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AN APPRAISAL OF GENDER-FOCUSED NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AS AGENTS OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND GENDER EQUALITY IN ZIMBABWE: A CASE OF HARARE CITY

BY

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SEPTEMBER 2017

DECLARATION

I, ITAI MAFA, the undersigned candidate, hereby declare that the content of this thesis is my original work and that it has not been previously submitted to any other University for any degree, either in part or in its entirety. I also declare that this work fully complies with the University of Fort Hare Policy on Plagiarism and that, as advised by my supervisor, the responsibility for adhering to the ethics of originality and proper referencing is entirely mine.

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Date : 22 May 2017

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ABSTRACT

It is the realization that women around the globe are alienated in terms of accessing resources and opportunities essential for their holistic development that has necessitated the crafting of the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) Number 3 by the United Nations as well as other relevant gender instruments such as the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Number 5. Zimbabwe, the focal country of the current study is not immune to the prevalence of gender inequality as it is a signatory to both commitments. Due to the overwhelming and arduous nature of the task, the government of Zimbabwe has long borrowed a hand from developmental agents such as Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other philanthropic organizations. Apart from NGOs' different visions and missions, a National Gender Policy (NGP) has also been put in place as a benchmark and a guideline to the eradication of gender disparities in Zimbabwe.

It is against this background that this research has been undertaken in order to appraise gender-focused NGOs in Harare city on their interventions to promote women empowerment and gender equality in Zimbabwe. This broad aim was broken into four objectives: to investigate the gender issues prevalent in Harare; to find out how women NGOs are fighting such disparities, to discuss perceptions pertaining to NGOs' interventions as well as discussing the challenges faced by these gender NGOs. In order to achieve this, the utility of the mixed method paradigm was preferred in the current study with the focus group discussion, a key informant method and a mini-survey chosen as data collection techniques. The feminist theory and its concomitant branches together with the political-economy theory were selected as lenses framing the study.

The findings revealed that women in Zimbabwe continue to suffer infringement of their rights as social injustice and subjugation continue with a manifestation of gender disparities such as domestic violence, susceptibility to poverty, HIV/AIDS and economic exclusion. The findings further unearthed the emergence of 'pornographic revenge' and the spreading of violence against women in public places. Moreover, women NGOs have been found tilting away from traditional methods of interventions,

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taking advantage of the advancement in technology and the popularity of the social media. Findings from the current study again discovered that there was little evidence to trace and pin-point the impact of NGOs in promoting women empowerment and gender equality mainly because of the immeasurability nature of some of the achievements by NGOs. Additionally, research participants opined that Zimbabwe's political and economic environment, religious and cultural factors appeared to largely thwart the efforts by NGOs thereby compromising the effectiveness of NGOs interventions. Again, the paucity of resources made it almost impossible for them to operate and translate their visions into practical programs and projects.

From these findings, it can then be concluded that gender NGOs in Harare lack the necessary resources, support and an enabling environment to adequately annihilate gender disparities for the empowerment of women, and the attainment of gender equality in Zimbabwe. The principles of empowerment for self-reliance as emphasized in Social Work Practice are not adequately implemented for the holistic development of women - the very factors necessary for sustainability. Salient recommendations forwarded include NGOs initiating indigenous ways of fundraising and shunning the dependency on international donors; putting in place tracking systems or panels that can ensure that policies such as gender-sensitized budgeting are effectively implemented; adopting innovative-advocacy methodologies such as a gender call centre and perhaps a gender TV show; including gender issues in the basic educational curriculums in order to socialize children into gender parity attitudes. Such radical shifts as supported by radical feminists may increase the effectiveness of the interventions being made by women NGOs in Harare.

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SUPERVISORS' CONFIRMATION

I hereby confirm that I have supervised the thesis of the student mentioned below and that it has been submitted with my authorization.

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All the glory is to God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit for the grace, the wisdom and strength during my study period.

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DEDICATIONS

I dedicate this project to:

- All the women and men who envision the possibility of a society where men and women are equal, people who are willing to do something in order to see that vision manifest in Zimbabwe and beyond.
- Dr Charity Dhliwayo, for being an inspiration and an example of academic excellence.
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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Meaning
AFF	African Feminist Forum
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ATR	African Tradition Religion
AU	African Union
BPFA	Beijing Platform for Action
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
Dr	Doctor
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Program
FBOs	Faith Based Organizations
FDGs	Focus Group Discussions
FHDC	Faculty of Higher Degree Committee
FTLRP	Fast Track Land Reform Program
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GCN	Girl Child Network
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GII	Gender Inequality Index
GMRDC	Govan Mbeki Research and Development Centre
GNU	Government of National Unity
GONGOs	Government NGOs
HDI	Human Development Index
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ILO	International Labour Organization

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IMF	International Monetary Fund
INTRAC	International NGO Training and Research Centre
KI	Key Informants
LF	Liberal Feminism
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MDC-T	Movement for Democratic Change – Tsvangirai
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MEZA	Men of Zimbabwe Arise
MWAGCD	Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development
NANGO	National Association of Non-Governmental Organizations
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NGP	National Gender Policy
NIV	New International Version
PMTCT	Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission
PSTD	Post Stress Traumatic Disorder
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
RAU	Research and Advocacy Unit
RF	Radical Feminism
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SF	Socialist Feminism
SGDs	Sustainable Development Goals
SME	Small to Medium Enterprise
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TALI	Tag a Life
TV	Television

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UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	United Nations Programs on HIV/AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nation Funds for Population Activities
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
WAG	Women Action Group
WCOZ	Women Coalition of Zimbabwe
WHO	World Health Organization
WIPSU	Women In Politics Support Unit
WOZA	Women of Zimbabwe Arise
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front
ZBC	Zimbabwe Broadcasting Cooperation
ZCC	Zion Christian Church
ZEDS	Zimbabwe Economic Development Strategy
ZIMASSET	Zimbabwe's Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation
ZimStats	Zimbabwe Statistics
ZWLA	Zimbabwe Women Lawyers Association
ZWRCN	Zimbabwe Women Resource Centre Network

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CHAPTER ONE

AN OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction and Background

While all Zimbabwean citizens have inalienable entitlements to realize different kinds of rights well anchored in the country's constitution and bill of rights such as the right to life, health and protection (Constitution of the Republic of Zimbabwe, 2013; UNDP, 2008), it is the right to gender equality and equity which has prompted the undertaking of the current study. Research reveals that the scenario in many countries especially of the developing world, embraces a skewed phenomenon with resources being inequitably distributed between men and women (Human Development Report, 2015; Baehr, 2013; Kabeer, 2005; Osrim, 2001; Lober, 2001). This has led to a situation where women are skewedly represented in many developmental endeavours such as education; they face social exclusion, and are sometimes totally absent in political decision-making positions (Kang'ethe, 2014; Segal et al., 2007). In relation to this, the UNDP revealed that women in Zimbabwe occupied only 17.9% of the parliamentary seats and that 48.8% of women compared to 62% men had reached secondary education (Human Development Report, 2013)

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Such inequalities have a negative impact as far as the development of any country is concerned, mainly because women's capacities are not tapped or adequately harnessed. The realization of the prevalence of these gender gaps globally may have influenced the need for the attainment of gender equality, equity and general women empowerment, according to the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) number three of the eight global developmental benchmarks (Mitlin and Satterthwaite, 2013; Mashiri, 2013; Malaba, 2006). Many countries including Zimbabwe, signed to participate in this developmental endeavour. In addition to Zimbabwe being a signatory to the MDGs commitment and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the government has also crafted a National Gender

Policy (NGP) as the primary local instruments for the empowering of women and the girl child (Van eedewijk and Mugadza, 2015).

Research again testifies that these inequalities have always been there as evidenced by the rise of different feminist waves that sought to empower women in the early 1800 (Smith, 2010; Breines, 2002; Springer, 2002). Haslanger and Tauna (2012) argue that the first wave feminists fought was mainly for political and economic freedom. Even today, many countries in the world including those of the developing paradigms such as Zimbabwe appear to be structurally gender-blind, supporting the economic development and social welfare of men at the expense of women and the girl children (Bhatasara, 2011; Malaba, 2006) as confirmed by a high Gender Inequality Index (GII) (Human Development Report, 2013). This may be attributed to the patriarchal leaning these countries espouse, usually treating men as first-rate citizens while women are considered second-rate in terms of access to resources, politics and leadership and decision making capacities (Baehr, 2013; Saungweme, 2013; Mawere, 2012; Mapuranga, 2010; Gender Challenge Initiative, n.d).

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Consequently, a scenario such as that is anti-developmental and calls for the governments and other development organizations such as the NGOs to heavily invest in women empowerment processes. This could raise women's contribution to their countries, removing them from the poverty trap to establish a society where the girl children enjoy the socio-economic resources in equal measures with the boy children. The achievement of these factors will positively influence the countries' fulfillment of the demands and dictates of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and beyond (Mitlin and Satterthwaite, 2013) as well as Zimbabwe's National Gender Policy.

The process of empowering women and the girl children for the attainment of gender equality in countries such as Zimbabwe has not been easy, prompting the government to enlist the support of other development structures including women NGOs. According to Zungura (2012) and Osrim (2001), NGOs emerged during the global recession period which affected all the countries, with the inclusion of Zimbabwe. In an attempt to curtail the calamitous effects of increased unemployment and the accumulation of debts, governments were compelled to cut on expenditure

and generate income while simultaneously ensuring development. Hence, the partnership that exists between governments and NGOs, in this case gender-focused NGOs.

However, gender NGOs can either be advancing the interests of men (for example Men of Zimbabwe Arise, MEZA) or that of women (for example Women of Zimbabwe Arise, WOZA) as differentiated by Van eerdewijk and Mugadza (2015). The current research is focusing on the latter, women organizations. In Zimbabwe, Van eedewijk and Mugadza (2015) on this issue revealed that women movement in Zimbabwe originated from prayer groups and stokvels. Perhaps this is so because this is where women of the same mind with the same needs gather to jointly seek solutions. This inevitably led to the emergence of formal women organizations such as Jekesapfungwa, Zimbabwe Women's Bureau and Young Women's Christian Association around the 1980s. Also, increased participation of the government in the UN summits and development agendas attracted the interventions of women NGOs. Van eerdewijk and Mugadza (2015) assert that new modes of organization have notably risen with the emergence of a new generation marked with significant legal reform. This led to both a quantitative and qualitative increase of women movement soon after the attainment of independence in 1980.

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These women NGOs in a country such as Zimbabwe have had a pivotal role in complimenting governmental efforts in order to accelerate women empowerment endeavours so that women's state of exclusion in development can be tackled for gender parity (Zungura, 2012; INTRAC, 2001; Davies, 2001). This is also to increase women's capacities to positively contribute to their countries' Gross Domestic Production (GDP) (Kang'ethe, 2014) for economic growth. As far as the fight for women empowerment and gender equality is concerned, the United Nations emphasizes that:

> 'We must reserve our utmost fervent solidarity for women, who find themselves in situations of subjugation and, in cases of slavery. We must always say it loud and clear that human rights are universal and gender equality as an expression of those rights is universal as well, so women rights are human rights" (UN, 2010: 16).

This justifies a call for all stakeholders to fight for gender equality as they would for any other pertinent human right. Indeed, many women NGOs in Zimbabwe have

risen up to fight for women empowerment. Nonetheless, despite an increase in the involvement and engagement of NGOs in advancing the gender empowerment process for equality and equity, there is visible evidence that the women and girl children in Zimbabwe continue to suffer bouts of social injustice and exclusion; inequitable access to resources such as jobs; political marginalization; sexual abuse and harassment among others (Kange'the and Mafa, 2014; Essof, 2013; Win, 2004). The conditions above explain the increased phenomena of both feminization of poverty and feminization of HIV/AIDS, as well as other forms of women subjugation in Zimbabwe (Kang'ethe and Chikono, 2014; Mafa, 2014; Malaba, 2006).

This necessitates an appraisal of these gender-focused NGOs to possibly reveal the factors that may be undermining their capacities as far as advancing women empowerment and equality is concerned. The study could reveal how NGOs involved in gender empowerment are run and managed, the level of support at their disposal - either locally or internationally, the level of government support they receive, their commitment to their objectives and possibly the capacities of the office bearers. Also, a study such as this could bring to the fore all the operational challenges besetting the NGOs championing for gender equality. This would enable a fair appraisal of all the dynamics or factors surrounding service delivery by NGOs and the political and economic environment NGOs are operating in. The political-economy theory will then be used as the blueprint to determine how the politics and the economy of Zimbabwe affect the effectiveness of the interventions by women NGOs. Other internal factors including the establishment of NGOs, the financing of NGOs, their partnership with other relevant stakeholders, and their engagement with the communities that they seek to serve will assist in appraising gender NGOs in Zimbabwe.

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1.2 Problem Statement

Despite women NGOs in Zimbabwe having been working in the domain of gender equality and women empowerment for decades, unfortunately, Zimbabwe still reflects a higher Gender Inequality Index (GII) of 0,544 placing the country at number 116 out of the 148 nations computed by the United Nations (Human Development Report, 2013). Even after the Millennium Development Goal peg to

eradicate gender disparities by 2015, contrary evidence of glaring levels of gender inequalities are still apparent. This entails that women in Zimbabwe continue to unjustly suffer many forms of exclusion such as denial to own land, feminization of poverty and HIV/AIDS, marginalization on the job market and alienation in politics and leadership positions. Largely, gender-based violence, infringement of sexual and reproductive rights among other social challenges are again prevalent among women in Zimbabwe (Zungura, 2012; Bhatasara, 2011; Mapuranga, 2010).

As a result, women and the girl children's capacities continue to be undermined as they lack the opportunities and resources to adequately develop their potential. The government of Zimbabwe's prioritization of MDG 1, 3 and 6 which were aimed at eradicating poverty, gender disparities and HIV/AIDS respectively, is clear evidence of the subjugation of women in the country (Mashiri, 2013). Considering the feminization of poverty and HIV concepts (Malaba, 2006), all the three MDGs mentioned above appeared to display the unfavourable conditions that women are exposed to. The above gender gaps are the ones that the NGOs are supposed to address, yet they remain evidently prevalent (Zungura, 2012; Nelson, 2007).

In reference to the NGOs, Lewis (2001) in Lewis and Opaku-Mensah (2006) argues that NGOs are falling short of expectations in eradicating social ills and ensuring sustainable development. Nelson (2007) concurs that the footprints made by NGOs were once visible but are now slowly but evidently fading away. This therefore begs countless questions as to the relevance and capacity of these NGOs as far as filling gender exclusionary gaps is concerned. Such questions justify the need to undertake an appraisal research on women NGOs in Zimbabwe, paying attention to the internal and external factors, with the hope of assessing their effectiveness and possibly unearthing the probable factors that may be undermining their operations.

1.3 Aim of the research

To appraise the dynamics associated with gender-based NGOs in Harare as agents of women empowerment and gender equality in Zimbabwe.

1.3.1 Specific Objectives

1. To explore the gender-related challenges prevalent in Harare City that gender-focused NGOs focus on
2. To find out how gender-focused NGOs address gender disparities for the attainment of gender equality and women empowerment in Harare City
3. To discuss the perceptions on the effectiveness of the interventions employed by gender-focused NGOs in fighting gender inequality in Harare City
4. To discuss the challenges that gender NGOs in Harare City face while championing for gender equality in Zimbabwe

1.3.2 Research Questions

1. What gender-related challenges do gender-focused NGOs in Harare focus on?
2. How do gender-focused NGOs address gender disparities to promote equality and women empowerment in Harare City?
3. What are the perceptions pertaining to the effectiveness of the interventions employed by gender-focused NGOs in fighting gender inequality in Harare City?
4. What challenges do gender-NGOs in Harare operate under?

