Chauraya, 2012). Coleman (2009) argues that it is possible for women to fail to get top leadership posts for which they would have applied for, on the basis that they failed to submit to certain sexual demands.

The challenge is compounded by the fact that men and women who have been disadvantaged due to sexual harassment, do not present formal complaints because of the perception that the cases lack legal merit. The other presumption is that the acts do not constitute serious matters that warrant reportage (The Australian Human Rights Commission, 2008). Bagilhole and Woodward (1995) observe that one serious un-doing was the under-reporting and under-estimation of the incidences of sexual harassment and their effects on women in the academic world. In support,

the Department of Education (2004) of the Republic of South Africa states that sexual harassment issues go unreported because the belief is that sexual advances are the sole determinants of abuse yet sexual harassment itself is a complex issue which distresses the self-respect of the victim. More often than not, cases of sexual harassment receive very little attention such that the harasser may just go with a warning (Morley, 2006; Gwirai, 2010).

2.5.2.7 Social factors as barriers to women leadership

Besides the organisational factors, women also face challenges in terms of accessing leadership positions due to cultural factors (Walker & Dimmock, 2006). Culture is prescriptive in terms of roles for men and women; therefore, the behaviour of men and women is regulated by culture. In this regard, roles for men and women are compartmentalised along cultural lines thus, creating differential opportunities for men and women (Walker & Dimmock, 2006). The roles ascribed by society tend to regulate the behaviour of women more than they do those of men (Walker & Dimmock, 2006). This creates a situation whereby men have greater access to opportunities than women.

Society, therefore, discourages women from being leaders due to the deep-seated and in-built patriarchal considerations. Women encounter innumerable obstacles and pitfalls that frustrate their ascendancy to leadership posts. These obstacles are an outgrowth of the feminine mystique which is built on the unfounded myth that the place of the women is in the kitchen (Onsongo, 2004). Within this realm and framework of thought, making decisions in the home is a male prerogative, while women are relegated to play the subjugatory role of family care (Onsongo, 2004). These stereotypes and cultural expectations according to Cubillo and Brown (2003), devalue the worth of women.

Amondi (2011) argues that it is unfortunate that these gender based roles assigned to men and women in society find their way into the work place. Women are assigned duties whose evaluation process are similar to those

of men. In some cases, women are regarded as incapable because they would have failed to satisfy the evaluation standard or benchmarks that equate them to men. In this regard, societal and organisational factors conspire to work to the detriment of the women. This situation validates the argument that women under-representation in organisations and academia is traceable to societal factors.

Religion is another social factor that accounts for female under-representation in leadership positions. Onsongo (2004) argues that religion creates an element of superiority and subordination between men and women. Women are placed in inferior positions effectively side-lining them from taking part in decision-making processes. Some religious practices are averse to the leadership of women both in and outside the church. Women thus, find themselves stranded in this cultural and religious gridlock effectively sealing their professional fate and their prospects of attaining leadership positions. The assumption of this study, therefore, is that the under-representation of women in leadership positions is a complex issue which is caused by, among many other factors, the nature of the socialisation process as highlighted above.

2.5.2.8 Family support

One of the reasons why women face challenges with regard to appointment to senior positions is failure to secure enough support from the family (Reisser, 1988; Bhalalusesa & Mboya, 2003; Chabaya et al., 2009). According to Sperandio (2011), women who opt to settle for senior management positions often forfeit support from family members. Family support is crucial for the success of any gender equality initiative. Families can, therefore, be very powerful agents of change. In the context of this discussion, the posts of vice-chancellors, pro-vice-chancellors and deans, are very busy and demanding positions which may require the incumbent to be available for work anytime. Family members often resent the nature of engagement and commitment associated with such positions for a woman. The hypothesis that women can avail themselves for work at any given time is averse to the cultural expectation of women, as they also

have other responsibilities and roles that largely fall within the home. Family reservations are driven by the stereotypical image of a leader that society also embraces. In as much as women are capable of leading and fully committing to performing leadership roles at par with men, they are bound by certain cultural expectations. They are expected to strike a balance between work-related demands and family responsibilities. This is consistent with existing literature explaining women's slow momentum within the gendered institutional environment. In this regard, women are most likely bound to forfeit their aspirations. A husband or partner, may not be too keen to see his partner spend long hours outside the home due to work commitments. Women do not normally get their families and husbands' support to achieve their aspirations to leadership positions. Chabaya et al. (2009) however, argue that husbands usually have the support of their wives. The wives actually create a conducive environment for their husbands' leadership roles.

It should be noted, however, that the picture is not that gloomy for all women. Some women have managed to secure support from their families and partners. Moorosi (2007), in a study carried out in South Africa, observed that older married women living without children tended to get support from their husbands. Odanga, Aloba and Raburu (2015) also observed that many women who progressed smoothly in their career had the support of their husbands or they were single and did not have children. Coleman and Glover (2010) noted changes in the new family set up in which women shared some family responsibilities with their partners thus, enabling them to pursue their career of choice without hindrance. In this situation, husbands play a vital role towards enabling their wives to meet the leadership demands.

2.5.2.9 Societal perceptions of female leaders in academia

Women also face challenges because society overlooks their potential as effective leaders. Women are regarded as unfit for demanding positions which require committed and dynamic problem solvers (Soobrayan, 1998; Chisikwa, 2010; Obura et al., 2011; Jarmon, 2014). Ruijs (1993),

Shakeshaft et al. (2007), Chabaya et al. (2009) and Rohner and Dougan (2012) underscore that women are perceived as weak leaders who are not capable of handling volatile issues such as student strikes and disciplinary cases. Society regards women leaders as passive, emotional, weak and lacking leadership qualities like commitment, decisiveness and assertiveness (Yinhan, Kai & Qi, 2014; Broadbridge & Fielden, 2015). This view contrasts sharply with the attitude towards men who are regarded as more direct and active (Shava & Ndebele, 2014). Women leaders are evaluated more harshly than men thus, undermining their interpersonal influence (Catalyst, 2007). Society regards men as stable and level headed when dealing with difficult situations, while women are perceived to be indecisive when handling potentially volatile situations (Chauraya, 2012; Gaidzanwa & Chung, 2010; Guramatunhu-Mudiwa, 2010; Morley, 2013, 2014; Black & Islam, 2014).

These qualities are all defined and understood within socially constructed perceptions of masculinity (Kariuki, 2006; Ogunsanya, 2007). Rowley, Hossain and Barry (2010) and Moges (2013) concur that leadership is defined and understood within a masculine context which depicts maleness as a form of career capital as well as a resource while femaleness is seen in form of negative equity. Morley (2006) found that in studies conducted in Sri Lanka, leadership was conceived as more fitting for males since it was consistent with aggression and authoritarianism. Morley (2013) indicates that in Nigerian institutions of higher learning, preference for senior leadership positions was given to males because of their perceived ability to deal with student unrest and making ruthless decisions.

In the light of these perceptions, it becomes a challenge for aspiring women leaders and women who are already in leadership positions, to get the full support of members of the community in the execution of their duties. Society's conception of a leader is therefore, stereotypically imprisoned in the cage of masculinity (Chisikwa, 2010, Rohner & Dougan, 2012).

2.5.2.10 The relationship between female leaders and the community

Another factor why women leaders face challenges in executing their jobs as leaders is the nature of the relationship that exists between them and the community. Makura (2009) notes that female leaders in the education sector, in Zimbabwe did not garner enough support from the parents. In some cases, parents failed to attend meetings or transferred their children to male headed schools citing the need for effective discipline for their children. According to Cheruto and Kyalo (2010), some parents displayed their displeasure with female heads by deliberately failing to pay levies on time thus, frustrating the institution's development endeavours. The same situation is true of Turkey where female educators are not parents' best favourites and they are less respected and valued (Celikten, 2009). Makura (2009) further explains that fissures between female leaders and parents stem from the fact that parents view female leaders as temperamental. They believe that female leaders are less tolerant and given to acting on rumours, something that causes subordinates to have a cold relationship with their leaders. To the parents, this sets a context for decreased pass rates.

However, Kagoda and Sperandio (2009) note that not all parents are averse to women leadership. Some parents are more favourably inclined to schools run by women and are more involved in school activities than in schools run by men. They believe that women leaders in education are more passionate in dealing with emotional issues like HIV and AIDS, especially nowadays when institutions face a multiplicity of social problems. Female leaders create more transparent and welcoming institutions than their male counterparts. Whatever the case may be, it is clear that institutional leaders male or female need community support so that the burden of running institutions, where parents would have entrusted their children, becomes manageable (Kagoda & Sperandio, 2009). This is the kind of support that most women leaders are not receiving, thus, making their task extremely difficult.

2.5.2.11 Attraction to senior leadership positions

Jarmon (2014) points out that the institutions of higher education tend to have processes and structures in place that reflect male values and lifestyles. These established values are often difficult to change (Mbepera, 2015). Women thus, find many senior positions made less attractive by the heavy workload that requires taking work home or being available at work at any time. This leads to a work and family related conflict in which women have to juggle between the two spheres. The process of managing the roles and responsibilities of wife, mother and career woman is both daunting and demanding (Unterhalter, 2011). Leadership is thus, perceived as unattractive by many women, not just because of the long hour's culture but also because of the value that they put to their families (Reisser, 1988; Bhalalusesa & Mboya, 2003; Chabaya et al., 2009). Success stories of women who juggle these responsibilities have been recorded but some have regrettably dropped the demands of either of these responsibilities.

The situation is compounded by organisational structures that indirectly exclude women. For example, some research seminars and networking opportunities are held after the normal working time. Those caring for young children will find fulfilling work obligations like attending such meetings, very challenging. Coupled with the issue of child bearing and child rearing is their own negative self-image. Chabaya et al. (2009) observe that some women have low self-esteem, lack confidence and perceive that their role in the family overrides all other roles. Also, women chairing faculty or university committees can find both their sex and their leadership ability rendered highly visible and under additional scrutiny because of their minority status. The prospect of accepting senior leadership positions, therefore, becomes less attractive.

Research carried out by Stead (2015) on women and leadership shows that ambition alone is not enough to make a substantive difference to the gender inequality in the work place. Instead, there are deeply embedded gendered assumptions that shape who society thinks can be leaders

(Stead, 2015). These assumptions lead to a situation in which women are viewed and evaluated first as women and second as professionals or as leaders. This means that their visibility as leaders is very low. Women are often made to feel uncomfortable as leaders (Stead, 2015). A male armed with good education, skills and experience is right on his way to the top. But a woman, in addition to the career needs, must build up her self-confidence and mental alertness, demonstrating a willingness to confront problems. The technical, leadership skills and competence of the career woman must necessarily outweigh those of the man. This is because a woman needs to demonstrate, not just a higher degree of competence than the average man, but also needs to maintain very good inter-personal relationships.

In the eyes of the feminists, the challenges that women face are a result of male dominance in the form of patriarchy. However, patriarchy is not the only problem. Applying the language of liberation is the major challenge. In the context of this study, robust implementation of gender policies is the liberation language that stands to realise the dream of equitable distribution of leadership posts between men and women thus, attracting more women to take up leadership positions. There is no doubt, however, that there are many success stories. Of interest are the efforts that women have made to rise above adverse circumstances and fight for recognition, despite the risks of being labelled and the risk of breaking family ties (Kiamba, 2008).

2.6 Invigoration of the existing policy frameworks

The final research question was on strategies to invigorate the existing policy frameworks to facilitate the promotion of women to decision-making positions. It should be noted that positive steps have been taken across the globe to strengthen the gender laws. The ratification of conventions and the adoption of national laws by governments have opened up space for the implementation of human rights. It has also facilitated the gaining of legal equality by the women. As has been noted, the principle of gender mainstreaming has been introduced in many countries leading to the de jure increment in the gender equality. It is clear, however, that a lot still

needs to be done. The great divide between policy implementation and the availability of the legal frameworks is the foundation of the problem. It is the foundation upon which this study is grounded. For this reason, parliamentarians must be capacitated to take a political position towards the enhancement of policy implementation with regard to gender equality in academia. Political, economic and social participation of women has been enhanced in many countries across the globe. This was achieved through the implementation of the quota system for political parties, business, parliamentarians and universities. Zimbabwe's education system could take a cue from that. A determined political will can help fortify our policy implementation strategies. The Beijing Platform's aim of achieving 30% of women in political decision-making structures still has to be realised apparently because of open and latent resistance. The researcher argues that there is need for a change of attitude combined with strong political intervention strategies. This will help claim the potency of the policies.

2.7 Empirical studies

This section looks at empirical studies that were conducted internationally, regionally and locally in line with gender policy implementation to promote gender parity in leadership in academia. It is important to explore some of the studies in order to properly position the current study in relation to the previous and prevailing situations regarding gender policy implementation in academia.

In the analysis of studies conducted in the Arab region by Kemp and Madsen (2013) and Morley (2013), it was observed that the trend of women's under-representation in senior leadership positions in academia is consistent with what is obtaining elsewhere outside the region. Across the Middle East and North Africa, there are more women attending universities than men (Morley, 2014; Morley & Crossouard, 2015). The workplace, however, tells a different story. Within the institutions surveyed by the study, the women constituted less than a fifth of the total academic staff. The conclusion was that Arab women's participation in higher education management was marginal. The women were mostly found in intermediate

management level positions but non-existent at top-level posts. This was despite the existence of regulatory frameworks that sought to rationalise the appointment and promotion of women to leadership positions in higher education.

Some of the reasons cited for the under-representation of women were that there was a marked difference between the academic career trajectories of men and women. While women advanced at a slower rate and were considerably more likely to fall out at each step on the way to the top, the progression of men was hurdle-free and was likely to receive both institutional and family support. The most commonly advanced explanation for this pattern was that the demands of an academic career for a woman were incompatible with the socially-valued roles of wife and mother.

Studies that were carried out in the Nordic countries; that is, Norway, Finland, Denmark, Iceland and Sweden show that within these countries, there is more commitment towards bridging the gender gap in all aspects of development. This study will give a more detailed write up of the Nordic countries because as Nielsen (2015) and Bergman and Rustad (2013) argue, the Nordic nations have gone much further down the road to gender equality than anywhere else in the world. Literature indicates that the chances of women attaining institutional managerial positions in the leadership bureaucracy of higher education institutions in these countries is better than anywhere else in the world. This makes the Nordic countries useful as both role models and benchmarks (Aukland, 2013; Zahidi, 2014). Compared to other countries in the European Union, the Nordic countries have more women on boards of the national research councils and more women vice-chancellors (rectors). The Nordic countries benefited from the passionate implementation of the gender quota system for government-appointed bodies. This resulted in an increased female representation on the boards of the Nordic research councils. The 2003 legislation passed in Norway requiring 40 % representation of each gender has been crucial in bridging the gender gap in institutional leadership in academia after having been adopted by the other Nordic countries. A rigorous policy mix

transformed Norway's tertiary education in terms of its scope for university leadership. This led to a 55 % increase in the number of women professors in 5 years from 9 % to 14 % and led to gender parity in the number of females and males that were recruited to carry out various responsibilities within the university systems (Teigen, 2012). The gender equality interventions implemented by Norway include:

- Gender analysis,
- Postdoctoral staff and associate professors
- Quotas for recruitment
- Gender policy development
- Appointment of equality advisors
- Committees for equality issues that report to high level management
- The allocation of a budget for equal opportunity
- Qualification stipends
- Mentoring for female PhD students
- Networking
- A start package for women in male-dominated fields
- Career planning support for women
- Career counselling and mentoring support is offered for women
- Entering senior leadership positions in tertiary institutions management (Morley, 2013).

The quota law has also gained considerable attention internationally. In recent years, the parliaments of Spain (2007), Iceland (2010), France (2011), the Netherlands (2011), Belgium (2011), Italy (2011) and Malaysia (2011) adopted similar quota laws regulating the gender composition of corporate boards (Teigen, 2012). Husu (2001), Rogg (2001) and Aukland (2013) point out that Nordic countries' women have achieved a relatively high degree of equality and their economic, social, political and educational participation is one of the highest in the western industrialised countries.

The status of women in managerial and leadership positions in academia in this region compares favourably with most countries (Bergman & Rustad, 2013). Table 7 below shows the percentage of men and women on research boards and vice-chancellors in Nordic universities.

Table 7: Board representation on research boards and female vice chancellors

Board representation			Ranking	Vice-chancellors		Ranking in She Figures
country	% women	% men	% women	% women	% men	% women
Denmark	35	65	7	14	86	13
Finland	45	55	3	25	75	3
Iceland	40	60	4	20	80	7
Norway	46	54	2	32	68	1
Sweden	49	51	1	37	73	2

Source: Adapted from Bergman and Rustad (2013) *The Nordic region- a step closer to gender balance in research: Joint Nordic strategies and measures to promote gender balance among researchers in academia*

In a study carried out by Morley and Crossouard (2015), in six South Asian countries, namely Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Bangladesh and India, the findings were that there was an overwhelming dearth of literature and statistical data on women and leadership in most of the countries that were studied. The study was conducted with the principal objective of drawing information regarding the state of the gender policies, baseline data from the literature, change interventions and available statistics on the situation regarding higher education in these countries. The researchers needed the data for the purpose of constructing recommendations about the specific future actions and change interventions to be implemented in south Asia.

The study noted that all the countries, save for Sri Lanka did not keep systematically disaggregated staff data. The research also discovered that gender was never used as a unit of analysis or treated as a specific category in the policy documents of most institutions of higher education in the region. The issues of gender were mentioned in respect to students, not staff. In the context of this study, while gender is used as a unit of analysis and consideration in Zimbabwean education system, especially at primary and secondary school levels, similar considerations do not reflect the situation in tertiary education in terms of leadership. The study also discovered that there was a paucity of substantive scholarship and research on the issue of women leadership in higher education in the region. In fact, the available literature that the study found was on small-scale unfunded post-graduate inquiries.

The study also revealed that there were no programmes that were designed to offer training to aspiring women for leadership positions. The findings by Morley and Crossouard (2015) corroborate findings in the existing body of literature that, worldwide, women who aspire to leadership positions are often frustrated or outrightly excluded from the most senior positions in academia. Conversely, the research also discovered that women were either indifferent or showed reluctance to attain senior leadership perceiving it as an unattractive, onerous and undesirable career options.

The dilemma that the research findings bring forth is whether women regard senior leadership positions with genuine disdain or they are discouraged through discriminatory recruitment, selection and promotion procedures including exclusionary networks. Part of the explanation lies in the fact that the challenges that women face are rather complex emanating from the family to the society and right into the organisation. below summarises the research finding on gender in equality in higher education in South Asia.

Table 8: Barriers to women leadership in Asia

Barriers to women leadership	Enablers
Organisational culture: Patriarchal nature of higher education institutions (HEIs).	Internationalisation and opportunities for mobility, networks and research partnerships., contacts and professional approaches
Lack of investment in women: The absence of structured interventions to develop women's leadership	Professional Development e.g. opportunities for doctoral study, and regular updating]
Recruitment and selection: Appointment processes for leadership lack transparency and are susceptible to gender bias	Mentoring programmes at formal and informal levels.
Family: Expectations of caregiving constraining no time to engage in HE careers	Institutional policies and practices including affirmative action, work/life balance and family-friendly interventions
Corruption- The leaders vulnerable to allegations bribery and corruption	Transparency in appointment and promotion to leadership posts
Perceptions of leadership: as a diversion from women's commitment to research and scholarship, seen as unattractive administrative functions requiring a 24/7 commitment	Gender sensitisation programmes- Women-only learning spaces in higher education institutions

Source: Adapted from Morley and Crossouard (2015) *Women in Higher Education Leadership in South Asia: Rejection, Refusal, Reluctance, Re-visioning*

Within the African context, literature shows that university education has always favoured men (Elmuti, Jia, Davis, 2009; Gaidzanwa & Chung, 2010; Guramatunhu-Mudiwa, 2010; Morley, 2013; Mokhele, 2013; Morley & Crossouard, 2015). In view of the disparities between the numbers of women holding leadership positions versus men, a correspondingly smaller number of women eventually occupy policy-making positions (Chabaya, Rembe & Wadesango, 2009; Mapolisa & Madziyire, 2012; Zinyemba, 2013; Shava & Ndebele, 2014).

Studies conducted in 10 African countries (Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, Uganda, Nigeria, Ghana, Zambia, Mozambique, South Africa and

Zimbabwe) by the Higher Education Resource Services (HERS) in 2007, showed that even though women constitute over 50 % of the higher education workforce, only 8 % were vice-chancellors and 12 % were registrars; while 21 % were appointed as pro-vice-chancellors and executive directors (Ogunsanya, 2007). In Ghanaian universities, 2008 statistics show that 10 % of the professors were women, while the figure stood at 12 % in Uganda (Morley, 2013).

In South Africa, studies carried out by Moorosi (2007), Mokhele (2013) and Mangwiro (2013) found that women still faced challenges in terms of promotion to senior positions in tertiary education. Although South Africa has done much in comparison with other African countries, many policies have largely been ineffective in bridging the gender gap in academia. Mokhele (2013) argues that affirmative action policies to support women's quest to attain senior leadership positions have largely been ineffectual. The general observation from many African and foreign researchers about gender issues in Africa corroborate the views and vision of Agenda 2063 (the vision upon which the theoretical framework of this study is anchored) that Africa must change its trajectory for development. Their view is that Africa must harness its resources and human capital, both male and female, to achieve sustainable growth in the next fifty years. Women are missing from Africa's development agenda.

In Kenya, Onsongo (2004) and Odhiambo (2011) based their study on factors affecting women's participation in university management. They noted that there was only one female vice-chancellor in 2002. According to Onsongo (2004), more women in Kenyan universities were heads of departments, at 13.2 %, deans of faculty at 18.2 % and registered female students constituted 25 % in 2002. The study concluded that women were missing from top leadership posts in the universities and that there was indirect gender discrimination in the appointment, recruitment and promotion process. In a different study in Uganda in 2006, only 12 % of women were deputy heads and heads of secondary schools. The situation was worse in private schools in Uganda, where only 10 % of heads of

schools were women (Kagoda & Sperandio, 2009). Kagoda and Sperandio (2009) postulated that women were only well represented in lower-paid positions, such as secretaries and attendants. In fact, the under-representation of women in top leadership positions in these countries reflects the general situation in many African countries.

The reasons for female under-representation in leadership positions in the education sector have to some extent been documented. Ogunsanya (2007) says that most women in Africa do not acquire the needed experience to become leaders because of social positioning. She further observes that most women in Africa have been outside the leadership domain for a long time and thus, are not equipped for leadership roles. However, some scholars are positive that the adoption of affirmative action by African states, such as the Agenda 2063, will increase the number of women in leadership positions previously dominated by men (Kariuki, 2006; Mbepera, 2015).

In a survey carried out in Nigeria by the ILO (2010) to assess the chances of women in accessing senior leadership positions in academia at the University of Abuja, using qualitative and documentary methods, the results suggested that consideration was given to intelligence, knowledge or excellence (competence) as the benchmarks for the promotion of women to senior leadership positions. This means that women who aspired to enter into senior leadership positions had to show commendable levels of competence. Consideration was given to a candidate's aptitude regardless of gender. While by any standards, possession of knowledge, excellence and intelligence are key attributes for any aspiring leader, competitively women still remain disadvantaged because of their inferiority in terms of numbers to adequately challenge men. In such a situation, men emerge as more suitable for leadership posts because they out-number women for any possible post. Table 9 below illustrates the possible pre-requisites for any woman aspiring to get a leadership and promotional post. The survey was carried out at one Nigerian university.

Table 9: Needs of women aspiring to leadership roles

	217 Responses	Agreement
1	Intelligence/Knowledge/Excellence	150
2	High level of competence	142
3	Confidence	84
4	Accommodation (tolerance, endurance, patience, fairness)	76
5	imitation of male behaviour	76
6	Exposure to leadership roles	62
7	Moral stability/stable homes	58
8	Good human relationships	55
9	Honesty	34
10	Ability to lobby	64

Source: Adapted from Ochieng (2015) *Women Leadership in Nigerian Universities*

Table 10: Women's needs to achieve rank in their professions

	217 Responses	Agreement
1	Higher education	178
2	Hard work	176
3	Self Determination	96
4	Discipline/confidence	70
5	Encouragement/promotion when due	69
6	Self-projection (needs to publicize all her achievements)	68
7	Firmness	44
8	Good public relations	44
9	Stable homes/family support	232

Source: Adapted from Ochieng (2015) *Women leadership in Nigerian Universities*

As shown on table 10, leadership patterns are generally modelled in the male norm where the women must count on the family support and family stability before making up their minds to consider applying for senior leadership posts. The table also shows that women need to prove that they are better than the men when competing for a leadership post in academia because literature has shown that appointment to senior leadership positions is purely on merit.

Within the SADC region, a study of 117 universities (UNESCO, 2010; UNDP, 2013) revealed that while 105 universities (89.7 %) are led by male

vice-chancellors, only 12 universities (10.3 %), were led by females. Only 5 of the 15 SADC countries; that is, Seychelles, Madagascar, Tanzania, South Africa and Zimbabwe had some universities that were led by female vice-chancellors. Table 11 below gives a summary depicting the under-representation of women as senior leaders in universities in the SADC region.

Table 11: SADC countries with universities headed by women

Country	Total No of Universities	Gender-Male	Female	% Males	%Females
Angola	12	12	0	100	0
Botswana	1	1	0	100	0
Democratic Republic of Congo	14	14	0	100	0
Lesotho	1	1	0	100	0
Madagascar	4	3	1	75	25
Malawi	4	4	0	100	0
Mauritius	3	3	0	100	0
Mozambique	11	11	0	100	0
Namibia	1	1	0	100	0
Seychelles	1	0	1	0	100
South Africa	23	17	6	73.9	26.1
Swaziland	1	1	0	100	0
Tanzania	23	21	2	91.3	8.7
Zambia	7	7	0	100	0
Zimbabwe	16	13	3	77	23
SADC REGION	122	116	13	89.7	10.3

Source: Adapted from Guramatunhu-mudiwa (2010)

In the survey that was conducted whose results are shown in Table 11 above, the number of universities differs from country to country with South Africa and Tanzania having the largest number of universities at 23 each. The general trend depicts a serious under-representation of women in senior leadership positions with men at 89.7 % against 10.3 % for women.

Figure 4 demonstrates the pattern of female under-representation in senior academic posts in SADC universities.

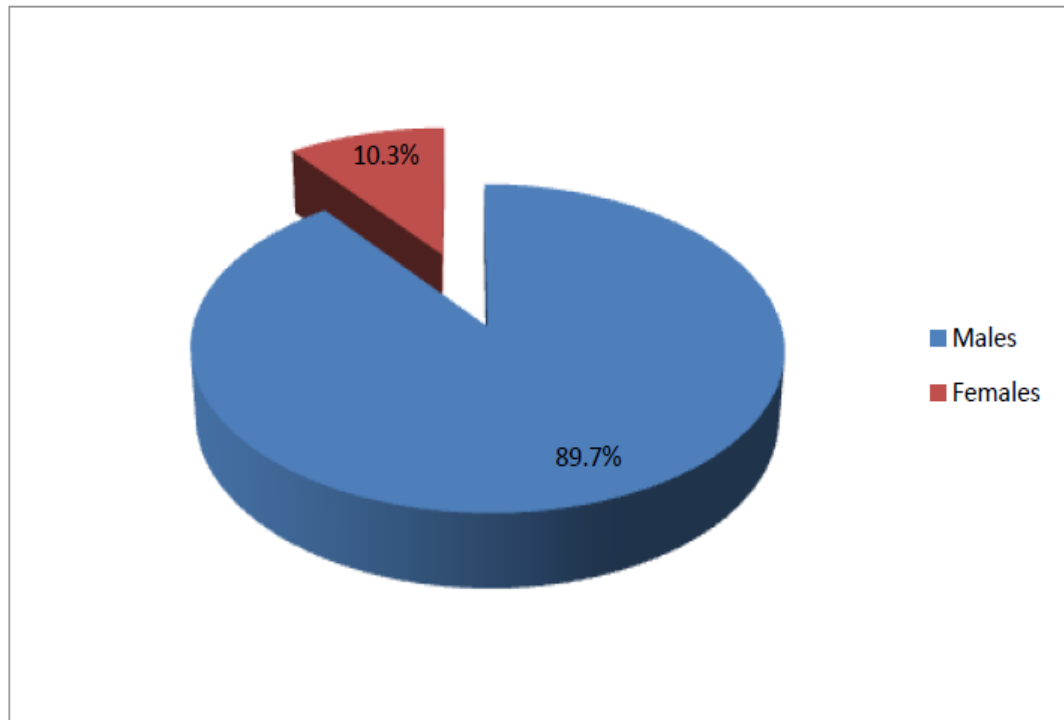


Figure 4: Pattern of female under-representation in senior academic posts in SADC

Source: Adapted from Guramatunhu-Mudiwa (2010). Forum on Public Policy

Within the SADC region, it is clear that there is a pattern of male dominance in the university senior posts. It is interesting to note that the signing of the SADC protocol on Education and Training and the Declaration on Gender and Development by member countries was done out of the need to ensure gender parity in educational leadership. The statistics for women leadership within the SADC countries as highlighted in figure 4, exposes the under-representation of women in senior university posts like vice-chancellorship, pro-vice-chancellorship deanship and registraship (Singh, 2008; Guramatunhu-Mudiwa, 2010).