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1.3.3 Assumptions/Hypothesis

According to Creswell (2009), a hypothesis is a proposed explanation made as a point of departure in research, where there is insufficient evidence to substantiate it. In support of the above definition, Greasley (2008) and Neuman (2000) view a hypothesis as a tentative statement which is made in prediction of the relationship between the dependent (resultant) and the independent (causal) variables. In a research study, the hypothesis therefore explains the interrelatedness of phenomena in a social world. Just as the issue of validity and reliability in quantitative research are substituted by trustworthiness in a qualitative research approach (Golafshani, 2003; Neuman, 2000), hypothesis in quantitative researches is replaced by assumptions in qualitative researches. Since the current study is predominantly qualitative, the use of assumptions will be preferred, and these are stated below:

1. The political-economic environment in Zimbabwe is thwarting efforts by gender-NGOs to attain women empowerment and gender equality
2. Gender NGOs in Harare face paucity of needed resources to realize women empowerment and gender equality
3. Inadequate gender sensitization in Zimbabwe is creating resistance to the promotion of women empowerment and gender equality

1.4 Definition and conceptualization of terms

Conceptualizing key concepts of the current study has been seen as mandatory because it lays the foundation for the study, ensuring that the researcher and the reader have the same understanding of key terms. In this study, the concept women empowerment will be used interchangeably with gender empowerment. Hence, the same has been applied in the current study. Other crucial concepts are defined below:

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1.4.1 Gender

International Labour Organization (ILO) (2000) defines gender as social attributes allotted to being a male or a female as internalized through the process of socialization. This goes further to bring differences in relation to responsibilities, access to and subsequently control over resources. Even though Chauraya (2012) inappropriately argues that Africans can hardly make a distinction between "sex" and "gender", INTRASAW dictionary in Esplen and Jolly (2006: 3) gives this elucidation:

> "Gender refers to the array of socially constructed roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values, relative power and influence that society ascribes to the two sexes on a differential basis. Whereas biological sex is determined by genetic and anatomical characteristics, gender is an acquired identity that is learned, changes over time, and varies widely within and across cultures. Gender is relational and refers not simply to women or men but to the relationship between them."

In the present research, that distinction between sex and gender will be duly observed and the two terms will be treated as meaning totally different things.

1.4.2. Women empowerment

Women empowerment is defined by Rahman (2013) as a complete transformation of

all the structures and processes which are responsible for women being viewed as inferior in the society. The author further explains that women empowerment

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"...signifies transformation of gender relations from hierarchal to egalitarian of gender plan rather than just tinkering with women's power positions" (Rahman, 2013:12). In reinforcement, Longwe (1989:152) views women empowerment as "...bringing about equality between women and men in the control of production factors and the control of distribution of the benefits of development."

It is interesting to note the emphasis being made on economic independence as Moser (1991:168) reinforces the above definition by anchoring that gender empowerment is "...giving women the right to determine choices in life and to influence the direction of change through the ability to gain control over crucial material and non-material resources." The diverging point for these scholars is that the latter recognizes the importance of non-material factors such as status and influence. It can then be said that if power is equated to having choices, then empowerment should be the process of being equipped to have choices. Kabeer (2005) also brings about a crucial angle highlighting that empowerment is giving women power to act in congruency to their own choices, even against resistance. This may suggests that the word empowerment becomes valid only if it relates to women who were or are disempowered.

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1.4.3 Gender Equality

Gender equality is the according of men and women the same conditions for the realization of their human rights and full potential in order that they can contribute and benefit from the social, political, economic and cultural developments which surround them (ILO, 2000). Even though men and women have biologically different characteristics, it does not suggest that one sex deserves more opportunities or resources than the other does. Undeniably, men and women are biologically different, but that according to Esplen and Jolly (2006) and feminists does not automatically bring the idea of superiority and inferiority. The authors maintain that it is sensible for two things to be different, but still equal in terms of importance and relevance. Borrowing the terms from research, equality would then exist when the probability for a woman or a man to get a political position, economic opportunity or get enrolled in a school is 50% (Small, 2009). Where equality exists, gender is irrelevant and not considered a determinant factor whenever access to resources and opportunities is concerned. Evidently, empowerment is therefore a multi-faceted

process of dismantling gender inequalities and all forms of gender disparities caused by the assignment of gender roles so that men and women are viewed through the same lenses, without discrimination or stereotypes in relation to access to opportunities, resources and social status (Malaba, 2006; ILO, 2000). The deliberation advanced above then prompts conceptualizing women or gender empowerment as the route to gender equality and equity.

1.4.4 Justifying the use of women empowerment and gender equality

While it remains evidently clear that women empowerment and gender equality are not synonymous, they share an unbreakable, inextricable relationship as they inform each other (Rahman, 2013; Kabeer, 2005; ILO, 2000). Some scholars may argue that women empowerment is a process which leads to gender equality while others may propose that when there is gender equality, women have been empowered. Either way, this 'egg-and-chicken" kind of relationship is not central to the current research. The researcher is at this point concerned with appraising NGOs that are advocating for the betterment of the lives of women and girls. The inextricability of the relationship lies on the fact that when NGOs are empowering women, they are advancing for gender equality and that while women NGOs in Zimbabwe are aiming for gender equality, they are also empowering women.

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1.4.5 Defining the concept NGO

Kegley and Blanton (2014) in their view define an NGO as a non-state organization, without the aim of making profit but initiated to be an intermediary that builds a transnational bridge between those in possession of resources and those in need. The World Bank (2003) on the other hand, asserts that an NGO is a citizen- based form of association that is operated independent of the government, to convey needed resources for the advancement of a social or a political agenda.

In Zimbabwe however, the Private Voluntary Organization Act (Chapter 17:05, of 1996) defines an NGO as an organization which is initiated; separate from its owners and purely not for profit orientations. The Act further emphasizes that the distinguishable characteristics of an NGO are that it should be independent from the government, should be intended for the good of the general public and should operate strictly observing non-partisan norms. Inarguably, the term embraces similar

elements and only differ in terminology and word choice. Perhaps it is crucial to point out that NGOs can also be involved in development projects and advocacy, where promotion of a cause would be primary (Zungura, 2012; Nelson, 2007; Lewis, 2001; Rich, 1997). Thus, NGOs can be viewed as inter-societal organizations mediating within and among states for the promotion of global governance and policing.

1.4.6 An Appraisal

Deriving from Vendova et al. (2013), an appraisal is an evaluative process where the organizations are assessed in accordance to what is required of them as they give feedback of their performance and the impact (effectiveness) of their interventions. Daoanis (2012) corroborates this definition positing that it is a way of measuring targets that are set by authoritative figures in order to track contributions, performance against the goals for the identification of strengths, and to make future plans for opportunistic development. In support of the above assertion, Alfaydy (2008) clarifies that an effective appraisal should involve 1) establishing standards of performance 2) communicating these standards to NGOs and 3) measuring actual performance against standards. In relation to the current study, this involves assessing the achievements of the NGOs against the National Gender Policy and other gender instruments such as NGOs' goals, as guiding frames. There is also need to evaluate the conditions under which these NGOs are operating, in an attempt to find a way that can make women empowerment and gender equality a realizable phenomenon in Harare and Zimbabwe as a nation.

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1.5 Significance of the research

The current research is of fundamental value as it will probe beneath the surface to appraise the actual programs and initiatives that NGOs have put in place as they strive to strengthen gender equality and women empowerment in Zimbabwe. In so doing, the identification of limitations and other factors that may be derailing the NGOs from making strong strides towards gender equality and the empowerment of a girl child will be made possible. Ultimately, it is the identification of such loopholes that can subsequently lead to the formulation or reformulation of relevant gender-policies by policy makers. With so much emphasis on sustainability and development in Social Work Practice, the current research may reveal factors which NGOs should consider or focus on in order to increase their effectiveness. This may influence the

initiation of relevant programs and sustainable projects that could effectively scrap-off bouts of social injustice and social exclusion, making gender equality in Zimbabwe a reality and not just a theoretical fantasy. Studies such as the current one can aid with recommendations to policy formulators and other relevant stakeholders to ensure higher Human Development Indices (HDI) and lower Gender Inequality Indices (GII) in Zimbabwe and possibly Africa.

1.7 Structure of the study

This is a summary to familiarize and prepare the reader with the contents of each chapter of the current study.

Chapter One: An Overview of the study

The first chapter gives introductory information and background literature which is relevant to the present research. Here, the problem statement is also given, leading to the formulation of research questions and the assumptions. In addition, the chapter conceptualizes a number of terms that are fundamental to this study. Finally, the significance of the study and the structure of the study are outlined.

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Chapter Two: Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

The chapter discusses the feminist theory with an inclusion of the liberal, radical, socialist and cultural feminism branches and their relevance to this research. Concepts that relate to empowerment are also elucidated. Secondly, the political-economy theory is discussed to prepare for the discussion of the political and economic state of Zimbabwe as this could assist in informing and strengthening the research. Some of the policies affecting the lives of women in Zimbabwe are also given in this chapter.

Chapter Three: Literature Review

The chapter reviews literature that is related to the prevalence of gender disparities on a global, regional, but mostly on a national level; that is Zimbabwe. The gender instruments, especially the National Gender Policy (NGP) of Zimbabwe is given as well as the manifestations and dynamics associated with gender issues. To ensure a holistic appraisal, the evolution of women NGOs in Zimbabwe has also been included. The internal structure of NGOs is discussed because it influences how NGOs are run. Processes such as funding, accountability and Impact Assessment

(effectiveness) are also explained in the chapter. The relationship between the government and NGOs assists in revealing the environment under which the NGOs operate.

Chapter Four: Research Methodology

Chapter four is a narration of the research methodology and the justifications of using both qualitative and quantitative approaches, even though the research is predominantly qualitative. Moreover, the sampling techniques and methods of data collection utilized in this study are discussed. The processes of selection criteria for respondents and participants together with the data collection process are explained. Apart from that, the data analysis processes are also given and the strategies that the researcher adopted in order to increase the trustworthiness, validity and reliability of the research findings are also given.

Chapter Five: Data Analysis, Interpretation and Presentation

The data from the qualitative (focus group discussions, interviews and content analysis) and quantitative (mini-survey) sources are presented separately in this chapter. The meaning-making process of interpreting the findings is also done without any efforts to discuss the findings, as this is done in Chapter 6.

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Chapter Six: Discussions of the Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

In this chapter, the researcher discusses the findings from the previous chapter by pitting them against existing literature, theories used, that is the feminist and political-economy theories and social work practice. The extent to which the study's aim and the objectives have been fulfilled by the study are also discussed. The chapter further discusses the study's research assumptions and the study's recommendations conclude the chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS

2.1 Introduction

The current chapter hinged on the theoretical and conceptual frameworks upholding this research project. Firstly, the researcher defined the theoretical and conceptual frameworks differentiating them as a leeway for the chapter. The role of theories was discussed, leading to discussions of the feminist theory and the political-economy theory. In an attempt to bring a balanced discussion on Zimbabwe's gender discrepancies, the current research adopted two complimentary theories, namely the feminist theory and the political economy theory. These frameworks were preferred mainly because the first one explains the prevalence of various gender exclusionary practices and inequalities, while the later one unveils the political and economic circumstances that NGOs in Zimbabwe operate under. A detailed discussion on the relevance of these frameworks to the current research was given after a brief definition of frameworks.

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2.1.1 Delineating a distinction between theoretical and conceptual frameworks

Even though Luse et al. (2012) and Ennis (1999) forward that "theoretical framework" and "conceptual framework" are sometimes used interchangeably, Grant and Osanloo (2014) posit that the terms are neither synonyms nor interchangeable. In Ennis' (1999) view, a theoretical framework is a structure which is useful in hypothesizing, understanding and giving meaning to relationships that exist among elements that influence, predict and affect outcomes of the research project. Grant and Osanloo's (2014) definition adds more weight to the term, stressing that a theoretical framework is derived from the already tested and validated, existing theories. The authors (Grant and Osanloo, 2014: 16) however, argue that a conceptual framework is "...the researcher's own understanding of how the research problem will best be explored, the specific direction the study will have to take, and the relationship between the different variables in the study." Camp (2001) reinforces the assertion above highlighting that a conceptual frame is a structure of what the researcher has learnt and how the researcher wishes to explain the progression of the phenomenon under study. A clear dichotomy is then seen between theoretical

and conceptual frameworks where the latter is proved and the former is the understanding and interpretation of the researcher in relation to the research being undertaken.

2.1.2 Examining the role of frameworks in moulding the research project

Irrespective of the thin line between the terms mentioned above, the importance of the terms are equally the same as far as the progress of the research project is in question (Luse et al, 2012; Camp, 2001; Ennis, 1999). In fact, Grant and Osanloo (2014: 13) liken the frames to the "blue print" of a house. They strongly believe that a research project without a frame is like a house without an architectural plan, where there is no point of reference or a guideline as to what to expect. No wonder Ennis (1999) calls frames the central piece of the research. Frameworks are therefore important in giving direction to the study, setting a foundation upon which the study rests. Largely, theoretical and conceptual frameworks assist with the organization and interpretation of the results, being the focal pieces to solving the research puzzle. Attention is now turned to the frames applicable in the current project.

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2.2 Establishing the existence of gender disparities through feminist lenses

The proceeding paragraphs sought to relate the prevalence of gender gaps in Zimbabwe to the global subjugation of women. The researcher traces the genesis of feminism and incorporate a few applicable branches in an attempt to align their assertion to gender inequality in Zimbabwe. Forms of empowerment have also been given because they are means to the actualization of gender parity and equity in Zimbabwe.

2.2.1 Understanding Feminism: The genesis of feminism

The word "feminism" was coined by Charles Fourier around the 1890s in relation to advocacy for women's rights (Madsen, 2000). To some extent, feminism has been misunderstood, misinterpreted and hence it has been envisioned by some people as a monolithic phenomenon marred with confusion (Lots, 2003; Breines, 2002). Many may have associated it with crazy, idle and overly sensitive women with nothing better to do with their time and efforts, but to try to change women into men as pointed out by Beddoes and Borrego (2011). On the other hand, some further wonder whether feminism is an ideology, a theory or a praxis (Lots, 2003;

Springer, 2002). So, to clarify on the perplexity of the subject, the feminist ideology came to life after the recognition and critique of male supremacy and dominance in all important facets of the society (Madsen, 2000). It is therefore an outgrowth of a global movement to holistically empower women of all races, religions and ages. Realistically, feminism is believed to have originated from America and came in progressive stages widely referred to as feminism waves (Haslanger and Tauna, 2012; Breines, 2002; Springer, 2002).

According to Breines (2002), the white middle-aged and educated women, such as Margaret Sanger and Voltaire de Cleyre, who sought equality in the industrial and political environment, pioneered the first wave. This wave sought to penetrate the political arena as well as securing a place for women to enjoy economic opportunities. The second wave led by Cherrie Moraga and Audre Lorde among others, was a fight for equality in the educational sector, the workplace and at home, while the third wave was of a radical nature (Springer, 2002; Breines, 2002). According to Haslanger and Tauna (2012), the third wave considered the race, ethnicity, nationality and class differences among women. It was therefore an opportunity and a push for the blacks and the Lesbians, Gays Bi-sexuals and Transgender (LGTB) to fight for their liberty also. As the inappropriate others, they suffered dual and sometimes triple exclusion of being women and then being blacks and homosexual as well - the minority and despised groups. Hence, theirs was a struggle to be equally treated as the white females, as men and as the heterosexuals.

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2.2.2 Women and domesticity

As far as domesticity is concerned, Beckett (2005) reveals that domesticity and childbirth have been seen for long functioning as synecdoche for female autonomy – a place of comfort, liberty and power. The author defines domesticity as being overly occupied with the household chaos and managing the family affairs with such duties as cooking, cleaning and childcare (Beckett, 2005). Considering that women were only viewed through the lenses of the kitchen and bedroom duties, they sought fulfillment outside the mother and wifery roles. According to Springer (2002) and Haslanger and Tauna (2012), they were seeking to prove the diversity of their latent strengths by establishing that they were as good as men, if not better, as far as politics and other matters such as economic advancement were concerned.

In unison, women in the second wave of feminism stubbornly reinforced their assertiveness by penetrating the male-dominated spaces to reclaim their own positions (Springer, 2002). However, this does not indicate that it is wrong for women to carry out nurturance roles for their families and to honour their conjugal duties of taking care of their spouses. In regard to this, Baehr (2013) argues that women in the long run have actually gained fulfillment through satisfying others, but now their feminine desire and instinctual ability to care for others have been unduly exploited to an extent of their tenderness turning into a state of vulnerability. Therefore, self- identity and redefining self has been emphasized and a new global order against gender-based violence and women victimology has slowly been ushered into the world community (Mashiri, 2013; Malaba, 2006; Lober, 2001).

Through feminist movements, the world has been forced to acknowledge women's strengths and competiveness, prompting the dire need to accord them equal opportunities with men (Springer, 2002; Breines, 2002). The so-called natural weaknesses of women have been put to test and have failed to validate the prevalence of sexism. According to Esplen and Jolly (2006), biological differences have been accepted but only as the foundation for gender roles and not for gender discrimination and subjugation. Therefore, feminism mainly through NGOs, has emerged as an enlightenment process for all women of all races and age.

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2.2.3 Understanding the process of Empowering through feminism

Usually, whenever an individual has to be empowered, there has to be an element of previous victimization, incapacitation, vulnerability and possibly discrimination (Baehr, 2013; Lots, 2003). Feminism therefore emerged in order to evenly redistribute power that seemed skewedly tilted in favour of men at the expense of their female counterparts. Since power can be equated with strength, feminism identified these strengths in an attempt to impart them on women so that they can realize their potential. In explaining empowerment, Chopra and Muller (2016) argue that power dynamics is central to empowerment. This suggests that in order to ensure lasting development which is emphasized in Social Work Practice, the distribution of power between men and women is to be duly observed. Giving power to women enables them to make choices and decisions that concern their security, advancement and safety for example decisions concerning their reproductive rights.

Rahman (2013) relates women empowerment to social relations, maintaining that feminists seek to challenge power relations from a hierarchal to an egalitarian state.

As supported by the strengths perspective that is espoused by Dennis Saleebey (2005), empowerment entails the identification of one's qualities, strengths and abilities; developing them in order to meet the needs of the individual, with an understanding that self-determination will be emphasized to an individual (Sheafor and Horejsi, 2008; Segal et al., 2007). Importantly and justly then, nothing should be imposed on the individual, but instead, educative interaction is essential in emancipating and empowering women. Further, women empowerment through feminism is seen by Kabeer (1999) in Chopra and Muller (2016) as a means and an end in itself – viewing empowerment as a process where women gain autonomy and as an instrument for neutralising patriarchy. The researcher's point of view shows that empowerment should start from within an individual spreading out to the external environment.

In addition to this, Collins (2000) argues that women empowerment involves challenging social thoughts which have been designed to oppress women as well as transforming social relations which are resisting the empowerment of women in societies. This is in congruence with Chopra and Muller (2016) who stress that women empowerment should change existing power-relations and bring a paradigm transformation on structures which reinforce the subjugation of women. Until such changes have been made, the skewedness of power, which is embedded in structural foundations, will continue to deprive women of their rights to the means of production and the services that are essential for their development. Below are three crucial categories of empowerment through feminism.

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2.2.4 The concept of "Self-Empowerment" in gender relations

Despite the promulgation of a law which liberated black Americans from slavery, it is said that they took about a hundred years to be literally free from slavery (Gonzelaz, 2014). Even though they were legally free, they were still mentally shackled. Indeed, an individual should perceive him/herself as free in the mind first, then he/she can behave like a free person. In this case, Kabeer (2005) suggests that how women view themselves as they look into their innermost is crucial in determining how they carry themselves in the society. Realistically, women who have liberated themselves

are confident of who they are and what they expect from their immediate environment and the significant others as emphasized by Saleebey (2005). Only when self-empowerment has been achieved can external empowerment be relevant and meaningful in a person's life. Self-worth and assertiveness in a woman are individual qualities that demand attention and command authority even in a patriarchal setting where men are unjustifiably viewed as superior to women.

Some men have used the oppressive attitudes and illusions to punish and victimize women who are seeking to empower themselves (Baehr, 2013; Kabeer, 2005). Perhaps this is why the feministic advocacy for women empowerment appears to have taken a snail's pace to bear significant fruits especially in developing countries. However, some sources believe that feminism has not been genuine and is bent on arm-twisting men to accept and feel the power dispensation of women (Haslanger and Tauna, 2012; ILO, 2011). Instead of the two genders working in tandem to fill in the gender-gap that has stifled many countries' development as women's strengths remained untapped and unleashed, men still embrace stubbornness as far as trusting the proponents of the feminist wave is concerned. In African countries that are viewed to be still traditional, such as Kenya and Zimbabwe, some men have stereotyped feminist movements as engineered and driven by women who cannot manage to have peaceful unions with men - the divorcee, separates, the unmarried, and the *unmarriagable* (ILO, 2011).

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Observably, the state of timidity and a low self-esteem may destroy the confidence of women and thereby bring them to a lower level of subordination. A liberal mind is therefore key for the attainment of women empowerment and gender equality, a world of possibilities (Beddos and Borrego, 2011; Lober, 2003). It is of great importance however, to note that self-empowerment without the social support and legal authoritative power can shatter the dreams and efforts of women who are trying to make some significant steps in the continuum of the feminist wave.

Therefore, Smith (2010) argues that real liberty in tandem with a lasting empowerment that yields gender parity calls for meaningful support and resources in order to dismantle hegemonic masculinity (the promotion of the domination of men in social position and subordination of women to domesticity). Sadly though, with the developing world always clamouring for help especially from the developed part of

the world (Zungura, 2012; Mitchell, 2010; Esttrella and Gavanta, 1998), the resources to advance and advocate for women empowerment and gender equality through supporting feminism in developing countries appear to be both strenuous and an arduous task.

However, all is not lost because as many countries domesticated and committed to the process of fulfilling the United Nations driven Millennium Development Goals such as goal number three (Mashiri, 2013; Human Development Report, 2013), there is hope that feministic ideologies will have their rightful place in societies soon. This suggests that governmental goodwill is central if a thriving women-empowerment movement is to accrue significant and desirable dividends.

2.2.5 Stressing on Legal Empowerment for gender equality

Central to the freedom and liberty of any individual is legalization of that individual in accordance with own country's constitution (Gonzalez, 2014). Legal deprivation in America is what prompted women to arise and demand for their right in the political and economic context (Lober, 2003; Springer, 2002). This new agitation could only yield significant meaning if laws to support the demands by feminists are timeously promulgated. Laws as formal mores according to Baehr's (2013) assertion are a benchmark announcing to the general populace what is acceptable and what is not. Self-empowerment, although it is of great importance, may be of little significance without legal reinforcement. Evidently, this makes legal empowerment a crucial element as far as the fight for gender equality is concerned. With the law on one standing with women, social and cultural resistance may pose little threat to women empowerment and the attainment of gender equality in Zimbabwe.

It is therefore important for any government to rally behind women in order to liberate them from the social claws of gender oppression and sexism. With the bill of rights and the constitution at the fore for empowering women (Constitution of the Republic of Zimbabwe, 2013; UNDP, 2008), gender parity and women empowerment can be a realizable phenomenon. Largely, legal empowerment of women for gender equality may therefore entail the reinforcement of women's rights through the implementation of laws that can protect their womanhood and physical vulnerability. This can include strict punishment for the perpetrators of gender-based violence and such brutal atrocities as rape, women trafficking and other pain-inflicting practices targeted at

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women (Mafa and Kang'ethe, 2016; Mashiri, 2013). Moreover, alteration of policies to accommodate women, especially to increase both the pace and space of inclusion is also another way in which governments could empower women both as individuals, groups or communities for the greater good of the society and the nation at large. The suggestions above constitute ways to achieve universal womanhood as always pointed out by the international bodies whether the United Nation, the World Bank or any other relevant organizations seeking to empower women of all races, ages and nationality (UNDP, 2008). Mapuva (2013) brings to light that in Zimbabwe, soon after independence, feminists mainly through women organizations advocated for pro-women policies suitable for the post-colonial era. This is because feminists recognized the need for the government to support gender equality through enacting formal laws.

2.2.6 Social Empowerment as a necessity to gender equality

According to Chopra and Muller (2016), the need for social empowerment does not disregard the importance of women empowerment at individual level. Inevitably, human beings depend on each other for survival through interaction, for their mutual existence and well-being (Mele et al., 2010). Therefore, interaction has immense social capital which translates into social happiness, bliss, social adjustment and generally an appreciation of human nature. Social empowerment, thus, is a recipe of mutuality and reciprocity fostered by all people in the society (Kang'ethe 2011; Sheafor and Horejsi 2008; Segal et al., 2007). This positively impacts on the socio-psychological and emotional homeostatic balance of women. This is better explained by the application of the systems theory advanced by Mele et al. (2010). Nevertheless, meaningful and unfaltering social and holistic empowerment as supported by the developmental values of Social Work calls for authoritative assistance of the state parameters in terms of the promulgation and institution of the bill of rights and constitution. The argument advanced above, therefore, points to the fundamental need for social empowerment. Social support constitutes vital aspects of fomenting and reinforcing not only women identity, but also their strengths and potentials (Saleebey, 2005).

According to Baehr (2013) and Lots (2003), social-empowerment is a communal movement which made a difference and paved a way for women to be conferred of

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their rights as equal citizens in the United States of America. However, the process was both gruelling and taxing as indicated by Gonzalez (2014) and Springer (2002). It might have required a lot of mobilization to attain numbers, self-denial, advocacy, lobbying and significant support from a score of men who saw women suppression and oppression as evil and a denial of their human rights (UN, 2010). This researcher hopes that this research can be a bell-ringing endeavour to advise women from countries whose state of gender inequality is glaring to mobilize men to commit themselves to the course of women empowerment. An appeal for women empowerment and the need for gender equality should not be viewed as a war against men, but as both a collaborative and a both-gender inclusive process, if at all it will accrue and usher in a desirable status of a socially just society.

Kaplan (1991) and Sheldon (1990) reinforce that the process of social empowerment calls for measures that will socialize women to be bold, courageous and free of their dependence tendencies on men. They ought to be socialized as equally competitive to men, in order to embrace the zeal and desire to achieve leadership in various settings of the society. This means countering the apparent status quo in many societies that socialize women to be timid domestic individuals, making them think that they need to dogmatically follow the whims and desires of men (Beckette, 2005; Kabeer, 2005; Kabeer, 2000b). In so doing, self-empowerment which leads to mental emancipation and social empowerment could be enhanced. Nonetheless, this will call for strong leadership that can realize the damage to the countries' socio-economic status that is caused by environments that disempower women at large.

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2.2.7 Viewing gender inequality through feminist lenses

Inequalities that are present between men and women prompted women as individuals, groups or organizations to step up and fight against centuries of oppression and suppression (Rasool and Suleman, 2017; Helman, 2012, Kabeer, 2005; Lots, 2003; Breines, 2002). They had to push and convince the society that they had reached the turning point of realizing the perfidy associated with their insubordination, career discrimination and subjugation in various contexts of life. It is critical to make a claim that if there was no evidence of political, economic and social tilting of gender practices in favour of men at the expense of women, then there would not be any need for gender empowerment and the call for gender parity. To

this end, there is much evidence in Zimbabwe that points out societal norms that are discriminative, diminutive, as well as condescending to women (McLean, 2015; Bhatasara, 2011; Mapuranga, 2010).

For most feminists, their fight is not in competition with their male counterparts. Rather, it is on elevating women so that they can be recognized and be given their own share of the resources, opportunities and importance (Breines, 2002). Viewed from gender lenses, this state of gender inequality has hugely hampered the efforts of a Zimbabwean woman, frustrating any efforts advanced by her to rise up above the innumerable social ills such as economic dependence on men and food insecurity (Gutura, 2014).

Therefore, equality or the lack of it is measured in relation to the resources channelled towards women for their development as compared to their male counterparts (Human Development Report, 2015; 2013). And this is sad if one thinks that in some labour settings, women are paid lower wages than their male counterparts for the same job, and yet women are likely to spend their money in taking care of their children, while for many men, most of their income does not contribute to the welfare of their families (Mafa, 2014). This among other reasons is what made United Nations, while describing the state of global poverty to indicate that 'poverty still wears a woman's face" (UNDP, 1995: 36). While the statement may appear demeaning (as it seem to include all women), it realistically represents the situation of millions and millions of women around the world including Zimbabwe, who are trapped in poverty and other forms of economic malaise (Zungura, 2012; Mafa, 2014; Bhatasara, 2011). According to some literature, this feminization of poverty has been a driver to the state of feminization of HIV/AIDS, more so that empirical research by a score of researchers such as Kang'ethe (2004; 2014) and in Zimbabwe Malaba (2006), and Gore (1993), validate an inextricable relationship between poverty and the prevalence of HIV/AIDS. It still remains, then, that women are polarized to circumstances that exploit them instead of empowering them. Hence, the outcry and emphasis by feminists for governments to work out modalities that will ensure a state of gender equality.

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2.2.8 Different branches of feminism

While feminism constitutes broad theories applicable to different aspects of women subjugation, Lots (2003) contends that feminist theorists have perhaps spent a little much time fighting over the validation and supremacy of one kind of feminism to the other, thereby missing the centrality of the problem at hand. This has stirred an average amount of confusion among contemporary feminists as these branches have brought tremendous division. For this reason, many distinct and proud feminists avoid any association with the term, even though consciously and unconsciously their practices and thoughts align them with feminism (Haslanger and Tauna, 2012; Springer, 2002).

In this regard, Haslanger and Tauna (2012) stress that feminism is better explained in conjunction with one's set of mind and beliefs than it is associated with the participation in some political movement or being in this branch of feminism or the other. This may explain why many people, male or female usually attach the prefix, "...I am not a feminist but I think..." before making a comment about the way women are treated compared to their male counterparts. Possibly, this is because of some confusion clouding feminism and maybe people do not want to be associated with the stigma of being a feminist. However, it is possible for people to be part of something without knowing it. In an attempt to validate the prevalence of many branches of feminism, Lots (2003) establishes that a single feminist perspective has neither existed at any time in the recent years; nor even in the yester years.

Sadly enough, only scholars and activists truly know of the numerous feminist perspectives circulating in the world and their relevance in tackling global inequality. Succinctly put, only progressive feminists understand that as far as application of feminism is concerned, a house divided against itself cannot stand (Baehr, 2013; Beddoes and Borrego, 2011; Lots, 2003). For progress' sake, they put their differences aside and join forces to fight gender inequalities for a just society. This then necessitates an exploration of the four branches of feminism as the researcher seeks to illuminate the prevalence of gender inequality in Zimbabwe, viewed from different feminist lenses. The current research has hinged on the liberal, radical, social and cultural branches of feminism because of their applicability to Zimbabwe's political, socio-economic and cultural environment. After all, despite points of

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divergence, these branches only differ in their approach to attaining gender equality, for they have the same agenda. Beddoes and Borrego (2011) strengthen the above statement citing that these feminism branches tend to interplay and overlap each other, both in practice and applicability.

2.2.8.1 Liberal Feminism (LF) and gender equality

According to Chopra and Muller (2016), liberal feminism with proponents such as Mary Wollstonecraft, Judith Murray among others seem to monopolize the feminism discussion perhaps due to its emphasis on legal frameworks. The liberal feminism branch strongly believes that gender imbalances are hatched by the domination of political, economic, educational and social institutions by men (Haslanger and Tauna, 2012; Smith, 2010). It is this unjustified preference of men that breeds and maintains a patriarchal imbalance that subjects women into a state of inferiority and insubordination. The gender skewedness in resource allocation and the awarding of opportunities may emanate from the application and implementation of gender-blind legal frameworks by the governments and social institutions.

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Beddoes and Borrego (2011) suggest that as a remedy to the phenomenon of gender skewedness in resource allocation and distribution, it is pertinent that societies' legal frameworks undergo immense transformation and dilution that will bring equality and equity between genders. Liberal feminism stresses that it is the sole responsibility of any state to be just in ensuring freedom for all its citizens, without inequality or discrimination (Baehr, 2013). Controversies and disagreements may arise on what freedom constitutes, and possibly the definition of rights. Nevertheless, the bottom line in this case is treating all the citizens as deserving and dignified humans irrespective of their gender, colour, religious preference or any other differentiating category. As such, the exercise of personal autonomy depends on the provision of an enabling environment that can facilitate women to adequately enjoy their countries' resources, opportunities, and recognition in the same measure as their male counterparts. For this reason, the liberal feminists argue that once the formal laws have been ironed out to practically equate men and women, all other aspects of life would fall into their place by default (Beckett, 2005; Lots, 2003; Breines, 2002; Lober, 2001). However, this may not be true in Zimbabwe where the

constitution supports equality (Constitution of Zimbabwe, 2013), yet evidence of inequalities still persist (Human Development Report, 2013).