As revealed in the study, ten countries out of 15 that make up SADC did not have a female vice-chancellor leading a university. The under-representation of women, among other reasons, is attributed to the nature of implementation of gender policy frameworks. Guramatunhu-Mudiwa

(2010) notes that there are entrenched male patterns of behaviour in academia that operate beneath the facade of policies designed to counter gender inequity.

Within the universities in SADC, the under-representation of women suggests that women face some forms of discrimination. It is important to note that UNESCO (2010) recognises sustainable development based on the principle of non-discrimination and equality of all the citizens. In SADC countries, as in most of the Sub-Saharan African countries, societies are patriarchal (Akinsanya, 2012; Black & Islam, 2014). This means that most the societies are built on the principle of gender inequality. The situation within the SADC region is consistent with the observations by the socialist-feminists who see the fingerprints of patriarchy in the design of female subjugation and male dominance. There is an internalised male norm which regards men as natural leaders. This societal norm paradoxically empowers men to address issues that mostly affect women whilst the women themselves are outside the corridors of power. The phenomenon in which girls and women are marginalised in senior positions, with no power to make decisions, is described as vertical marginalisation or hierarchical marginalisation. This conforms to the worldwide phenomena in which women are under-represented in productive sectors (Guramatunhudiwa, 2010).

The under-representation of women in senior leadership positions remains a big concern in higher education and continues to seriously undermine the realisation of equitability (Gaus, 2011). The wide gap between men and women in senior leadership posts in academia raises issues regarding the effectiveness of the policy implementation process. Interventions for gendered change do exist in many societies but it appears that there is a glitch at the implementation stage. As it stands, SADC may not achieve its commitment to achieving gender equality in educational leadership. The signing of the SADC protocol on Education and Training and the Declaration on Gender and Development needs a lot of commitment from member states. As long as the protocol and other policies on gender

equality are not legally binding, they lack the force of law to achieve the desired outcomes. This irregularity forms the core of this study which is to analyse the implementation of gender policies to promote gender parity in leadership in academia.

Just like other African countries, Zimbabwe is a patriarchal society whose socio-economic religious space is male-dominated. Socialist-feminists argue that men's power is consolidated through the dominance of institutional structures of the society. In this regard, women find themselves dominated by men in almost all aspects of life.

As a way of consolidating women's power, gender equity policies were put in place with the aim of raising women to equal positions with men in all the sectors including appointment to senior leadership positions. Section 17 of the constitution of the Republic of Zimbabwe states that:

- (1) The State must promote full gender balance in Zimbabwean society, and in particular;
 - (a) the State must promote the full participation of women in all spheres of Zimbabwean the society on the basis of equality with men;
 - (b) the State must take all measures, including legislative measures, needed to ensure that;
 - (i) both genders are equally represented in all institutions and agencies of government at every level; and
 - (ii) Women constitute at least half the membership of all commissions and other elective and appointed governmental bodies established by or under this Constitution or any Act of Parliament;

(2) The State must take positive measures to rectify gender discrimination and imbalances resulting from past practices and policies. Adapted from (Chinyoka, 2013).

In contrast to section 17 of the constitution of Zimbabwe, studies carried out in Zimbabwean institutions of higher learning by Chipunza (2003), Gaidzanwa and Chung (2010), Chauraya (2012, 2013, 2014) and Zvobgo and Farisayi (2014) to find out gender representation with regard to senior leadership positions in tertiary institutions, revealed that universities operated in ways that sustained and reproduced unequal gender relations in both the social and the intellectual life. While the universities referred to equality and egalitarianism in their policy documents, very little was done to fulfil these noble objectives (Guramatunhu-Mudiwa, 2010).

Zimbabwe has seventeen universities of which only 3 (18 %) of them are led by women, while 14 (82 %) are led men. This is a serious under-representation of women. Universities have their own comprehensive packages of policy strategies to facilitate the promotion of women to senior leadership positions. These include the use of affirmative action policies, placing riders on adverts that state that the post being applied for favours a female environment or that women are encouraged to apply. There are also recruitment policies based on a 60 % and 40 % ratio in favour of women (Zvobgo & Farisayi, 2014).

It is important to note that paucity of women is not only visible at the top institutional leadership positions but also in the university committees as highlighted in table 12 below. The gender distribution in the committees is based on a study conducted at Midlands State University by Zvobgo and Farisayi (2014).

Table 12: Gender distribution in university committees at Midlands State University (2005-2013)

Committee Name	2005				2013			
	Female		Male		Female		Male	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Council	7	21.9	25	78.1	12	37.5	20	62.5
Finance	3	30.0	7	70.0	3	30.0	7	70.0
Academic Staff Promotions and Tenure	4	23.5	13	76.5	4	23.5	13	76.5
Non- Academic Staff Promotions and Tenure	4	44.4	5	55.5	4	44.4	5	55.5
Academic Staff Appointment Board	3	37.5	5	62.5	3	37.5	5	62.5
Non-Academic Staff Appointment Board	1	20	4	80.0	1	20.0	4	80.0
Salaries and Conditions of Service	3	30.0	7	70.0	3	30.0	7	70.0
Fundraising	3	42.9	4	57.1	3	42.9	4	57.1
Building	3	25.0	9	75.0	3	25.0	9	75.0
Risk Management	6	25.0	18	75.0	6	25.0	18	75.0
Continuation of Employment Beyond Retirement Age	3	42.9	4	57.1	3	42.9	4	57.1
Farm Management Board	2	22.2	7	77.8	2	22.2	7	77.8
Planning	2	28.6	5	71.4	2	28.6	5	71.4
Budget	2	33.3	4	66.7	2	33.3	4	66.7
Marketing and Public Relations	4	50.0	4	50.0	4	50.0	4	50.0
Tender Adjudication	4	26.7	11	73.3	4	26.7	11	73.3
Senate	7	16.7	35	83.3	19	25.3	56	74.7
Academic Board	3	17.6	14	82.4	3	17.6	14	82.4
Work Related Learning	-	-	-	-	5	25.0	15	75.0
Research and Post-graduate Studies	-	-	-	-	7	31.8	15	68.2
Library	4	40.0	6	60.0	4	40.0	6	60.0
Research Board	5	35.7	9	64.3	5	35.7	9	64.3
Student Travel Fund	3	27.3	8	72.7	3	27.3	8	72.7
ICT Purchasing	-	-	-	-	6	54.5	5	45.5
Graduate Employment	3	33.3	6	66.7	3	33.3	6	66.7
Open Day	-	-	-	-	5	45.5	6	54.5
Editorial and Publication	4	36.4	7	63.6	4	36.4	7	63.6
Campus Security	3	23.1	10	76.9	3	23.1	10	76.9
Quality Assurance	6	27.3	16	72.7	6	27.3	16	72.7
Health and Safety	7	35	13	65.0	7	35	13	65.0
Termination of Studies Appeals	4	44.4	5	55.6	4	44.4	5	55.6
Communication Skills	4	33.3	8	66.7	4	33.3	8	66.7
Associate Affiliate	1	20.0	4	80.0	1	20.0	4	80.0
Pension Board of Trustees	0	0	7	100	0	0	7	100
Housing	3	37.5	5	62.5	3	37.5	5	62.5
Student Employment	4	25.0	12	75	4	25.0	12	75
Alumni	-	-	-	-	4	33.3	8	66.7
Student Affairs	11	35.5	20	64.5	11	35.5	20	64.5
TOTAL	126	27.9	325	72.1	170	30.8	382	69.2

(Academic Registrar's Office, 2013)

Source: Adapted from Zvobgo and Farisayi (2014), *Zimbabwe Journal of Science and Technology* (9) 90-97

The findings by Zvobgo and Farisayi (2014) show male dominance of all the university committees during the period that the research was conducted. University committees make decisions that affect the day to day operations of the institutions. Absence of an interest group means that its concerns are not properly represented. Poor representation of women in university committees also means limitation of the women's voices. The gender inequality that characterises the university committees also reflects women under-representation at the administrative level. These findings are in line with Chauraya (2012), Kemp and Madsen's (2013) and Xuhong and Gaughan's (2014) observations that tertiary and university education leadership is exclusively male-dominated.

In conclusion, the studies have made a clear indication that gender policies were enacted in every country that was discussed. Many of the countries have acceded to international statutes guaranteeing equality of all the citizens before the law including equality based on gender. It has also been noted that women face various challenges ranging from intersectionality of culture, family expectation and work obligations. Also, personal attributes that derail women's career progression have been outlined. The question is, if male hegemony is ubiquitous, why is it that there is the more active participation of women in leadership positions in some regions when in others, it is very low? The puzzle that this study seeks to investigate is why there is a continued under-representation of women in some regions or countries in almost all the sectors, particularly in higher education. The under-representation of women exists against the backdrop of enacted gender policies in those countries. This question has not been succinctly answered in the literature discussed above. The question forms the knowledge gap that this study seeks to unravel. Most of the literature gives the ideological justification of why men dominate women in leadership but does not succinctly explain the difference in terms of women participation in different regions and places. This study suggests that there is need to re-

think the inter-link between gender policy and gender policy implementation.

2.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter outlined the theoretical framework that the researcher used to contextualise the study namely; the socialist-feminist theory, and John Rawls and David Miller's social justice theory. These theories were analysed in the context of the African Agenda 2063 in order to domesticate the study within the African perspective. The theories purport that, due to patriarchy, men's hegemony and women's subjugation become an internalised phenomenon. This makes the male norm in the work place almost natural. In that regard, tendencies for men to gate-keep their positions at work become rife leading to an unjust situation of male domination in leadership positions. Through this, women's under-representation in senior leadership positions, therefore, continues to escalate. The chapter also discussed the conceptual framework, literature review and literature based on research questions and the empirical studies. Some research findings and conceptualisation of the theory suggest that there are three factors that determine gender equality in as far as leadership is concerned, that is; family, organisational and societal factors. Within an organisational setting, the three factors discussed revealed that there is a mis-match between policy and practice or what people should or claim to do and what they actually do. Since the focus of the study was on the implementation of policy frameworks to promote gender parity in leadership in academia, the study was premised on the assumption that although Zimbabwe has comprehensive gender policy guidelines which promote equality between men and women in all aspects of life and development, there are no robust changes that are taking place in terms of the promotion of women to senior positions in academia (Zvobgo & Farisayi, 2014). The next chapter outlines and justifies the methodology that was used in the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on research methodology. All the major aspects that guided this research are discussed in this section. These include the research paradigm, the research approach and design, population, sample and sampling techniques, data collection instruments, data credibility and trustworthiness, data collection, data analysis and ethical considerations. A brief discussion on each of the aspects raised above is presented in the following paragraphs.

3.2 Research paradigm

Paradigms can be conceptualised as systems of intertwined thinking and practices that spell out how research is carried out. They can also be seen as shared beliefs and practices in a research field. Onwuegbuzie and Teddie (2003) describe them as illustrations of research models, while Willis (2007 p.8) sees them as a comprehensive 'belief system or a world view that guides research and research practices in a field'. The researcher selects a paradigm that suits the purpose of the research being undertaken, in terms of intent, motivation and expectation (Dawson, 2009).

Dawson (2009) states that there is a range of research paradigms which include interpretivist/constructivist, positivist, post-positivist, and post-modern among others. A paradigm consists of rationally-related assumptions, concepts or propositions which guide the research framework (Dawson, 2009). Nieuwenhuis (2007) stresses that a paradigm relates to expectations, assumptions and beliefs about crucial aspects of realism which give rise to a particular conception of the world.

From a philosophical perspective, a paradigm relates to three issues. First, the interpretation or perception of the nature of reality (ontology), that is, whether it is internal or external to the researcher. This means that individual actors create and interpret their own meaning of events, which are unique and cannot be generalised to other contexts.

The present study examined the perceptions, attitudes and expectations of the social actors, that is, the lecturers, the registrars, the pro-vice-chancellors and the vice-chancellors at two universities in Bindura metropolitan regarding the implementation of gender policies to promote gender parity in leadership in academia. What happens at the two universities relating to gender, in terms of appointments to senior leadership positions, elicited a multiplicity of perspectives. According to Mack (2010), participants can give diverse interpretations to a single incident depending on how they perceived it. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) add that the nature of social phenomena is only interpreted through senses and experiences resulting in different perspectives. Ontology, therefore, brings to the fore, the reasons why researchers need knowledge. It stipulates the nature of reality as conceptualised by the researcher (Willis, 2007). This means that ontology assumes that reality is subjective and it is indirectly constructed, based on individual conceptualisations and interpretations.

Second, a paradigm also relates to the conceptualisation or understanding of the type of knowledge that can be generated, and the parameters for justifying it, that is, (epistemology). The concern of epistemology is about what people know about reality, and how they get to know it. In its strict sense, epistemology is about knowledge which is a very important base for research in both the social and natural sciences (McMillan & Schumacker, 2001; Willis, 2007). The assumption of epistemology is that knowledge is gained through specific approaches. The approaches take into account 'the differences between the human world and the objects of natural sciences and therefore, require the social scientist to understand the subjective

meaning of social action' (McMillan & Schumacker, 2001; Gall & Gall, 2003).

It should be noted that epistemology is concerned with all claims made about knowledge. Its quest is on finding out what the researcher claims to know and understand and the process involved in finding knowledge. Furthermore, it is also concerned with finding out how knowledge is recognised and the manner in which it is used when it is found (Briggs, 2012). Knowledge is thus, gained inductively to create a theory through one's personal experiences (Mack, 2010). It is a product from particular situations hence, it is not reducible to one-dimensional interpretation.

In this study, the epistemological position that was taken was guided by the interests of the researcher to understand the interactions taking place at the two selected universities in Bindura urban, on matters pertaining to the implementation of gender policies to promote gender parity in leadership in academia. Epistemology, therefore, informed the process through which the researcher got the knowledge and reality at the two selected universities in Bindura urban, Mashonaland Central province of Zimbabwe, regarding policy implementation issues on gender and leadership.

Third; a paradigm also relates to a methodology which is a research strategy that transforms ontological and epistemological principles into guidelines that show how a research process is conducted (Sarantakos, 2005). Kumar (2011) says that methodology is a logical approach to the construction of knowledge. It is a branch of science that is concerned with the investigation of the potential and limitations of certain practices, principles or procedures of scientific inquiry. Methods are the techniques and actions or procedures that are followed when conducting a research. Methods that are used are therefore, determined by the methodology (Kumar, 2011).

A researcher's methodological approach underpinned by and reflecting specific ontological and epistemological assumptions represents a choice of approach and research methods adopted in a given study. The terms

pertain to the science and study of methods and the assumptions about the ways in which knowledge is produced (Gall & Gall, 2003). In this study, the methodological choices that were made were selected on the basis of their suitability to collect information on experiences, perceptions and attitudes of the vice-chancellors, pro-vice-chancellors, registrars and lecturers, regarding gender policy implementation on appointments to senior administrative positions.

In order to create the basis for choices with regard to the methods, literature or research design, the researcher needs to select a paradigm. This implies that reality is better interpreted in the context of research paradigms as it serves as the guiding principle by which reality is viewed (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). In the context of the discussion, therefore, a researcher should be guided by a philosophy which allows them to set principles that scientifically lead to valid steps as the events are examined. In the present study, the selection of the qualitative approach and the case study design, which formed the methodological basis for this study, was necessitated by the choice of the interpretive paradigm. The qualitative approach was pre-disposed toward detailed thick descriptions of experiences of senior members of the university administration, namely; vice-chancellors, pro-vice-chancellors, registrars and lecturers in their own natural setting at their work places. In view of this assertion, a paradigm is a very important component of the research process. The choice of the paradigm determines the methods that are used, the events observed and examined and the interpretation of the results. It was therefore, essential for the researcher to choose a paradigm that assisted him throughout the research process.

3.2.1 Interpretivist research paradigm

This study used the interpretive research paradigm which falls within the constructivist orientation. The research paradigm emphasises the ability of the individual to construct meaning; hence, it is also referred to as

constructivism (Mack, 2010). The research paradigm was selected on the basis of the social-scientific nature of the research. The interpretive research paradigm appreciates that the social sciences are different from the natural sciences. The research paradigm's argument is that reality cannot be investigated in the same way. In the present study, women encounter challenges that are peculiar to their own settings within their institutions. The circumstances that hinder them from being promoted or appointed to senior leadership positions are different and circumstantial, hence, the need to use an interpretivist research paradigm. Interpretivists believe that truth can be perceived from a multi-dimensional perspective (Cohen & Manion, 2005). Social reality, to them, is interpreted by the individual, based on the ideological inclination of the individual. This is because the reality is a social construct and truth is context-bound. Interpretivists favour meaning to measurement-oriented methods of enquiry because they argue that it is difficult to generalise how one experiences a phenomenon (Creswell, 2007; Mertens, 2010). Interpretivism emphasises subjective understanding and interpretation of a phenomenon as opposed to objective measurability, controllability and predictability construct laws of human behaviour (Cohen & Manion, 2005). The strengths of interpretivism are evident in the depth of explorations and thick descriptions it yields through its qualitative approach to research. However, its major weakness is subjectivity and inability to generalise beyond the situation studied.

The major purpose of the interpretivist/ constructivist paradigm to research, as stated by Dawson (2009) is to understand the world of human experience. The research paradigm bases itself on the presumption that 'reality is socially-constructed' (Mertens, 2010). The interpretive paradigm was, therefore, useful in enhancing the researcher's understanding of the experiences of the vice-chancellors, pro-vice-chancellors, registrars and lecturers from the two selected universities in Bindura urban, on the implementation of policy frameworks to promote gender parity in leadership in academia. This is because the interpretivist/constructivist researcher relies on the views of the participants on the situation being studied

(Creswell, 2007). The researcher also takes into account the impact that the research has on their own background and experiences (Dawson, 2009).

Interpretivists further view reality as a social construct in which people are the social actors who give meaning to their actions as they perceive them (Dawson, 2009). This entails that, individuals with their diverse experiences, assumptions and conceptions make a contribution towards the on-going construction of reality existing in their broader social contexts through social interaction. The reality, in view of this conception, is not static. It changes and can be interpreted differently from different points of view. Nieuwenhuis (2007) points out that the definitive objective of the interpretivist research is to give a point of view of a situation. The situation under study is analysed to provide insights into the way in which a particular group of people make sense of their situation or the phenomena they encounter. The interpretive paradigm was thus, suitable for this study as it allowed the researcher to interact with the lecturers and senior members of the university administration. The researcher, therefore, relied upon the views and experiences of the vice-chancellors, pro-vice-chancellors, registrars and lecturers from the two selected universities in Bindura urban on the implementation of gender policy frameworks to promote gender parity in leadership in academia.

Hermeneutics and phenomenology form the basis of the interpretive paradigm and heavily influence it (Mack, 2010; Nieuwenhuis, 2007). The field of hermeneutics is primarily based on studying meanings and interpreting them in historical texts. The interpretive paradigm was thus, born out of the meaning-making cyclical process (Mack, 2010; Nieuwenhuis, 2007). The need to consider human beings' subjective interpretations and perceptions of the world is the foundation upon which phenomenology is anchored. Phenomenology advocates the need to consider human beings' subjective interpretations, and their perceptions of the world as the starting point in understanding social phenomena (Mack, 2010). Therefore, the ontological assumptions of interpretivism are that reality is perceived from various angles and therefore, interpretation of

events is also understood from different angles (Mack 2010; Kumar, 2011). Developments in the interpretive paradigm point to the inevitability and prominence of the researcher's own subjectivity in the (hermeneutic) process of interpretation. Interpretivism emphasises on progressive development as a key part of the enquiry process, thereby, adding to the budding and philosophical quality of this type of research. The relevance of the interpretive paradigm to the study was anchored on the fact that the researcher sought to understand the participants' conception of policy matters with regard to gender parity on matters of appointment to senior leadership positions in academia. This broadened the researcher's horizon on the phenomenon under study.

Interpretivist researchers study social reality from the perspective of the people themselves. This empowers the interpretivist to have an emic or insider perspective. Wahyuni (2012) says that, in this set-up, the background, values and experiences of both the participants and researcher, substantially influence data collection and its analysis. Issues to do with the influence of the interpretivist researcher's own past and present, values and beliefs in interpreting the thoughts and feelings of the participants would be constantly taken into consideration (Kumar, 2011). Taking cognisance of such factors assisted this researcher in minimising researcher bias, which might have influenced the findings of the study.

Interpretivists propound that research must be observed from within, through the direct experience of the people, rather than from outside where objectivity is compromised (Mack, 2010). An attempt was made by the researcher, during the undertaking of this study, to immerse himself within the two selected universities, for a relatively long period. This was meant to enhance understanding and interpreting of issues from the perspective of the participants. It also enabled the researcher to have an in-depth examination of the implementation of gender policies to promote gender parity in leadership at the two selected universities. Wahyuni's (2012) idea corroborates Mack's (2010) observation by postulating that interpretive

research acknowledges the close relationship between the researcher, what is explored and the situational constraints shaping this process.

Wahyuni (2012) notes that the essence of interpretive researchers is the need to understand peoples' perceptions and experiences with regard to their environment and the internal subjective basis. In the context of this study, the objective of the researcher was to understand the complexities and dynamics at the two universities regarding the implementation of gender policies to promote gender parity in senior leadership positions rather than to explain the phenomenon that was under study.

The interpretive paradigm espouses the hermeneutics of examining texts in relation to conversations and writings of pictures in terms of methodology. It is incumbent upon the researcher using this paradigm, therefore, to read a text and understand the meaning within it. Through this approach, each individual brings their subjectivity to the text. The method enables the researcher to come to grips with the message. In this way, an attempt is made to get a deeper meaning and understanding of how the parts relate to the whole. Unlike the positivists, interpretive research presumes that the meaning of a text is rarely obvious and can only be retrieved through an in-depth analysis and examination of the message.

Further to that, interpretive research does not pre-define dependent or independent variables, neither does it set out to test the hypothesis. Its major objective is to produce an understanding of the social context of the phenomenon and the process by which the phenomenon is influenced and influences the social context (Wahyuni, 2012). This paradigm, therefore, assisted the researcher to get a full appreciation of vice-chancellors', pro-vice-chancellors', registrars' and lecturers' experiences with regard to the implementation of gender policies to promote gender parity in leadership in academia.

3.2.2 Criticism of the interpretive paradigm

Despite the fact that the strengths of the interpretive paradigm are well documented, the paradigm has been criticised for being subjective. The paradigm is looked at with derision for over-looking the importance of the scientific procedures of verification which makes its results non-generalisable to other situations (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). In view of this limitation, many positivists question the overall value of interpretivism to research. Nieuwenhuis (2007) notes that there is limited generalisability among researchers in this paradigm. Although the major objective of interpretivism is to provide detailed information about social phenomena, critics often point at its narrowness in scope, and its incapability to make meaningful generalisations to larger aggregates. Interpretivists dismiss this criticism by claiming that it is never the intention of the study to generalise the findings but to deeply understand social phenomena in its natural setting. As Mack (2010) argues, the objective of the interpretive research is the creation of local theories for practice rather than generalisable findings.

Interpretivism is also criticised for having an ontological assumption that is subjective rather than objective. Mack (2010) argues that selecting a paradigm is an indication that all research is subjective in nature. Through selecting a paradigm, the researcher is being subjectively oriented towards a particular way of doing research. This means that the researcher, as the data collection instrument, cannot distance or extricate themselves from their values and perspectives. The fact that there is no hypothesis, means that the researcher, by their mere involvement in the research, is being subjective. It should be noted, however, that interpretivists still remain objective in analysing the data they collect. By hiding their feelings and expectations, the researchers are capable of analysing the data thoroughly, with the objective of getting an in-depth understanding of the participants' natural environment disregarding their own prejudices in the process (Mack, 2010).

Despite the criticisms, the paradigm was regarded as appropriate for this study because of its flexibility in terms of allowing the researcher to be the research instrument. In this context, the researcher was immersed in the participants' own natural setting and was therefore, able to get their experiences, perceptions and feeling regarding the implementation of gender policy frameworks to promote gender parity in leadership in academia. The researcher was in a position to gain more insight into the dynamics, complexities and uniqueness of university set-ups.

3.3 Research approach

The present study was rooted in the interpretive paradigm. The study thus adopted the qualitative approach. It is important to the type of study approach is determined by the nature of the data that are collected for a study. There are therefore a number of research approaches that are used in the collection of data namely the mixed methods approach (pragmatism), quantitative approach positivism and qualitative approach, (interpretivism). The mixed methods approach combines qualitative and quantitative methods in a single study (Onwuegbuzie & Teddlie, 2003). Bryman (2004) and Creswell (1994) argue that a study can use both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Depending on the paradigm feminist researchers can use both qualitative and quantitative methodologies (Molina-Azorin, 2012). The mixed methods research is becoming an increasingly popular approach in several areas, and it has long been called for as an approach for providing a better understanding of research problems. Those who oppose the mixed methods approach argue that it lacks congruency in philosophical positions (Crotty, 1998).

On the other hand, the quantitative approach is a numerical method of quantifying and describing phenomena of materials or characteristics (Best & Kahn, 1993). Creswell (2009) argues that quantitative research is a means of testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables, which can then be measured, typically by instruments, so that numbered data can be analysed by numerical procedures. This approach is

linked to positivist epistemology, which assumes that there is only one social reality of a phenomenon, which can be discovered, but not constructed. Because of the nature of the present study which required the lived experiences of the participants, it was prudent to use an approach that captured their views, concerns, observations and aspirations.

This study thus adopted the qualitative research approach which is concerned with the enquiry process of exploring and understanding social phenomena. Wiersma and Jurs (2009) argue that the basis of qualitative research is its explanatory approach to social reality and its ability to explore the lived experiences of human beings focusing on their meanings and interpretations in their natural settings. Thus, the qualitative approach was relevant in this study because the researcher studied participants' experiences as they occurred in their natural settings, the universities. The universities provided a base from which the researcher was able to analyse issues pertaining to gender policy implementation when considering appointments to senior leadership positions. This enabled the researcher to gain an insiders' view of the problem under study.

Wiersma and Jurs (2009) state that, qualitative research is a form of social enquiry that focuses on the way people interpret and make sense of their experiences and the world in which they live. Qualitative approaches are thus used for the purpose of exploring the feelings, perspectives, behaviour and experiences of people and what lies at the centre of their lives. Nieuwenhuis (2007) as well as Denzin and Lincoln (2011) posit that the purpose of qualitative research is to collect rich descriptive data with regard to a particular phenomenon or context, with the express objective of developing an in-depth understanding of what is being observed or studied. The emphasis of qualitative research is uncovering the meanings and interpretations that members of a social group give to social phenomena, according to their experiences. Qualitative research is concerned with developing explanations of social phenomena (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). This means that it assists the people in terms of understanding the social world in which they live and why things happen the way they do. Its

focus is on social aspects of the world and it seeks to answer questions about;

- Why people behave the way they do.
- How opinions and attitudes are formed.
- How people are affected by the events that happen around them.
- How cultures have developed in the way they have.

The qualitative approach enabled the researcher to explore the feelings, perspectives, behaviours and experiences of participants in Bindura urban Mashonaland Central Province, pertaining to the implementation of gender policies to promote gender parity in leadership in academia.

Johnson and Christensen (2014) stress that qualitative research involves an all-inclusive enquiry carried out in a natural setting. The all-inclusive approach means that the phenomenon under study is conceptualised as a multi-faceted system that is more than the sum of its parts. Denzin and Lincoln (2011) maintain that qualitative research is a unique approach that locates the observer in the world through making the world visible by using sets of interpretive materials and practices. These practices have an effect on transforming the world. The practices include a series of representations, like interviews; field notes, photographs, conversations, recordings and memos. This means that qualitative research is undertaking an interpretive naturalistic approach to research.

In this context, researchers attempt to make sense of or to interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. In the present study, the use of multiple methods in collecting data from participants in Bindura urban universities, which was the participants' natural setting, helped the researcher to understand their perceptions and actions regarding the implementation of gender policies to promote gender parity in leadership in academia. The fact that qualitative research is context bound, assisted the researcher to be sensitive to the context, that is, the universities in which data were being collected. This confirms Johnson and

Christensen's (2014) observation that there is an agreement among scholars that qualitative research is a naturalistic, interpretive approach whose major objective is to understand the meanings which people attach to phenomena, actions, beliefs, decisions and values within their social worlds.

Qualitative research facilitates the meaning-making process and the complex nature of meaning in the lives of the people. It thus, concerns itself with the construction of meaning and reflects the specific methods used in the data analysis process (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Denzin and Lincoln (2011) concur with Johnson and Christensen (2014) that the aim of qualitative research is to provide an in-depth understanding of the social world of research participants by getting to understand their social and material circumstances, their perspectives, experiences and histories. In this context, the qualitative research approach was very important in conducting the current study as it helped the researcher to have an in-depth insight into gender policy issues in relation to matters of promotion and appointment to senior leadership positions at the two selected universities in Bindura urban.

Merriam (2001) observes that another critical aspect of qualitative research is that the researcher is the primary instrument for the collection of data and analysis. The ability of the human instrument to be responsive and adaptive makes qualitative research an ideal means of collecting and analysing data since understanding is the goal of this kind of research.

In the context of this study, the advantages were that the researcher had an increased understanding of gender policy issues in the institutions in relation to appointments and promotion to senior administrative positions. Merriam (2001), however, observes that the human instrument is not free from weak points and biases that may have an impact on the study. Merriam (2001) suggests that rather, it is incumbent upon the researcher to identify those possible biases and monitor them with a view to ascertaining how they may be shaping the collection and interpretation of data rather than trying to eliminate them. The subjective nature of the qualitative research approach is viewed by Merriam (2001) as virtuous because it is

the basis of the researcher's distinctive contribution. This is because the research becomes a product of a unique configuration of the researcher's personal qualities joined to the data they would have collected. In order to minimise the possibility of bias in the present study, the researcher triangulated the data collection instruments and the data itself.

3.4 Research design

A research design is a detailed description of a proposed study aimed at investigating a given problem. It is a strategic framework for action that functions as a bridge between research questions and their implementation (Terre-Blanche, Durrehiem & Porter, 2007). Creswell (2007) sees a research design as a plan or a procedure for determining the nature of the relationship between variables. Nieuwenhuis (2007) views a research design as a plan or a strategy which moves from the underlying philosophical assumptions to specifying the selection of participants, the data gathering techniques to be used, and the analysis to be done.

A research design gives the overall framework for the process that the researcher follows, the collection of data, and the analysis of the data (Leedy, 1997). Similarly, Gall and Gall (2003) say that it is a plan for the collection and usage of data in order to get the desired information. It guides the researcher during the collection, analyses and interpretation of data. The choice of a design is based on the researcher's assumptions, research skills and research practices (Lee, 2008). These all influence the way the researcher collects data. Kothari (2008) notes that a research design is a theoretical structure within which research is conducted. It is the basis for the gathering, measurement and analysis of data. Thus, a research design permitted the researcher to tie together the theoretical paradigm, the research approach and the methods of collecting data (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). The present study adopted a case study as its research design.

3.4.1 Case study

Yin (2011) believes that a case study design is an enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life situation and context. Zainal (2007) sees it as a design that focuses primarily on the examination of research questions and issues within a contextual, and often, a causal context. A case study design engages the researcher in rigorous thinking, which results in sufficient presentation of evidence to arrive at the appropriate conclusions (Yin, 2014). The case study design provides context-based practical knowledge (Flyvbjerg, 2006) which assists the researcher to study participants in their natural environment.

In the context of this study, the case study design enabled the researcher to get the views, perceptions and attitudes of the vice-chancellors, pro-vice-chancellors, registrars and lecturers regarding issues of gender equality in matters pertaining to ascension to senior leadership positions at their own institutions. Nieuwenhuis (2007) further asserts that a case study research is a systematic inquiry into a set of related events or a single event with the objective of describing and explaining the phenomenon of interest.

The major characteristic of a case study research is the use of a variety of data sources. This strategy has the advantage of enhancing data credibility (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Data sources that are used to get an in-depth understanding of the case may include archival records, documentation, physical artefacts, interviews, direct observations and participant observations (Willis, 2007; Baxter & Jack, 2008). In the present study, the case study design assisted the researcher to use focus group discussions, face-to-face interviews, and document analysis in soliciting data from participants with regard to the implementation of strategies used at the two selected universities in Bindura urban to promote gender parity in leadership in academia.

It should be noted that, in most cases, a case study design selects a small geographical area or a very limited number of individuals, as the subjects of

study. The present study focused on only two universities in Bindura urban with a limited number of participants, that is, vice-chancellors, pro-vice-chancellors, registrars and lecturers who were sampled from the total population of lecturers at the two institutions. This confirms Zanal's (2007) observation that in strict terms, case studies investigate and explore contemporary real-life phenomenon through detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of activities or conditions and their relationships.

Case studies give a multi-dimensional analysis in which the researcher considers not just the voices and perspectives of a few participants in a situation but those of other relevant groups and actors (Bell, 1999). In the context of this study, it was not only the perceptions of the vice-chancellors, pro-vice-chancellors, and registrars that mattered, but also the perceptions and voices the lecturers themselves. This design accorded the less influential members of the university setting like the ordinary lecturers (at least in terms of administrative structures), a voice in matters regarding the appointment of members of staff to senior leadership positions. This was very important because the researcher got in touch with 'grassroots' participants in order to come to a deeper understanding of the dynamics of the situation at the universities. Willis (2007) and Lee (2008) assert that heuristic case studies enhance the researcher's understanding of the issues under study. Case studies can bring about the discovery of new meanings, extend the researcher's experience and knowledge, or confirm the already existing knowledge about the phenomena under study. The aim is to get an insightful appreciation of the case(s) under study.

This study used both the descriptive and explanatory case studies. A descriptive case study is one that is focused and detailed, in which proposition and questions about a phenomenon are carefully scrutinised and articulated from the outset. Exploratory case studies explore any phenomenon in the data which serves as a point of interest to the researcher. This is because the goal set by the researcher is to describe the data as they occur (Yin, 2014). Use of descriptive and exploratory case studies was necessary because of the kind of research questions that the

study had; that is, the 'how and why' questions which required an in-depth explanation of the social phenomenon. The research questions required a broad understanding of the uniqueness that each individual at the two institutions of higher learning under study had. The two universities under study were unique in the sense that one was a state university while the other was a private church-run institution. This means that a descriptive and explanatory case study approach accorded the researcher permission to capture all the details and lifelong experiences of the members of administration and lecturers from the two universities, in their own settings. This design ensured that access and aspiration factors were covered, that is, the factors that discourage and prohibit aspiring women, from the two universities, to ascend to senior leadership positions.

3.4.2 Advantages of the case study

The major strength of the case study is the use of diverse sources and techniques in the data collection process. Prior to the collection of data, the researcher determines the kind of evidence to gather and the kind of techniques to use in the analysis of data, in order to answer the research questions (Bell, 1999; Yin, 2011). The other advantage of a case study design is that the analysis of data is most often conducted within the context of the area in which the study is taking place (Zainal, 2007; Yin, 2011). In the present study, analysis of data was done within the context of the two different universities that were selected for the study. The trajectory that this study took, confirms Willis' (2007) observation regarding the holistic nature of the case study design in which knowledge about human behaviour is generated within the context of the lived experiences of the social actors.

The thick qualitative descriptions, often produced in case studies are not only useful in terms of helping to explain the complexities of real-life situations, but also in exploring or describing the data in the real life environment. These descriptions, as Zainal (2007) postulates, may not be captured through experimental or survey research designs. Unlike

experimental research, it is possible, within the domains of case studies, to embark on a study without a pre-determined hypothesis (Willis, 2007).

The other advantage of a case study design is that the researcher has the leeway to gather rich, detailed data in a natural setting. This means that the case study design permits the researcher to collect rich data from the social actors, who are the participants themselves (Willis, 2007). Under this kind of a situation, a lot of information is generated as the researcher examines a particular event comprehensively using user friendly language which is understood by both academic and non-academic participants (Bell, 1999; Cohen et al., 2005).

In the context of this study, the researcher opted for the case study design because it allowed the researcher to intensively focus on and obtain unique views, experiences, perceptions and attitudes of, the vice-chancellors, pro-vice-chancellors, registrars and lecturers on the implementation of gender policies to promote gender parity in leadership in academia.

3.4.3 Disadvantages of the case study design

Although studies have shown that case studies are useful in terms of gathering rich data, critics point to three major weaknesses inherent within the case study research design. The first is that case studies are often accused of lack of rigor. Zainal (2007 p.21) argues that more often than not, case study researches have been slovenly, fraught with ambiguous evidence or biased views thus, influencing the direction of the findings and conclusions.

Second, case studies have been criticised for lacking sufficient basis in order to make a scientific generalisation because of its use of small number of subjects, some of which are conducted with only one subject (Zainal, 2007). Thus, questions like 'how can you generalise from a single case?' are not uncommon among critics of the case study design. Yin (2014) characterised the case study design as 'microscopic' because of the nature

of the samples which are small. Zainal (2007) however, argues that a big sample is of no consequence, rather, what is essential, is parameter establishment and objective setting of the research. Hancock et al. (2006) add that fixation with the need for a large sample reflects a misunderstanding of the purpose of case study research which is a description of particular cases in detail.

Case studies are thus particularistic and contextual. The focus of case studies is the generalisation of the theoretical propositions, not the population, as in statistical research (Yin, 2011). This position is supported by Nieuwenhuis (2007) who argues that generalisation is not the focus or intention of case study research. Case study research is aimed at gaining an in-depth understanding of the complexities and dynamics of a specific situation.

This study aimed at getting to grips with the unique dynamics of the two selected universities in Bindura urban in terms of how they handled gender policy matters when considering issues of promotion and appointment to senior leadership positions. The two cases provided an opportunity to uncover generalisable knowledge since the objective was to gather sufficient details of the two cases, to learn about variables, mechanisms, patterns and configurations that were relevant to many other cases.

The third concern is that case studies are often criticised as being too long, difficult to carry out and producing an enormous amount of documentation (Yin, 2014). Case studies such as ethnography or longitudinal studies can certainly elicit a lot of data over a period of time. The challenge comes when the data are not managed and structured systematically. However, to thwart that weakness, Yin (2011) argues that case studies enable methodical reporting of all evidence and has time limits. Further to that, it is important to note that the writing formula on case studies depends on choices of investigators.

Notwithstanding the criticisms raised against case study designs, the researcher chose the design because it allows for a detailed understanding of the patterns that emerged from the different participants. This gave the researcher an opportunity to gain a deeper appreciation of the uniqueness, dynamics and complexities within the selected universities regarding the implementation of gender policy frameworks to promote gender parity in leadership in academia.

3.5 Population

Population refers to a group of individuals that has one or more universal features of concern to the researcher for the purpose of gaining information and drawing conclusions (Briggs, 2012; Creswell, 2007). Babbie and Mouton (2005) see population as a group of participants on which the study is focused. According to Khan (2011) the population is the entire group of people to which the researcher wishes to generalise the study findings. The population, thus, provides the aggregate of elements from which the sample is chosen.

The population for this study comprised two vice-chancellors, two pro-vice-chancellors, two registrars and all the two hundred and forty (240) lecturers from the two selected universities in Bindura urban. Vice-chancellors and pro-vice-chancellors are the chief executive officers and deputy chief executive officers of the institutions respectively. They are the chief academic, administrative and disciplinary officers of the universities, with general responsibility for maintaining and promoting the efficiency, effectiveness and good order of the university. By virtue of wielding executive powers, all final decisions on matters of strategic importance to the institutions, rest in their offices. Their powers include having the prerogative to agree or to disagree with recommendations from relevant committees, on matters regarding engagement, dismissal, promotion or demotion of university office-bearers. They often exercise their duties in consultation with other important committees within the structures of the institutions. It is clear that vice-chancellors epitomise the vision of the institutions; hence, their inclusion in this study was very critical.

Registrars were also very important in the study because they superintend over Human Resources Departments, which handle administrative issues like the hiring and/or firing of workers, among many other responsibilities, in liaison with higher offices. The post of the registrar is a very senior post in university structures and therefore, very crucial to this study. Lecturers were also very important to this study because it is from their constituency that possible applicants for senior leadership posts in the administrative structures of the two universities came. In this study lecturers represented the voice from the grass roots and it was really essential to get their contributions because they are the recipients of policy issues.

3.6 Sample and sampling procedures

In this study, purposive sampling was used to select two universities that were studied in Bindura urban. Purposive sampling depends on the researcher's judgment to select a sample of participants who have specific knowledge or experience that is of interest to him/her and are able to provide the best information for the study (Roper & Shapira, 2000; Herek, 2012). Stratified purposive sampling was used to divide the population into strata or layers based on what was seen as significant characteristics of particular sub-groups of interest. This also facilitated comparison of the two universities. As such, the two universities under study were categorised based on the responsible authority. One was a state university while the other was a church-run institution. Through purposive sampling, twenty four lecturers who were considered information rich were selected from the two universities, that is, twelve from each university. In order to ensure gender balance, half of the sample from each institution comprised female lecturers.

The issue of gender balance was very critical to this study because it formed the core upon which the research was anchored. It was therefore, necessary to get views from both female and male lecturers regarding the implementation of gender policies on matters relating to appointment and promotion to senior leadership positions in academia. The two vice-

chancellors, the two pro-vice-chancellors and the two registrars were also purposively selected to be part of the study in their capacity as the administrators of the two institutions.

3.7 Data collection instruments

The adoption of the interpretivist approach in this study meant that data that were collected, were qualitative in nature. The researcher found the use of face-to-face interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis as the ideal data collection techniques. Below is a brief description of the research instruments that were used.

3.7.1 Focus group discussions

Silverman (2011) and Krueger (2009) state that focus groups are a form of group interview that capitalises on communication between research participants in order to generate data. They recommend that the membership of an ideal focus group should range between six and twelve participants. In this study, two focus groups were purposively selected from the twenty four sampled lecturers; that is, one group from each of the two institutions. Only seven lecturers from each institution were purposively selected for the focus group discussions. The members who were invited were known to have rich experience pertaining to the dynamics of the two institutions. The purpose of the focus group discussions was to create an interactive atmosphere in which the lecturers were free to air their views pertaining to the power dynamics within their own institutions.

The researcher used his experience in university education to get a slot during which all the participants were relatively free. This is because lecturers are generally very busy people, thus, a very diplomatic approach to convince them to partake in the discussion was necessary. The lecturers opened up a very robust discussion in which very important and sensitive issues regarding appointment issues were raised. During the course of the discussion, the participants interacted on their own and asked each other very pertinent questions. The researcher moderated the

discussion ensuring that each participant was given an opportunity to air out their views. Moderation was also meant to ensure that the discussion maintained the correct trajectory, and to curb the extroverts who shut out other participants in the discussion as well as encouraging the introverts to say out their views.

Chairpersons of departments were also invited for the purpose of adding depth to the discussion and to further explore issues on gender policy implementation on matters to do with appointments to leadership positions. The presence of chairpersons of departments in the discussions was very important because the university administrative hierarchy, at least in academia, starts from the departments. The chairpersons of departments were thus able to give their own perceptions regarding gender policy issues on matters pertaining to leadership from the department level. Views from departments were very critical because the researcher needed to know if the institutional gender policies were being implemented from the lowest levels, the departments.

3.7.2 Face-to-face semi- structured interviews

Interviewing is one of the most common ways of data collection because it provides facts about the specific phenomena through conversation (Silverman, 2011). Cohen and Manion (2005 p.155) define an interview as 'a two person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the purpose of obtaining relevant data focusing on specific objectives'. Three major categories of interviews are structured/closed interviews, semi-structured and unstructured open-ended interviews.

Unstructured interviews are also called depth interviews as they can be used to obtain in-depth information about a participant's thoughts, beliefs, knowledge, reasoning, motivations and feelings about a topic (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). For the semi-structured interviews, an interview guide was used where topics and issues to be covered were specified in advance in outline form. The outline increased the comprehensiveness of the data and made data collection systematic for each respondent. According to

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2005), the concentration on the context that occurs in open-ended interviewing is not limited to the immediate situation or setting, in which the interview occurs. In addition, the interview gives the researcher the ability to ask about a wide range of factors that may be relevant and to pursue the connections among those factors. Interviews are also very crucial because they allow the participants to give answers in their own words.

In this study, data were also collected through unstructured and semi-structured interviews with ten lecturers who did not take part in the focus group discussions. This means that each of the two institutions was represented by five lecturers selected through purposive sampling. The interviews were conducted as a way of confirming, corroborating or adding to issues raised in the focus group discussions. A semi-structured interview schedule which contained a set of pre-determined questions and themes to be explored was used in this qualitative enquiry. The interview was very important to this study because the researcher was able to probe more, validate and corroborate some of the subtle issues raised in focus group discussions with regard to gender policy implementation on matters of appointment of women to decision-making positions.

3.7.3 Document analysis

Documents are a data gathering instrument which use all types of written communication to shed light on the phenomenon under study (Maree, 2007). The most common documentary methods are documentary study, thematic content analysis and text analysis (Sarantakos, 2005). Primary sources are original documents that can be obtained from meeting agendas, leadership reports, memoranda or unpublished data such as minutes of a meeting, letters, newspaper articles or any other documents that are connected to the investigation (Maree, 2007). In this study, document analysis was very important because it enabled the researcher to look at copies of application letters, copies of advertisements that were flighted, interview schedules as well as minutes of interviews that were conducted for appointment and promotion to higher posts. The documents

shaded light on matters that did not come from interviews and focus group discussions. This is because documents are official items that are not easily manipulated by whatever source. The institutional gender policy was analysed in relation to the nature of the interview question. This was very important because there was need to find out if there was any synergy between gender policy pronouncements, Employment Equity Acts and the actual practice on the ground. The documents were obtained from the Human Resources Departments of the two institutions.

3.8 Data Credibility and Trustworthiness

Data trustworthiness was achieved through multiple methods in data collection. In qualitative research, validity and reliability refer to a research that is credible and trustworthy. Credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability are key criteria of trustworthiness (McClure, 2002; Nieuwenhuis, 2007). These are constructed to parallel the conventional criteria of inquiry of internal and external validity, reliability and neutrality.

Credibility enabled the researcher to establish confidence in the truth of the findings. To ensure credibility, the researcher used member-checks in which participants were given their interview transcripts and the research reports in order to confirm whether or not the researcher captured the responses correctly during face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2005), however, warn that the process of member-checking may lead to confusion rather than confirmation because participants may change their minds on an issue. This is because the interview itself may have an impact on their original assessment and new experiences from the time of contact may emerge. To counter the cited problem, the researcher used the original voice data that were recorded, to come up with credible findings.

In addition, the researcher achieved credibility through triangulation of data. Data triangulation was realised through the use of face-to-face interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis. This was done because a single method can never adequately shed light on a phenomenon under

study. Using multiple methods thus, facilitated a deeper understanding of the implementation of gender policy strategies to promote gender parity at senior leadership level at the two selected universities in Bindura urban.

Transferability entails showing the applicability of the findings to other settings or contexts (McClure, 2002; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2005). Applicability was achieved by carefully selecting the sample within the context of the study. The concept of dependability, on the other hand, replaces the idea of reliability. Dependability encourages researchers to provide an audit trail (the documentation of data, methods and decisions about the research) which can be laid open to external scrutiny. That is, dependability shows that the findings are consistent and can be repeated (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2005). Thus, in terms of dependability, the researcher conformed to the laid down procedures of conducting the study, that is, the researcher was constantly interacting with the supervisor. Conformability as another aspect of credibility and trustworthiness is a degree of neutrality or the extent to which the findings of a study are shaped by the participants and not researcher bias, motivation, or interest (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2005). To achieve conformability, the researcher offered a self-critically reflexive analysis of the methodology used in the research.

3.9 Data collection

3.9.1 Access into universities

The researcher got a stamped and dated approval letter to carry out research in Bindura urban universities from the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education Science and Technology Development (MHTE) in Zimbabwe. The researcher also gained approval from the vice-chancellors of the sampled universities when he visited them to show them the Ministry approval to conduct the research at the universities. The researcher used his experience as a worker in the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education

Science and Technology Development to obtain information that was pertinent to this research.

Telephone appointments were made with the vice-chancellors of the two universities, in order to visit the universities. Permission was sought from the vice-chancellorss to carry out the interviews with members of the senior manangement team, the vice-chancellors, pro-vice-chancellors, registrars and some of the lecturers. The other lecturers participated in focus group discussions. The researcher had direct interaction with the paticipants to build trust and confidence since it was important to draw their attention to the seriousness that the research deserved. The researcher targeted the mid morning slots when most lecturers were likely to be still around the institutions and thus able to commit their time to participate in the discussions and interviews.

3.10 Data analysis

The analysis involves organising raw data into a system that reveals the basic results from the research. Data are arranged, ordered and presented in some reasonable format that permits decision-makers to quickly detect patterns in the data (The European Union, 2009; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). Data analysis can take qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods. In qualitative research, Neuman (2007), European Union (2009), Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011), suggest that, information obtained is organised in a chronological order, describing the daily life of a group or small groups focusing on critical events that describe the group(s) story. Data were thus categorised according to their meaning, revealing patterns, regularities and critical events. The categories of data were clustered into meaningful groups or themes. The data were then analysed using the thematic content analysis technique. In this case, themes were derived from the interview data, the focus group discussion responses, as well as notes from documents.

3.11 Ethical considerations

In order to conduct the study in an ethical manner and to protect the integrity of the participants, the researcher complied with the ethical considerations as contained in the University Faculty of Education Handbook of Post Graduate Qualifications Policies and Procedures, so as to ensure that individual rights were not infringed upon and to promote fairness in the interpretation of the data. The researcher sought clearance from the Faculty Research Ethics Committee and institutional Research Ethics Committee. Issues of informed consent, confidentiality and protection from harm were strictly adhered to.

3.11.1 Informed consent

Johnson and Christensen (2014) stress that the participants' right to freedom and self-determination is the cornerstone of the principle of informed consent. Informed consent entails explaining and giving information about the study to the participants in a manner that is clear to them. Drew, Hardman and Hart (2008) say that within the context of informed consent, participants have the right to accept or to turn down the offer to participate in the study.

Information pertaining to the purpose and methods to be used in the study, the benefits and potential risks involved and the demands that the research placed upon the participants was available to the participants (Best & Kahn, 1993; Canterbury Christ Church University, 2006; Creswell, 2007). The researcher also clarified the fact that participation was voluntary and that, it was the choice of the participant to recuse themselves at any stage of the research (Creswell, 2007; Drew et al., 2008).

The researcher also made sure that participants were aware of the parameters of the research and clarified that the information obtained was going to be used for academic purposes only and that participants were not supposed to write their names for anonymity and confidentiality sake. All

the participants were given the forms which they read and understood before signing them. The participants were allowed to ask questions, make changes and add anything they felt was necessary. Each participant remained with a signed copy.

After obtaining consent, the next thing was to distribute interview guides. The interview guides had clear instructions right at the top, for the purpose of guiding participants in the completion process. The issue of confidentiality was also reinforced in the instructions. Within 20 minutes, most lecturers had completed filling in the guide. The researcher thus, managed to collect all the forms on the same day in order to achieve a 100% return rate. Data were collected over a period of two weeks. Those who participated in the research got a token of appreciation as promised on the first day.

3.11.2 Confidentiality

When carrying out research, each participant is entitled to privacy and confidentiality both on ethical grounds and in terms of the protection of their personal and sensitive data (Canterbury Christ Church University, 2006). In carrying out this study, the researcher observed the participants' right to privacy and protection by way of ensuring confidentiality. Confidentiality relates to the regulation of information and guaranteeing that data will not be shared with unauthorized people (Krathwohl, 2004). Drew et al. (2008) make a distinction between confidentiality and anonymity when they argue that anonymity refers to the participants' secrecy in terms of identity, even to the researcher, whereas confidentiality means that the participant's identity should be kept secret and safeguarded from any other exposure though known to the researcher. Confidentiality, therefore, relates to a situation where only the researcher is aware of the participants' identities.

It is important to note that information that is potentially damaging to the participants should be kept secret and not disclosed to unauthorised persons. According to Bryman (2004), researchers must not reveal the

identity or the nature of contribution that any participant makes to the research. This means that a contribution or a response must never be attributed to any participant. Mertens (2010) corroborates Bryman (2004) and Krathwohl's (2004) observation that local people must not be able to speculate or to match a contribution with some participant in the area. The researcher thus, observed confidentiality at all times such that participants were not linked to specific responses. The researcher used codes as a way of camouflaging the identities of the participants.

The data that were collected through the voice recorder during focus group discussions and face-to-face interviews, as well as data collected through document analysis, was safeguarded by keeping all information obtained during the study confidential.

3.11.3 Protection from Harm

Drew et al. (2008) argue that one of the most important ethics with regard to research is the protection of the participants from any possible harm. Harm may include factors such as psychological stress, personal embarrassment or humiliation or any other negative factors that may disturb the participant framework of the mind. In extreme circumstances, harm may include actual physical pain and even death. Leedy (1997) and Drew et al. (2008) further stress that the researcher must be protected and should not get exposed to undue danger or injury. In the context of this study, the researcher explained to the participants that the nature of the research was risk-free and it was actually meant to study issues of women under-representation and gender equality in the leadership of academic institutions. The probability of sustaining any injury, discomfort or danger was thus next to zero.

3.12 Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the methodology that this study adopted. The study used the interpretive paradigm and the qualitative research approach. The study also adopted the case study design for various reasons that were

explained in the chapter. Shortcomings of the case study design were also highlighted. The chapter also discussed the population, sample and sampling procedures. The purposive sampling technique was adopted and the justification for its choice were also discussed. Data collection techniques which were focus group discussions, face-to-face interviews, and documents were discussed. Data analysis and data credibility and data trustworthiness, as well as ethical considerations, were discussed. The next chapter focuses on data presentation and analysis/ discussion.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents, analyses and discusses the data that emerged from this study. The chapter gives a report of the findings that emerged from the interviews that were conducted with vice-chancellors, pro-vice-chancellors, registrars and lecturers from each of the two institutions. It also presents findings from document analysis and focus group discussions that were conducted with lecturers who were not part of the interviews. Thematic content analysis was used to interpret the data from the interviews. The data were presented in the form of themes, codes, quotations and networks that emerged from the Atlas qualitative data analysis package that was employed to code the data. Data from focus group discussions and document analysis were used to corroborate findings from interviews.

The thematic content analysis provided for an easy comparison and contrast of data that emerged from the study. In the context of this study, it was possible to compare and contrast participants' views and findings from other studies. Use of thematic content analysis had the advantage of facilitating the handling of large volumes of quote statements. The frequency of codes that expressed similar ideas could also be counted. Frequency analysis was used to determine whether or not the responses from the participants were shared by other participants or were just individual views. These were triangulated from different units of participants and instruments. Through this approach, it was possible to make inferences and to identify and monitor consistencies. The report is organised in accordance with the study's research questions as highlighted below.

4.2 Main Research question

How do the existing gender policy frameworks assist aspiring women in accessing leadership positions in academia?

4.2.1 Sub –research questions

- How functional are the existing policy frameworks in stimulating the promotion of women to leadership positions in academia?
- Why do women face challenges that prevent them from promotion to leadership positions in academia?
- How can the existing policy strategies be invigorated to facilitate the promotion of women to decision-making positions in academia?

The interviews and the focus group discussions provided qualitative data on the implementation of gender policies to promote gender parity in leadership in academia. In the process of presenting and analysing the data, triangulation of different forms of the data that were collected was done. This was done to ensure trustworthiness and credibility of data. Chances of arriving at false conclusions were also minimised through this process.