The emphasis on equal rights for all according to Tong (2009: 2), is "...first, to make sure the rules for the game are fair, and second to make certain that none of the runners in the race for society's goods and services is systematically disadvantaged." However, Haslanger and Tauna (2012) make us to note that the oppression of women is not just confined to political or legal rights as this thought of feminism asserts, but extends to the way other societal institutions regard women. This then requires the coordination by the government in all the socio-cultural institutions to raise awareness of their insensitivity and bias in relation to treating women generally. Clearly, the application of the systems theory that emphasises that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts is relevant in directing the synergy of the various institutions in bolstering the efforts to gender equality and the empowerment of women in Zimbabwe (Mele et al., 2010). Gender equality is therefore a multi-faceted phenomenon that may require wider exploration of other types of feminist theories. What follows hereunder is a discussion on Radical Feminism.

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2.2.8.2 Radical Feminism (RF) and its position on gender equality

Radical feminism that emerged around the 1960's with supporters such as Ellen Willis maintains that existing structures have been soiled by patriarchy and that they are beyond any possible transformation, but must completely be dismantled and re-erected from the foundational aspects (Collins, 2000; Smith, 2010). In other words, RF concedes that it is only when these structures are restructured or significantly adjusted that a meaningful balance in rights, growth and distribution of resources between men and women can be fairer. Baehr (2013) highlights an interesting observation that links Liberal and Radical feminism's thinking. She is of the view that patriarchal norms and inherited traditions greatly influence the formal laws that are passed as legal frameworks to guide the nations' operations. Because of these predicaments, radical feminists, therefore, call for a complete overthrow of the present systems and replacing them with a new systems that would maintain and harbour the norms of gender equality (Breines, 2002; Springer, 2002).

According to Baehr (2013), the most infuriating thing about paternalistic norms is that they may appear favourable to women while they may be stirring women into socially preferred ways of life. For example, women are pushed into domesticity especially immediately after childbirth because men or the society view them as vulnerable to the harsh working conditions in the employment industry. They may never go back to work and that may be the genesis of subjugation as these women will economically depend on men for their survival (Mafa, 2014; Malaba, 2006; Kang'ethe and Munzara, 2014; Chant, 2006). Probably this explains the drastic and unusual solution forwarded by the RF to totally scrap-off the present system with the aim to establish a new order. Even though this thought sounds promising, the applicability of scrapping-off all cultural, economic and political structures that are anti-developmental for women may be difficult. Cultural feminism is explained below:

2.2.8.3 Cultural feminism

Explaining culture to mean the values, traditions, norms and customs that have been held dear by a particular society and which are often passed on from generation to generation, either wholesomely or in bits parts (Kang'ethe, 2009; Afolayan, 2004), may make the task of understanding cultural feminism quite easier. While the cultural feminism branch sprouts from radical feminism, the anchor of this movement that is supported by feminists such as Mary Daly and Adrienno Rich, is that it seeks to reinstate the uniqueness of female attributes that are generally undervalued in all important aspects of life (Beckette, 2005; Ghodsee, 2004). This thinking reinforces the natural differences between women and men, but without suggesting that these differences denote differed treatment in terms of opportunities and resource allocation.

Moreover, the cultural feminists praise women's positive virtues that are embedded in their naturally feminine personality. Because of such womanly attributes as caring, patience and non-violence behaviours, Beckett (2005) and Baehr (2013) argue that the traditional and natural roles of women are the foundation for the articulation of a more humane world. Indeed, an exploitation of women's natural and biological role unfortunately seems to lead to their subjugation. In line with this, Alcoff (1988) claims that gender-blind cultural custodians view women's passivity as an act of pacification; their sentimentality as proclivity to nature; and subjectivity as a sign of

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advanced self-awareness. This suggests that the oppression of women is prevalent because they have conditioned themselves to timidity, silence and submission to every instruction given to them without asking questions. Hence, there is a need to challenge cultures that exploit these virtues.

Gravely so, the phenomenon has apparently been accepted as a norm until recently when women activism intensified (Smith, 2010; Springer, 2002; Breines, 2002). This denotes the rise of women through reclaiming their voices to speak of their trepidations, demanding that they be heard. However, Beckette (2005) and Pedwell (n.d) contend that the CF's overemphasis on differences pushes women out of public affairs to pursue individual interest and thereby promoting division. In Zimbabwe Van eerdewijk and Mugadza (2015) speak of the division that occurred among feminists due to diverging ideas on political grounds. As such, Ghodsee (2004) further highlights that a grave weakness of cultural feminism is that it seeks to mitigate the so-called inhumane offense of patriarchy while never attempting to challenge the economic and social foundations of the prevalence of patriarchy that contribute to inequalities.

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2.2.8.4 Socialist feminism (S.F)

According to Alcoff (1988), socialist feminism focuses on both the public and private spheres of women's life. In socialist feminists' view (for example Elizabeth Diggs), gender equality is only made possible through working to end the cultural and economic causes of women's subjugation. Therefore, socialist feminism rejects the claim by the radical feminists that patriarchal practices are primarily the only source of women oppression (Smith, 2010; Lots, 2003). Instead, Chirisa (2004) and Gudhlanga et al. (2012) are of the view that financial dependency on men by women entraps them into subordination and a state of helplessness. This necessitates the need and prioritization of women's economic empowerment above everything else.

Perhaps the fact that money is the lubricant for life's necessities creates circumstances that expose women to vulnerability as they seek to surmount the economic challenges (Mapuranga 2010; Beckett, 2005). Of interest is to note the link that exists between socialist feminism and Marxism because the former appreciates Marx's gendered division of labour as determined by the economic system (Alcoff, 1988). Marx is of the view that the fight against class oppression by default is also an

indirect fight against gender class (Marx, 1988). Thus, victory over class division simultaneously leads to the eradication of all forms of gender exclusionary practices. The social feminists however, reject this assumption arguing that the two forms of oppression lack direct connection and therefore the belief that they can both be solved by a "one-size-fit-all" supposition is naïve (Pedwell, n.d; Beckett, 2005). Chirisa (2004) therefore put an emphasis on economically developing women in Zimbabwe in order to reverse their subjugation.

2.2.9 NGOs and Feminism

According to Haslanger and Tauna (2012), feminism in the mid 1800 was used in reference to the qualities or characteristics that differentiate women from men. However, this term was later adopted for advocacy against women suffrage thereby becoming a tool for promoting the rights of women. In line with the above assertion, this may mean that all gender-based NGOs take some form if not part of the feminism phenomenon. The realization that illustrious social ills such as HIV, poverty and violence are gendered challenged some NGOs to revise their approaches to the eradication of these ills. Instead of massaging the problem while endeavouring to solve them, gender-based NGOs have sought to empower women instead, with the conviction that prevention is better than cure (WOZA, 2009; Lewis and Opaku-Mensah, 2006). For example, in a bid to fight child mortality rate, HIV and AIDS as well as hunger in Zimbabwe, the government and other charitable organizations are attempting to liberate women from the holds of illiteracy, violence and other societal challenges which prohibit women to realize their full potential (Zungura, 2012; Lewis, 2001).

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In Zimbabwe, Betty Makoni and Rudo Gaidzwanwa are among the people who are known to have been actively involved in women movements when it started. Today, feminists including Netsai Mushonga at Musasa Project, Pamela Mhlanga at Zimbabwe Women Resource Network Centre and Kudakwashe Chitsike at Zimbabwe Women Lawyers Association among others, are intervening for the betterment of women In Zimbabwe. This kind of support from NGOs that are mostly funded by international organizations may be the only possible solution to the attainment of gender equality and women empowerment in Zimbabwe and beyond. Probably the NGOs' involvement in feminism could be the solution to make women

empowerment a reality and not just a vision that is displayed in most NGOs' reception areas.

2.2.10 Feminism under criticism

Despite women movements stirring irrefutable global waves and causing governments to revise their policies (Smith, 2010; Springer, 2002; Pedwell, n.d), many scholars have mercilessly put the aspiration of this theory under serious attack. Some of these attacks emanate from the empirical evidence that even after so many years since the introduction of the feminist movement, the majority of women in Zimbabwe for example continue to suffer noticeable counts of economic exclusion and social injustices (Mapuva, 2013; Chant, 2006; Kang'ethe and Munzara, 2014; Mafa, 2014). This has made many activists and scholars to question the practical applicability of this theory in women's everyday struggle for the attainment of equality and equity (Baehr, 2013; Lots, 2003). Haslanger and Tauna (2012) are of the view that there is need to revisit and reinvent feminist perspectives that are relevant to the 21st century, addressing the diversity of the current gender-based challenges.

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The sad part of it all according to Beddoes and Borrego (2011) is the suggestion that feminists might have contributed to their marginalization due to their tendency to prop-up only a segment of the upper class and silencing the voices of the majority. Despite all those drawbacks, of importance nevertheless, is to maximize the strengths of the theory and its emancipatory ability to usher women in a society where there is room for self-actualization through the support from various societal stakeholders. Looking back in America for example, the efforts of the feminist movement paved a political and economic path for women, awarding them some degree of recognition as human beings and equals (Beddoes and Borrego, 2011; Tong, 2009).

In this light, the fact that this framework managed to penetrate the legal, political and social forces of influence (Smith, 2010; Lots, 2003; Breines, 2002) validates its importance. Hence, the researcher is of the view that instead of obsessing on the weaknesses of the framework, may be it is time to maximise on the strengths of the theory if gender equality in Zimbabwe will ever be achieved. Fault-finding and apportioning blame will

perhaps divert all stakeholders off the important challenge, investing time and resources on minor issues. Following in the discussion is the political-economy theory as another framework guiding the current research.

2.3 The Political Economy Theory

The section will address the history of the political-economy theory, its relevance to the current study and also discuss the political and economic environment of Zimbabwe.

2.3.1 History and proponents of the political-economy theory

According to Kuruma (1954), the political-economy system developed in three phases. The first period was driven by Francois Quesnay, the founder of the Physiocratic school during the beginning of the 18th century. He is said to be the one who firstly introduced science into political and economy dynamics. This first period coincides with the time when the production power was gradually developing under the feudal relations of production. Pollock and Maitland (1968) posit that this was an exploitative form of production where the rich and politically influential few in a way owned the peasants or poor people, through a monopolistic control of the means of production. At this period, the capitalistic order was rising to replace the existing order of those days. Marx (1976) argues that the capitalist demanded its legitimacy as the 'natural order' claiming that it had people's interest in mind. At that point in time, the natural order was in direct conflict with the order that already existed. As such, political power was used to align the self-proclaimed natural order (capitalist) to reality. Efforts were then made to clarify the principles that governed economic aspects and the result was the political economy system (Kuruma, 1954).

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The second period was led by David Ricardo who did not do much, but only sought to define the labour of the poor in terms of its contribution to the economy. This is because the economic crisis in the 1825 brought contradictions to the capitalist mode of production that prompted the workers to rebel, leading to the emergence of the socialist movement (Marx, 1988). The contradictions that rose against the capitalists propelled the political-economy system to make a choice between breaking off from the capitalist standing point and gain autonomy as an independent science or to maintain that standing point at the expense of being autonomously

scientific. The choice was made and the button-stick into the third period was ushered in by Karl Marx as he is known today as the founder of the political-economy theory (Marx, 1988).

The relevance of this theory in the current research lies in its ability to reveal the economic and political environment that gender-based NGOs are exposed to in Zimbabwe. It is the interplay between these structural pillars that influence the governmental operations as well as other stakeholders functioning alongside them. The theory seeks to unearth these circumstances in relation to how they influence the services, operations and the effectiveness of interventions by gender-based NGOs. In order to successfully appraise NGOs in the gender mainstream, it is not enough to just establish the prevalence of gender inequality as the feminist theory has reinforced. There is need to dig around the atmospheric conditions as either lubricants or hindrances to the realization of gender equality in Zimbabwe. The discussion below brings to the fore how governmental forces can hinder or support the process of gender equality. A historic background on the political theory sets the discussion in motion.

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2.3.2 Understanding the political-economy theory

The point of departure is that political theories according to Scott (2006) seek to analyse the direction, fate and quality of public life while economic theories are concerned with both the production and the distribution of goods and services for the people. Therefore, the political-economy theory naturally is an integration of the management of the inputs and the outputs of the market by the sitting government as dictated by the government's policies and laws (Cohn, 2008; Smelser and Swedberg, 2005). In simple terms, this theory is concerned with how the direct and indirect interventions of the government impact on the acquisition of the means of production and their distribution to the public.

Besley (2007) further clarifies that the politics of a nation through the elected government can influence the economy by passing laws that allow the free market system (where the law of demand and supply operate without government intervention) to determine the market or by the command economies where the government controls the means of production (land and capital) through monetary and fiscal policies, consumer spending and government spending. It should be

remembered that the forces of economics and politics do not occur in isolation. Their outcome influences the operations of other entities and the citizens of the country as consumers, contributors of labour and as suppliers. As explained better by the systems theory, the macro systems affect the micro and mezzo-systems too (Mele et al, 2010). In the same manner, the political and economic entities directly affect the education, health and family structures.

Largely therefore, the standards of living of the citizens of any country rely heavily on the government's fairness in distributing the means of production. This is reinforced by Scott (2006) who emphasizes that the notion of political economy is merely the analysis of the institutions and structures put in place by the political figures to either accelerate or hinder the macro economy. Hence, the relevance of this theory is that it is concerned with studying the reciprocity between the economics and politics of Zimbabwe in influencing each other and ultimately the life of people and the operations of other structures such as the NGOs (Weingast and Wittman, 2008). NGOs as bodies accountable to the host government are therefore negatively or positively affected by the political and economic environment which inevitably affects the NGOs' interventions for the attainment of gender equality and women empowerment. In order to link the theory with the Zimbabwean experience, the political and economic climate of Zimbabwe is given in the passages that follow.

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2.3.4 A rundown of Zimbabwe's Political Climate

> "I urge you, whether you are black or white, to join me in a new pledge to forget our grim past, forgive and forget, join hands in a new amity and together, as Zimbabweans, trample upon racialism, tribalism and religionalism and work hard to reconstruct and rehabilitate our society as we re-invigorate our economic machinery." Mpofu (2003) in Mlambo (2013: 50).

Those were the words by the president of Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe in 1979 the night before the commemoration of independence. One can only envision the hope for a better tomorrow as well as the possibility of a Zimbabwe where gender and race or tribe would not be a pre-requisite to accessing opportunities. Sadly, Mlambo (2013) reveals that barely two years later, the Korean-trained Zimbabwean army slaughtered over 20 000 people in Matebeleland as the head of state denounced them as anti-government and ordered their total annihilation. As people started processing the occurrence of this massacre, it started dawning in the

minds of many that the promises of love and oneness appeared to be merely idealistic fantasies as the true colours of an autocratic, self-serving political culture of the ruling party started to show its true identity. This culture got fully blown in 2000, 2008 and 2013 where everyone who raised their voices to try and support the opposition party was either imprisoned, beaten, threatened or made to disappear mysteriously (Tevera, 2015; McFadden, 2005). The war between the main opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) and the ruling ZANU Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) have rendered the political environment an unfavourable one, whether for peace and tranquility, whether for business, or even for any form of economic stability (Makamure, 2012; Masvaure and Wamwanduka, 2008; Win, 2004).

Twenty years later after independence, the same government in 2000 implemented the fast track Land Reform Program that was a land seizure from the white farmers as their legitimacy to own land and live in Zimbabwe was denounced (Mlambo, 2013). This put questions on the 'oneness' that was emphasized in the independence speech. Presently, the country is marred with political factions even within the ruling party as there is a fierce debate as to who will be Mugabe's successor to run presidency in the 2018 presidential elections (Mashava and Ncube, 2015).

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To this end, the nation in the last few years has witnessed three cabinet reshuffles within nine months, a clear reflection of the commotion, confusion and disorder in the sitting government (Mugove and Mbiba, 2014). Many government officials were served with letters of dismissal including the former Vice president, Joyce Mujuru (Mashava and Ncube, 2015). With such a politically unpredictable environment, can the economy sustain the demands to ensure gender equality and women empowerment processes? To help answer this question, the researcher turns on to look at the economic conditions in Zimbabwe. Evident though is that the gap between those with the means of production and those without continue to widen as the two classes are polarized on both extremes, with the women and the children suffering the most. This means that the NGOs as institutions that endeavour to fill in the gaps left by the government have been trapped in this melee and milieu. Most NGOs are viewed with suspicion as opposition party sympathizers as well as the

agents of the western world (Van eerdewijk and Mugadza, 2015); they have not found a unifying solution.

2.3.5 An overview of Zimbabwe"s Economy

Zimbabwe's sudden economic meltdown that occurred between 2000 and 2010, but especially in the 2008 and 2009 epoch disturbed the development of the country. In tracing the genesis of the economic meltdown, Alao (2012: 96) emphasizes that, "The consequences of economic mismanagement brought Zimbabwe's economy to a precarious position such that the term economic structural adjustment programme entered the country's vocabulary". In support of Alao, Mawere et al. (2012) argue that the once-off, lump-sum of Z$50 000 which was given to war veterans in 1997 as compensation shuddered the stability of the country's economic base. Hellum et al. (2013: 25) in Van eerdewijk and Mugadza (2015) further reveal that still in 1997, over a period of 4 hours, the Zimbabwean dollar lost 74 % of its value and this brought the country on its economic knees. From then, the economy has relentlessly been on an infinite downhill.

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It was in 2000 when the land-grab policy, which led to a reduced production in agricultural exports was executed, considering that Zimbabwe's economy lies on the Agriculture sector (Mafa, 2014; Alao, 2012). On the other hand, inflation spiraled out of control and Zimbabwe and the world witnessed one hundred trillion dollar bond-notes in circulation (See appendix A). The inflation was increasing incessantly, making the country's once powerful Zimbabwean dollar lose its position as a legal tender (Kang'ethe and Mafa, 2014; Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, 2011). The Zimbabwean dollar was phased- out and replaced by a multi-currency economic system.

Even though the Government of National Unity (GNU) restored some dignity to the economy of Zimbabwe (Asoka, 2012), it has never been the same as corruption and the mismanagement of funds continued to take a huge toll (Alao, 2012). In addition, the GNU did not last for long. This researcher remembers that Zimbabwe as once Africa's breadbasket, a nation once described as a Canaan of Africa. Sadly, the country has over the years degenerated into one of the world's near failed state (Coltart, 2008). Probably, this is a reflection of how bad governance in tandem with lack of political vision, and the rigidity of the ruling party to allow

democracy to thrive in the country, can affect people's lives. Gravely, the economy that sustained many African nations through continuous and sustainable supplies of food and employment support can hardly sustain its own citizens today (Tavera, 2015, Mafa, 2014). An unemployment rate of over 90%, hunger and starvation, disease and a generally crippled economy is what is now characterizing Zimbabwe (Alao, 2012; Tevera, 2015; Coltart, 2008). Further and observably, the lives of the citizens today have succumbed to a wave of poverty, desperation and despondency.

However, the scenario described above does not suggest that the country has lost its whole sovereignty and governmental operations. The country is still continuing, although at a snail's pace to recover (UNDP, 2013), more so after creating new allies from the oriental countries such as China. Reviving strategies are being implemented for the betterment of the country's economic restoration. Indigenous laws such as the ZimAsset policy, among others are being reinforced in an attempt to strengthen the gender state of Zimbabwe (Otto and Katema, 2011). Further, the citizens of the country who became the beneficiaries of the white settlers' eviction are increasingly being supported by the government with inputs and machinery as well as education in order to resuscitate the farming sector (Kang'ethe and Serima, 2014). Coupled with youth empowerment and women empowerment, developmental projects are being erected by the government as a way of revitalizing the economy of the country (Kang'ethe and Mafa, 2014).

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Notably, the recently found diamonds have raised the economic hope for the country with unabated breath (McLean, 2015). This, however, is only possible with answerable and responsible leaders who can account for every cent received. This is because corruption remains a serious cankerworm that needs to be annihilated. This researcher contends that the state of corruption and self-enrichment have largely robbed the country a grand opportunity of recovery and the improvement in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the country. In summary, there are no doubts that the above environment has also affected the operations and development of the gender NGOs to accrue their deemed goals and objectives. Therefore, this short background on the economic position of Zimbabwe has been deemed necessary if the political economy theory is to thoroughly appraise NGOs' operations as they champion for gender empowerment and equality in Zimbabwe.

2.3.6 Economic policies and Women in Zimbabwe

This passage explains how the policies implemented by the government as political leaders affect the economic stability of women in Zimbabwe. A discussion on these policies assists to reveal the economic challenges that women in Zimbabwe are facing and how that disempowers them and limit their choices and development. In 2008, Zimbabwe experienced an economic decline in all the sectors of its economy, but mainly the Agricultural sector. According to Bhatasara (2011), the Land reform Programme by the government greatly affected the food security of many women especially the female-headed households as most women lost their land through the redistribution plan. The programme bred immense poverty and other related ramifications such as waves of unemployment and food shortages. Nationwide, shelves in the shops were basically empty (Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, 2011) with women and children suffering the most due to the concepts of feminization of poverty and child poverty (Mafa, 2014; Kang'ethe and Mafa, 2014).

Tevera (2015) also revealed the operation in 2005 that was approved by the government to destroy all the houses that were considered to be below the standards or built on illegal land. Many people especially women and the children were mostly affected because they stay in informal sectors where the operation hit the most (Mafa, 2014). Even though the government had promised to build worthy houses for those who were affected, this promise never became a reality. Shelter as a basic necessity was compromised, exposing many women to vulnerability and harsh economic circumstances.

Among other policies again is the Statutory Instrument (SI) 64 of 2016 that was gazetted to boost the economy of Zimbabwe through a restriction of goods that were once imported from neighbouring countries such as South Africa, Mozambique and Botswana. Otto and Katema (2011) and Dreeze and Sen (2002) found out that the majority of women survive through buying and selling imported goods. This ban therefore negatively affected the food security and financial base of women in Zimbabwe. Therefore, such policies can be seen as reinforcing the impoverishment of women, thereby widening the gap for gender NGOs to fill.

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2.3.7 The political-economy of feminism and NGOs

The thirst for economic and political freedom were the prominent factors which forced women of all races to stand up and demand their right to vote and be economically active during the first waves of feminism (Smith, 2010; Lots, 2003). For women back then, political and economic liberty were the gates to the possibility of empowerment and equality. This is true even to modern feminists and Zimbabwean women in general. Chopra and Muller (2016) argue that legal feminism is not only concerned with equal rights and individual opportunities but economic aspects that include structural adjustments. This is the connection of feminism through NGOs with the political and economic state of a nation. It is the application and implementation of these policies and bill of rights that play a pivotal position in providing an opportunity for women to achieve economic independence (Mlambo, 2013; Kabeer, 2005). If women needed an economically and politically conducive environment for their development, the researcher is of the view that the stability of the economy and a political environment to an extent determines the attainment of gender empowerment in Zimbabwe. In order to holistically appraise the engagement of NGOs in their pursuit for gender parity in Zimbabwe, it is therefore fairly important to critically investigate all the dynamics that are associated with their establishment and the policy environment surrounding the NGO operations.

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2.3.8 Radical economy theory under scrutiny

Even though the emphasis on the importance of a supportive economic and political environment is supported by the feminist theory (Smith, 2010; Springer, 2002), it is apparent that gender inequality cut across other sects of life such as the cultural, religious and social aspects (Beckett, 2005; Lots, 2003; Lober, 2001). It may not be surprising that even in some countries from the west, women's rights are still being violated and infringed upon (Human Development Report, 2013). This implies that the phenomenon of experiencing gender inequality and inequity is a global trend. This may bring in questions of whether gender discriminatory issues are hinged on legal and economic power, or simply a matter of how the society views women (Esplen and Jolly, 2006). Therefore, this justifies the undertaking of the current research to determine various factors surrounding the attainment of gender equality and women empowerment through NGOs' interventions

2.4 Conclusion

The above theoretical and conceptual frames are just lenses through which the dynamics associated with the state of gender inequality, inequity and disempowerment of women in Zimbabwe are discussed. Further, the frames help as blueprints to analyse the present environment under which gender empowerment NGOs are exposed to. The feminist theory as well as the political-economy theory are frames assisting to substantiate the findings of the current research, in an attempt to come up with practical recommendations that can be implemented for the formulation and/or reformulation of policies that can foster economic development and political stability. Such aspects that are necessary for NGOs to effectively and efficiently realize their mission of attaining gender empowerment. The next chapter now focuses on the dynamics associated with gender issues on a global, regional and national scale.

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CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

The concepts of women empowerment and gender equality came to life primarily due to the realization that women are globally subordinated to their male counterparts (Saungweme, 2013; Kabeer, 2005). Social injustice and social exclusion among many other factors are the major manifestations of such social atrocities. In the present chapter therefore, the researcher discusses in detail the dynamics that are associated with gender issues. The global, regional and emphatically national background on gender issues have laid the foundation, leading to the discussion of gender instruments framing NGO operations. Culture, religion, policies and socialization have been discussed as possible factors reinforcing the prevalence and possibly the retention of gender inequality. NGOs as platforms for the evaluation of the attainment of women empowerment and gender equality in Zimbabwe have also been discussed.

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3.2 Gender Issues

Globally, regionally and at the national level, the governments are prioritizing the need to empower women and the girl child (Matanana and Bukaliya, 2015; UNDP, 2013; Gudhlanga, 2012). This dire need for gender equality is necessitated by the undeniable prevalence of gender exclusionary practices in all spheres of life. Hence, the researcher starts by unpacking the United Nation's MDG number three as the starting point for gender equality and women empowerment.

3.2.1 Acquaintance with the Millennium Development Goal Number Three

In an attempt to pursue inclusivity and to narrow the socio-economic gaps that prevail between the developing and the developed world, the United Nations crafted eight (8) MDGs (Mitlin and Satterthwaite, 2013; Mashiri, 2013). These MDGs sought to eradicate the most prevalent forms of social injustice that exist globally. It is not trivial to emphasize that these menacing social challenges have proved to be the counter-developmental for most, if not all the governments throughout the world (Malaba, 2006; Lewis and Opaku-Mensah, 2006). As such, a 2015 benchmark was

set to review the progress made by different governments and associated organizations committed to the task such as NGOs.

Of all the eight (8) MDGs, there is a remarkable and noticeably link existing between the MDGs 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 (eradication of poverty, educating the girl child, promotion of gender equality, improvement in maternal health and reduced HIV infections respectively) (Zimbabwe Human Development Report, 2013; Gebre-Egziarbher, 2010). This link should prompt the debate and discourse pertaining to how women and girl children have been pushed to the periphery and exposed to a vulnerable position in comparison to the men and the boy children. In as much as the current research is a direct exploit of the MDG 3, women were central to the other MDGs listed above, thereby reinforcing the need for women empowerment on a global level, not just in Zimbabwe. Possibly, this is because most of the evidence depict that women and the girl child appear to carry the heavier saddle of the above listed challenges (Human Development Report, 2013; UNDP, 2013; Gore, 1993). In reinforcing the impact of these social ills, Chirisa (2004: 14) argues that 'Women have had blows of the tempestuous milieu hitting them the hardest."

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The relevance of the current study and the empowerment of women according to the MDG 3 indicators can therefore not be emphasized enough as the MDG 3 seems to be the central piece of the puzzle. In fact, Kabeer (2005) calls this MDG an intrinsic goal as it is an end and not just an instrument facilitating the achievement of other goals. MDG 3 is therefore the desired goal after the eradication of poverty, educating the girl child, improvement in maternal health and reduced HIV infections. The skewedness of the prevalence of HIV/AIDS, poverty and illiteracy in favour of men can therefore be balanced to a state of equilibrium when women are empowered to realize their full potentials. This discussion leads to the currently operating Sustainable Development Goals.

3.2.2 Sustainable Development Goal: Number Five

Following the deadline for the MDGs targets in 2015, reports revealed that inequalities were still apparent (Human Development Report, 2015) thereby prompting the United Nations again to craft the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in an attempt to attain global development (Pisano et al., 2015). According to

Loewe and Rippin (2015), the SDGs are an extension of the MDGs. This entails that the SDGs seek to build upon the foundation that has already been laid, while at the same time covering the glaring gaps that were not addressed by the MDGs. Pisano et al. (2015) reveal that the MDGs were criticized for being limited in their approach to social and economic, aspects which are central to the empowerment of women as emphasized by the socialist feminists (Smith, 2010; Lots, 2003). Hence, a more holistic approach was sought to ensure sustainable development. This led to the crafting of the SDGs as they incorporate 4 crucial areas namely, inclusive social development, environment sustainability, peace and security as well as inclusive economic development (UNSTT, 2012) in Pisano et al. (2015), aspects which are crucial for the fight against feminization of poverty and feminization of HIV/AIDS. Osborn and Ullah (2014) jointly establish that the SDGs have been crafted to be consistent with the national instruments such as Zimbabwe's National Gender policy and other international laws of countries and that they are inclusive of all stakeholders that are relevant for global sustainable development.

Central to the current study is the SGD number 5, which seeks to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. Just like the MDG number 3, Loewe and Rippin (2015) and Pisano et al. (2015) concur that SDG number 5 is cross-cutting as it overlaps into other goals even though it is a goal on its own. This target rests upon 5 targets which aid to achieve its implementation. Such targeted areas include ending of all forms of discrimination against women and girls, elimination of violence against women in the public and private spheres, elimination of harmful practices such as child marriages and promotion of women's reproduction rights (Loewe and Rippin, 2015; Pisano et al., 2015). Such goals are central to the empowerment of women as they seek to protect women from harmful practices, vulnerability and other concomitant factors that may hinder the development of women and a girl child. Therefore, these goals hinge on the political, educational and health aspects of women; the three main indicators that are used to calculate the Gender Inequality Index (GII) (Human Development Report, 2013; 2015). With the foundation laid on the global targets on gender issues, the researcher moves on to discuss the global and regional position of the gender phenomenon in order to appraise the NGOs in their efforts to ensure the attainment of SDG number 5.

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3.3 Global and Regional Synopsis on Gender Equality

Indeed, 'gender disparity', 'gender inequality' and 'gender bias' - whatever terminology is preferred – constitutes a globally debilitating phenomenon. Gender equality is defined by ILO (2000) as the giving of men and women the same opportunities in order to realise their human rights and full potential so that they can contribute and benefit from the social, political, economic and cultural development of their societies (ILO, 2000). In line with this, Gudhlanga, Chirimuuta and Bhukuvhani (2012) opine that gender disparities in economics, education and governance sectors are not exclusive to Zimbabwe. Instead, these are long standing anomalies around the globe. From the developed to the developing countries, none is immune to this ostensibly defiant predicament. This brings us to Malaba's (2006) question of whether gender inequality is a natural disaster or a man-made structure intended to advance the welfare of one gender over the other? Maybe the fact that it is widely prevalent reinforces the claim by others that it is a natural phenomenon that is divinely ordained as men are considered superior (Chauraya, 2012). But perhaps this claim however, may not answer the question as to why it appears as if it ravages the developing world more than the developed one (MDG Report, 2015; Saungweme, 2013). Is it that the differences in Gender Inequality Indices (GII) are accounted for by the differences in policies, culture, values and the belief systems?

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The Human Development Report (2015) reveals that Iceland, Finland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark occupy the top five of the gender parity ranking. The report further shows that in the top twenty of countries nearing gender parity, there are only three Sub-Saharan African countries, Rwanda (rank 6), South Africa (rank 17) and Namibia (rank 16). Even though these rankings are in accordance with the attainment of gender equality (on paper) and not women empowerment practically (Human Development Report, 2013), this suggests that gender inequalities are not evenly or naturally distributed, validating the issue of culture and socialization as possible reinforcing factors. In this regard, many scholars agree that gender inequality is not natural, but rather engrained in the political, cultural and social embedment of every society (Saungweme, 2013; Malaba, 2006; Chirisa, 2004). Gudhlanga et al. (2012) single out patriarchy and customary laws as either causes or contributory factors of gender inequality. Hence, the different levels of inequality as shown by the Gender Inequality Indices (Human Development Report, 2013).

This contention, in the researcher's view then, appears to make the process of gender equality a simple one to solve. If humanity created it, then maybe humanity should be able to destroy it and recreate something that is developmental, fair and just as advocated for by the radical feminists (Smith, 2010).

Considering the way women empowerment issues have been discussed on organizational, micro and macro levels, on both national and international levels through national and international instruments (Human Development Report, 2013) this subject should have been solved already. This poses questions as to whether it is a matter of resources or the resistance from those that are benefiting from the tilted scale of social justice? To this, Kabeer (2005) emphasizes that some men appear to enjoy privileged positions, suggesting that they may not willingly give up the privileges they have had since time immemorial. These are some of the unanswered questions that dominate all debates surrounding gender disparity issues.