The findings of the study are presented in two parts. The first part of the discussion (Part 1) presents the demographic information of the participants such as gender, age and experience. The study sites, the universities, are also presented in this part. The second part presents and analyses findings from the interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs) and documents, in line with the research questions and objectives.

Part 1

4.3 General information

4.3.1 Demographic data

Demographic data relate to variables such as age, sex and experience of the participants. The demographic data of the participants was the variable that was considered in the analyses of the data gathered for this study.

Table 13: Age range of the participants

Category	Age range in years				
	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 and above
Vice-chancellors	-	-	-	2	-
Pro-vice-chancellors	-	-	-	2	-
Registrars	-	-	1	1	-
Lecturers	-	2	17	5	-

Table 13 shows that the ages of the two vice-chancellors and their pro-vice-chancellors ranged between 50 and 59 years. One registrar, fell within the 40-49 year group and the other was between 50 and 59 years old. The majority of the lecturers were in their forties. Two lecturers fell between the 30 and 39 years age group while five of them were between 50 and 59 years old. The above variables influence among many other things, the ability to understand key issues that influence the teaching and learning process. In education, age plays a very significant role in understanding issues that are key to the teaching and learning process. Values like appreciation of personal differences and capabilities, values of respect for authority, unity, cooperation are very important for any practising educator (Finkelstein, 2009). In general, better understanding of the dynamics that typify teaching and learning often comes with age and experience.

In the case of administrators, the experience is a tremendous asset that imbues the administrator with soft skills and competences such as empathy, communication and team work among many other skills. It influences the management style of a leader and their approach to challenges that confront them (Knyszewski, 2010; IET, 2017). Experience is a very problematic term though, because of its relativity, but, in the context of this discussion, experience was taken to mean practical knowledge, skill, or practice derived from direct observation or participation in events or in a particular activity (IET, 2017). This means that experience has everything to do with the length of participation and what one learns in a certain event. Seasoned and experienced educators realise the importance of gender equality and gender equity as key factors in teaching and learning and in educational management. Experience is, therefore, one vital attribute of maturity, as argued by Knyszewski (2010) who note that, a person is considered mature when he or she has a lot of experience.

Table 13 shows that the top three administrators at the two institutions from the registrars to the vice-chancellors were very seasoned and mature office bearers. They had adequate experience to appreciate the importance of gender equality in the realm of educational management. Gender equality is thus an inevitable factor that is necessary to sustain the operations of any academic institution.

It was important also to ascertain the gender of the vice-chancellors, pro-vice-chancellors, registrars and lecturers. Through, this, the researcher was keen to find out whether or not gender considerations had any influence in the establishment of the current leadership structures of the two institutions. It was also important for the researcher to know this information, for the purpose of ensuring that different opinions from the participants were represented, according to gender. The data on the gender of the leaders were gathered in response to a question which required information on whether or not the leadership structures at the two institutions reflected good gender balance. Table 14 below shows the

university from which the participants were stationed, designation and their gender.

4.3.2 Study site, designation and gender of administrators and lecturers

Table 14: The study site, designation and gender of the participants

University	Designation	Gender		
		Male	Female	Total
University A	Vice-chancellor	1	0	1
	Pro-vice-chancellor	1	0	1
	Registrar	0	1	1
	Lecturers	8	4	12
University B	Vice-chancellor	0	1	1
	Pro-vice-chancellor	1	0	1
	Registrar	1	0	1
	Lecturers	7	5	12
Total		19	11	30
Percentage		64%	36%	

The table above shows that university A was headed by a male vice-chancellor while university B was headed by a female vice-chancellor. At pro-vice-chancellorship level, both universities were headed by males. Just like vice-chancellors, there was also gender balance with regard to the registrars. Both universities had a woman and a male registrar respectively. Comparing the two institutions from a glance, it would appear that there was gender balance at the top leadership level. The statistics, however, reveal more than what meets the eye. From the pro-vice-chancellorship level, the tide flows heavily against the women right down to the lecturers. Overall, the statistics give a bleak picture of female under-representation and male dominance at the two institutions.

This observation is consonant with Gaidzanwa and Chung (2010) who noted that there were fewer women than men who held leadership positions in universities because of the discriminatory nature of the system. The two universities reflected a serious under-representation of women in

the senior administrative structures. The imbalance that existed at the administrative level, mirrored the same gender inequality that existed at departmental and faculty level. It is, however, important to note that inequality in academic leadership, is not a trend that is unique to Zimbabwean institutions. It is a predisposition that pervades most university systems around the world (Zvobgo & Farisayi, 2014). As noted elsewhere, available statistics from 27 countries in the European Union suggest that only 13 % of all the institutions offering tertiary education and 9 % of PhD awarding universities are headed by women (SHE, 2009). In countries such as Luxembourg, Lithuania, Cyprus and Hungary, not even one university was headed by a woman at the time the statistics were made available.

It is interesting to note that the findings from the European Union, confirm Kemp and Madsen's (2013), Morley's (2014), Xuhong and Gaughan's (2014) observations across Arab and Asian universities that tertiary education was the most exclusive on matters of gender equality in leadership. Within the institutions surveyed in their study Morley (2014) and Morley and Crossouard (2015) observed that women were less than a fifth of the total members of the academic staff. These statistics included figures taken from the Middle East and North Africa. The findings from their study, therefore, corroborate observations from this study that women's participation in higher education management is marginal.

4.3.3 Data collection instruments, codes and study sites

The table below presents information on the data collection instruments, the number of participants, the study site and the identification codes.

Table 15: Identification codes, study sites and type of research instruments for VCs and PVCs

Code	Participants and study site	Research instrument
V.C. 1	Vice-chancellor of university A	Interviews
V.C. 2	Vice-chancellor of university B	Interviews
P.V.C 1	Pro- vice-chancellor of university A	Interviews
P.V.C 2	Pro-vice chancellor of university B	Interviews
Total	4	

Table 15 shows the codes that were assigned to the two vice chancellors and their deputies. It also shows the study sites of the two universities, as well as the data collection instruments used by both participants. The vice-chancellor from university A was coded V.C.1 while the pro-vice-chancellor from the same institution was coded P.V.C. 1. The vice-chancellor and pro-vice-chancellor from university B were coded V.C.2 and P.V.C.2 respectively. Table 16 below gives the identification codes for the registrars.

Table 16: Identification codes, study sites and type of research instruments for registrars

Code	Participants and study site	Research Instrument
Reg 1	Registrar of university A	Interviews
Reg 2	Registrar of university B	Interviews
Total	2	

Table 16 shows the codes, study sites as well as the data collection instruments that were used on the registrars.

Lecturers who were interviewed were identified as follows:

Table 17: Identification codes for lecturers who were interviewed

Code	Participants and study site	Research instrument
Lp1- Lp5	Lecturers from University A	Interviews
Lp6- Lp10	Lecturers from University B	Interviews
Total	10	

Lecturers who did not take part in the focus group discussions were interviewed, as shown in table 17. They were allotted codes that were different from those that participated in the focus group discussions. Codes Lp1 to Lp5 were assigned to lecturers from University A while codes Lp6 to Lp10 identified lecturers from university B.

Lecturers who participated in the focus group discussions were identified as follows:

Table 18: Identification codes and study sites for lecturers who participated in focus group discussions

Code	Participants and study site	Research instrument
L1- L7	Lecturers from University A	Focus group discussion (FGD1)
L8- L14	Lecturers from University B	Focus group discussion (FGD2)
Total	14	

To distinguish lecturers who participated in the focus group discussions from lecturers who were interviewed, a different set of codes was assigned to them. As indicated in Table 18, lectures from University A were coded L1 to L7 and the focus group session was coded FGD1. Lecturers from university B were coded L8 to L14 and the focus group session was coded FGD2.

Table 19 presents information on the pseudonyms of the universities, responsible authorities and the location of the universities

Table 19: Pseudonym, responsible authority and the location of the university

Pseudonym	Responsible Authority	Location
University A	State University	Urban
University B	Private Church-run university	Urban

As indicated in Table 19, University A was a state controlled institution while university B fell under the responsible authority of a church. It was important for the researcher to establish the responsible authorities of the two universities in order to locate the issue of gender and leadership from a religious and state perspective. This is in line with Onsongo's (2004) observation that religion creates pre-eminence and subordination between men and women. It effectively puts women at the periphery of decision-making. Some religious persuasions are averse to any form of women leadership. This religious gridlock seals the fate of any women who aspire to be leaders. Purposive selection of universities with different responsible authorities was to give a comparative analysis of the receptivity of the two institutions to issues of gender equality.

The table also provides information on the location of the university. Both universities are located in Bindura metropolitan. Acceptance of leadership posts when offered, for women, often depend on the location of the institution. Most women prefer being deployed to places that are convenient in terms of proximity to their families and homes. That way, they are better positioned to fulfil both obligations as wives at home and as employees of the institutions to which they would have been posted. These views are confirmed by Mbepera (2015) in a study conducted among female teachers in Tanzania. She found that most teachers shunned being deployed to places far away from their families where they found it difficult to enjoy the company of their families. In such cases, most women preferred being deployed to places that were accessible and from which they could conveniently join their families.

It is important to note that in Zimbabwe, all universities fall under the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education Science and Technology (MHTE). Most universities are located in the urban centres and each of the ten provinces of Zimbabwe has at least one state university. With the new thrust of taking universities to the regions where their mandates are strongly represented, some new universities are now being established in the rural areas. Lupane State University and the Dutch Reformed Church University stand as two examples of universities that were established in a rural setting. Any person with the requisite qualifications is eligible to apply for any post anywhere in Zimbabwe. Location of the university, therefore, plays a big part in influencing an individual's choice of whether or not to apply for a promotional post or accept an offer of appointment.

Part 2

4.3.4 Emerging themes and units

Four major themes emerged from the data that were gathered. For the purpose of analysing the data, the themes were divided into categories and sub-themes. This was meant to present the views of the participants according to the identified themes and sub-themes. The themes reflected the main research question and sub questions. The following themes were identified:

- The effectiveness of the policy frameworks in the promotion of women to leadership positions in academia.
- Challenges that prevent women from promotion to leadership positions in academia.
- Community perceptions of female leadership.
- Invigoration of the gender policies to promote gender parity in leadership.

The results were discussed immediately after presenting them as a way of avoiding repetitions that characterise the separation of data presentation

analysis and discussion. Table 20 summarises the themes, units and sub-themes.

Table 20: Themes, units and sub-themes

Theme	Units	Sub-themes
4.4 Effectiveness of the policy frameworks in the promotion of women to leadership positions in academia	4.4.1 Knowledge of university gender policy	4.4.1.1 Lack of policy ownership
		4.4.1.2 Inadequate policy consultation
	4.4.2 Positive views on university gender policy	4.4.2.1 Gender policy as a fulfilment of universal human rights
		4.4.2.2 Gender policy as an instrument for quality assurance in education
		4.4.2.3 Gender policy as platform to promote robust debate
		4.4.2.4 Gender policy as an instrument for quality assurance in education
	4.4.3 Negative views on university gender policy	4.4.3.1 Gender policy as a window dressing tool
		4.4.3.2 Gender policy as a cause of declining educational standards in education
		4.4.3.3 Gender policy as a negative factor in female students
		4.4.3.4 Gender policy as a cause for acrimony in educational institutions
		4.4.3.5 Gender policy as a cause for nepotism in academia
4.5 Challenges that prevent women from promotion to leadership positions in academia	4.5.1 Demotivating factors to women leadership aspirations	4.5.1.1 Familial issues that prevent women from accepting leadership positions
		4.5.1.2 Organisational inability to accept women leadership
		4.5.1.3 Male lecturers' attitudes towards female leadership
		4.5.1.4 Female lecturers' attitude towards female leadership
		4.5.1.5 Husbands' reaction to partners appointment to leadership positions
		4.5.1.6 Women leadership turning the tables upside down
		4.5.1.7 Women response to appointment to positions of authority
		4.5.1.8 Rejection of the appointment offer
		4.5.1.9 Lack of confidence
		4.5.1.10 Breaking glass ceiling and reaching ivory towers
		4.5.1.11 Self-actualised leadership
		4.5.1.12 Skill development for female leaders
4.6 Community perceptions of female leadership	4.6.1 Socio-cultural contextualisation of female leadership	4.6.1.1 Socio-cultural barriers against women leadership
4.7 Invigoration of the university policies to promote gender parity		4.7.1 Monitoring and Evaluation
		4.7.2 Affirmative action
		4.7.2.1 Revitalising gender mainstreaming

4.4 Effectiveness of the existing policy frameworks in stimulating the promotion of women to leadership positions in academia

The first theme was on the effectiveness of the existing policy frameworks in stimulating the promotion of women to leadership positions in academia. The theme which was divided into units and sub-themes. In order to find out the efficacy of the existing policy frameworks in stimulating the promotion of women to leadership positions, data were collected through face-to-face interviews. Vice-chancellors, pro-vice-chancellors, registrars and ten lecturers from the two universities, who were not part of the focus group discussions, constituted the interviewees. Focus group discussions were carried out with seven lecturers from each of the two universities to making up a total of fourteen. Document analysis was also used as a way of triangulating data from the interviews and focus group discussions.

The findings revealed that while the universities had gender policies in black and white, there was lack of impetus on the part of the institutions to implement the gender policies. It is important to note that gender policies have broad functions and gender equality in all aspects is a key clause. At the two institutions little consideration was being given to the gender equality component in leadership. Studies by Kloot (2004), Onsongo (2004), Chauraya (2012), Morley (2014) and Xuhong and Gaughan (2014) confirm the indifferent attitude towards female leadership as a key factor in the dearth of women leadership. In Chauraya's (2013) view, policies are designed by men and therefore, act in the interest of men. This means that lack of policy implementation is an entrenched pattern that sustains male hegemony.

Against the principle of fairness, the gender policy documents, guide the appointing committees to make special consideration for the marginalised sex on matters relating to promotion and appointments. This is meant to bring a sense of equality in the composition of members of staff at all

levels, from departments up to the administration. The first major weakness of the policies, as derived from the interviews and documents, was that they were silent on the gender composition of the appointing committees. The appointing committees convene for the purpose of interviewing or making recommendations for the appointment or promotion of members of staff. In terms of their composition, the committees do not have permanent members, save for the vice-chancellors and pro-vice-chancellors. Other members that make up the committee at any given time, are invited to join the appointing committee basing on the area of specialisation that will be under consideration in the interviews. Under such a situation, there is no guarantee of gender equality.

Through document analysis, it was apparent that there was male domination in the committee at any given time. Some of the very strategic university committees and boards from the two institutions that the study found to be male dominated were the senate, senate executive (sennex), council, faculty boards, and administrators forum which met once every week. The administrators' forum comprises heads of all sections in the university. They meet weekly for the purpose of appraising the administration of any new developments in their departments.

The findings from this study confirm the observations by Zvobgo and Farisayi (2014) from a study at Midlands State University in Gweru, Zimbabwe. They looked at gender policy implementation at the university from a sample of 128 members of staff (80 males and 48 females) using both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. As part of their study, they assessed gender composition of university committees between the years 2005 to 2013. They found a very marginal increment of female representation in the committees over a period of eight years. The current study yielded almost similar results in Bindura urban Mashonaland Central province using qualitative methods. This explains the enduring and implacable nature of gender inequality in academic institutions. The findings thus, make the whole process of the committee system in the universities averse to the spirit of promoting women participation.

While the findings above confirm the predicament that women find themselves, as observed by Bilen-Green, Froelich, and Jacobson (2008) as well as Chabaya, Rembe and Wadesango (2009), they contradict the purpose for which the gender policies were promulgated. In their study Chabaya, Rembe and Wadesango (2009) found that the government of Zimbabwe was giving a stimulus to women to attain leadership positions through favourable policies. In particular, the government was making use of Public Service Circular No.11 (1991:2) which encouraged formerly District Education Officers (DEOs) now District Schools Inspectors (DSIs) and Education Officers (Eos) to accept any woman who applied for headship unconditionally. While the gender policies do not advocate the unconditional appointment of women to leadership, they aim to facilitate an equal representation of women in every aspect, taking into consideration the fact that men and women are different.

The findings of this study are also in line with Morley and Crossouard's (2015) observation that the gender policies were taking effect at a very slow pace. There was an apathetic approach to the implementation of the policies, further entrenching the plight of women as the marginalised group in academia. This study also established, through documents, from the two institutions, that there was no judicious reference to the policies when appointment committees met for appointment and promotion purposes.

While in this study, the findings on the effect of policies agree with studies conducted elsewhere in Zimbabwe by Mapolisa and Madziyire (2012), Zinyemba (2013) and in Sub-Saharan Africa, by Onsongo (2004) and Odhiambo (2011), in Kenya, and Sperandio and Kagoda (2009) in Uganda, the findings also contradict research findings by Husu (2001), Rogg (2001), Bondal and Bendixen (2012) and Bergman and Rustad (2013) in the Nordic countries. They found that implementation of gender policies in the Nordic countries was very strict and it yielded positive results. Within the Nordic states, the researchers found that women were participating in all fields of national development, because of the supportive policies. The

studies also established that in Norway and Sweden for instance, societal barriers that prevent women from accessing education and leadership were deconstructed. The findings in Norway were almost similar to findings in Malaysia. Malaysia witnessed a commendable increment in the number of female vice-chancellors mainly due to a 30 % benchmark that the country set for women senior positions in academia. The cases highlighted above are an indication that gender policies can yield positive results if implemented ardently.

Though countries like Sri-Lanka and the Philippines witnessed a phenomenal increase in the percentage of women in leadership in academia, the factors that led to the increment were different from those in the Nordic countries and Malaysia. In Sri-Lanka and the Philippines, the education profession, in general, is not well remunerated and hence; less attractive to the majority of men. This shows that women are relegated to areas where there are fewer privileges, monetary gains and prestige.

The theme under discussion, the effectiveness of the existing policy frameworks in stimulating the promotion of women to leadership positions in academia, identified three cardinal categories, namely knowledge of university policy, positive views on university gender policy as well as negative views on university gender policy. Some of the sub-themes included lack of policy ownership, inadequate policy dialogue, gender policy as fulfilment of universal right to equality of opportunity, gender policy as instrument for gender equity in education, gender policy as an instrument for quality assurance in education, gender policy as a window dressing tool, and policy as a cause of lack of robust debate in the university. Tables 21 and 22 below indicate the level of knowledge that the participants had of the gender policy.

4.4.1 Knowledge of university gender policy

Table 21: Knowledge of university policy: University A

Name of University	Category	Sound Knowledge	Little knowledge	No Knowledge
University A	Vice-chancellor	✓		
	Pro-vice-chancellor	✓		
	Registrar	✓		
	Lecturer L1		✓	
	Lecturer L2			✓
	Lecturer L3		✓	
	Lecturer L4		✓	
	Lecturer L5		✓	
	Lecturer L6			✓
	Lecturer L7		✓	
	Lecturer Lp1			✓
	Lecturer Lp2			✓
	Lecturer Lp3		✓	
	Lecturer Lp4		✓	
	Lecturer Lp5		✓	

Table 22: Knowledge of university policy: University B

Name of University	Category	Sound Knowledge	Little knowledge	No Knowledge
University B	Vice chancellor	✓		
	Pro-Vice-chancellor	✓		
	Registrar	✓		
	Lecturer L8			✓
	Lecturer L9			✓
	Lecturer L10		✓	
	Lecturer L11		✓	
	Lecturer L12		✓	
	Lecturer L13			✓
	Lecturer L14			✓
	Lecturer Lp6		✓	
	Lecturer Lp7			✓
	Lecturer Lp8		✓	
	Lecturer Lp9			✓
	Lecturer Lp10		✓	

It was important to find out if the lecturers from the two universities were conversant with the university gender policies. The data came from a question regarding the knowledge that the participants had regarding the gender policies.

4.4.1.1 Lack of policy ownership

Surprisingly, the findings from this research as indicated in Tables 21 and 22 above showed lack of a sound knowledge-base on the contents of the university gender policy. It is the mandate of the Human Resources Department to ensure that each new member of staff who joins an organisation gets acquainted with the rules and regulations of that particular organisation. New members must be workshopped or given a policy package that regulates their modus operandi in the organisation. During the interviews and focus group discussions, many lecturers from the two universities expressed ignorance about the contents of the gender policy. They were well aware of the existence of the policies within their

institutions but they had never had an opportunity to read them. There was a lack of ownership. Out of the fourteen lecturers who made up the team for the FGDs, six lecturers showed outright lack of knowledge on the existence of the gender policy. The other eight had insubstantial knowledge. Of the ten lecturers who were interviewed, four showed complete lack of knowledge of the gender policy. The remaining six had very hazy knowledge of its contents.

These findings confirm the observations by Runhare and Gordon (2004) in their study of gender issues in Zimbabwe who discovered a very low knowledge-base of policy issues among Education Officers (EOs), school principals and educators. The lack of knowledge was attributable to lack of exposure to the ministerial policy circulars. Members occupying higher offices were privy to the circulars at the expense of the lower levels of the education system. This created a situation where some principals and educators were found on the wrong side of the law due to lack of understanding of policy provisions. Within universities, lecturers are also found wanting due to lack of appreciation of regulations ordinances and policies (Domatob, 1996). The issue of lack of exposure to policies should not be looked at in isolation, but as part of the broader organisational framework's tepid approach to gender issues.

Conversely, the two vice-chancellors, the two pro-vice-chancellors, as well as the registrars, were very knowledgeable about the gender policy frameworks in their respective universities. These were the top members of the administration team. These top three administrators are the de jure permanent members of the appointment committee. They consulted the policies on a more regular basis when conducting interviews and solving any other issues related to gender. The registrars were also the custodians of all the university policies and were bound to be at grips with the contents of the policies more than most members of staff.

During the interviews that the researcher conducted with members of the administration, there was a general consensus among the administrators that the presence of the university gender policy had, however, not adequately addressed the issues of gender equality in leadership. These sentiments emanated from the two institutions. The ineffectiveness of the gender policies was evident in the continued skewed nature of the staff composition in favour of men at the two institutions. Male dominance was reported in almost every section of the two university structures. The inability of the gender policies to bring a discernible change to the institutional landscape in terms of gender equality, as this study established, was a result of an interplay of personal, cultural and organisational factors. The administrators were thus hostages to the broader patriarchal and stereotypical societal outlook that perpetuated male hegemony. Studies by Elmuti, Jia, Davis (2009), Weidekamm and Willer (2010), O' neill, Shapiro, Ingols, Blake-Bead (2015), Tickler (2013), Zikhali and Perumal (2014), Morley and Crossouard (2015) and Parker (2015), confirm that cultural and organisational obstacles rooted in gendered institutions explain the slow pace in achieving gender equality in education.

4.4.1.2 Inadequate policy consultations

Focus group discussions and interviews with lecturers at the two universities revealed that there was inadequate stakeholder participation in the crafting of the gender policies at the two institutions. Lecturers indicated that they were neither consulted on the design of the gender policy nor were they appraised on the substance of the policy regarding gender equality issues. There were no minutes from documents to suggest that the policies were subjected to intensive academic debate. The policies were thus more of a product from the Human Resources Departments that had not sold very well. This meant that the lecturers could not provide adequate details on any specific provisions in the policy.

L3 commented:

I do not know much about its contents, besides the fact that it is supposed to bring in fairness between men and women, in terms of working conditions and opportunities. I am yet to see the document physically.

The above sentiments were corroborated by a female lecturer, L4, who noted:

I know the policy is in black and white but I am yet to receive a copy of the document, ether electronically or as a hard copy. That is essentially the function of the Human Resources Department. The department is supposed to provide us with such information.

Lp7 from university B further stated:

I am not aware whether or not there is a policy document because I have not seen it. I, however, understand that universities should have mechanisms through which they regulate issues pertaining to gender equality, in line with recruitment and promotion of staff members. We have a female occupying an influential post in the administration. It could be a result of the effect of such policies.

Most of the lecturers concurred that the policy served as a guiding manual to the appointing authorities on matters to do with appointments and promotions. They indicated that the administration and the Human Resources Department should have devised a way of ensuring that there was a sense of ownership of the policy document among the members, through consulting all the staff members.

L9 observed:

It is the prerogative of the university's Human Resources Department to disseminate critical information to all stakeholders. Through this, members are kept aware of new developments and important issues in the institution. I do not claim to know much about the policy, but I believe that it has much to do with ensuring that the

work place is user-friendly to men and women without any form of discrimination.

L10 added:

An intensive consultation exercise should have been done. This would have allowed everyone a chance to make an input. I think that there is a need for a full proof way of ensuring that women are more involved in the leadership structures of the institution. The policy is there, yes; but more needs to be done.

Policy consultation is a very important exercise because not only does it build a strong sense of inclusivity and ownership, but it also ensures that the beneficiaries understand their rights and responsibilities. At both universities, findings indicated that very little policy dialogue had taken place. The researcher expected key stakeholders, such as the lecturers, to have adequate knowledge on policy issues since they were an integral part of the system. Some of the members who were part of the interviews and FGDs were chairpersons of departments. Ideally, chairpersons of departments are part and parcel of the administrative structure of the institutions. They are supposed to interpret policy issues to the members of the department. Their lack of knowledge especially on the gender policy demonstrated the lack of seriousness with which the issue of gender was regarded at the two institutions.

V.C. 1 indicated:

A committee is charged with the task of crafting policies. Normally this comes from specific departments or sections under whose jurisdiction that area falls. For example, issues to do with gender fall under the Welfare Department. The department works with staff from the registrar's office and Human Resources Department. The draft passes through all the relevant boards and is finally approved by the senate. From here, it is now policy and the Human Resources Department then issues out copies to all the concerned areas or carries out an awareness workshop.

V.C. 2 also said:

There is sufficient groundwork that is done before a policy comes into force. One key element we are sure of is stakeholder participation. Everyone is represented because the final board to approve a policy is senate and every chairperson of a department is a member.

The vice-chancellors' information contradicted what the lecturers indicated. From the views expressed by lecturers from both universities, the university gender policy was largely a preserve of top administration officers and there was no formal consultative process on the policy at both universities. This observation is in agreement with Van Wyk and Lemmer (2004) and Jarmon (2014) who observed that stakeholders in the education system did not have much say on policy issues, and decision-making powers therefore, lay in the hands of the administrators.

4.4.2 Positive views on university gender policy

This category highlights some of the positive views that were expressed by the participants with regard to gender policy implementation to promote gender parity in leadership in academia. The data were derived from the question that needed the participants to explain good aspects about their gender policy. The views that the participants proffered were discussed under the following sub-themes: Gender policy as the fulfilment of the universal right to equality of opportunity, Gender policy as an instrument for gender equity in education, Gender policy as a platform to promote robust debate and Gender policy as an instrument for quality assurance in education.

4.4.2.1 Gender policy as fulfilment of universal right to equality of opportunity

The study found that some participants, regardless of gender and the study site, felt that the existence of a gender policy at their institutions was very critical because it laid the basis and foundation for gender parity in the day-to-day operations of the institutions. Gender equality, not only in terms of leadership but also in all aspects of life, was expressed as a fundamental human rights issue. Some of the participants' positive attitude showed a deep sense of the understanding of gender equality, not only as a key human rights issue, but also as a central aspect of national development. Their views echo Gaidzanwa and Chung (2010), Zinyemba (2013), Yinhan, Kai and Qi (2014) and Broadbridge and Fielden's (2015) observation that issues of gender equality are the precursors to achieving goals of national development as enshrined in Agenda 2063. The vision for Agenda 2063 is that for Africa to achieve sustainable development in the next fifty years, Africa must adopt a gender equality trajectory as one of the cornerstones.

V.C. 2 noted:

We should note that international statutes on human rights give women the same rights as men. Women, therefore, deserve to be treated equally with men in every aspect of life. In terms of leadership, why should it be different....? We want a 50/50 state of things. Discrimination is counter-productive, you may leave out women who are very intelligent and can change the scope of things in the university leadership who knows.

The opinions above were complemented by Reg 1 who noted:

....it is now a statutory requirement to mainstream gender in all activities to do with education. This means that even in the leadership of academic institutions, there has to be a serious consideration of the gender parity element starting from departments, faculty right up to administration level. Considering

women for top posts is very important because not only does it add value to the institution, but also inspires other women.

The above sentiments confirm UN (2014) observations that there is still need to resort to statutory enforcement as a way of promoting gender equality in higher positions. This comes against the backdrop of the UN (2014) statistics outlining that the percentage of female parliamentarians, and female managers in the public and private sector including education was miserably low. The UN, therefore, called for legislative reform as a means of reducing female under-representation.

The observations by V.C.2 and Reg 1 confirm Jarmon's (2014) findings that having qualified women in leadership positions in academia, not only serves as a strong motivational factor for women but also serves to broaden the quality and scope of academic discourse.

The findings also agree with Mbepera's (2015) observation that taking women on board at decision-making level accelerates the development of a nation economically and socially. Mbilinyi (1992) and the United Nations, (1995) report confirm Mbepera's (2015) observation that women are in a position to exhibit their acumen if given a chance. Failure to recognise the potential in women amounts to disregarding their worth. Hobbler, Lemmon and Wayne (2011) and Mbepera (2015) further argue that qualified female leaders provide the motivation that young girls require. Students spend most of their time either at school or at college, and are thus, in a position to get inspiration from successful female leaders. Gender parity, in terms of accessing equal opportunities, is critical.

Pro-V.C. 2 added:

It is increasingly becoming common and acceptable for women to want to aim higher and to lead even in areas formerly dominated by the male-management norm. It is very important because there is need to identify and utilise the talent in women. It is a human rights issue.

It was interesting to note that through the focus group discussions and interviews, lecturers expressed divergent views pertaining to the implementation of policy frameworks to promote gender parity in academia. Most lecturers felt that implementing the gender policies as a way of achieving gender equality between men and women was a very noble idea.

Lp4 and Lp10 agreed with L6 who noted:

We are moving with time. Women were formerly discriminated against in all walks of life, let alone being appointed to lead institutions. The world is fast moving towards addressing that anomaly. There is now a very irresistible move towards equality of opportunity. Gender policies are meant to do just that.

L7 concurred:

We risk being condemned into the dustbins of history if we remain imprisoned and shut out from the whole world in our patriarchal ideas. We need more women leaders in academia. Look at chairpersons of our departments; the majority are men with very few women as chairpersons. All our Deans of Faculty are male, what story does it tell..? We need equality of opportunity and we must be moving towards that direction now.

Within the same group of participants, some were a bit cautious although they were generally agreeing that women needed to be given opportunities to lead. They felt that only deserving women should be accorded leadership positions. The reasoning was that promotions should not be based on gender considerations but what the person stood for. Women were therefore, not supposed to stand an advantage by virtue of being women and neither were men supposed to benefit just from being men. From the focus group discussions, L13 and L14 concurred with the views that were raised by Lp3 in the interviews.

Lp3 argued:

People are getting carried away by some concepts of equality of opportunity. Leading an academic institution such as a university is quite a challenging task that requires competent, qualified and dedicated people. Placing someone at the helm of such a responsibility on the ticket of gender expediency will be the height of irresponsibility.

This observation was very crucial for this study because it gave a divergent dimension to the gender equality mantra. Gender issues were sensitive and emotion-driven matters, some lecturers felt that there was a need to analyse the costs and benefits of gender equality. The above sentiment was based on the assumption that while the policy was designed to benefit women, there was a possibility that it could reap long-term negative repercussions. The fears of the participants were that if applied blindly, the policy could affect delivery and destroy the quality of the universities. The participants' sentiments mostly converged on the need to institute a robust debate on the gender policies in order to come up with the best way forward for the good of the universities.

These findings show that lecturers had divergent views pertaining to the implementation of the gender policies in the universities. The mixed views from the participants re-ignite the debate put forward by Bilen-Green, Froelich and Jacobson (2008) that qualified women can facilitate institutional change and are capable of leading very successful corporates.

4.4.2.2 Gender policy as an instrument for gender equity in education

There were some participants from both study sites who added the dimension of gender equity into the gender policy implementation debate. They argued that the inclusion of gender parity in leadership positions was in the spirit of gender equity. These views were put in their own category because the ideas that the participants raised, resonated with International Conventions such as Agenda 2063, The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), the SADC Declaration on

Gender and Equality, signed by SADC Heads of State and Governments in 1997 and the Millennium Development Goals Summit (2000) which called for the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (Hlatsywayo & Hlatsywayo, 2014). Participants expressed the views that gender equity would not only improve the number of women in education in terms of quantity but also address the issue of sensitivity to the males and females in the distribution of resources in education.

From the interviews and FGDs with lecturers, it emerged that more women were in support of a more effective implementation of the gender policies. They felt that the policies strengthened their rights to equal treatment in education. The views raised by the lecturers were also supported by the vice-chancellors, pro-vice-chancellors and registrars during the interviews.

Registrar 2 noted:

Our policies are in sync with the need to promote gender equality in education at whatever level. Women must be found at the bottom level as leaders, at the middle level as leaders and at the very top level also as leaders. If applied in spirit and in a word, we really would have done a good thing for our women.

These views were supported by V.C. 2 who noted:

I am a woman, a product of gender equity in education, No exercise of favouritism got me to this post, and I deserved it. I am trying to show what I am capable of doing as a leader. Look at the vice-chancellor of Zimbabwe Open University. She was a lady. The vice-chancellor of Women University in Africa, she is a lady. They founded the universities and propelled the universities to enviable levels in Zimbabwe.

Some participants argued that it was unfair for men to fail to appreciate the challenges that women faced at the lower levels at which most found

themselves. This was despite the fact that some of the women had better academic accomplishments than men.

L1 argued:

Women are treated lowly yet they are just as human as men. They need equal treatment with men based on their abilities. This concept should also apply to the allocation of leadership posts. Some men are really not bothered by the concept of equality and equity simply because they do not experience the challenges of inequality in the same manner that women do.

Making reference to equal educational opportunity, one lecturer L3 from university A, agreed with L11 from university B, that the gender policy protected women from unfair discrimination. Some men were however not yet ready to relinquish their dominance. As observed by Oplatka (2006), Shakeshaft (2007), Powell (1999) and Bassett (2009), men are likely to prefer other males as leaders because they resemble them in philosophy, deeds, club membership, appearance and attitudes. The gender policies were thus, meant to deconstruct the male-management norm in order to create an even platform for both men and women.

L3 argued:

....the right to equal opportunities, whether in education or in any other sector is fundamental to everyone. It is important to give the women a chance so that people can judge them from the results. The current situation is that people are very sceptical about women leadership, yet they are not being given opportunities to prove themselves.

Lecturers from both universities called for the need for equity, in terms of how man and women were treated in the allocation of responsibilities and duties. The spirit of the gender policies, as has already been noted, was to bring about equity in the education sector. The implementation of the policies has not been vigorous due to the feeble approaches by the powers

that be. According to the Feminist theoretical perspective upon which the foundation of this study is built, the education sector in particular, is an agent that mirrors and reproduces male domination in terms of decision-making, policy formulation, hierarchical power structures and procedures (Amondi, 2011; Chauraya, 2012; Zikhali & Perumal, 2014).

Participants felt that ardent implementation of the gender policies would go further than just achieving equity but would also re-dress gender imbalances found in the education system and the employment sector. One lecturer from university B, L13 felt that gender equity policies did not only empower women as individuals, but also had downstream positive effects to young women. Young women would feel inspired to succeed and to be leaders in their chosen careers, thus contributing to the development of the nation.

4.4.2.3 Gender policy as platform to promote robust debate

Some participants felt that the need for a policy framework that protected the interests of women in academia was very important. This, they said, was because the voice of women was lacking in terms of enhancing the quality of academic discourse. Participants felt that universities should be at the forefront of women empowerment through giving them leadership positions. This way, they would be in a position to articulate their visions in education. They would be in a position to prove their skills in shaping the destiny of the education sector. The current situation was that most committees and boards were male dominated and the woman's voice was small. The participants therefore, called for the deconstruction of boardroom patriarchy with a view to working towards the enhancement of quality discourse.

Reg 1 said:

In most of the meetings, there is an over-dominance of men but I feel that it is important to have more women so that we hear their contributions. Naturally, in situations where discussions are one-

sided, an element of rigor is compromised. We need the voice of the women so that the quality of our debates is enhanced.

The observations above are confirmed by Coleman (2010), Morley (2014) and Yinhan, Kai and Qi (2014) who noted that in contemporary leadership studies, women proved to be capable of demonstrating unique leadership skills and exceptional vision. They argue that current literature is full of evidence that shows that women were effective leaders who were able to transform institutions in line with 21st century demands. Research has shown that women can provide very brilliant ideas in academic discourse and exhibit unparalleled abilities in management (Rowley, Hossain & Barry, 2010; Moges, 2013). Academic institutions therefore, stand to benefit if they engage competent and progressive women in their management structures.

It is important, therefore, to have qualified women in leadership structures so that they bring in their expertise. The expertise they bring is critical for the development of the institutions. Higher education institutions are essential in the dissemination and production of new knowledge. The need for competent leaders to lead such institutions and to debate convincingly at the highest level is critical for any university. Universities have unique responsibilities of producing human capital at the highest level. The world university rankings system, assess the competence of the university through its results and products. In a way, it will be the nature of the leadership that will be under assessment as well. Gender policies must therefore, be used to give women a chance to show the competences articulated above.

4.4.2.4 Gender policy as an instrument for quality assurance in education

Participants felt that the gender policy was a very important instrument in terms of promoting quality in education. An education system that exhibited poor quality standards by the contemporary benchmarks of quality, was a

barrier to the enrolment of students. Participants highlighted that parents were not at liberty to sacrifice their hard earned cash to finance the education of their children at institutions they did not associate with good standards. At the tertiary level, quality is therefore, linked to the content, the lecturers, the methods, the examination system, the curriculum, the policies, planning and leadership. Leadership is, therefore, one of the key elements of quality in education. In the context of this study, participants felt that the gender policies must be used to attract good leaders who promote quality.

The concern of this study was on the enactment of policies that facilitate female leadership as a way of guaranteeing equality of opportunities. It is the policies that regulate the operations of an institution. Sound policies can enhance the quality, performance and ranking of an institution through proper leadership. Students would also get quality education. One of the best ways to address the issue of quality in education was to consider the inputs, outputs and the environment that promotes the process of teaching and learning. The inputs in this research were the women. Participants felt that the gender policy should generate quality work through sharing of divergent opinions between men and women.

The views from the participants resonate with Tickler's (2013) observation that the change process in academia has been slow due to the failure of higher institutions to fully accept women into their most senior leadership structures. Tickler (2013) further asserts that quality audits at international level were being measured by gender equality as a key performance indicator. The participants indicated that diversity of opinions in the university leadership structures would enhance the university status in terms of performance.

L3 said:

Women provide progressive and divergent views in leadership that enhance the quality of our institution. We have very few female leaders here of which I think it is not good for any society. There

should be a drive to increase the number of women in positions of leadership qualitatively of course.

L1 also pointed out:

Every university now has a quality assurance department. The department audits everything starting from books, furniture, research output, teaching, and staff composition. In that way, gender constitutes a very significant aspect of the quality assurance. Gender equality ensures that there is a diversity of opinions. The diversity of opinions is considered a very important aspect for the success of every department or faculty and ultimately the university itself.

From the views expressed by the participants, gender policy implementation is a qualitative quality principle that is critical not only in terms of enhancing the qualitative output of an institution but also ensuring that there is a diversity of opinions. The inclusion of women in management as leaders is one significant way of ensuring quality in education.

4.4.3 Negative views on university gender policy

Some participants argued that the implementation of gender policies was counter-productive and was responsible for declining educational standard in Zimbabwe, especially at tertiary level. The data came from the question that required participants to explain what they thought were the bad things about their university gender policy. The participants' observations were discussed under the following sub-themes: Policy as a window dressing tool, Policy as a cause for declining educational standards in universities, Policy as cause for increase of incompetent officers in administration, Policy as a negative factor for female students' motivation, the gender policy as a cause for acrimony in educational institutions and the gender policy as a cause for nepotism in academia.

4.4.3.1 Gender policy as a window dressing tool

Participants argued that whilst the universities had gender policies whose purpose was to ensure gender equality and gender equity in the functions of universities, rarely was there any serious commitment to enforce policy implementation. Their argument was that any promotion or appointment procedure was supposed to be informed by the policy dictates. According to the participants, the presence of gender policy documents in the institutions was simply a charade to hoodwink the community and society. This was because gender inequality in the institutions continued to exist no matter how loud-sounding and well written the policies were.

L2 noted:

I have seen many adverts in the papers flighted by our institution with a rider that women are encouraged to apply. Does it mean that all women do not express interest because eventually, it is a man who is considered for that post? If there was a serious commitment to the letter and spirit of the policy, we could be having more women even in leadership at this institution.

There was concurrence among many participants from both universities that the policies were mere window dressing tools that were not put to real use. Minutes from the interviews conducted to fill in vacant posts (that the researcher got from the documents in the Human Resources Department) indicated that women indeed attended some of the interviews but they were dropped in favour of men. This was after tallying of the marks of all the interviews by the appointment committee.

LP1 argued:

We hear there are policy documents that are supposed to create a good working relation between men and women and to also create fairness in accessing opportunities. It seems to me that the policies are only very useful in cases where there is an altercation between a

man and a woman. It seems the policies are applied more harshly to men than women, otherwise anywhere else, I do not see their use,

The data collected in this study, therefore, attests to the fact that the policies were more of window dressing tools that did not really come into force. The authorities lacked keenness in implementing the policies. Such lack of commitment on the part of appointing officers, the participants observed, created fertile ground for stereotypes and bias in appointments leading to the under-representation of female leaders in academia. Research by Ruijs (1993), Bartol (1999), Graves (1999) and Powell (1999), show that there was a minimum reference to gender policy during interviews. Lack of adequate female representation in the appointment committees was one of the factors that masked the female voices. Ruijs (1993) indicates that some interview questions that were asked were too personal resulting in some women failing to perform well in the interviews. Questions relating to whether or not a woman had a husband and the number of children they had.

4.4.3.2 Gender policy as a cause for declining educational standards in universities

Participants from both universities expressed need for utmost caution in the implementation of gender policies; especially with respect to key administrative posts. Their argument was based on the fact that appointments that were not well planned and solely driven by the need to achieve sameness in terms of numbers between men and women could lead to poor educational standards at the institutions. They felt that exercising any form of mediocrity in choosing leaders was tantamount to steering the universities to their abject collapse.

Some participants argued that universities were by nature, hubs of research and knowledge generation and therefore, needed to appoint accomplished scholars and researchers as leaders of such institutions who are very central to the development of any university. Appointment of non-

performers was seen as a factor that could greatly reduce the research output of the university, thus, leading to the devaluing and de-branding of the institution both locally and internationally.

L7 observed:

Use of the gender policy on appointments to leadership positions was anchored on the need to address gender disparities which to me is understandable. It is also important, however, to realise that failure to pay careful attention to issues of competences and qualifications may lead to a significant nose-dive in the quality and value of the university. Nowadays there is an aggressive marketing of university brands in order to attract students. If a university is known for the wrong reasons, it will not compete favourably with other universities.

This point was well supported by L2 who stressed:

A university that is not driven by quality, risks losing its clientele base who are the students. I know one university whose majority of programmes are failing to take off because it cannot raise viable classes to start courses year in year out.

There was concurrence from most lecturers on the fact that universities should be factories where new ideas are generated. There should be promotion of robust debate on matters that affected institutional and national development. Unlike the lecturer from university A, who was rather general on the loss of university reputation, the lecturer from university B mentioned universities that had managed to maintain their reputation because they had not ceded powers to run such universities in the hands of incompetent personnel simply because they were women.

L8 had this to say in form of questions that he posed to his colleagues:

Do you think that most of the universities in Zimbabwe are failing to get women as applicants for administrative posts....? Is the situation not the same elsewhere in the region and beyond? It seems to me

that.... they want a suitable female or male candidate. Appointing women for the mere fact that they are women can kill our education system.

The sentiments expressed above are consonant with a survey carried out in the Middle East by Kemp and Madsen (2013) and Morley (2013) which confirmed that there were very few women in leadership posts in that region. In fact, within the institutions surveyed by the study, women constituted less than a fifth of the total academic staff. The conclusion was that very few women attained leadership posts in Arab universities. However, most women were found in the intermediary management level positions, and were non-existent at top-level posts.

4.4.3.3 Gender policy as a negative factor for female students motivation

Two participants felt that the policy was not in sync with the thrust to promote hard work within the girl child. In fact, they highlighted that female students were supposed to work hard on their own so that their qualifications would earn them promotions to higher posts. The participants observed that girls should not be instilled the mentality that if their performance is mediocre, they can benefit from friendly policies. They felt that consideration of gender equality for the purpose of filling each and every vacant post did not instil the sense of worth and hard work within the girl child. They argued that what was important was to consider the qualifications of the candidates. These views represent the very principles that the Zimbabwe Council of Higher Education (ZIMCHE) is using as an entry qualification for any vacant post in tertiary education.

The views expressed by L12 were in agreement with ideas from Lp4 from the interview. L12 stressed:

The girl child must be motivated to work hard so that she can get whatever post she wants on the basis of merit. The realisation that

policies can work in their favour may take the steam to work hard out of the girls.

This means that some participants felt that policies may actually promote laziness among the girl children once they realise that they can benefit from the leniency of the policies towards women. According to some of the participants, the ultimate result of the policies would be to send wrong signals to the younger generation of girls; thus, promoting mediocrity instead of enhancing quality in the institutions.

L10 had this to say:

Policies are meant to address the historical imbalance between men and women this is understandable. What confuses me and probably many of us here is whether or not there is going to be a cut-off point. Surely we must get to a stage where women and men, boys and girls should fight in order to get higher posts on the strength of hard work not through the backing of some policies.

The participants felt that, rather than benefiting from policies, women and female students should be motivated to work hard. They felt that motivation was one of the most powerful determinants of success or failure. The participants pointed out that women should, increase their motivation to succeed through internalisation, by increasing the choice and value for learning.

L6 concurred with L10 stating:

Gender polices are very good because they try to address issues of imbalance between men and women. They may actually do the opposite of what they intend to achieve. I feel girls and women must heighten their level of motivation and inspiration. It is only through adopting such attitudes that they will be able to make it in life. Individual goal setting and achievement should be the maxim.

It is the conviction of this research however that the challenges that women face were symptoms of a problem that was much bigger than them. The majority of women were self-motivated and they had targets and goals that they set for themselves. In view of the socialist-feminist theory, it is the patriarchal nature of the society that shatters women's dreams, hopes and aspirations.

4.4.3.4 Gender policy as a cause for acrimony in educational institutions

Some participants felt that gender policies were good and that they represented a milestone in terms of trying to bridge the inequality gap between men and women. Instead, policies were being used to settle scores in some circles. They felt that the gender policy blue-print had very noble intentions to reduce female under-representation in all aspects of life. Some participants felt that the under-representation of women, not only in leadership in academia, but also in other sectors such as politics and the economy, needed to be resolved, in a way that did not express feelings of retribution. Participants felt that there seemed to be a subtle abuse of the gender policies to settle scores, especially among male and female colleagues. While the gender policies were being abused in various forms by men and women, women were fingered to be mostly in the habit of manipulating the gender policies to settle personal scores.

L9 commented:

If you cross the path of a female colleague, be rest assured that if she decides to use the gender dimension of the conflict, you are most likely going to be found on the wrong side of the law. Women carefully use the gender policy framework to their advantage. In the case of a misunderstanding between a male and a female colleague, women often complain that men abuse them simply because they were female. Some male lecturers have been charged for trivial misunderstandings with female colleagues.

The study found that, instead of bringing about equity, gender policies were being used as a divisive and retributory tool. This was not the ideal nor the intended function of the gender policy.

Lp2 concurred with the above views by saying:

I passed a comment to one of my colleagues in a jocular manner. She indicated to me that the joke was in bad taste as it had some sexual connotations. I tried to explain to her that I only wanted to create a humorous working environment but she could not be convinced. She took the matter to the Human Resources Department whereupon I was called to appear before a staff disciplinary committee. I was told that the gender policy was very clear on how men and women should relate at work, and I was charged for making an 'indecent joke' so to speak.

The above incident is not isolated. Several such situations happen on a day-to day-basis though some go unreported. The bottom line, however, is that gender policies were leaving good and bad marks in as far as work relations between men and woman were concerned.

4.4.3.5 Gender policy as a cause for nepotism in academia

Some participants felt that gender policies were being corruptly used to promote incompetent relatives of influential people. This was all done in the name of promoting gender equality. They felt that influential people in and outside the university, had a way of manipulating appointment procedures in order to accommodate their female relatives and friends. One of the ways was to use the gender equality mantra. Through this way, some very important offices in the administration were manned by incompetent people who got the jobs on the basis of their close relations to influential people.

Studies conducted in Tanzania also confirmed the existence of such malpractices in the appointment and promotion of women. Favouritism, payment of bribes and seeking sexual favours were some of the corrupt activities that Mbepera's (2015) study found to be rampant within the education system in Tanzania.

This study did not, however, find explicit cases of bribe and appointments based on sexual favours. This was because, as Bagilhole and Woodward (1995) and The Australian Human Rights Commission (2008) observe, there is a serious under-reporting of incidences of sexual harassment and corruption. One of the factors was the complex nature of cases of corruption bribery and sexual harassment. Beneficiaries of corrupt activities and the imitators were not free to disclose such activities. Some women who were sexually harassed also preferred to remain silent on the pretext of maintaining their dignity. The participants, however, found some indicators of ineptitude in the manner in which some top female office bearers were discharging their duties. Participants felt that there were finger prints of corruption in the appointment of some office bearers. They indicated that some female office bearers were failing to justify and live up to the demands of their offices.

As noted by Lp8:

Our registrar cannot interpret regulations for our programmes, she relies on the deputy registrar. She cannot chair a successful board meeting. If she does, the meetings will be characterised by a lot of discord because she comes to the meetings ill prepared.

The concerns above were reiterated by most participants from university B who also felt that policies were being bent in order to accommodate people who had close ties with individuals in higher offices. Three of the lecturers concurred that corruption and nepotism could have been at the centre of some appointments.

L12 had this to say:

You get someone who is completely blank as to the demands of his office. At the university level, leaders are supposed to interpret policy and to be quite conversant with university ordinances and the general systems under which university operates but you find a leader who is totally lost.

These views were corroborated by L10 who noted:

Leaders must be distinguished researchers and as such, they must take a leading role in ensuring that the university is visible through research. Year in, year out; you find that the leaders do not publish any research work. Then you begin to wonder as to the criteria that were used to appoint them to those positions in the first place. To me, it would seem someone got into that office through the back door.

4.5 Challenges that prevent women from promotion to leadership positions in academia

The second theme which emerged from the second research question presents information on why women faced challenges in attaining leadership posts in academia. This research report presents findings from the data that were collected through interviews and focus group discussions. The challenges that women faced were presented under the sub-theme Demotivating factors to women leadership aspirations.

4.5.1 Demotivating factors to women leadership aspirations

The issue of factors that demotivate women from accessing leadership positions was discussed under the following headings: Familial issues that prevent women from accepting leadership positions, Organisational inability to accept women leadership, Male lecturers' attitude towards female leadership, Female lecturers' attitude towards female leadership, and Husbands' reaction to partners' appointment to leadership positions.

4.5.1.1 Familial issues that prevent women from accepting leadership position

Both vice-chancellors and both registrars indicated that women were entangled in a dilemma with regard to balancing of roles. Among some of the roles were, being a mother, a wife, a social being and an administrator. Female administrators indicated that the role of caring for the family, including breastfeeding, was a mammoth one. Despite their heavy work schedules, female administrators reported that they consistently kept themselves abreast with family issues through the phone even during the time they were at work. This was because fathers did not normally pre-occupy themselves with family matters (Blake-Bead, 2015). Most mothers virtually ran the families; taking care of the education, health and budget of the family.

The participants also noted that it did not matter whether or not the female administrator was married. There was still insufficient time to do other personal things because of work commitments. This factor discouraged potential female candidates from applying for leadership posts. Female leaders in administration indicated that they wore a multiplicity of hats which included those of academic advisors, counsellors, disciplinarians, custodians of university policies, and most of all, leaders. At the same time, they remained wives, mothers, aunts, sisters in law, daughters and friends. Creating a balance where one had to fulfil the requirements of each role was very taxing. This is corroborated by Weidekamm and Willer (2010), O'neill, Shapiro, Ingols, Blake-Bead (2015) and Parker (2015) who found that the challenges that women faced were based on the need to strike a balance between family demands and work-related obligations. The few women who managed to balance the roles found themselves isolated within a masculine-normed organisational environment (Schwanke, 2013; Zvobgo & Farisayi, 2014).

V.C. 2 observed:

As women, a lot is expected of us. At work I am a full time administrator, and I have to meet the expectations of my duty as required by my employment contract. At home, I am a mother, a 'muroora' (daughter in law), a 'tete (aunt) and a 'sisi' (sister), who is expected to fulfil all those roles again. It becomes even more challenging when it comes to family or social gatherings.... that is where I am expected to play a very involving role as a muroora. My absence sets tongues wagging that I shun activities done in the family into which I am married. That is really stressful.

The majority of the lecturers who participated in both the interviews and FGDs agreed that women were torn in the dilemma of being a housewife, a professional and more so an administrator. This sort of dilemma was acuter on the side of women than it was for men. These findings agree with studies conducted by Reisser (1988), Bhalalusesa and Mboya (2003), Chabaya et al. (2009) in Tanzania and Zimbabwe respectively, in which they found that the demands of roles of a female administrator were perceptibly incompatible with the socially-valued demands of a wife and mother. This made women to view leadership as an unattractive bustle because of the value they put into their families.

The views raised by Lp8 and Lp9 were also shared by P.V.C 1 who highlighted:

Women assist their maids in doing the chores, that is, if they have the maid, they cook for their husbands. They serve them with their food, ensure that their husbands wear well-ironed clothes. They also ensure that their husbands have had a descent bath. The same care is expected of the children in terms of their dressing, food and family budget. I think women get so much exhausted by these daily activities.

Most of the participants narrated expansively on the responsibilities that women had in the home. One example was that women were the last to go to bed, yet they were the first to wake up in the morning.

L8 added:

Women are the first to wake up in the morning, they prepare breakfast for the husband and the children, and they ensure that the home is looking good and that the children are well dressed for school. They also check to see that the children have collected all the school requirements. Meanwhile, the husband either continues sleeping or makes sure that his car is cleaned if he has one... Let's take a hypothetical situation in which the woman is a leader; that will be obviously too much for her.

During the interviews, both registrars and both pro-vice-chancellors agreed that men had fewer home-related responsibilities in comparison to women. The administrators' points of view were corroborated by the male lecturers who indicated that most of the home-related work was being done by their wives. This gave men ample time to do their work and concentrate on developing their institutions as leaders as well as getting time for leisure.

Most female participants reported that female leaders did not have time for leisure since their work programme was tight due to long working hours, coupled with responsibilities at home. This left them with very little space for relaxation

V.C. 2 added:

We just do not have time to rest and concentrate on issues that also matter, that is, preserving our marriages. If I concentrate too much on work-related issues, the next day, I am thrown out of the house into the streets. That unfortunate development would lead to the suffering of my children because they would be products of a broken marriage. The blame will be squarely laid down on me that I failed to respect the tenets of my marriage.

Most participants indicated that women leaders faced a lot of challenges in line with their endeavour to strike a balance between family and work-related issues. The inference they made was that these challenges were responsible for female under-representation in leadership in academia.

4.5.1.2 Organisational inability to accept women leadership

One of the organisational challenges that this study found was lack of a pool from which to select qualified women for top leadership posts. Statistics from the documents showed that at the two universities, there were more male PhD holders and Professors than females. In fact, at University A, there were 5 female expatriate Professors whereas university B did not have a single Professor. Of the 70 lecturers who had registered for PhD studies at University A, at the time of the study, 57 were male. At university B, of the 15 lectures who had registered for PhD studies, only 4 were female. This made the chances of men being promoted higher than the women. These findings are similar to what was established by Zvobgo and Farisayi (2014) in Zimbabwe and by the Gender mainstreaming Division (2007) at Makerere University in Uganda. The studies established that promotion was based on qualifications which are research and publications. This criterion effectively shut out the chances of women being promoted.