3.3.1 Global fight against gender inequalities

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It has always been individual nations deliberating on the "women issues" as Kazembe in Chirisa (2004: 24) calls aspects that have to do with women empowerment and gender equality, until the international body recognized the urgency and gravity of the matter and stepped in to accelerate the agenda. This was when the issue was raised and attempts were made to seek more fulfilling and compelling answers that can ascertain the attainment of global gender equality (Human Development Report, 2015; 2013). Possibly, the rising of the United Nations might have expedited the tackling of the gender issue because this meant more resources and a better audience. Chirisa (2004) and Van eerdewijk and Mugadza (2015) concur with this view revealing that 1976-1985 was declared a decade for women as this witnessed the dawn of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1979. This might have been a turning point for all governments to realize that feminists were not just idle women with nothing to do, but rather aggrieved citizens striving to be recognized as able and equal in every sense of the word.

The urgency for the need to empower women was further accentuated in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) conference where women empowerment topics

dominated in all the discussions (Van eerdewijk and Mugadza, 2015). Then, gender bias and its manifesting challenges were identified as leading to feminization of poverty, prompting the conclusion that it was indeed an unnecessary social ill that needed to be eradicated. As such, international forums were urged to come up with micro-economic policies and strategies that would alleviate all forms of discrimination against women and the girl child (Zungura, 2012; Chirisa, 2004). This may explain why NGOs as agencies of change have globally joined forces against all forms of gender inequalities (Van eerdewijk and Mugadza, 2015).

3.4 Gender Dynamics: Local Context

To give a deeper understanding of NGOs and gender issues in Zimbabwe, the researcher considered first laying out all the gender instruments that are used as benchmarks in Zimbabwe. These are given below:

3.4.1 Gender Instruments guiding NGOs on Gender Issues in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe as a nation has equipped itself with instruments that are aimed at eradicating gender disparities in forms of policies and the laws that are embedded in her constitution (Chirisa, 2004; Gender Challenge Initiative, n.d). These instruments act as frameworks upon which strategies may be implemented to ensure gender equality in the country. The most important of these instruments is the National Gender Policy and it is discussed below.

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3.4.1.1 The 2004 National Gender Policy (NGP) of Zimbabwe

It is the need to attain gender equality that has prompted the government of Zimbabwe to craft a policy that ensures the empowerment of women (Constitution of the Republic of Zimbabwe, 2013; Chauraya, 2011). In 2004, way before the MDG targets, Zimbabwe already had a policy aligned to women empowerment and the attainment of gender equality and equity (Van eerdewijk and Mugadza, 2015). 'Growth with Equity' was the underpinning ethos of the first National Gender Policy which was put into effect under 4 themes, namely: (i) Women in Politics and Decision Making (ii) Women and the Economy (iii) Education and Training of Women (iv) Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women. These themes all branched out to have a common goal, which is to close the gender-bias gaps in Zimbabwe (Mulenga et al., n.d). The policy stretched for 8 years from 2004 to 2013

when a new policy was gazetted. It is crucial to highlight the achievements that were made by the first gender policy because it formed the base and foundation of the policy that is operational today. As such, a summary of the breakthroughs made are given below as reported by Chitsaka Chiziwa, Ambasador of Zimbabwe to the United Nations on Agenda item 28, about the advancement of women in Zimbabwe:

- There was increased awareness for social justice and a series of legislation were passed to assist with operationalizing the gender policy.
- There was strengthening of a national gender machinery which led to a creation of a separate and a new ministry to take up the women and gender affairs.
- It made possible the launching of a framework and strengthened women empowerment projects for women economic empowerment.
- Provision for constitution which included local and international partnership with NGOs and the government aimed at gender equality and equity.

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However, despite all these positive outcomes, the information prove that women representation in Zimbabwe is still below that of gender parity (Saungweme, 2013; UNFPA, 2011). A gender inequality index (GII) of 0.544 (Human Development Report, 2013) recorded in 2012 is nowhere close to the ideal parity statistic which is a reflection of gender equality. It still remains vital to check if the operationalization and implementation of MDGs dispensation or the new National Gender Policy of Zimbabwe have in any significant way helped to correct these gender disparities.

3.4.1.2 The 2013-2017 National Gender Policy (NGP)

Due to the ever-changing economic, political and social environment in Zimbabwe, the second NGP was implemented in order to make amendments on these shortcomings (Mulenga et al.; n.d). The 2008 SADC gender protocol and the 2015 MDG targets also brought in their own requirements that demanded the need for both an assessment and a review to check the relevance of the first policy. It was viewed by the policy reviewers in Zimbabwe as out-dated and hence the need to replace it with a befitting one. Under the new NGP, the vision, goal and the guiding principles are given below to shed more light on the amendments that were made to the first policy (UNDP; 2013):

3.4.1.3 The (2013-2017) NGP Vision

'A gender just society in which men and women enjoy equity, contribute and benefit as equal partners in the development of the country."

3.4.1.4 The (2013-2017) NGP Goal

'To eradicate gender discrimination and inequalities in all spheres of life and development."

The above mentioned obligations are believed to be the most crucial areas that are central to the empowerment of women in Zimbabwe (UNDP, 2013; Constitution of the Republic of Zimbabwe, 2013). NGOs in advocacy, economic development, educational and reproductive rights therefore derive their mandate for women empowerment from the NGP. The government has also engaged the nation in a number of internal initiatives that needed policy adjustment such as Zimbabwe's Land Reform program, the Economy Recovery Program, Empowerment and Indigenization Program and the Political Reconciliation Program (Chauraya, 2011; Osrim, 2001). Therefore, the NGP 2013-2017 would not have come at a better time since the status of women have to be considered in all these developments.

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The strength of this policy is that unlike the first NGP, it is founded upon the principles of equality, inclusivity and gender justice, making it more applicable to social development and social justice (Gudhlanga et al., 2012; ILO, 2011). To this end, McLean (2015) posits that inclusivity is a call for tolerance and acceptance of meaningful participation to all citizens regardless of their gender. This means that men and women would both have equal access to opportunities and resources for their development.

Currently, the evidence provided shows that there is still unequal access to resources as revealed by many local researchers (Bhatasara, 2011, Gudhlanga et al., 2012; Saungweme, 2013). This concurs with the arguments by the liberal feminist theorists such as Judith Murray, who forward that there is need for the practical implementation of policies that support women empowerment in all spheres of life in order to develop women in societies (Smith, 2010; Baehr, 2013). Also, the issue of national gender instruments stresses on the role of the government to either support or hinder the attainment of gender equality in Zimbabwe through policies.

The goals, vision and targets mentioned above therefore work as benchmarks when gender-NGOs are planning and organising their programmes for the realization of a state of gender actualization phase (Human Development Report, 2013; Mulenga et al., n.d). Below are some of the frameworks the government has made for the attainment of gender equality in Zimbabwe.

3.4.2 Legal Legislation and Policy Framework

Zimbabwe has made a significant difference, taking noticeable strides in amending and endorsing legislation (Mulenga et al., n.d). To date, according to the Constitution of the Republic of Zimbabwe (2013), it has passed 17 pieces of legislation aimed at advancing gender equality and equity. In tandem, other gender legislative instruments include the Matrimonial Causes Act (1987); Maintenance Act (1999); Administration of Estate Act (1997); Maintenance Act (1999); Sexual Offences Act (2001), Education Act (2004), Labor Act [Chapter 28:01]; Criminal Law Act (2006); and Domestic Violence Act (2007). These legislatives are useful tools that are aiding in the pursuit of a gender-balanced nation (Mutanana and Bukaliya, 2015).

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3.4.3 Constitution of Zimbabwe and Gender Dynamics

Zimbabwe's constitution that was promulgated in 2013 is commonly acknowledged because of its firm commitment towards gender equity (Constitution of the Republic of Zimbabwe, 2013). This constitution moreover makes reaffirmations on earlier commitments publicized by the Constitutional Amendment of 2005, number 17 that was intolerant to any form of discrimination on the basis of gender National objectives of the policy clearly depict gender balance to be one of the objectives to direct the state, institutions and all the governmental agencies. Apart from that, the Bill of Rights of this new Constitution recognizes that both women and men have the right to equal treatment and this includes the right to access equal opportunities in economic, political, cultural and social spheres. It further accords women the custodian and guardianship of children below 18 years, making void all customs, cultural practices and traditions that infringe on the rights of girl children and women (Constitution of the Republic of Zimbabwe, 2013). Certain sections are further elaborated to ensure certainty in the application of these rights. Now that the legislature and constitution supporting the policy have been summarized, the

researcher goes on to delve deeper into the principles that govern Zimbabwe's new National Gender Policy (NGP).

3.4.4 Implementation of the 2013-2017 National Gender Policy

According to Mulenga et al., (n.d), it is one thing to have a policy on paper and yet a completely different thing altogether to translate the policy into projects and programmes that can achieve the desired results. The NGP has a number of principles and strategies that facilitate the implementation of this policy and these are discussed below.

3.4.5 Principles Guiding the National Gender Policy

The National Gender Policy is grounded on the following collective principles that guide its implementation:

3.4.5.1 Gender Justice in all sectors of development:

Gender justice or social justice is the critical value central to this policy (ILO, 2011). Gender justice is rights-based in that, as detailed in the Constitution, both women and men ought to enjoy equal rights as defined in the nation's bill of rights. However, caution should be taken such that while pursuing to address disparities, one's gender should not be advanced at the expense of the other or in a way that may ultimately lead to reverse discrimination (Lots, 2003). Again, the expression of one's rights should not infringe on the rights of the other.

3.4.5.2 Affirmative action:

Taking into consideration the forms of injustices subjected to women (Mafa, 2014; Malaba, 2006), the policy recognizes that remedial action is crucial in order to advance the gender that was previously disadvantaged by all kinds of discriminatory practices. Hence, affirmative action needs to be taken to address all forms of gender inequalities especially where there are time-bound targets set by the United Nations or the Southern African Development Community (SADC) such as the call for 50/50 politics representation (UNFPA, 2011). Only when corrective action is taken can empowerment of women be realised.

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3.4.5.3 Integration of Gender-Perspectives in all Aspects of Development:

All agencies of gender issues, governmental and non-governmental organizations should engage in appropriate action that permanently closes all gender disparity gaps. This is a call for productive and collaborative partnership if gender equality in Zimbabwe is to be a reality. Of importance is the integration between theoretical gender policies and their implementation in practical terms (Mulenga et al., n.d). As emphasized by Daoanis (2012) and Alfaydy (2008), monitoring and evaluation is also crucial to check if the targets are being met and if not, finding out what corrective action may be needed to ensure the success of the policy on its intended output.

3.4.5.4 Broad-Based and Inclusivity:

This principle is based on the diversity of people and accepting them despite their political, cultural, religious, economic and social differences (ILO, 2011). However, the constitution of Zimbabwe (2013) in line with protecting the rights of every citizen is against cultural practices that violate the rights of other people, for example forced and early marriages (Mapuranga, 2010). As such, those at grassroots levels are empowered to participate in socio-economic and cultural matters that concern them despite their social class. This is in line with the Social Work principles of participation and ownership for it is central to community development (Segal et al., 2007). Therefore, the Social Work values of acceptance and diversity are also honoured by the National Gender Policy of Zimbabwe.

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3.4.5.5 Peace and Harmony at Family and Community Level:

Unity, peace and harmony are the fruits of development that reflect positively on the policy. When peace and harmony is achieved at micro and macro levels (Zastrow and Kirst-Ashman, 2013; Segal et al., 2007), meaningful participation and decision-making is also made easier, the very values core to development. Empowerment efforts by NGOs such as developmental projects are also likely to be more effective in a harmonious community where there is togetherness. This presents the principle as crucial for the actualization of women empowerment.

The strategies listed above are the guidelines to the gender NGOs as they plan their mandates, projects and programmes for women empowerment in Zimbabwe.

Alfaydy (2008) argues that the translation of policies needs an action plan to guide the operations. With such guidelines, progress can be monitored and evaluated (ICNL, 2015). After a review on the gender instruments in Zimbabwe, the researcher turns to discuss the reality that surrounds Zimbabwe on gender issues.

3.5.1 Zimbabwean women and politics: Evidence of inequality

In order to get an understanding of the Zimbabwean political situation, it is crucial to give a background history of the country's politics. Zimbabwe as a nation gained its sovereignty in 1980. Looking back, this independence was not presented to them on a silver platter. Instead, they claimed it through a serious struggle (Tevera, 2015; Ndlovu-Gathseni; 2011). To this end, Coltart (2008) explains that the citizens of Zimbabwe had to abandon the comfort of their homes and the company of their families and live like gorillas in the bushes in order to claim their land. At the forefront of the battle line were the spirit mediums (two individuals who are believed to have been chosen to guide and lead the nation to the dawn of freedom): *Mbuya* (grandmother) Nehanda and *Sekuru* (grandfather) Kaguvi, (Egbedi, 2015; Tevera, 2015).

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Ndlovu-Gathseni (2011) asserts that these are national icons who led the First *Chimurenga* (the uprisings), and their brevity was believed to tap the blessings of the ancestors and higher beings. In Zimbabwe, they are held with such high esteem as *Masvikiro enyika* (Spirit Mediums of the country) as they led the fights against the British regime (Tevera, 2015; Egbedi, 2015). The honour bequeathed upon them is so much that when the tree where *Mbuya* Nehanda is believed to have been hung on by the British soldiers fell, there was so much commotion in the country such that the tree was ferried and carefully placed at the national heroes' acre. In fact, many interpreted the fall of the tree as a prophetic event signifying the dawn of a new political era, while others lamented that it was a bad omen and that doom was befalling the country if persisting political issues were not urgently addressed (News Day, 2011). This is the kind of reverence that is bestowed upon a female, dead spirit medium of the first *Chimurenga* in Zimbabwe, especially by the war veterans. Perhaps the 'born-frees" may not understand why the falling of a tree could create such a chaotic national wave.

Central to the issue of gender inequality however is that, if a woman was the one bestowed the privilege to lead Zimbabweans on the battlefield; this may imply that women are equally capable of taking leadership roles in the post-independence era. This is supported by the fact that men alongside women, the *mujibhas* (boys) and *chimbwidos* (girls) fought back-to-back until the country's liberation in 1980 (Ndlovu-Gathseni, 2011; Osrim, 2001). However, there seems to be exclusion and alienation of women now when both genders should harmoniously and jointly share political power and decision-making positions as stated in the National Gender Policy (Saungweme, 2013; Human Development Report, 2013; UNFPA, 2011; Osrim, 2001). It is therefore not justified why domesticity is now being labelled "a woman's place" – when it is a place which disempowers her and limits her development (Beckett, 2005).

The current political stand reflects nothing that aligns with equality, human rights and dignity; the very principles that were central to the struggle. Saungweme (2013) echoes that women are marginalized in politics and are underrepresented in the government. This claim is reinforced by the UNFPA (2011) which clarifies that although there has been a significant increase of women representation in politics in Zimbabwe, this is still 30% lower than the 50/50 mark set by Africa Union (AU) and SADC protocols on gender issues. The report further sheds light on this revealing that in 2005, only 24 out of 150 parliamentary seats (13%) were occupied by women. However, the country made a little appreciable improvement of representation to 20% in 2009 (UNFPA, 2011). Another score of women recognition towards women empowerment was when the nation witnessed the inauguration of three prominent positions being occupied by women in Zimbabwe. These positions were the first ever black vice president in Zimbabwe, the first female president of the Senate and the Deputy Prime Minister of the Government of National Unit (GNU). All three positions brought a shacking in Zimbabwe's political history (Coltart, 2008).

Commenting on the position of women in politics, the report by the Ministry of Gender, Women Affairs and Community Development cited as Zimbabwe (n.d: 3) reckons,

> Zimbabwe is coming out of intense political polarization. Women's participation in the political discussion which gave birth to the inclusive

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> government was a negotiated process where women's involvement was an after-thought. (Zimbabwe, n.d: 3).

There appears then to be a lot of man-made structural deficits that are pulling women down and side-lining them from crucial decision-making processes. The researcher will then wish to delve deeper into this through data collection in order to bring the readers to appreciate and make an appraisal of the current political representation of women in the country. This will reveal the interventions being implemented by women NGOs in an attempt to increase women representation in politics. The researcher will move on to explore more on the educational status of women in Zimbabwe.