The study also revealed that women who aspired to be leaders faced stringent requirements from the Zimbabwe Council of Higher education (ZIMCHE). The entry requirements for any possible post within the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education Science and Technology Development (MHTE), according to ZIMCHE standards was based on qualifications. This study showed that there was a lack of a pool from which to select qualified women. ZIMCHE standards greatly reduced the chances of women being seconded to top leadership posts. These findings also echo Lestrade's (2012) findings in Ethiopia that, HERQA, a higher education quality assurance board did not have any documented mechanisms to address

issues of gender equality in higher education. However, some researchers such as Morley (2006), argue that quality assurance, as a regime of power, can be used both as a repressive tool and a window of opportunity for women.

Some of the organisational challenges that this study found, related to work schedules that demanded women leaders to work beyond the normal working time and even during weekends and holidays. Participants noted that senior leadership positions demanded a lot of travelling at times far away from home. This meant that women had to leave their husbands and children in order to meet the travelling obligation associated with the job. Generically, high offices like that of the vice- chancellor or the pro-vice-chancellor, form the backbone of any university administration system. In most cases, it involves much travelling to both local and foreign destinations, away from the family. Women are caught in a dilemma in which they either fulfil family demands at home or pursue work related commitments. This, regrettably, means dedicating inadequate time to family requirements. Women may have to handle pregnancy and breastfeeding matters. These factors taken together, pose a serious challenge to the woman operating in environments characterised by heavy work schedules. The majority of the female participants felt that against the background of the foregoing, making a decision either to accept or reject a post was a very hard.

Acker (1990), Blackmore (1999) and Black and Islam (2014) assert that organisational set ups create structural barriers to female leadership and advancement. Organisational leadership is thus, viewed with a sense of masculinity. Amondi (2011) asserts that the way leadership values were modelled in society, took into account the interests of men. Competence is therefore, defined in terms of male traits. Some of the male traits involved availability at work at any given time, firmness and strength. These views were confirmed by the participants during the FGDs and interviews.

L5 noted:

The working conditions for women in leadership are always very challenging. I think the long working hours that those in leadership posts have to spend at college could be a deterrent factor to some women who might want to apply for leadership posts. For safety concerns on the way home and also having to take care of family business at home, personally, I wouldn't like to remain at work beyond the official time when work ends.

Lp6 commented:

Working as a leader in environments dominated by men is challenging. It would seem as if all the conditions that you face are all good for men. If you want to cope as a woman, then you have to strike a balance with home demands. If you can't withstand the heat in the kitchen, then you are out.

4.5.1.3 Male lecturers' attitude towards female leadership

Within organisational structures, participants felt that male subordinates and male colleagues were generally not supportive to female leadership. As noted by Powell (1999), Shakeshaft (2007) and Bassett (2009), patriarchy is at the centre of male indifference towards female leadership. Generally, most men prefer to work in an environment that is masculine. This means that men are comfortable in working in environments with leaders that resemble them in attitudes, philosophy, deeds, appearance and hobbies (Oplatka, 2006). Chauraya (2012) asserts that, in situations that are antipathetic to female leadership, women are left with a very little chance of gaining experience that the organisations require to enable them to compete for leadership posts.

During FGDs L14 remarked:

Generally, men are not very supportive of women leadership. They tend to give the impression that a woman is occupying a leadership post to make up the numbers. Sometimes you hear men calling

female leaders 'Beijing'. This, in some way, implies that the person is not considered to be occupying the position on the basis of merit.

In support of the views raised by L14, Reg 1 commented:

Female leaders appear powerless in the face of their male counterparts and subordinates. The male subordinates are not ready to take what their female superiors say. Whilst others are ready to cooperate and work along with the female leaders, the majority are not eager. This makes it difficult for female leaders to instil a sense of discipline into male subordinates.

Most male participants reported that some of the areas where female leaders clashed with male subordinates included failure to meet deadlines, failure by the administration to pay for extra work done. Some of the extra work that the participants cited was the teaching of block classes (this was an extra teaching load apart from the full time conventional students), non-payment of contract and sabbatical Leave. Overall, however, these incidences pointed to the antagonistic relations that existed between female leaders and some male subordinates.

4.5.1.4 Female lecturers' attitude towards female leadership

It was ironic that most female participants indicated that female leadership did not carry the weight of the support from other women. This finding confirmed observations made by Valerio (2009) and Coleman (2011) that women leaders did not enjoy the support of their fellow women. Female participants felt that female leaders tended to manifest a *queen bee syndrome*; that is, they tended to be more critical of their fellow women than men. This kind of attitude discouraged women who aspired to get into senior leadership positions. This meant that women who aspired to be leaders were not discouraged by men only but they also faced discouragement from other women. The findings of this study also confirmed findings by Akuamoah-Boateng et al. (2003) that women leaders had a tendency of discouraging fellow women from fulfilling their dreams through setting unachievable goals. What made the whole issue complex

was the fact that women tended to enjoy even better support from men than from women. As highlighted by Valerio (2009), Coleman (2009) and Shakeshaft (2007), some men were increasingly becoming conscious of the need for gender balance, hence, supported women in developing their career needs in comparison to men.

V.C. 2 highlighted:

Being a product of gender equality, one would need to think that much of the support should come from those of your ilk. They do support me but that support must really be pushed up. Women must reach out to me in as much as I try to reach out to them. They must not fight me.

The views raised by some women during FGDs seemed to contradict what V.C. 2 said, as summarised by L5:

It is one thing to support a woman to be in a position of authority and it's another to get inspiration from her. Most of them, once in office, turn to be very hard, jealousy and less approachable than some men. You get inspired by a woman in authority only if you do not work with her.

The excerpts above confirm the findings by Celikten (2009) and Makura (2009) in studies carried out in Turkey and in Zimbabwe respectively. The studies, however, explain the short-comings of some women leadership styles differently from what this study found. The studies found that women cannot lead effectively because of their lenient nature. The women are said to be compassionate, empathetic, caring, vindictive, sensitive and open to acting on rumour. Such dispositions are therefore, not consistent with effective leadership. Studies by knyszewski (2015) however, have shown that most qualities typical of women leadership were actually virtues. The study found that qualities of being compassionate and soft, among others, must not stand in the way of women leadership. What is essential is for the women to have trust and faith in the organisation. When women identify

with the organisation, their aspirations to lead it are heightened. An organisation that a woman can identify with, therefore, can be a positive stimulant to their leadership ambitions. From the different findings, the inference one can make is that, it is important for women leadership to have a vision. A good leader is not only skilful in their area, but needs a vision of the bigger picture and to understand her responsibility in the wider world. Women leaders must believe that change is possible and worthwhile. They must be in a position to convey that message to other women in a way that is appealing. The vision in the leader must make them see things ahead, and inspire others to assist in making those dreams come true. Such is what women leadership should emulate.

4.5.1.5 Husbands' reaction to partners' appointment to leadership positions

The majority of the female lecturers who were interviewed and who took part in the FGDs indicated that male spouses had an inclination to believe that women who got administrative posts did so out of sexual favours from male superiors. In this regard, male spouses had a subtle suspicion and mistrust of their wives. The suspicion was hinged on the assumption that women leaders operated in male environments; meaning that they conducted their day-to-day businesses surrounded by men. Local and foreign travels on official business were done mostly in the company of men. The participants indicated that the likelihood of the women developing relationships with men around them was very high.

In this regard, men were therefore, not willing to allow their spouses to accept leadership posts. Women who were allowed to accept such posts did so under the strong mistrusts from their partners. The fears expressed by the men were in line with the observations made by Bell et al. (2002), Akinsanya (2012) and Mbepera (2015). They found that power plays a crucial role in sexual harassment. This is confirmed by the socialist-feminist theory which says that the relation between men and women is a power relationship (Haning, 2006). Men use their power to subjugate women

sexually or otherwise. The Socialist-feminist theory purports that capitalism and patriarchy mutually reinforce each other in the exploitative relationship. Men wield the economic power to conquer the financially weaker. Men's economic power builds an entrenched advantage over women (Rosser, 2005; Hoffman, 2014). Tied with the patriarchal nature of the society which espouses male dominance, men become the natural leaders and financially stronger than women. Chances of women being sexually harassed, therefore, become real.

The studies also found that women were bound to be discriminated sexually in one way or another during the course of their career. This practice was witnessed in England and other European Union countries where a lot of female leaders reported cases of sexual harassment. Women were most likely to be sexually harassed in situations where men were in a position to decide their future (Chabaya et al., 2009; Coleman, 2009; Runhare, 2010). Some women, therefore, fell victim to machinations of men. As noted by the participants, to avoid the possibility of being misunderstood by their husbands, most women who had the potential to lead, just dropped the idea for the purpose of preserving their marriages.

The findings of this study are also consistent with results obtained by Kiamba (2008), Mbepera (2015) and Stead (2015), that married women who were leaders, did not get support from their husbands. In contrast, as observed by Bhalalusesa and Mboya (2003), men tended to wield a lot of support from their spouses. Bhalalusesa and Mboya's (2003) views are supported by Chabaya et al. (2009) who argue that women endeavour to create a good environment for their husbands to exercise their duties as leaders. They, however, observed that there was a propensity by men to challenge the power of women. Men neither supported their wives in their quest to secure positions of authority nor in their exercise of leadership roles as administrators.

Lp7 commented:

When I was the chairperson of my department, my husband would often ask me why I did not delegate someone to attend a meeting on my behalf. This was often said in situations when I arrived home a bit late attending a meeting. Though this did not happen quite frequently, I had to resign from the post to save my marriage as the worst could have happened. Though he did not say anything, at the back of my mind I just thought that he could have been suspecting that I was having an affair with someone.

Some female lecturers went on to say that it was not unheard of for husbands whose wives occupied senior leadership posts to marry second wives. This resulted from a sense of family neglect the husbands felt. In that situation, the women would be spending the greater part of their time attending to official responsibilities. This, the participants noted, had led to serious damages to some marriages and in some cases marriages were irrevocably broken.

During the interview P.V.C 2 indicated:

Some women were in perpetual conflict with their husbands because the husbands had a feeling that once a woman had been promoted to a leadership post, she gets exposed to different people resulting in her becoming unfaithful. Acrimony is generated and in some cases, the marriage becomes perpetually rocky.

Some husbands, however, appreciated the appointment of their wives and were very supportive. As noted by Moorosi (2007) in a study carried out in South Africa, couples that were much older tended to support each other on matters regarding promotion to positions of authority. The same observations were made by Odanga, Aloka and Raburu (2015) who noted that a lot of women who were successful in their careers, did so with the blessings of their husbands. Coleman and Glover (2010) also noted that there was a tendency to support each other in the new family structures in which there was sharing of responsibilities.

4.5.1.6 Women leadership turning the leadership tables upside down

Most participants felt that there was a need for a paradigm shift in terms of how men viewed female leadership. The issue came to the fore as part of the challenges that women were facing in exercising their duties as leaders. Participants were cognisant of the cultural factors that discriminated against women. They indicated that it was possible to turn the tables of culture and chart the new way forward in terms of accepting and respecting female leadership.

Lp3 argued:

There is need to change the people's perceptions such that they see you as a leader first, and a woman second. Men must not be locked up in their stereotypical perceptions of women. They need to be objective and evaluate what I say rather than evaluating what I am.

L5 added:

During meetings, our ideas are thrown out. You get the feeling that you are not worthy in the meeting. Ideas that are put across by men are more acceptable. I had to leave a meeting where my ideas were constantly crashed. I feel that the main reason is that ideas that come from women are not very useful. That is not true at all. In some extreme cases, you hear people saying 'madzimai haataure padare revarume'. (Women are supposed to keep quiet in meeting, it is a forum for men).

Women felt that it was time for them to be assertive against the societal mind-set which classified them as second class citizens. They felt that they were capable of performing at the same level with men or out-performing them. The perceptions that men had of women, contradicted the standing world record in which some universities headed by women are among the best in terms of performance (Bothwell, 2015). This demonstrated that women were making a significant impact in tertiary education through their participation in educational programmes and in leadership.

4.5.1.7 Women's response to appointment to positions of authority

The third theme that emerged out of this study was on how women responded to appointment to senior leadership positions. The issue was discussed under the sub-topics: Rejection of the appointment offer; Lack of confidence; Breaking glass ceilings and reaching ivory towers; Self-actualised leadership and Skills development for female leaders.

The findings of this study revealed that women responded differently to their appointment to leadership positions. While some were able to develop coping mechanisms, others could not stand the heat and simply resigned in the face of the myriad of challenges that came along with the demands of the job. During the interviews carried out with members of the administration, women indicated that as part of their career needs, they had to be confident, mentally alert, and above all, demonstrate a willingness to confront problems. They also indicated that the leadership competences and skills of a woman had to outweigh those of a man if they were to be appreciated. This was because women did not only need to prove to be better than men but also to demonstrate the integrity required in leadership.

L11 argued:

Challenges that confront women are there, they are real, but women have to grapple with them. There is a need for a very strong sense of perseverance and commitment otherwise one would throw in the towel.

The ideas raised by L11 were different from how Lp7 responded to her appointment.

Lp7 commented:

Women face a lot of challenges yes....., but the levels of some of the challenges may threaten personal and marriage security. I just had to call it quits. You get to a point where you say is this really necessary?

4.5.1.8 Rejection of the appointment offer

Another issue that emerged during the discussion on how women reacted to appointment to positions of authority was an outright rejection of the offer. This was one of the factors that contributed to under-representation of women in leadership in academia. Analysis of data from documents from the Human Resource Departments indicated that few women invited for interviews, did well in the interviews and were subsequently considered for the post but failed to take up the post. This reveals the broader context of the problem. Women took into consideration the social values, norms, stereotypes, beliefs attitudes and expectations of the society before accepting leadership posts (Walker & Dimmock, 2006). This emanated from the socialisation process and the patriarchal nature of the society in which women were taught that leadership roles were for men. To some extent, this brings to scrutiny the strength of the socialist-feminist theory. It would appear that the theory does not adequately challenge the concealed obstacles that stand in the way of women to leadership in education. As found in this study, women continue to base their decisions on cultural and societal expectations.

Participants pointed out that women tended to put a lot of consideration into the broader context of their social life. They gave thoughts and re-thoughts to an appointment offer in terms of how it would affect them within the family and cultural context. It is likely that in cases where a woman rejected a post, the post was awarded to a man or to apathetic individuals. This underscores the complexity of the whole issue surrounding women leadership.

Lp5 commented:

I might accept the appointment, but look here, I do not stay in a vacuum, and I live amongst the people. What will my neighbours, church mates, work mates say if I were to suddenly leave my family and everything to take up a post away from home?

L 1 added:

It may not really count for society to recognise you as a leader who does not have principles. There is also need to uphold family and societal values. It is about what comes first before the other. We have families to look after, but we also need to work for those families. Should we lose our values and dignity because we need to lead?

4.5.1.9 Lack of confidence

Participants also noted that one of the reasons why women turned down appointment offers was a lack of confidence. Participants indicated that some women were not confident of their ability to lead. They lacked that assertiveness despite the fact that they had the ability.

P.V.C 1 observed:

I believe that some women need to seriously deal with their fears which are enemy number one. During interviews, you can actually see the potential of a person to perform very well in the new assignment. You get surprised that they don't show up for the post. We have had two or three such cases where we recommended a woman for the post of Dean of Faculty. She declined the offer of the post after passing the interview.

This shows that some women had no confidence to face the challenges associated with leadership. Evidence from the documents indicated that between the years 2010 and 2014, three women rejected promotional offers at the two institutions. One post was for the deanship at university A and the other two posts were for chief librarian and registrar at university B.

P.V.C 2 reported:

In most adverts placed in the media for vacant posts, there is a rider stating that women are encouraged to apply but some women for one reason or the other decide to hide their talents. Some are voted into leadership positions such as chairpersons of departments by

their colleagues but they decline on the basis that they are incapable of leading.

The observations made above, show that while the majority of women were failing to be considered for leadership positions. Some of the few that were lucky, rejected the offers or they lacked the confidence to take up the offer. These findings confirm Kamau (2001) and Chisikwa's (2010) observation in Kenya and Sperandio and Kagoda's (2009) observations in Uganda, that some women rejected appointments to leadership posts mainly because they lack confidence or they did not like the areas to which they were posted.

4.5.1.10 Breaking glass ceilings and reaching ivory towers

It should be noted that the dearth of women at leadership levels in academia can, to a very negligible extent, be attributable to women who declined offers of leadership posts. Such rejections of offers were rooted in more serious societal issues that women find themselves. Rejecting a post was a mere symptom of a bigger problem. The real issues that confronted women on a day-to-day basis were rooted in rigidly held societal attitudes and beliefs, stereotyping and the presence of glass ceilings, lack of motivation and lack of the will-power to implement policies, among many others.

These factors virtually block the chances of women ever rising to the top posts in management along career paths of their choice. The findings agree with studies conducted in Zambia, Ghana, Mozambique, South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania and Uganda by the Higher Education Resource Services (HERS) in 2007. The studies indicated that although women were in the majority, constituting more than 50% of the workforce in higher education, only 8% were vice-chancellors and 12% were registrars, while 21% were appointed as pro-vice-chancellors and executive directors (Ogunsanya, 2007). Statistics show that in Ghanaian and Ugandan universities, only 10% and 12% of the women respectively were professors in 2008.

The findings of this study reveal that women were individually motivated to achieve top posts but societal forces worked against them. Society has certain stereotypical pictures of a man and a woman. The challenges that women faced, therefore, emanated from the cultural and social expectations. Similar research findings were reported in Zimbabwe by Zinyemba (2013) and Mapolisa and Madziyire (2012), although their focus was mainly on women leadership in primary and secondary schools. Women work in gendered environments in which they have to fight the system in order to break the glass ceilings. The fact that women need to deal with work practices with inherent discriminatory practices and compete with men at the same level, leads to over-rating of men and under-rating of women in as far as work related patterns of behaviour are concerned.

As noted by Reg 1:

Women are motivated to work. We are self-driven but there are well orchestrated societal barriers that work against us. There are a lot of social and cultural forces that one has to fight and win in order to achieve one's set goals.

Reg 1's observations were also echoed by L4 who argued:

In order to get to the Promised Land in academia, women must prove, in many ways, that they are better than men. They fight against many forces and everything starts from the family. Some family members are very protective of ambitious family members especially women. The family may actually be the first hurdle one needs to cross.

The observations by L4 agree with the observations by Weidekamm and Willer (2010), O' neill, Shapiro, Ingols, Blake-Bead (2013) and Parker (2015) that the challenges women faced were aggravated by the fact that they had to consider family responsibilities and professional ethics. The few women who resisted the tide, found themselves isolated in the ivory towers;

male-dominated environments (Schwanke, 2013; Zvobgo & Farisayi, 2014).

Walker and Dimmock (2006) assert that culture regulates the behaviour of men and women in terms of roles and responsibilities. Roles for men and women are therefore, categorised along cultural lines. This obviously leads to differential opportunities for men and women. The irony is that the roles ascribed by culture tend to have more effects on women than men. Women are thus, more restricted in their roles than men. Men tend to have more freedom in exercising their responsibilities than women. Women have to fight the invisible barriers in order to succeed. The findings of this study corroborate findings by Thuy Le (2011) in his studies of 62 societies, that both the indigenous and organisational cultures significantly prejudiced women from exercising their full potential. This is because culture prescribe in women, certain behavioural traits that hinder their prospects of attaining leadership positions. The restrictions prescribed by culture, therefore, explain women under-representation in leadership.

4.5.1.11 Self-actualised leadership

The 21st century ethics of leadership call for a new kind and quality of a leader who is self-actualised. The self-actualised leader leads the minds and hearts of people from whatever walks of life. The leader is able to motivate people to tap into their human capital. This type of leadership anchors on the ability of the leader to facilitate the development and engagement of a vision and to collaborate rather than monopolise (Hayes, 2015). This finding was generated from the question that related to the kind of leadership people expected to find from women. From the discussions in the FGDs and interviews held with the lecturers, there was agreement among most of the lecturers, that self-actualising leadership, was a good type of leadership. Self-actualised leadership ‘coaches people’, and it is not dictatorial or formed on the basis of the military command. It empowers and enables subordinates to express their intellectual, creative and emotional capital in order to develop professionally.

As part of women's response to appointment to leadership positions, this study found that some women accepted the positions of leadership on the basis of wanting to fulfil their dreams. Some participants indicated that some successful professional women occupied leadership posts out of the need for self-actualisation and to express their intellectual capital. The women did not, therefore, accept the posts for material gains but on the basis that they wanted to achieve the peak of their professional dreams. Such women normally did their work with passion because they did not expect a material reward from the job. Instead, what they wanted was self-satisfaction; doing something that they wanted in life.

V.C. 1 indicated:

Not all people are driven by monetary gains when they apply for a job. Some people find joy in doing what they want in life. It doesn't need to be a woman or a man, but when women do something out of passion, it really comes from their heart. They will do a good job.

The above views were corroborated by Reg 2 who stressed:

It is generally challenging for a woman to make a break-through in leadership in academic institutions. If driven by the spirit of serving, the university can soar to greater heights. Look at the Women University in Africa (WUA), Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU) and other universities that are or were formerly administered by women, they are rising stars in the strict sense of the word.

There was also consensus among the V.Cs that self-actualised leadership was propelled and regulated by vision. The self-actualised leader constantly reminded people of their own self-actualising drive with their families' communities and work places.

V.C. 2 commented:

A self-actualised leader is humane, has a heart for the people, cares and has compassion. He or she also realises the importance of openness and collaborative work. Such is the skill that we want our leaders including women to emulate.

From the above discussion, it can be seen that self-actualised leaders are goal getters who implement policies and get results from the strategies that they create. They are also action-oriented.

4.5.1.12 Skills development for female leaders

Participants felt that there was need for a long term and sustainable solution to curb female under-representation in the senior management positions in academia. Some participants felt that it was important to educate men and women to accept female leaders in the same way as they accepted males. Most participants felt that women leaders could benefit from a skills-gap training to augment and hone their leadership styles. There was a general consensus among the participants that as part of skills-development, women could benefit from both local and international training agencies that were into skills-development.

The observations in this study, therefore, were that women were very astute leaders whose skills could be enhanced if they attended workshops and symposia on leadership. In particular, some participants mentioned that organisations like the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) mainly focused on the development of leadership skills for women. The organisation introduced programmes whose main focus was on enhancing women participation in policy-making at various levels in society. Participants felt that it was crucial for prospective leaders to under-go such training as a way of sharpening leadership skills.

L1 noted:

Leadership is an art. Some people are good painters whilst others are really bad ones. One needs some sort of orientation for

leadership posts so as to lead that organisation exercising all the qualities that go along with the post.

The findings of this study are in line with the initiatives that are already being offered by the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU). Zimbabwe is not yet a beneficiary of the programmes offered by the ACU. In these programmes, prospective leaders benefit from workshops to boost and intensify their participation in leadership and management of universities. The programmes include giving out of modules, offering training workshops, and facilitating international networking with leaders from various corners of the world.

South Africa, India, New Zealand and Australia were already embarking on the same programmes (ACU, 2010). Higher Education Resource Services (HERS) is another example of a skills training academy that attracted women from all over sub Saharan Africa. The idea is to augment women skills in academic leadership (Moorosi, 2007). Studies carried out in the USA indicate that HERS trained over 4,300 women in academic leadership. Such training programmes could help establish a pool from which qualified leaders in academia could be drawn.

4.6 Community perceptions of female leadership

The fourth theme that emerged from this study was on the community perceptions of female leadership. The theme has one category that is; socio-cultural contextualisation of female leadership and two sub-themes which are; socio-cultural barriers against women leadership, women leaders and cultural beliefs.

4.6.1 Socio-cultural contextualisation of female leadership

It was also important to find out how female leaders related with the community outside the university. This was because universities or institutions, in general, existed within communities. The university client-base or students come from the community and so the community

invariably becomes a key stakeholder in the education system. It is ironic to note that female leaders reported lack of cooperation from the surrounding community. Female leaders postulate that the lack of support emanated from the conception that the community had female leadership. There was a subtle feeling that women were supposed to work under men in every aspect of life. Women in leadership, therefore, faced such deep-seated patriarchal beliefs. These observations were confirmed by Celikten (2009). Makura (2009), Cheruto and Kyalo (2010) who indicated that relations between the community and women leaders were usually characterised by inexorable animosity. The hostility exhibited by some members of the community was generated from the in-built perceptions of a woman as unfit to execute leadership roles.

Reg 1 noted:

We engage the local community in many programmes but you will always notice that the community does not have faith in female leadership. I have to apply a lot of courage in order to make things happen. It seems that they just regard female leadership with a lot of disdain.

V.C. 2 had a lot to say about relations between female leadership and the community

V.C. 2 indicated:

I relate with members of the community in many fora. We do outreach programmes as part of our corporate social responsibility. I get an opportunity to interact with members of the community on a regular basis. You really need to work extremely hard to earn their respect. It seems the notion of a woman working in a male-dominated environment as a leader, to them is an anathema.

Most participants highlighted that professional women, just like any other women, operated within a socio-cultural network and context with certain

expectations. This means that society expected women to act as social beings. Women just like men, were still expected to be guided by their culture even if they were in leadership positions. These cultural expectations placed on women certain rights and obligations. Most female participants, however, felt that the community was out to prove that women were not as capable as men. Some men did not trust female leadership. Female lecturers who were part of the FGDs and were formerly in leadership positions elsewhere indicated that they faced a lot of challenges in terms of transforming the mentality of the members of the community, who looked at them with mistrust.

L11 said:

The community can be supportive and can at times be a real challenge to deal with. They take women as easy push overs whose concerns can be easily disregarded. I had to fight very hard and to stick to my principles in order to earn their respect.

While the findings of this study explain the relations between the community and universities, they disagree with findings by Kagoda and Sperandio (2009) who observed that some parents were very supportive of women leadership. They believe that women leadership provided care and safety for the children especially in the face of HIV and AIDS. In this sense, the schools and the community enjoyed cordial relations.

4.6.1.1 Socio-cultural barriers against women leadership

It is important to note that education is a complex system embedded in a political, cultural and economic context. Walker and Dimmock (2006) indicate that culture prescribes roles for women and men. This means that culture regulates the behaviour of members of the society. Walker and Dimmock (2006) further reiterate that a cultural set up is responsible for creating differential opportunities for women and men. In this regard, men tend to get better access to opportunities than women.

Society does not expect women to be leaders due to ingrained patriarchal history. This is the source of the challenges that women face enroute to taking up leadership positions. Men believe that the place of the woman is in the kitchen (Onsongo, 2004), where they take care of the children and do the cooking for the family. These cultural expectations and stereotypes have the negative effect of devaluing the worth of a woman. This is why women tend to face challenges when it comes to leadership.

V.C. 2 noted:

Some men just feel belittled to get instruction from a female senior member of staff. It is a cultural norm that we really need to fight against. Many nations have since surpassed that stage. We need a new mind-set, a paradigm shift so that we travel along a new trajectory where women are supposed to gain their real worth.

The views were also echoed by Reg 1 who commented:

Within the work place, it is the male norm that dominates and almost becomes natural. In this regard, men become so protective of their dominance. I have had to struggle to become acceptable and still continue but you find that you meet new hurdles once you cross some.

The sentiments echoed show that there was consensus among participants that socio-cultural issues played a significant role in influencing women's self-esteem and the choices they made relating to career progression and leadership.

4.7 Invigoration of the university policies to promote gender parity in leadership in academia

The final theme that emerged from this study was in line with invigorating of the university policies to promote gender parity between men and women. This theme was in line with the last research question which aimed to find out ways of invigorating the gender policies. The theme comes last

because, under this question, participants were reflecting on the challenges that women were facing and giving possible policy-positions or solutions that could be considered in order to enhance the chances of women being promoted to positions of leadership in academia.

This particular category was divided into two sub-themes that emerged from the data that were collected to find out what could be done to invigorate the university policies. The purpose of invigorating the policies was to ensure that more women played an active and visible role in the leadership of the institutions. The sub-themes drafted according to the data were; Monitoring and evaluation, Affirmative action and Revitalising gender mainstreaming.

4.7.1 Monitoring and evaluation

Participants felt that one way of invigorating the gender policies was through monitoring and evaluation. Most participants felt that the two institutions did not have a mechanism for assessing the effect of the policies. This, they said, was evident in the continued male domination of university committees, departments and the top leadership of the two institutions. Monitoring and evaluation were some of the ways through which improvements could be instituted on the policy documents. Participants felt that it was crucial to track implementation and outputs, in this case, the outputs were very minimal. The UN (2008) observed that through monitoring and evaluation, it was possible to measure the effectiveness of the policies. Through monitoring and evaluation, it would be possible to determine when changes and interventions would have been effected. The institutional leaders would have made informed decisions.

4.7.2 Affirmative Action

The findings of this study indicate that there was need for a more purposeful implementation of affirmative action policies as a way of enhancing the chances of women to attain leadership positions. Affirmative

action seeks to provide special favours to members of a disadvantaged group. As pointed out by Jaffrelot (2003) and Fullinwider (2014), affirmative action seeks to address historical gender imbalances. Studies in some Asian countries such as India show that they use a quota system where a specific percentage of jobs or vacancies are reserved for members of a certain group. Other regions do not use the quota system but they give preference to members of certain groups in case of vacant posts. The essence is to create balance in terms of opportunities between members of privileged and disadvantaged groups. In the context of this study, women represent the marginalised group. Despite the existence of affirmative action, the under-representation of women continues to escalate.

This study found out that while the purpose of affirmative action was to remove the hurdles that stood in the way of women career progression, what lacked was the strategic management of their implementation. This observation agrees with Morley and Crossouard's (2015) findings that even where policies existed, there was need for an implementation strategy in order to make the policies effective. Participants felt that, with the correct attitude, it was possible to use the existing policies to spur the career progression of women.

L13 said:

Affirmative action policies can reap positive benefits for both men and women if applied with passion. Some countries have benefited from the use of such policies. What is required is the candid implementation of the policies.

According to the theoretical framework which underpins this study, that is the socialist-feminists and John Rawls and David Miller's, social justice theory, implementation of gender policies, gender mainstreaming and affirmative action policies is a fight against social injustice.

Studies by Morley (2006) show that affirmative action policies have worked perfectly well in countries such as Sweden, Norway, Iceland and Malaysia.

In those countries, significant disparities between men and women have diminished due to the strict implementation of policies (Husu, 2001; Rogg, 2001; Bondal & Bendixen, 2012; and Bergman & Rustad, 2013). Sweden, Iceland Norway and Malaysia stand as the paragons of gender equality and gender equity. Studies by Muponda (2008) also indicated that affirmative action policies are indispensable if the emancipation of women is to be realised.

LP5 added:

Affirmative action is desirable and inevitable. It is the only way that total emancipation of the women can be achieved. Yes, there are some countries that have faced challenges in its implementation but they should not be our benchmarks. There is a need for a clear agenda for women emancipation and affirmative action is one of the key items.

It is important to note that although some participants felt that affirmative action can be a useful starting point in invigorating the gender policies, affirmative action policies have been subjected to criticism. Studies by Chinyoka (2013) found that affirmative action policies were offering cosmetic solutions to the problem of women under-representation. The study indicated that affirmative action policies were addressing the symptoms not the real problem. The real problem lies in the patriarchal nature of the society. Whilst Chinyoka's (2013) argument makes a lot of sense, it is the premise of this study that affirmative action is meant to increase the chances of women taking part in decision-making situations. The more they get involved in decision-making the better placed they will be to influence the deconstruction of the shackles of patriarchy (Madzivadondo, 2011).

4.7.2.1 Revitalising gender mainstreaming

Participants from both universities felt that another way of ensuring that the chances of women attaining leadership posts were boosted was through revitalising gender mainstreaming. The focus of the participants was to

ensure that through gender mainstreaming, there could be a re-designing and democratisation of the institutional systems for the purpose of accommodating the interests of women as leaders. Gender mainstreaming is a legislative intervention that was endorsed in 1995 under the Beijing Platform for Action (PLAN). It was also ratified in the European Union Treaty of Amsterdam 1997. In Zimbabwe, gender mainstreaming was translated into national policies, plans and programme strategies (Oladunni, 2014).

This was after Zimbabwe had acceded to international treaties. Participants felt that there was a need for a more intense scrutiny of the gender mainstreaming at the two institutions in line with gender policies. It would appear gender mainstreaming had not worked with regard to the creation of equality in leadership positions at the two institutions. The male-management norm continued to dominate at the two institutions with women being seriously under-represented in strategic committees and key positions at the two institutions.

Lp6 commented:

With the continued male dominance in all arms of the institutions, there is need to re-look at the effects of policies. The approach to gender mainstreaming and affirmative action must be thoroughly reviewed so that positive results can be reaped.

The views expressed by Lp6 were also echoed by L2.

L2 added:

Gender mainstreaming and other policy approaches have been found to be workable in some countries. What is important is for the leaders to have the right attitude and the correct framework of the mind. We can witness a transformation in terms of the plight of the women.

The views from the participants, however, corroborate ideas by Morley (2014). Lack of policy implementation to sustain gender equality endeavours has been the greatest impediment to the success of gender mainstreaming in many countries around the world (Morley, 2014). This study is based on the premise that despite the existence of the policy machinery designed to ensure gender equality male dominance continues to exist within the education system. This study is therefore, in line with Morley's, (2014) argument that there has not been a passionate policy implementation strategy to enhance the chances of women being promoted to leadership positions.

4.8 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, qualitative data gathered were presented, analysed and discussed. The major focus of the study was to explore the implementation of gender policies to promote gender parity in leadership in academia with reference to two universities in Mashonaland Central Province of Zimbabwe. The objectives of the study were derived from the research questions. Data from documents were used to buttress data collected from the interviews and focus group discussions. To ensure trustworthiness and credibility of data findings, triangulation of these research instruments was done. This was meant to enhance the truthfulness of how education stakeholders implemented gender policies to promote gender parity in leadership within institutions of higher learning.

Generally, the findings of the present study were that there was lack of implementation of gender policies by administrators in the institutions under study. There is the persistence of the male-management-norm in institutions of higher learning. Women continue to be severely under-represented, meaning that universities remain places of exclusion and elitism. The study also found that organisational philosophies or work ethics were generally insensitive or inconsiderate to women, especially on matters pertaining to the balance between personal, family and leadership responsibilities. This naturally resulted in some women shunning leadership

posts, because to them, the two roles appeared incompatible. Women are thus locked up in a professional and cultural gridlock that severely retards their professional growth. These findings agree with Gaidzanwa and Chung (2010), Zinyemba (2013), Dahlvig (2013), Morley (2014), Zikhali and Perumal (2014), Zvobgo and Farisayi (2014), Morley and Crossouard (2015), Parker (2015) and Broadbridge and Fielden's (2015) findings that under-representation of women in leadership is more acute in tertiary and university education than any other sector.

The subsequent chapter presents the summary of the study, draws conclusions and makes recommendations and suggestions for future studies in order to enhance more participation of women in leadership in universities.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the study, conclusions, recommendations based on the study and recommendations for further research. The chapter has been divided into four sections. The first section summarises key issues that were raised and discussed in chapter 1 to 4. The second section draws conclusions based on the findings of the study. The third section makes recommendations based on the study while the fourth and last, give suggestions for further studies.

5.2 Summary of the study

Chapter one made an attempt to situate the research problem within the proper context. It addressed the international, regional and Zimbabwean contexts of the problem. The problem for this study was the weak implementation of gender policies designed to promote gender parity in leadership positions in academia. The chapter outlined the advantages of incorporating competent and qualified women into leadership positions in academia. It highlighted the potential in women to contribute significantly towards the turn-around of the education system in Zimbabwe. However, the discriminatory tendencies inherent within the appointment processes, coupled with the male-management norm, explains the under-representation of women in leadership positions. The chapter highlighted the efforts that the government of Zimbabwe made, and continues to make, in order to uplift the status of women in all aspects of life. International statutes, conventions and policies on gender, that the Government of Zimbabwe acceded to, were also discussed. In acceding to the statutes and conventions, the government of Zimbabwe was making a commitment to ensuring that both women and men enjoyed the same rights, as enshrined in the Constitution of Zimbabwe. The focus of this study, was,

therefore, on the need to harness the full potential of women to undertake leadership roles in academic institutions.

The chapter presented the statement of the problem, research questions and sub-research questions, objectives of the study, significance of the study, and delimitations of the study and definitions of key terms. The chapter finally presented the structure and outline of the chapters of the whole study, as well as the ethical norms considered in this study.

Chapter two reviewed related literature. The theoretical framework that underpinned the study was the socialist-feminist theory and Rawls and Miller's social justice theory. The theoretical framework was chosen on the basis of its socialist-scientific approach to gender issues. The two theories were considered on the strengths of their resonance with the situation inherent within the education system in Zimbabwe. Feminism, the theoretical framework that informed this study, advocates gender equality as a starting point towards attaining equality in all aspects of social life. They believe that a political ideology that espouses economic inequality of its citizens vicariously creates inequality between men and women because men have more economic power than women. They thus, advocate an overhaul of capitalistic forms of political governance, as a way of reviving the hopes for women. The conviction of the feminists is that capitalism forms the fulcrum upon which the dominance of men over women is anchored (Bryson, 1993). The contention of their argument is that, there is a very close conspiracy between class structure, capital and the oppression of women. To corroborate this theory, John Rawls and David Millers' theory advocates social justice as the basis for equality between men and women in all facets of life.

The Zimbabwean education system exhibits patterns of strong institutional male-dominance. The conviction of the study, therefore, was that the feeble implementation of gender policies and the male domination syndrome, could be explained by the strong patriarchal ties that pervade the education system. The chapter also reviewed literature based on the research questions for the purpose of irradiating the research gap. The literature

showed that, around the world, the under-representation of women in senior leadership positions in academia, was a factor strongly entrenched in a multiplicity of factors that included the lack of proper gender policy implementation (Gaidzanwa & Chung, 2010; Zinyemba, 2013; Zvobgo & Farisayi, 2014; Zikhali & Perumal, 2014; Parker, 2015; Morley & Crossouard, 2015). The literature indicated that discrimination and stereotyping were at the centre of women's unimpressive showing as leaders, not only in academia, but also in other sectors of national development.

Review of empirical studies revealed that the under-representation of women in senior leadership positions in academia was a trend that was synonymous with many tertiary institutions around the world (Kemp & Madsen, 2013; Morley, 2013). However, the situation was different in most Nordic states. Most Nordic states have recorded, and continue to record, significant progress towards gender equality in academia. One of the reasons for the success of the gender equality programmes in the Nordic countries was the strict implementation of gender equality laws in academia and in other sectors. Conversely, the Zimbabwean context is still plagued by a lot of impediments to women leadership in academia. Some of the factors that frustrated the hopes of women who aspired to lead, as revealed by literature were; lack of training in leadership on the part of women, lack of support from colleagues, (men and women alike), lack of inspiration from role models, and the existence of the male-management norm (Chabaya et al., 2009; Obura et al., 2011; Gaus, 2011; Sperandio, 2011; Amondi, 2011). These factors epitomised the lack of readiness to embrace female leadership, not only at the two institutions, but also across the whole spectrum of the education system.

Chapter three presented the methodology of the study. The research used the interpretive research paradigm, which falls within the constructivist philosophical orientation. This necessitated the use of research designs and approaches that fall within the realm of interpretivism. The qualitative approach was chosen because it is pre-disposed towards detailed thick

descriptions of data. In the case of this study, this was information relating to the experiences of senior members of the university administration and the lecturers. Focus group discussions, interviews and document analysis were employed as the data collection tools. The researcher preferred the use of the above instruments due to their ability to collect participants' views, feelings and attitudes (Creswell, 2007; Mertens, 2010; Silverman, 2011).

Two vice-chancellors, two pro-vice-chancellors, two registrars and ten lecturers, (five from each of the two universities), were interviewed after obtaining their consent. A total of fourteen lecturers, that is, seven from each of the two universities, took part in the focus group discussions after having obtained their consent also. Purposive sampling was used to select the two universities that were studied. The same method was also used to select the participants. This was because, through purposive sampling, the researcher was able to select participants who had rich data required for the research. Thematic content analysis was used to analyse the data. The study followed Creswell's (2007) data analysis method through the sorting of data into codes to generate themes. The thematic approach was therefore, used for presenting the findings of the study.

Chapter four presented the data and analysed/discussed them. As a way of avoiding unnecessary repetition, data were analysed immediately after presentation. This was to avoid a situation where data are presented and analysed in two different chapters. Data from interviews and focus group discussions were buttressed by data from documents. The triangulation of the instruments ensured that the data were truthful and credible.

The findings of the study were presented in two parts. The first part presented the demographic information of the participants; age, gender and experience. It was necessary to present demographic data of the participants because variables like age, gender and experience were critical elements with regard to issues of leadership. The researcher needed to know the gender, age and experience of the leaders of the two

universities in order to have an insight into the level of maturity of the leaders. This also gave the researcher a working-idea of how the leaders appreciated and valued issues of equality in general, and gender equality in particular as part of their management style.

The second part of the chapter presented and analysed/discussed the findings from the focus group discussions, interviews and the documents. This was done in line with the aim of the study, which was to find out the implementation of gender policies to promote gender parity in leadership in academia. The interview items were designed to answer the main research question which was: How do the existing gender policy frameworks assist aspiring women in accessing leadership positions in academia? The research findings were also summarised in line with the objectives of the study.

This part also responded to research questions on whether or not the existing policy frameworks were effective in stimulating the promotion of women to leadership positions in academia. The question on why women faced challenges that prevented them from promotion to leadership positions in academia was also addressed in this part. The last question to be answered in this section was on finding ways that could be instituted to invigorate the existing policy strategies, as a way of facilitating the promotion of women to decision-making positions in academia.

The study revealed that there was inadequate knowledge among the lecturers, of the existence of the gender policy frameworks at the two institutions. This was because there was inadequate policy dialogue before the gender policies were enacted into functional and binding statutes at the two institutions. Many lecturers indicated that there was lack of ownership of the policies, as they were not privy to the crafting of the policies. They professed ignorance of the contents of the policies. Though some of the lecturers indicated awareness of the existence of gender policy frameworks within their institutions, they were ignorant of the nature and contents of the documents.

The researcher's findings were similar to the findings by Runhare and Gordon (2004), among some Zimbabwean educators. These researchers found that school teachers and administrators were not conversant with policy issues that regulated their operations. Although the findings by Runhare and Gordon (2004), show a striking resemblance on the lack of knowledge by the teachers and lecturers, they differ in the case of their findings on administrators. To the present researcher, this reflected the need to carry out intensive policy dialogue. Universities are essentially run by policies, regulations and ordinances and as such, knowledge of key policy frameworks is very important. The need for policy consultation is very important. From the documents, the researcher established that the focus of the gender policy frameworks at the two institutions was to eradicate social, economic and religious practices that violated the concept of equality and equity. The policies were drafted to foster the principle of equality and equity, as parameters for sound working relationships between men and women, at the two institutions. The study established that the Human Resources Departments of the two institutions had not done enough groundwork with regard to policy dialogue and stakeholder consultations.

Contrary to the lack of knowledge displayed by the lecturers, the researcher found that the members of the administration at the two institutions were very conversant with the policy statements on gender equality and equity. The reason was that administrators interacted with the policies on a more regular basis than the lecturers. The university registrar's department, under which the Human Resources Department falls, is the custodian of all university policies, ordinances and regulations. Members of the administration comprising, but not limited to; the vice-chancellors, the pro-vice-chancellors, the registrars and their deputies, the deans, chief librarians, the bursary, the directors and other arms of the administration, which include section managers, were bound to be more informed on policy issues, than the ordinary lecturer. Members of the administration listed above, sat on various boards as regulated by

university policies. This enhanced their chances of getting to grips with the gender policy frameworks.

The focus of this study, however, was on the vice-chancellors, pro-vice-chancellors, registrars and lecturers at the two institutions.

The gender policy documents also advocated the need to increase the number of women and to facilitate promotion of qualified women to higher posts. To the researcher, there was a contradiction because, while the gender policies advocated increased recruitment of female staff members, the women had to compete with men for vacant posts on an equal footing as stipulated by ZIMCHE. This means that, in order to qualify for a vacant post, women had to be better qualified than their male competitors or they had to out-perform the male competitor in an interview. Essentially, this boils down to the fact that possession of the requisite qualifications was the criteria for recruitment rather than gender. It is ironic that on most of the adverts for the vacant posts, there was a rider that encouraged women to apply. From the researcher's analysis, gender policy documents contradicted the principle of perceiving women as a disadvantaged sex. The university policies were also silent on special schemes designed to enhance the chances of women being promoted to leadership positions; such as research grants, retention and staff development. Though the gender policies were designed differently according to the vision and mission statements of the two institutions, the import of their focus was principally the same.

The study also found that the gender policies were an effective tool in the fulfilment of the universal rights to equality of opportunity. As articulated by some of the participants, in the absence of binding regulations, the goal of equality between men and women, in terms of access to leadership positions, would remain silhouetted. In the view of some of the participants, the policies were supposed to be the reference point that regulated the operations of both private and public entities on issues pertaining to gender

equality. As this study revealed, the implementation of the gender policies to address the under-representation of women in leadership positions was very lukewarm. In fact, as the document records suggested, the road to gender equality at the two institutions was agonisingly slow. Gains of very small magnitudes had been recorded, as very few women headed strategic organs of the institutions. Women remained under-represented in all structures of the university administrative systems, starting from the departments.

At university A, all the six deans were male. Out of the six directors, only one was female and out of the twenty-four chairpersons of departments, only six were women. At university B, despite having a female vice-chancellor, out of the six departments, five were headed by men and almost all the top administrative posts were held by men. The inference one can make is that the male-management norm pervaded the operations of the two institutions. The fact that one of the universities was a private church-run institution confirms the fact that gender inequality is a ubiquitous issue. There was no difference in the manner in which the two institutions approached issues of gender in terms of gender policy implementation. The conclusion was, therefore, clear that patriarchy cuts across religious, cultural and racial boundaries. It is a universal phenomenon. The study also found that the under-representation of women in leadership structures of the two institutions under study was not a unique phenomenon to the two institutions, but was a common feature in most tertiary institutions throughout Zimbabwe and beyond.

The study also established that the inclusion of women in leadership structures, as directed by policy, was in line with international statutes and conventions. Some of the statutes and conventions were; the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 1995; The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); Agenda 2063; the Millennium Development Goals Summit 2000; and the SADC Declaration on Gender and Equality signed by SADC Heads of State and Governments in 1997. The purpose of the statutes and conventions was primarily the elimination of all forms of discrimination

against women (Hlatsywayo and Hlatsywayo, 2014). The intentions of the conventions and statutes were therefore, not only on the quantitative increment of the number of women in education but also on gender sensitivity in the distribution of resources and responsibilities.

The study revealed that implementation of gender policies was also important as a way of ensuring quality in education. This was based on the worth of any education system, being judged by the outputs, which is the quality of the graduates. The image of an institution is also reflected through the nature of its policies. Participants were very clear on the fact that, an institution that embraced gender diversity through recruiting competent male and female staff members, was likely to produce quality results. This was because the management style of competent leaders was inclusive and it empowered both staff and students to appreciate the importance of diversity in all its forms, for national development. It was established that implementation of gender policies enhanced the qualitative out-look of the institutions in terms of turning around their academic fortunes.

Contrary to the ideal purpose of the gender policies, the study revealed that, at the two institutions, the policies were mere window dressing tools. This means that the institutions were simply in possession of the policies for professional expediency. The policies were never seriously adhered to during interviews for vacant when candidates were being sought to fill top administrative posts. The policies were, however, more purposefully referred to in addressing fallings-out, indecent assaults and offensive contacts between male and female colleagues at the work place. It was ironic that the policies were more effective in protecting the interests of women against sexual harassment than promoting their career progression. While it was important to protect women from physical harm and indecent assaults at the work place, it remained extremely important also, to nurture their professional growth through exercising gender equity in the allocation of leadership posts.

In line with the dysfunctional nature of the policies at the two institutions, some participants felt, on the contrary, that it was actually ideal for the policies to be applied with a lot of caution. Their argument was that blind loyalty to the concept of gender equality and gender equity was counter-productive. They preferred a situation in which institutions engaged suitable candidates regardless of gender. They subscribed to the idea of universities being autonomous sites for the manufacture of knowledge. The autonomy would entail that the universities would be given the prerogative to choose their own members of staff. Through this, the possibility of choosing incompetent leaders would be avoided. They noted that universities needed robust debate on matters relating to their wellbeing. Incompetent leaders, appointed to fulfil the principle of gender equality and gender equity, were bound to lead the universities to academic disasters of monumental proportions.

In this regard, the participants felt that the concept of gender equity and gender equality needed to be applied reservedly. The different sentiments expressed by the participants pointed to the complex nature of the gender discourse. The intricate nature of the issue was found in the fact that some women also supported men in expressing their fears on the implementation of gender policies. The majority though, felt that there was ample merit in gender equality and gender equity issues, though there was need for a strong statutory back-up to bring them to reality. Overall, the study found that the gender policies, in their current form, did not inspire hope for women who aspired to be leaders in the respective institutions under study.

The second question was on why women faced challenges in their endeavour to attain leadership posts in academia. The study found that there was an inter-link of organisational, societal and personal factors that accounted for the under-representation of women in senior leadership positions. Through the interviews and focus group discussions, it was observed that women in leadership positions faced challenges that discouraged other aspiring women from emulating their positions. At personal level, it was observed that some women felt that the responsibility

of leadership threatened the safety of their marriages. This was based on the fact that work demands tended to encroach into their private and family lives. The female lecturers thus, tended to put more value into their marriages and family life than their career progression. Resultantly, some female lecturers turned down appointment offers on the basis that 'balancing off' leadership demands and family life was a challenge. This was mostly in cases where a post became available far away from their places of residence. In such cases, even if the post might have had more financial incentives than their current earnings, women still found merit in staying with their families rather than grabbing the opportunity. The study found all this to be part of the larger scheme of cultural-socialisation which ring-fenced women to household activities within the realm of the family unit.

Concomitant with the women's concerns was their husbands' or partners' hesitation and misgiving of having powerful women for wives. They indicated that their husbands and partners felt that once promoted, the chance of the women cheating on them was very high. The husbands felt that this was because of the inevitable change in interaction patterns and class of associates that came with elevation to higher posts. The study established that the fears that the men had for their wives or partners, and the reservations expressed by the women, were an epitome of the effects of patriarchy and cultural socialisation. The socialisation process put a lot of restraint on women, from exercising their full potential, especially with regard to venturing into male-dominated fields. The same process drew limits to men's expectations of the potential that women had and the levels to which they could reach. This situation resulted in some women preferring to hide their potential and talents or to down-play them in an effort to remain acceptable within the confines of masculinity and femininity. These factors explain the under-representation of women in leadership positions at the two institutions.

At the organisational level, the findings of the study were that there was a conglomeration of factors that militated against women's assumption of

leadership posts. Some of the challenges were that some work schedules required leaders to continue being at work, long after the normal working time and late into the evening. Some of the work commitments extended into the weekends and holidays. Such kind of heavy work schedules, that demanded working beyond the call of duty, were more suitable to men than to women. Women found such arrangements to be misogynistic and designed to accommodate the interests of men. The need to fulfil house chores like cooking for the family, taking care of children, and at times breastfeeding responsibilities, naturally made this option very unfeasible for women. Acceptance of a leadership responsibility by the woman meant sacrificing family time. This threatened both the marriage and the family cohesion. The study found this factor very utilitarian in explaining the under-representation of women in leadership positions at the two institutions.

The study also found that the gender policy was not being used in the appointment of chairpersons of departments. In fact, choosing of chairpersons was done through a vote. Members in the department were free to choose candidates of their choice. Chairpersons were usually chosen for a period of three years, with the possibility of renewal for another term. The tenure period was renewable based on the performance of the chairperson. The V.C made the final approval and only on rare occasions did he reject the recommendations from departments regarding their choice of leadership. At the departmental level, no strict principle on issues of gender was followed.

This approach, in effect frustrated the hopes of any aspiring women to the positions of departmental chairpersons. This is because the researcher found the institutions under study to be male dominated. The uneven nature of the ratio between men and women in administrative posts gave an indication of gender imbalance at the two institutions. The sample that participated in the focus group discussions and the interviews validated the state of this anomaly. Chances of women being chosen to leadership posts at departmental level were therefore, very slim. The researcher found this

to be a factor that betrayed a lack of synergy in the implementation of the gender policies at the two institutions. Furthermore, the procedures followed in the appointment of members to any senior position in terms of the gender policies were not made explicit to the lecturers or chairpersons of departments. As part of the administrative organ of an institution, departments needed to be the starting point in terms of the implementation of policies. The study, therefore, established that side-lining of the gender policies in the appointment and promotion procedures was a ploy by some administrators to corruptly appoint their friends or relatives to leadership posts.

The idea of sexual harassment, common between male superiors and female subordinates, did not feature prominently in this study as in other studies elsewhere. It has been reported in Tanzania, for example, by Mbepera (2015), that senior education officers were in the habit of asking for sexual favours from women before giving them posts as heads of schools. Such scandals only served to bring inept women into the system as heads of big institutions. This study did not find sexual harassment as a conspicuous factor that deterred women from accessing leadership positions at the two universities. This is probably because participants chose not to talk about it. Issues to do with sexual harassment are very complex, besides bringing anguish to the victim, they also demean their basic dignity and humanity especially if discussed in public. Naturally, people want to protect their self-worth, such that if they were victims of sexual harassment, they feel comfortable discussing the issues at more private and convenient fora from where they would expect to get some help.

The study also found that women who broke the 'glass ceilings' and made it to the top of the organisational leadership structures did not enjoy the support of some of their female colleagues. Some female participants felt that some female leaders adopted the 'queen bee' syndrome and tended to be autocratic. They were more critical, vindictive and spiteful of other

female colleagues than the male counterparts. They felt that, ideally, successful women were supposed to be role models to the young girls, so that they emulate the worth of leadership through pursuing leadership styles that were non-discriminatory. They expected women just like men to pursue leadership styles that loathed dictatorship and were in accordance with the will of the people. These styles would empower subordinates to express their intellectual and innovative skills. The female participants felt that female leaders must inspire other women so that together, they fight a common cause to de-construct patriarchy and improve the dignity and self-worth of women. The study observed that some women preferred male candidates as leaders ahead of their female colleagues. This factor incontrovertibly accounted for female under-representation in leadership in academia. The researcher found this to be a factor that emanated from the greater scheme of the process of socialisation. The process socialises women to feel that playing a subservient role to men, is part of the natural order of things.

It was also established in the study that the community tended to have a lower opinion of female leaders than male leaders. Female leaders were perceived to be devoid of the clout necessary to lead, especially leading big institutions like universities. They were seen to be incompetent, weak, inaccessible and incapable of instilling the correct work ethics and discipline among members. This created an unsound working relationship with members of the community. The researcher noted that the perceptions of members of the community originated from the patriarchist, stereotypical perception of women as ordained to be perpetually submissive to men. These perceptions are an extension of the feminine mystique which is anchored on the myth that the place of a woman is in the kitchen (Onsongo, 2004). Through this myth, society dampens the morale of women as possible effective leaders, due to the in-built and deep-seated patriarchal notions. Through these perceptions, women face innumerable hindrances and pitfalls that infuriate their ascendance to power. The study thus found this to be another factor that accounted for the under-representation of women in leadership positions in academia.

The last part addressed the issue of invigorating the existing gender policies for them to be more effective in terms of enhancing the chances of women to access leadership posts. One way of achieving this was through instituting mechanisms of monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the policies. The goal of monitoring and evaluation is meant to improve the current and future administration of outputs, outcomes and impact. Monitoring and evaluation would have assisted in terms of improving the performance of the policies. This was noted from the fact that there was continued male domination of all strategic aspects of the institutions, including headship of departments and committees. The study found that through monitoring and evaluation it was possible to quantify the effectiveness of the policies. The results would have assisted the institutional leaders to determine the areas that needed any interventions or changes in terms of enhancing the chances of women to be considered for leadership posts.

The study also found that purposeful implementation of affirmative action policies was another way of invigorating the gender policies. This was based on the principle that affirmative action sought to address historical imbalances that stemmed from gender and racial inequalities (Jaffrelot, 2003; Madzivadondo, 2011; Fullinwider, 2014). The study noted that in order to realise the success of the affirmative action policies, the critical aspect was the strategic management of the implementation of the policies. This was in line with Morley and Crossouard's (2015) findings that there was need for a workable implementation strategy to make the affirmative action policies effective. This stemmed from the fact that despite the existence of the affirmative action policies, the gender gap between men and women in leadership positions continued to escalate. The study noted that while affirmative action policies had failed to reap the desired results in some countries they had succeeded in reducing women under-representation in other countries. Research studies conducted by Husu (2001), Rogg (2001), Bondal and Bendixen (2012) and Bergman and Rustad (2013) show that affirmative action policies and other policies

centred on women emancipation and career progression had registered phenomenal successes in the Nordic countries and Malaysia. As noted by Muponda (2008), affirmative action policies were desirable and inevitable.