3.5.2 Education status of women in Zimbabwe

In the Sub-Saharan Africa, Zimbabwe has one of the highest percentages of literacy levels, both generally and for women. With its over 90% literacy peg (ICNL, 2015), slight inequalities in terms of men and female's access to education are still prevalent. For example, 48.8 % of women had ordinary level qualification (equivalent to matric) compared to 51.2% for their male counterparts (Saungweme, 2013). This is a reflection of inequalities even though the gap appears to be closing up (Zungura, 2012; Malaba, 2006).

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The Zimbabwe Civil Society Shadow Report to the Cedaw Committee (2012) and McLean (2015) reveal that the education lifespan of most girls is cut short because of polygamy and child marriages especially among the Apostolic Faith sects (*Vapositori).* In regard to this, McLean (2015) points out that these children have been socialized into normalizing their religious culture and this poses an onerous task for anybody who attempts to reveal to them the truth that can empower them. Even though the National Gender Policy of Zimbabwe (2013-2017) acknowledges the cultural and religious differences of people, the Constitution of Zimbabwe (2013) seeks to discourage and illegalise practices that victimise women and girl children. Once these girls drop out of school due to such practices, the hope for them to secure a formal and a well-paying job is doomed, more so if they get married to older men (Runhare and Gordon, 2004; Mapuranga, 2010). The scenario of the freedom of religion therefore, becomes anti-developmental if the right of worship of an individual violates the girl children's right to education and development (Mafa, 2014;

Mapuranga, 2010; The World Bank, 2003). When feminism started, Springer (2002) and Breines (2002) reveal that the 2nd wave of feminism sought educational empowerment in order to ensure economic freedom. Dreeze and Sen (2002) in harmony lament that illiteracy is 'unfreedom' and the chief restriction that imposes limitations to economic freedom as the phenomenon is the cause of women's state of unemployment and also their desperate engagement in the informal sector.

Apart from that, Zimbabwe's Civil Society's Shadow to the Cedaw Committee (2012) and Witt (1997) further disclose issues of son-preference in times of families' financial insecurities. In these cases, the money available would be spent on the boy child at the expense of the girl child because of the African belief that a woman would get married and leave the family, but a male child is seen as the "head" of the family who makes the family name to grow *(kukudza dzinza)* (Mapuranga, 2010). Indeed, this is an unsettling revelation as it clearly accounts for the gender gaps that are prevalent in the formal employment sector.

Despite a few exemptions, largely one's level of education mirrors one's economic performance or status as well as their employability (Mafa, 2014; Runhare and Gordon, 2004). As such, the economic status of women in Zimbabwe is explored next.

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3.5.3 Women and economic - empowerment in Zimbabwe: a mirage

The definitions of empowerment as put forward by Longwe (1989), Moser (1991) and the ILO (2000) put considerable emphasis on the importance of economic freedom and sustainable development. As such, it seems as if empowerment is incomplete until women have been given economic power and choices as emphasised by the socialist feminists (Gudhlanga et al., 2012; Beckett, 2005). It is against this information that the researcher prompts to bring the reader to the attention of the plight of women in Zimbabwe as far as their economic status is concerned.

It is undeniable that Africa has been witnessing a reduction in agricultural production as a result of unreliable rainfall, climate change associated with global warming and the increased costs of inputs (Alao, 2012; Negin et al., 2009; Coltart, 2008). Zimbabwe has not been impervious to this predicament and as an agricultural nation whose economy heavily relies on the success of the agricultural production; this has

mercilessly brought down her economy's development. Worst still is the revelation by Saungweme (2013) and Bhatasara (2011) that women in Zimbabwe are polarized and pegged mainly in the unstable, informal and communal farming. One can only imagine the extent of vulnerability exposed to these women who are already segregated from the economic mainstream and are now disadvantaged by the unreliability of rains.

As far as the employability of women is concerned, Kabeer (2000a) and Malaba (2006) assert that women are less likely to find a job while at the same time they are more likely to lose it - a double jeopardy. Indeed, this is a real manifestation of gender bias and the related corollaries that skewedly disfavour women. Whether this is rooted in the structural failure or on social discrimination as informed by cultural and social values (Malaba, 2006; Mapuranga, 2010) remain a debate among scholars. Kabeer (2000a) nonetheless, further emphasizes that gender determines the division between productive and reproductive labour, with women being polarized to the primary responsibility of the latter. However, confinement of women to domesticity and child bearing is common in Zimbabwe, even though with women empowerment and their emancipation through NGOs and other media, the situation is slowly being neutralized.

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The UNFPA (2011) and Mapuranga (2010) opine that cultural practices that uphold patriarchal dominance as well as religion may be attributed to these gender roles. The assignment of supremacy over males perhaps leads them to impose dominant social values that ultimately condescend and disparage women. This is how cultural discrimination leads to economic exclusion as societies will attach economic leadership roles to men while women are forced into subordination - the very thing that the feminists in the first and second wave resisted (Baehr, 2013; Haslanger and Tauna, 2012; Helman, 2012). Having explored on the vital indicators of women empowerment that are politics, the economic and educational situations, the researcher wishes to discuss the most prevalent forms of gender exclusionary practices in Zimbabwe.

3.5.4 Forms of gender exclusionary practices handled by NGOs in Zimbabwe

The following paragraphs are an outline of some of the gender disparities in Zimbabwe which women NGOs are fighting against, information which seek to answer the first research question.

3.5.4.1 Social Exclusion

Irrefutably, inclusivity in all facets of social activities and structures is central to the attainment of gender equality and the empowerment of women in Zimbabwe (Saungweme, 2013; Mapuva, 2013; ILO, 2012; Beddoes and Borrego, 2011; Osrim, 2001). If what has caused women to be disadvantaged economically, socially and politically is alienation from decision-making processes, then this can only be revoked and amended by including them in these matters, as they are crucial to their development. To this end, Kabeer (2000a) opines that social exclusion underpins poverty, inequality and injustice. This suggests that social alienation either causes and/or perpetuates the prevalence of those seemingly obdurate social ills that impede development in societies. Perchance, this explains why societies and countries that exhibit higher GII in reality are underdeveloped (Malaba, 2006). Developing countries such as Zimbabwe and other African countries suffer bouts of impoverishment and the ravaging effects of inequalities (Human Development Report, 2013). Therefore, an inextricable interconnectedness exists between these social phenomena.

Kabeer (2000a: 3) is of the view that social exclusion exists where certain groups (in this case women) are 'set apart' or 'locked-out' of essential participation in matters that relate to them. The author further stresses that the prevalence of social exclusion and all forms of inequalities have profound implications to the development of any society. In explaining social exclusion, Gore (1993) talks of 'unruly practices' where to assume that publicly-given services and goods are allocated fairly is a fallacious fantasy. Reality shows that there is likely to be unofficial routes by which provision is made, consequently depriving other people of services that they are entitled to. Breaking down this point, social exclusion against women in the delivery of public services happens where the official route (as stated in the policies) is tilted to favour men at the expense of women. In evaluating the effectiveness of social policies then, what may be on paper may not reflect the reality on the ground

(Mulenga et al.; n.d). For instance, Zimbabwe may have some of the best policies, but paper rights' do not lead to women empowerment if there is no developmental implementation.

Overlooking the needs of the excluded women and ignoring their sense of exclusion may push them to initiate their own 'unruly practices', if the researcher can borrow the term used by Gore (1993), and this may lead to activities which have negative implications on the stability and tranquillity of the society. These may range from petty crimes to organized violence or destructive behaviours such as prostitution because it is illegal in Zimbabwe as revealed by Mafa (2014). This also can be stressed back to the organized 'unruly practices' that saw the dawn of the third wave of feminism (Springer, 2002; Breines, 2002). These women could not be ignored any longer as they were excluded in politics and the economy (Smith, 2010; Ghodsee, 2004). They were trapped into domesticity, subjected to domestic violence and impoverishment, conditions that are also prevalent in Zimbabwe (Bhatasara, 2011; Saungweme, 2013; Mapuva, 2013). Through policing then, NGOs' efforts are crucial to ensure social inclusion as the remedial action necessary to attain gender equality. The ILO (2012) sheds more light on the subject arguing that social inclusion is the way of ensuring social security, an economic strategy to eradicate poverty, social exclusion and other social ills that are enervating the lives of women. This would also promote sustainable development, gender equality and equal opportunities for all. Another form of challenges that women NGOs in Zimbabwe are fighting is gender-based violence and it is discussed below:

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3.5.4.2 Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

The Gender Challenge Initiative (n.d) asserts that GBV is a direct affront to human dignity through the violation of someone physically, emotionally and otherwise, simply because of the person's gender. In addition, Gender Links (2012) affirms that GBV is any violating behaviour directed to an individual because of their gender in order to undermine the dignity, autonomy, security or health of that victim. This definition takes into consideration the feminine and masculine stereotypes that are defined and attached by the society, according to the perceived adherence to cultural and religious values (Chauraya, 2012; Esplen and Jolly, 2006).

In Zimbabwe, Mashiri (2013) and Mapuranga, (2010) argue that patriarchy is the anchor responsible for the creation and perpetuation of GBV as it creates gender imbalances between men and women. Perhaps the psyche of abusers has translated masculinity to mean the exertion of power over others, even if it is harmful and forceful. As such, women are treated as property possibly because of the payment of lobola as suggested by Chireshe and Chireshe (2010). Hence, they are expected to be subservient towards men in all things. Irrespective of the form of abuse exerted on women, Mashiri (2013) reinforces that GBV restricts women's development as men tend to control their liberty and growth. This is true in cases where the husband may influence or overpower their wives in issues such as educational career advancement. This is believed to emanate from skewed gender relationships embedded in religious and cultural beliefs that weaken women's power to negotiate on matters that concern their wellbeing; for example, their educational, sexual and financial preferences (Mapuranga, 2010; Gender Challenge Initiative, n.d). In support of this, the ILO (2011) reveals that those who do not behave according to the stereotypical 'women' are targets for harassment, abuse and stigma. Unwillingly then, women may ultimately curve in to align to the expectations of the society, even if it means letting go of their rights.

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The Gender Challenge Initiative (n.d) reminds the world that women-to-man GBV also occurs, but that the reverse is more common. For women, the Gender Challenge Initiative (n.d) and Mashiri (2013) both concur that GBV extends beyond the victims to the families, relationships, and socio-economic development at national level. In concurrence, the ILO (2011) unearths that the following groups are more susceptible to GBV: office and factory workers; child labourers; domestic workers; sex workers and bonded workers. This may be so because the nature of their jobs strips them of bargaining powers to negotiate their working conditions and/or the security of their jobs. For example, considering that the majority of personal assistants (PAs) are women due to economic inequalities; and that top management is usually taken by men (Mafa, 2014; ILO, 2011), the PAs' fate may be at the mercy of the male manager, thereby subjecting them to vulnerability and possible victimization.

3.5.4.2.1 Talking the prevalence of GBV in Numbers

Gender inequality – although the term is normally misinterpreted, in reality connotes the notion of unfair treatment between men and women over unjustified criterions (Esplen and Jolly; 2006; ILO, 2000). That being said, the researcher goes deeper to reveal why GBV is linked to the prevalence of gender inequality as either a cause or a manifestation thereof. Mafa and Kang'ethe (2016), Mashiri (2013) and Malaba (2006) all identify the undeniable link that exists between GBV and the phenomenon of feminization of HIV/AIDS and poverty. These challenges due to their complexity and obstinacy have created devastation around the globe including Zimbabwe. Therefore, because GBV increases the vulnerability of women to poverty and HIV (Chant, 2006; Gender Challenge Initiative, n.d), a look at the statistics of the prevalence of GBV is necessary as this will bring awareness, thereby assisting governments and NGOs to join forces for its eradication.

Literature reveals dreadful and unsettling statistics about the prevalence of GBV in the world and in Zimbabwe. WHO (2013) indicates that 35% of women around the globe have been abused at some point in their lifespan, be it physically or sexually. Appalling is the revelation that 68% of the women who are abused sexually and physically experience these harsh treatments from their intimate partners (USAID Toolkit, n.d), the same people that are supposed to protect and care for them. This is closely related to the findings of the UNAIDS (2012) which states that about 60% of women in Zimbabwe experience sexual abuse from their partners. It seems as if masculinity in Africa is somehow linked to having power over circumstances, situations and unfortunately over other people, especially those who cannot defend themselves.

In trying to explain the genesis of this predicament, the Gender Challenge Initiative (n.d) points out that financial disparities between men and women in Zimbabwe greatly intensify sexual dominance. Possibly this is because of the loyalty that women feel obliged to give to men who support them economically. As such, women tend to aversely yield in to the requests in order to secure their financial foundations. In spite of all this, Zimbabwe Health and Demographic Survey (2005-2006) laments that the spate of stigma attached to sexual abuse may undermine the actual figures of the prevalence of abuse due to a lack of adequate evidence. This is reinforced by

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the study they carried which showed that about 34.7 % of the women who were violated testified that they had never told a soul about their abuse. Therefore, the actual statistics may remain a mystery as long as the society still attaches abuse to loose morals and seductive behaviour (Mafa and Kang'ethe, 2016), instead of tackling the challenge as a manifestation of gender inequality.

An interesting revelation is further made by the Demographic Health of Zimbabwe (2011) in Gender Challenge Initiative (n.d) which points out a positive correlation between early marriages, low levels of literacy and vulnerability with GBV in Zimbabwe. In regard to early marriages, the Apostolic sect has been singled out as the church practicing this as well as polygamy (Zimbabwe Civil Society Shadow Report to the Cedaw Committee, 2012; Gender Challenge Initiative, n.d). In as much as most of these girls might have been socialized to view this trend as an acceptable norm, women empowerment especially through NGOs is necessary to be an eye-opener to the reality of the impacts of such forms of gender inequalities. Bhatasara (2011) believes that mental emancipation and the acknowledgement of women's capabilities is foundational to women empowerment if all forms of GBV are to be addressed.

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Mashiri (2013) also identifies another form of GBV that may not be so common in other countries. This is the politically-motivated violence against women in Zimbabwe. Research Advocacy Unit (RAU) (2009) argues that political violence against women in Zimbabwe dates back to the time of war where women were abused sexually to sooth the soldiers on the battlefield. The research further reveals that 36% of war survivors were sexually harassed. This tendency finds evidence in the 2008 Presidential re-run when women with husbands and children supporting the other political parties were targeted as a way of threatening them to drop the course of supporting the opposition parties or candidates of their choice (Mashiri, 2013; Essof, 2013; Makamure, 2012).

Musasa Project (2008) in Van eerdewijk and Mugadza (2015) reveal that in Zimbabwe, physical abuse in forms of battering, emotional torture and sexual harassment are most prevalent forms of politically-motivated violence. These forms of violence are targeted mainly on human rights activists and their families as state violence goes unchallenged in Zimbabwe (Research Advocacy Unit (RAU), 2009).

This has left the victims with emotional scars such as fear, guilt, low self-esteem and unwanted pregnancies, HIV infections and unsafe abortions that may lead to infertility and cervical cancer. This marks the discussion of some of the forms of GBV that need to be addressed in Zimbabwe. How gender inequality manifest itself in Zimbabwe is discussed below as this influences how NGOs should intervene, in fulfilment of the second objective of the current research.

3.5.5 Manifestations of gender inequality in Zimbabwe

It is the manifestations of the adverse effects of gender inequalities and other concomitant ramifications that have caused human rights activists, political figures and the NGOs to join forces in an attempt to surmount the prevalence of these social ills (Van eerdewijk and Mugadza, 2015; Human Development Report, 2013; Zungura, 2012). The researcher believes that the reason why the UN included women empowerment and gender equality among the 8 MDGs is because gender disparities were found to be anti-developmental. Fundamentally, gender inequality has been associated with under-development, poverty and HIV/AIDS among other socio-economic ills that hinder the development of many African countries (Malaba, 2006; Gore, 1993). Below are a number of these ills as they have been found to be poignantly prevalent in Zimbabwe.

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3.5.5.1 Is Feminization of poverty a reality in Zimbabwe?