Revitalising gender mainstreaming was also raised as another very important factor for bolstering the chances of women attaining leadership posts. Gender mainstreaming was viewed as a way of democratising the political, social and economic space for the purpose of equalising the participation of women and men in all aspects of life. Participants felt that gender mainstreaming at the two institutions had produced unexciting results. There was thus, need for self-introspection on the part of the two institutions with a view to involving more women in decision-making positions.

5.3 Conclusions

The findings of this study suggest that universities could reinforce the implementation of their gender policies as a means of enhancing the participation of women in leadership positions. At both universities under study, there was lack of a robust implementation strategy to ensure more involvement of women in leadership and decision-making structures. The male-management norm pervaded the two institutions, and men tended to use gate-keeping mechanisms that sustained their hegemony. Most of the administrative posts were occupied by men as deans, directors, managers and chairpersons of departments. The availability of few women in leadership structures did not have any significant impact. The researcher believes that more women in the leadership structures, could fight for the practical and strategic gender needs of women. Robust implementation of policies has the potential to defeat the male supremacy.

The conclusion that can be drawn from the above findings is that, it is important for the two universities to have a healthy monitoring and evaluation mechanism to review their policy implementation endeavours. Monitoring and evaluation are qualitative exercises which take an inventory of the successes and challenges of a programme (UN, 2014). The exercise

would have influenced the correction of some of the glaring gender imbalances within the two institutions.

The challenges that women face are largely a result of the paradoxes that emanate from socio-cultural expectations and organisational obligations. The requirement for women to fulfil seemingly conflicting expectations militates against their professional progression (Weidekamm & Willer, 2010; O'neill, Shapiro, Ingols, Blake-Bead, 2013; Parker, 2015). The socio-cultural expectations include the personal and familial obligations that women have to fulfil. At work, women join male-dominated environments and at times so packed are the work programmes that women fail to have discretionary time for other roles. Male dominance was seen as one of the key socio-cultural factors that worked against women in their aspirations to attain leadership positions in academia. The gendered environments under which women operate, stimulate the growth of a disposition which deter them from showing their full potential. Such a situation enables men to emerge as more suitable candidates for leadership positions than women (Tickler, 2013). Women need to be given the opportunity to prove their full potential. In the current set-up, their potential is over-shadowed by men's dominance and resistance. Men's resistance is found in various forms, which include lack of cooperation with female leaders and appointing and voting men to key leadership posts. In the context of the sentiments expressed, it is important to realise that women are different from men. It is, therefore, prudent to use affirmative action as the basis to enhance more participation of women in leadership positions more judiciously.

The challenges that women face are also compounded by the fact that, the operations of universities are subject to audits from the Zimbabwe Council of Higher Education (ZIMCHE). ZIMCHE is a quality assurance board that audits the programme regulations, the actual programmes and courses as well as the qualifications of the university lecturers. The council is thus, a watchdog on the operations of the universities. This means that women who wish to lead at whatever level, have to satisfy the standards as required by ZIMCHE in terms of qualifications, experience and other

relevant factors. In this regard, the study concludes that there is a need for a policy alignment between ZIMCHE specifications and the Zimbabwe National Gender Policy (ZNGP). The contradictions that exist between the aspirations of the ZNGP and ZIMCHE specifications work to the detriment of women. It remains of cardinal importance though, for women to have the requisite qualifications for any post for which they apply. Qualified women will be in a position to execute the demands of the posts for which they would have been appointed.

The dearth of women at the top leadership levels in academia is also attributable to lack of a large pool from which qualified women could be sourced. One of the factors that explain the scarcity of women in decision-making positions is the presence of glass-ceilings. The invisible ceilings limit the levels to which women can go in their career progression. The inference the study makes is that lack of training on the part of women has the potential to sustain the status quo. It is, therefore, advisable to intensify training programmes to reinforce and leverage women's leadership skills. The training programmes will assist women to traverse the multiple responsibilities and constituencies of their roles. In this way, women will be in a position to strengthen their leadership capacity, and transform their careers.

5.4 Recommendations based on the findings of the study

Against the background of the foregoing findings and discussions, this study makes some recommendations in line with the goal of achieving gender parity in leadership in academia. The study recommends the establishment of an audit of the university programmes with a view to establishing or intensifying training programmes in academic leadership and management. An incentive, such as a scholarship and research fund, should be availed as a way of attracting more takers from the women and encouraging them to study for higher degrees. This would enable women to attain higher qualifications, which place them in a better position to challenge men to leadership positions.

The study also recommends a more robust implementation of gender policies, affirmative policies, quotas and targets and gender mainstreaming in the universities, as a means of increasing women into the male-dominated field of leadership. There is no proof in education to show that implementation of such measures has come at the cost of efficiency anywhere in the world. Tied to this would be the establishment of gender sensitisation committees. These committees would be charged with the task of organising workshops and symposia, to bring gender awareness issues to the members.

The study also recommends instituting a broader research programme at international level, on the impediments that women face as well as enablers to leadership in academia. The research would use a different theoretical framework from the one that the current study used. This study used the socialist-feminist theory and John Rawls and David Millers' theory of Social Justice. Of interest, would be to carry out the research in countries that follow the Marxist-Socialist ideology. In 1980, the Government of Zimbabwe adopted a socialist ideology, but from the 1990s onwards, the political economy of the country slowly gravitated towards capitalism. This was the political ideology under which the current research was carried out. It would be interesting to bring out any inter-link between Marxist-Socialist ideology and gender equality.

5.5 Recommendations for future research

The current study focused on only two universities in Mashonaland Central Province of Zimbabwe. The findings may therefore, not be generalisable to other universities in Zimbabwe. This was because it was a case study. The researcher, therefore, recommends that a comprehensive study that incorporates more universities from different parts of Zimbabwe be conducted. The researcher recommends the use of a quantitative research approach or mixed methods. These approaches make use of data gathering instruments and methods that accommodate larger samples than a case study.

It would be of interest to extend the study to cover academic results and research output of institutions that are led by women and those that are led by men, in Zimbabwe. This means that another study on the implementation of gender policies to promote gender parity in academia, incorporating the use of methods that generate quantitative data on academic results from female headed and male headed universities should be conducted.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Ethical clearance certificate



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE REC-270710-028-RA Level 01

Certificate Reference Number: MUS081SMAN01

Project title: Implementation of gender policies to promote parity in leadership in academia: A case study of two universities in Bindura urban district of Mashonaland central province Zimbabwe.

Nature of Project: PhD

Principal Researcher: Edward Mandoga

Supervisor: Prof T.D Mushoriwa

Co-supervisor: N/A

On behalf of the University of Fort Hare's Research Ethics Committee (UREC) I hereby give ethical approval in respect of the undertakings contained in the above-mentioned project and research instrument(s). Should any other instruments be used, these require separate authorization. The Researcher may therefore commence with the research as from the date of this certificate, using the reference number indicated above.

Please note that the UREC must be informed immediately of

- Any material change in the conditions or undertakings mentioned in the document
- Any material breaches of ethical undertakings or events that impact upon the ethical conduct of the research

The Principal Researcher must report to the UREC in the prescribed format, where applicable, annually, and at the end of the project, in respect of ethical compliance.

Special conditions: Research that includes children as per the official regulations of the act must take the following into account:

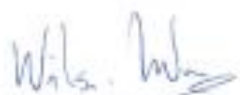
Note: The UREC is aware of the provisions of s71 of the National Health Act 61 of 2003 and that matters pertaining to obtaining the Minister's consent are under discussion and remain unresolved. Nonetheless, as was decided at a meeting between the National Health Research Ethics Committee and stakeholders on 6 June 2013, university ethics committees may continue to grant ethical clearance for research involving children without the Minister's consent, provided that the prescripts of the previous rules have been met. This certificate is granted in terms of this agreement.

The UREC retains the right to

- Withdraw or amend this Ethical Clearance Certificate if
 - Any unethical principal or practices are revealed or suspected
 - Relevant information has been withheld or misrepresented
 - Regulatory changes of whatsoever nature so require
 - The conditions contained in the Certificate have not been adhered to
- Request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project.
- In addition to the need to comply with the highest level of ethical conduct principle investigators must report back annually as an evaluation and monitoring mechanism on the progress being made by the research. Such a report must be sent to the Dean of Research's office

The Ethics Committee wished you well in your research.

Yours sincerely



Professor Wilson Akpan
Acting Dean of Research

17 August 2016

Appendix 2: Letter of consent for all respondents



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

Ethics Research Confidentiality and Informed Consent Form

Please note:

This form is to be completed by the researcher(s) as well as by the interviewee before the commencement of the research. Copies of the signed form must be filed and kept on record

Our University of Fort Hare / Department is asking people from your community/sample / group to answer some questions, which we hope will benefit your community and possibly other communities in the future.

I Mandoga Edward from the Department of Adult and Continuing Education, am conducting a research regarding the **implementation of gender policies to promote gender parity in leadership in academia: A case study of two universities in Bindura Urban Mashonaland Central province**. I am interested in finding out more on how universities are implementing gender policies to promote gender parity in leadership positions. I am carrying out this research to analyse the implementation process of gender regulatory frameworks in the appointment and promotion of members to senior leadership positions in the universities. The research may assist in the intra-university alignment of gender policies which will ensure uniformity in the implementation of the policies on matters of appointment and promotion to senior leadership positions.

Please understand that you are not being forced to take part in this study and the choice whether to participate or not is yours alone. However, we would really appreciate it if you do share your thoughts with us. If you choose not take part in answering these questions, you will not be affected in any way. If you agree to participate, you may stop me at any time and

tell me that you don't want to go on with the interview. If you do this there will also be no penalties and you will NOT be prejudiced in ANY way. Confidentiality will be observed professionally.

I will not be recording your name anywhere on the questionnaire and no one will be able to link you to the answers you give. Only the researchers will have access to the unlinked information. The information will remain confidential and there will be no "come-backs" from the answers you give.

The interview will last around 30 minutes (*this is to be tested through a pilot*). I will be asking you questions and ask that you are as open and honest as possible in answering these questions. Some questions may be of a personal and/or sensitive nature. I will be asking some questions that you may not have thought about before, and which also involve thinking about the past or the future. We know that you cannot be absolutely certain about the answers to these questions but we ask that you try to think about these questions. When it comes to answering questions there are no right and wrong answers. When we ask questions about the future we are not interested in what you think the best thing would be to do, but what you think would actually happen. If possible, our organisation would like to come back to this area once we have completed our study to inform you and your community of what the results are and discuss our findings and proposals around the research and what this means for people in this area

INFORMED CONSENT

I hereby agree to participate in the research regarding the implementation of gender policy frameworks to promote gender parity in senior leadership positions in academia: A case study of two universities in Bindura urban Mashonaland Central province. I understand that I am participating freely and without being forced in any way to do so. I also understand that I can stop this interview at any point should I not want to continue and that this decision will not in any way affect me negatively.

I understand that this is a research project whose purpose is not necessarily to benefit me personally.

I have received the telephone number of a person to contact should I need to speak about any issues which may arise in this interview.

I understand that this consent form will not be linked to the questionnaire and that my answers will remain confidential.

I understand that if at all possible, feedback will be given to my community on the results of the completed research

Signature of participant

Date:

I hereby agree to the tape recording of my participation in the study

Signature of participant

Date :

Signature of Researcher

Date

Appendix 3: Authorisation letter

All official communications should be addressed to:
"The Secretary for Higher & Tertiary Education
Telephones: 795891-5, 796441-9, 730055-9
Fax Numbers: 792109, 728730, 703957
E-mail: thesecretary@mhet.ac.zw
Telegraphic address: "EDUCATION"



Reference:

MINISTRY OF HIGHER AND TERTIARY
EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT
P. BAG CY 7732
CAUSEWAY

3 March 2017

Mr. E. Mandofa
Bindura University of Science Education
P. Bag 1020
Bindura

Dear Mr. Mundofa

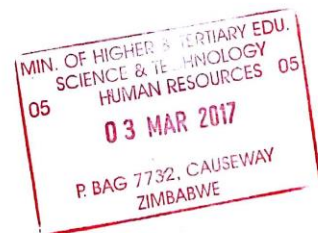
RE: REQUEST OF AUTHORITY TO CARRY OUT A RESEARCH ON "IMPLEMENTATION OF GENDER POLICIES TO PROMOTE PARITY IN LEADERSHIP IN ACADEMIA", A CASE OF TWO UNIVERSITIES IN BINDURA URBAN DISTRICT OF MASHONALAND CENTRAL PROVINCE, ZIMBABWE: BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION AND ZIMBABWE EZEKIEL GUTI UNIVERSITY (ZEGU): MINISTRY OF HIGHER AND TERTIARY EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT

Reference is made to your, letter in which you requested for permission to carry out a research on "IMPLEMENTATION OF GENDER POLICIES TO PROMOTE PARITY IN LEADERSHIP IN ACADEMIA", A CASE OF TWO UNIVERSITIES IN BINDURA URBAN DISTRICT OF MASHONALAND CENTRAL PROVINCE, ZIMBABWE: BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION AND ZIMBABWE EZEKIEL GUTI UNIVERSITY (ZEGU)".

Accordingly, please be advised that the Head of Ministry has granted permission for you to carry out the research.

It is hoped that your research will benefit the Ministry and it would be appreciated if you could supply the office of the Permanent Secretary with a final copy of your study, as the findings would be relevant to the Ministry's strategic planning process.


Mavhondo P. (Mr.)
Acting Director – Human Resources
For: **PERMANENT SECRETARY**
/nn



Appendix 4: Language editing certificate



**Wits University:
Faculty of Humanities
Wits School of Education**

LANGUAGE EDITING CERTIFICATE

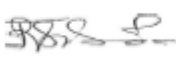
To whom it may concern

I hereby confirm that I have proof read and edited the following PhD thesis using Windows 'Tracking' System to reflect my comments and suggested corrections for the author to action:

**IMPLEMENTATION OF GENDER POLICIES TO PROMOTE GENDER PARITY IN LEADERSHIP IN
ACADEMIA: A CASE STUDY OF TWO UNIVERSITIES IN BINDURA URBAN MASHONALAND CENTRAL
PROVINCE ZIMBABWE
BY
EDWARD MANDOGA**

Although the greatest care was taken in the editing of this document, the final responsibility for the product rests with the author.

Sincerely



SIGNATURE DATE: 08.05.2017

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Wits School of Education
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UNIVERSITY OF THE
WITWATERSRAND
JOHANNESBURG



WSoE
WITS SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Appendix 5: Interview schedule for vice-chancellors

Interview Schedule

I want to start by thanking you for sparing your time out of your heavy schedule to accept to take part in this interview. I am a PhD student in the Faculty of Education at the University of Fort Hare in South Africa. I am carrying out a study on the topic: The implementation of gender policies to promote gender parity in leadership in academia: A case study of two universities in Bindura district Mashonaland Central Province, Zimbabwe. All responses that you are going to give will be used for academic purposes only.

Section A: Biographical Data

Gender **Male** ☐ **Female** ☐

Age Range

25-29 ☐ 30-39 ☐ 40-49 ☐ 50-59 ☐ 60-69 ☐

Experience in years

5-10 10-15 15-20 20-30 30 and above

Professional Qualifications Masters ☐ PHD ☐

Section B

Gender policy issues

1. Does the university have a gender policy, if yes how is the policy crafted?
2. What is the purpose of the gender policy?
3. How knowledgeable is the university community of the existence of the gender policy?
4. How knowledgeable is the university community of the functions of the gender policy?

5. What are your comments on the policy with regard to gender equality?
6. Are the policy provisions with regard to gender equality being adhered to, if yes in what way, and if no, why?
7. In your opinion what has been the impact of the gender policy on the appointment and promotion procedures?
8. What has been the impact of the gender policy on the recruitment procedures?
9. How transparent has been the use of policies in the appointment process?
10. How has the gender policy inspired female lecturers' hopes of attaining leadership posts in the university?
11. How has the gender policy frustrated the hopes of female lecturers' aspirations for leadership posts?

Challenges faced by Women

12. What challenges do women face with regard to fulfilling their hopes in education?
13. Why do they face such challenges?
14. How do the challenges impact on their aspirations to attain leadership posts in education?
15. How do female lectures respond when appointed to leadership positions within the institution?
16. What aspects do you think are pertinent for a woman to be a good leader?
17. How does the university relate with the outside community?
18. How does the outside community view women leadership?
19. How do female lecturers view women leadership?
20. How male lecturers view female leadership?

Policy invigoration

21. What do you think should be added to the current gender policy?
22. What do you think should be removed from the current gender policy?
23. In your view what gender policy model would you recommend enhancing women chances of appointment as leaders?
24. Do you have any other additional information or explanations that you might want to make?

Thank you for allowing me to record the interview

Appendix 6: Interview schedule for pro-vice-chancellors

Interview schedule

I want to start by thanking you for sparing your time out of your heavy schedule to accept to take part in this interview. I am a PhD student in the Faculty of Education at the University of Fort Hare in South Africa. I am carrying out a study on the topic: The implementation of gender policies to promote gender parity in leadership in academia: A case study of two universities in Bindura district Mashonaland Central Province, Zimbabwe. All responses that you are going to give will be used for academic purposes only.

Section A: Biographical Data

Gender Male ☐ female ☐

Age Range

25-29 ☐ 30-39 ☐ 40-49 ☐ 50-59 ☐ 60-69 ☐

Experience in years

5-10 ☐ 10-15 ☐ 15-20 ☐ 20-30 ☐ 30 and above ☐

Professional Qualifications Masters ☐ PHD ☐

Section B

Gender policy issues

1. Does the university have a gender policy, if yes how is the policy crafted?
2. What is the purpose of the gender policy?
3. How knowledgeable is the university community of the existence of the gender policy?
3. How knowledgeable is the university community of the functions of the gender policy?

4. What are your comments on the policy in connection with the appointment and promotion of women?
5. Are the policy provisions with regard to appointment and promotion of women being adhered to, if yes in what way, and if no, why?
6. What has been the impact of the gender policy on the recruitment procedures?
8. How transparent have been the use of policies in the appointment process?
10. How has the gender policy inspired female lecturers' hopes of attaining leadership posts in the university?
11. How has the gender policy frustrated the hopes of female lecturers' aspirations for leadership posts?

Challenges faced by Women

13. What challenges do women face with regard to fulfilling their hopes in education?
14. Why do they face such challenges?
15. How do the challenges impact on their aspirations to be leaders in education?
17. How do female lectures respond when appointed to leadership positions within the institution?
18. What aspects do you think are pertinent for a woman to be a good leader?
19. How does the university relate with the outside community?
20. How does the outside community view women leadership?
21. How do female lecturers view women leadership?
22. How male lecturers view female leadership?

Policy invigoration

23. What do you think should be added to the current gender policy?
24. What do you think should be removed from the current gender policy?
25. In your view what gender policy model would you recommend enhancing women chances of appointment as leaders?
26. Do you have any other additional information or explanations that you might want to make?

Thank you for allowing me to record the interview

Appendix 7: Interview schedule for registrars

Interview schedule

I want to start by thanking you for sparing your time out of your heavy schedule to accept to take part in this interview. I am a PhD student in the Faculty of Education at the University of Fort Hare in South Africa. I am carrying out a study on the topic: The implementation of gender policies to promote gender parity in leadership in academia. A case study of two universities in Bindura district Mashonaland Central Province, Zimbabwe. All responses that you are going to give will be used for academic purposes only.

Section A: Biographical Data

Gender Male ☐ Female ☐

Age Range

25-29 ☐ 30-39 ☐ 40-49 ☐ 50-59 ☐ 60-69 ☐

Experience in years

5-10 ☐ 10-15 ☐ 15-20 ☐ 20-30 ☐ 30 and above ☐

Professional Qualifications Masters ☐ PHD ☐

Operational issues

1. What is the academic staff establishment at this university by gender?

Males ☐ Females ☐

2. How many academic departments are there at this institution?

3. What methods are used to select the Chairpersons of Departments?

4. How many are university wide committees there at this institution?

5. What methods are used to select members and chairpersons of the university committees?

6. What methods are used to select managers, deans and directors of the university?

6. How is the academic appointments committee constituted in terms of membership?
7. What criteria is used to select members who sit in the academic appointment committees?

Section B

Policy issues

8. Does the university have a gender policy, if yes how is the policy crafted?
9. What is the purpose of the gender policy?
10. If yes at what level is the policy applied with regard to appointment and promotion of women to leadership positions?
11. How knowledgeable is the university community of the existence of the gender policy?
12. How knowledgeable is the university community of the functions of the gender policy?
13. What does the policy say with regard to the appointment and promotion of women?
14. Are the policy provisions with regard to appointment and promotion of women being adhered to, if yes in what way, and if no, why?
15. In your opinion what has been the impact of the gender policy on the promotion procedures?
16. What has been the impact of the gender policy on the recruitment procedures?
17. How transparent have been the use of policies in the appointment process?
18. How has the gender policy inspired female lecturers' hopes of attaining leadership posts in the university?
19. How has the gender policy frustrated the hopes of female lecturers' aspirations for leadership posts?
20. How do the ZIMCHE policy guidelines compliment your institutional gender policy?

Challenges faced by women

21. What challenges do they face with regard to fulfilling their hopes as leaders in education?

22. 23. Why do they face such challenges?
24. How do the challenges impact on the women, in relation to their jobs?
25. How do female lectures respond when appointed to leadership positions within the institution?
26. What aspects do you think are pertinent for a woman to be a good leader?
27. How does the university relate with the outside community?
28. How does the outside community view women leadership?
29. How do female lecturers view women leadership?
30. How male lecturers view female leadership?
31. What mechanisms to you put in place to encourage women to apply for leadership positions?

Policy invigoration

32. What do you think should be added to the current gender policy?
33. What do you think should be removed from the current gender policy?
34. In your view what gender policy model would you recommend enhancing women chances of appointment as leaders?
35. Do you have any other additional information or explanations that you might want to make?

Thank you for allowing me to record the interview

Appendix 8: Interview schedule for lecturers

Interview schedule

I want to start by thanking you for sparing your time out of your work schedule to accept to take part in this interview. I am a PhD student in the Faculty of Education at the University of Fort Hare in South Africa. I am carrying out a study on the topic: The implementation of gender policies to promote gender parity in leadership in academia: A case study of two universities in Bindura district Mashonaland Central Province, Zimbabwe. All responses that you are going to give will be used for academic purposes only.

Section A: Biographical Data

Gender Male ☐ Female ☐

Age Range

25-29 ☐ 30-39 ☐ 40-49 ☐ 50-59 ☐ 60-69 ☐

Experience in years

5-10 ☐ 10-15 ☐ 15-20 ☐ 20-30 ☐ 30 and above ☐

Professional Qualifications Masters ☐ PHD ☐

Operational issues

1. How can you explain the gender balance in your faculty?
2. Are there any members from your department/faculty who have been promoted to leadership posts?
3. Does the university encourage women to apply for promotion posts? If so, in what way?
4. Do you aspire to hold a leadership position in the university? Explain.
5. Have you ever applied for a post in the university before? If so what was the response?

6. Does the leadership of your institution reflect good gender balance? If not, what kind of gender composition do you want to see in your institution?

Section B

Policy issues

7. Does the university have a gender policy, if yes how is the policy crafted?

8. If no, how does the university handle gender equality issues?

9. How inclusive is the process of formulating the policy?

10. What is the purpose of the gender policy?

11. What is good about the policy?

12. What is bad about the policy?

13. What does the policy say with regard to the appointment and promotion of women?

14. How are chairpersons of departments chosen?

15. Why does the university prefer such ways of choosing chairpersons?

16. What has been the impact of the gender policy on the recruitment procedures?

17. How transparent have been the use of policies in the appointment process?

18. How has the gender policy inspired female lecturers' hopes of attaining leadership posts in the university?

19. How has the gender policy frustrated the hopes of female lecturers' aspirations for leadership posts?

Challenges faced by women

20. What challenges do women face with regard to fulfilling their hopes as leaders in education?

21. Why do they face such challenges?

22. How do the challenges impact on the women, in relation to their jobs?

23. How do female lectures respond when appointed to leadership positions within the institution?

24. What aspects do you think are pertinent for a woman to be a good leader?

25. How does the university relate with the outside community?

26. How does the outside community view women leadership?

27. How do female lecturers view women leadership?

28. How do male lecturers view female leadership?

Policy invigoration

29. What do you think should be added to the current gender policy?

30. What do you think should be removed from the current gender policy?

31. In your view what gender policy model would you recommend for enhancing women chances of appointment as leaders?

32. Do you have any other additional information or explanations that you might want to make?

Thank you for allowing me to record the interview

Appendix 9: Focus group discussion guide for lecturers

Focus group discussion guide

INTRODUCTION AND INSTRUCTIONS

I want to start by thanking you for sparing your time out of your work schedules to accept to take part in this discussion. I am a PhD student in the Faculty of Education at the University of Fort Hare in South Africa. I am carrying out a study on the topic: The implementation of gender policies to promote gender parity in leadership in academia: A case study of two universities in Bindura district Mashonaland Central Province, Zimbabwe. Please feel free to say anything. Remember the views expressed here are only going to be used for this study. Also, you do not have to say who you are because only the ideas not your name, are important.

Thank you.

Mr Mandoga Edward

Policy issues

1. Does your department/ faculty have a gender policy, if yes how has the gender policy contributed towards setting the staff establishment, if no what are the reasons?
2. Do you understand the university gender policy?
What is good about the policy?
3. What is bad about the policy?
4. What should be added to the policy?
5. What should be removed from this policy?
6. What practices in your community do you find to be bad for women leadership? Explain with examples.
7. What practices in your community do you find to be good for male leadership? Explain with examples.
8. Describe the conception that your society has of female leaders.
9. How do men view women leadership in your institution?
10. How do women view women leadership in your institution?

11. What are the characteristics consistent with a leader in academia?
12. Describe the challenges that women face as leaders in an academic institution.
13. In your view why do women face such challenges?
14. What is the relationship between home factors and women under-representation in leadership?
15. What do you suggest should be done to solve the problems?
16. How does the responsibility of taking care of the family and general parenthood affect women leadership?
17. How supportive to each other are women as leaders?
18. As women and aspiring leaders, what do you expect of the roles of the following people as leaders of the institution?
 - a) The vice-chancellor
 - b) The pro-vice chancellor
 - c) The Dean
 - d) Departmental Chairpersons
19. Is there any difference in terms of leadership styles between the men and women?

Interventions

20. How can the current gender policy interventions be improved to attract more women into the leadership positions?
21. What do you think must be done to attract more women into positions of leadership?
23. Are you happy with the way the current policies are being implemented? If so why? if not why?
22. What gender policy model framework would you like to see being implemented at your institution?

Thank you for taking your time to participate in this discussion

Appendix 10: Document analysis guide

Data from the policy documents

1. What do the policies say about gender equality?
2. What do the policies say about gender equality in leadership?
3. What do the policies say about gender composition of the appointment committees?
4. Do the university have a strategy for policy implementation? if so, how does it work?
5. How transparent have been the use of policies in the appointment process?

Data from the minutes

6. How many committees do the universities have?
7. What do the minutes say about the gender composition of the appointment committees?
8. What do the minutes say about the gender composition of other committees?
9. From the minutes, what is the gender composition of the other committees in the institutions?
10. From the minutes, what qualities do the appointment committees look for in a leader?
11. What verdicts are given to female candidates in interviews/ if positive or negative, why?
12. From the minutes, how are chairpersons of departments chosen?

Data from the adverts

13. What do the adverts say about the qualities and gender of applicants for leadership posts?
14. Do the adverts carry a rider that encourage the application of female candidates?
15. Why does the university prefer such ways of choosing chairpersons?

Data from other documents

16. What challenges do women face as leaders in the two academic institutions?

17. From the documents, why do women face such challenges?
18. What is the relationship between home factors and women under-representation in leadership?
19. What are the universities doing to atone for the challenges that women are facing?
20. What conception of female leadership do women have?