In as much as poverty can be viewed as a state of economic deprivation, it is undeniable that its genesis is rooted in political and cultural inequalities within societies (Mafa, 2014; Bhatasara, 2010; Malaba, 2006). Kabeer (2000a) establishes that poverty is a multi-dimensional phenomenon stressing back its roots to structural and societal failure. Societal failure may manifest through the social exclusion of women and other various facets of social injustice against women. These structural challenges have the tendency to maintain and exacerbate the grips of feminization of poverty (Kang'ethe and Munzara, 2014; Chant, 2006).

In contention with the above revelation, Malaba (2006) agrees that some cultural aspects reinforce the thinking and perception that women are human beings with limited capabilities compared to their male counterparts. This is perfidious because it prompts and paves a way for societies to put in place structural barriers that stifle women's opportunity to compete on an equal footing with men in the society.

Therefore, Kabeer (2000a) tries to find the relevance or rather connectedness of poverty and gender disparities, taking cognizance of the fact that poverty already claims significant "spot-light" attention from both the national and international organizations. The author, below asks the following pertinent questions:

> *If poverty implies a concern with ensuring the satisfaction of basic needs, is not a focus on poverty sufficient to ensure a concern with justice? And finally, are all forms of exclusion necessarily 'bad' and all forms of inclusion necessarily 'good'? (Kabeer 2000a; 2).*

The author's questions emanate from the realization that women suffer social exclusion leading to various kinds of injustices that lead to their susceptibility to poverty. As such, their inclusion in these matters should not be assumed to be an automatic solution to their problems.

In trying to define the feminization of poverty phenomenon, Malaba (2006) stresses that this is a term that describes the socio-economic patterns that keep women globally disproportionally poor. This may mean that the situation is worse for women who are already subjected to social discrimination, or trapped at the intersection of oppression and poverty. Bhatasara (2011) looks closely into the land issue and its interplay with the phenomenon of feminization of poverty. The author makes the researcher to understand that the purpose of looking into land issues is that land in Zimbabwe is crucial in determining one's means of production and ultimately one's ability to surmount the ravaging effects of poverty.

It is sad that gender-blind officials and masculinists occupying government positions assumed that giving women the land they had been denied for long would bring about women empowerment (Bhatasara, 2011). However, even though giving women land does not automatically translate to them conquering poverty, at least it is a necessary starting point to the expected end. In regard to this, Mbaya (2005) makes a disappointing remark pointing out that the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) actually deprived women of their land, thereby shrinking their participation in the development processes.

This researcher thinks that perhaps what has been a lacking factor to expedite women empowerment is political power. This could be true in that the first women who fought for equality recognized that for their development, they had to demand

for their political and economic rights (Baehr, 2013; Haslanger and Tauna, 2012). The importance of political and economic power in influencing one's development should therefore not be overlooked as it is central to development. Social Work through its values and principles largely takes cognizance of all of people's challenges in order to seek sustainable intervention. This is supported by the systems theory which salutes the interrelatedness of structures as they influence each other for synergy (Zastrow and Kirst-Ashman, 2013; Segal et al., 2007).

Women's domesticity and their subordination to men force them to economically depend on men for their survival (Bhatasara, 2011; Malaba, 2006). Due to hopelessness and despondency (Gudhlanga et al., 2012; Gore, 1993), the welfare of women is left at the mercy of men. Therefore, it is economic dependency that has led men to be perpetual abusers of women to an extent that many women and their children have ended up in shelters to be accommodated mainly by NGOs in the gender mainstream (Mafa, 2014; Zungura, 2012).

These various forms of abuse of women by men, whether social, emotional, sexual or psychological; that have led to a growing phenomenon of matrifiocality, a situation where women shoulder the burden of taking care of children solely (Kang'ethe and Mafa, 2014; Musekiwa 2013; Kabeer 2000a). This researcher holds no iota of doubt that the state of matrifocal families heralds a situation of gender disempowerment because the phenomenon in Zimbabwe is associated with glaring episodes of poor living standards. This may explain why Landau and Griffith (2007) consider that changes within the societal structures need to undergo some significant shifts possibly through NGOs' intervention, if ever the process of women empowerment and eradication of poverty are to yield results.

The issue of poverty is therefore a complex and a multi-faceted phenomenon, and sometimes borders on matters beyond human control. For example the global recession of 2008 was responsible for economic malaise and ultimately impoverishment of many people in many countries because of joblessness (Alao, 2012). Again, the emergence of the capitalist system which exploits humans in order maximize profit suggested the need for technological advancement leading to numerous retrenchments more so of women, leading to poverty (Kang'ethe, 2014). However, it seems as if unnecessary inequalities are flourishing and apparently

widening the lacuna between the rich and the poor, not forgetting between men and women.

3.5.5.2 Establishing the concept of Feminization of HIV/AIDS in Zimbabwe

Although it is evidently true that HIV is not a respecter of persons, age, colour or status, immense global literature by WHO (2013) and UNAIDS (2012) in tandem with local literature by Kang'ethe and Munzara (2014), Zungura (2012) and Mapuranga (2010) established that the phenomenon suffer an immense gender bias, and hence the concept feminization of HIV/AIDS. Plainly, the term feminization of HIV/AIDS was adopted to explain that this pandemic is gender-skewed, with more women than men being prone to the infection. However, it should not be interpreted to mean that men are exempted from HIV infections; only that women are more likely to be infected more than men due to an array of factors.

Perhaps it is good to indicate how biological factors, albeit not as such as the role of social structures, make HIV/AIDS a more feminized disease. During the penile-heterosexual sexual engagement, the surfaces that are bound to receive the virus are largely different, with the vagina surface area offering more space and therefore a larger opportunity to receive the virus (Kang'ethe, 2009). This diametrically differs with the space that is provided by the penis during any heterosexual viral exchange. This has meant that a woman is more likely to receive the virus in a sexual bout from a male than is the converse. This anatomical difference partly explains feminization of HIV/AIDS as well as other sexually transmitted diseases. This has made man to be a perfect transmitter of the virus with the phenomenon being exacerbated by literature findings that put a man as possibly five times more sexually licentious than a woman (Kang'ethe, 2015; Mapuranga, 2010; Patton, 1994).

However, feminists argue that the impact of the biological factor should not obscure the impact of social structures especially in patriarchal societies such as those from many African countries. Over the years, the patriarchal leaning societies have had social structures that victimize women leaving them more vulnerable to HIV/AIDS infections than their male counterparts (Mafa, 2014; Zungura, 2012). This has presented a sad state of affairs in that some of the norms from these social structures (Mapuranga, 2010), though destructive as they are in informing gender skewed infections, have largely been accepted across both gender divide as normal

(Mafa and Kang'ethe, 2016; Malaba, 2006). They have therefore been conventionalized and this exposes women to vulnerability. As such, mitigating the effects of HIV/AIDS in many of the seriously affected countries in the Sub-Saharan countries has to do with addressing the phenomenon of gender inequalities and the vulnerability of women (Mashiri, 2013; Malaba, 2006; Gender Challenge Initiative, n.d).

In support of this, the Gender Challenge Initiative (n.d) argues that GBV subjects women to vulnerability and this increases their chances of being infected by the virus. Perhaps this is so because abused women tend to lose their voice on matters that concern their sexual preferences and the use of protective devices (WHO, 2013). Considering that about 60% of women globally (UNAIDS, 2012) experience sexual and or physical abuse, there is a high possibility of them contracting the infection. This then explains and reinforces the concept of feminization of HIV/AIDS. Even though there is post-exposure prophylaxis treatment that can reduce the chances of a victim contracting HIV/AIDs or even a pregnancy within 72 hours, the stigma associated with sexual assault hinders many women from reporting these cases (UNAIDS Gap Report, 2014; Zimbabwe Ministry of Health, 2014; International Labour Organization, 2011). Again, the knowledge of the existence and the accessibility of such a prophylaxis may not be available in rural communities.

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3.5.5.2.1 Effects of cultures in reinforcing feminization of HIV/AIDS

In Zimbabwe, cultural practices such as patriarchal dominance forbids women to discuss sexual matters even with their husbands, lest they be labelled as wayward or promiscuous (Mapuranga, 2010; The Gender Challenge Initiative, n.d). Such spousal inequalities may expose them to infection as culture tends to silently condone the behaviours of promiscuous men. This may be explained in terms of the cultural handovers which overlooks promiscuous behaviours of men justifying it as an expression of their masculinity and male prowess (Kang'ethe , 2015; 2009), while a woman displaying such behaviour especially in Zimbabwe is shunned (Mafa, 2014). Perhaps episodes of promiscuous behaviours appear to be obscured by the fact that polygamy is well accepted in Zimbabwe, even among religious sects such as the Apostolic sect and the Zion Christian Church (ZCC). The research findings by Patton (1994) revealed that men are possibly five times more promiscuous than women, somehow leaves no grain of doubt that cultural beliefs and traditions do not appear

to discourage men's unscrupulous sexual behaviours.

Bhatasara (2011) also identified land ownership as another cause of vulnerability among women and this may expose them to HIV. The author argues that the fact that culturally, less women own land entails that women are more likely to depend on men economically. As such, they may be subjected to economic exploitation as they seek to survive. To this end, the Food and Agriculture Organization Report (2006) in Bhatasara (2011) laments that many widows are dispossessed of their land when their husbands die in many cases being accused of witchcraft, prostitution or killing their husbands because other cultures recognise that the assets belong to the husband. As a result, this creates desperation which exposes them to poverty and ultimately HIV/AIDs as they employ different strategies to provide for themselves and their children (Mafa and Kang'ethe, 2016; Mafa, 2014; Zungura, 2012). It may be crucial to point out that the culture of dispossessing widows of their land when their husbands die is a not only a culture among the Zimbabweans, but a culture shared by other societies in other African countries (Kang'ethe, 2014; Tong, 2009). These are some of the gender-challenges that NGOs in Zimbabwe are addressing in order to empower women and enhance their development.

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3.5.5.2.2 Poverty, a launching pad of feminization of HIV/AIDS

This researcher hereby explores other facets that prompt feminization of HIV/AIDS as a manifestation of gender inequality, with the phenomenon of matrifocality being the focus. Due to the phenomenon of poverty, the statistics on matrifocal households have risen unabatedly in Zimbabwe (Musekiwa, 2013). A score of women in matrifocal households engage in commercial sex work among other survival strategies (Mafa, 2014) in an endeavour to put food on the table for their children and themselves. To this end, Mafa (2014), disinterred that about 70% of the women selling sex whom she studied in Zimbabwe were single mothers who may have been victims of divorce or widowhood. The research further revealed that all the single mothers she interviewed were HIV positive and had contracted the virus while selling sex.

This shows how the gendered position that women occupy in the society makes them prone to HIV/AIDS. This has made some researchers such as Mbaya (2005)

and Kabeer (2000a) to caution the government and other gender friendly bodies such as NGOs against overlooking gender in the battle to fight HIV/AIDS. This is because HIV/AIDS is a gendered disease and can only be mitigated effectively if gender gaps are addressed. This researcher contends that until the social, economic and cultural aspects subjecting women to vulnerability are adjusted to acknowledge women, the concept of feminization of HIV/AIDS especially in Africa could undoubtedly remain a gruelling stumbling block. This calls for the recruiting and financing of NGOs because of their grass-root approach to scrapping off social ills.

3.6 Dynamics affecting NGO"s efforts to gender equality in Zimbabwe

The researcher turns on to discuss the aspects that may influence the attainment of gender equality and women empowerment through NGOs' interventions in Zimbabwe, be it negatively or positively.

3.6.1 How culture affects the efforts by NGOs

From a lay man's perspective, the concept culture connotes people's ways of life especially those qualities of life that have been handed down from generation to generation. However, the concept attracts different perspectives and definitions with Kang'ethe (2009) indicating that culture can be a continuum where the traditions, customs, belief systems or yester-cultures form part of the practices of the current generations that constitute contemporary culture. Importantly, the continuum may constitute a future component in that a varied reflection of cultures can be used to reflect on an array of behaviour and characteristics of people in the near future.

In another perspective, Beckett (2005) views culture as a process that determines people's dos and don'ts, their thinking, attitudes determining the future of a people. To summarize Beckett's contention of culture, the phenomenon should be viewed as both a continuance of the past and current deeds or an amalgamation of both the past and present behaviours, practices, customs and traditions. There should not be a disjoint but consistency should act as a reflective mirror of the whole life of a particular society (Beckett, 2005; Gore, 1993; Pedwell, n.d). Nevertheless, an important aspect of culture is that it is a dynamic phenomenon and hugely informs the way people conceptualize their lives.

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Looking at the phenomenon from other lenses, Pedwell (n.d) views culture as constituting spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional underpinnings that characterize a society or a social group. It also includes notarts and letters, modes of life, and the fundamental rights of the human beings, value systems, traditions and beliefs (Serageldin,1992). This indicates that culture is integral and portrays holistic aspects of people's lives, implying that cultural underpinnings, depending on how they are implemented, can be instrumental and fundamental in determining the attainment of gender equality through NGOs' interventions (Afolayan, 2004).

Closer to the definition above, but with a slight difference, Alcoff (1988) conceptualizes culture as a way of life where life practices are constructed and maintained in a specific manner. As such, culture is said to be the most common binary division to polarize the world between the West and non-West. This definition may put too much emphasis on these cultural differences, turning a blind eye on the obvious similarities such as the need for global equality. This is further noted by Pedwell (n.d) who reveals a link between culture, gender roles and ultimately gender inequality. Culture, then is not just a way of life, but an anchor which determines how opportunities and resources are distributed. Therefore, culture influences how women are treated in the society, determining whether it facilitates or hinders NGOs' efforts to promote women empowerment in Zimbabwe. This may partly answer Malaba's (2006) question of whether gender inequality is natural or not. If the assignment of social gender roles is closely linked to culture, then perhaps indeed gender inequality is man-made. This may also explain why it appears as if the notion of a patriarchal state generally defines African countries, through the dictation of its culture. This is explored on in the following paragraphs.

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3.6.2 Patriarchy: The anchor of gender disparities in Zimbabwe?

Patriarchy constitutes customs, traditions and belief systems that form a culture of a particular society, defines and prescribes gender roles and makes demarcations on how power is shared and distributed (Mashiri, 2013; Lots, 2003). Patriarchy is a fundamental determinant of gender inequality in that the African continent is characterized by the prevalence and perpetuation of male superiority over women (Beckett, 2005; Jackson, 2002). The researcher has therefore discussed patriarchy

in an attempt to examine whether patriarchy supports or hinders the efforts being made by NGOs in Zimbabwe to empower women.

Baehr (2013) contends that in the African context, most societies embrace patriarchal characteristics where inherited traditions push women into a state of inferiority and domesticity. This, in most cases is because of the passing on of norms through socialization, making societies to possess restrictive inabilities to value women's personal autonomy and accord them necessary conditions vital for their development (Malaba, 2006; Witt, 1997). Inevitably, in a patriarchal setting, a man is regarded as the head of the family, having the final say in any matter that may be brought to the table for discussion. Reasonably, this flow of authority might have been put in place for peace and tranquility to prevail. Moreover, accountability, respect and the smooth flow of commands in any organizational setting, with the family included, are usually facilitated by the presence of a leader. The need for division of labour might necessitate the need for a single authority figure to ensure that the family affairs are in order.

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However, it has never been succinctly explained why it is the man who should always be the head of the family. All the same, it appears that patriarchy interplays with many religions of the world especially Judeo-Christianity, that vividly demarcates the roles across both gender divides (Mawere et al., 2012; Mapuranga, 2010). On that note, some mythological stories about women leadership falling short of the expectation is found within the Kenyan mythical stories pertaining to leadership between men and women. The story holds that once upon a time, Kikuyu leadership (Kenya's populous ethnic grouping) was entrusted within the hands of a lady by the name Wangu Wa Makeri, but she was dethroned by men after failing the leadership litmus test of succumbing to pregnancy. The men folk considered that after falling pregnant, she could not adequately perform a myriad of tasks that bequeathed her position as the leader (Hubpages, n.d).

Therefore, whether the apparent societal choice of man as the leader is based on mental capacity or gene mechanism, it is not clear. All the same, Mafa (2014) in her study identified some matrifocal families who were doing well in nurturance and management of resources without the influence or presence of a male figure. Evidently though, this culturally embedded trait of patriarchy has not been without

destructive consequences as most social ills such as gender-based violence, sexual abuse and other forms of ill-treatment are founded on a patriarchal disposition (Mashiri, 2013; Baer, 2013; Malaba, 2006). To this day, the joy, peace, potential and dignity of many women and girls have been sacrificed on the altar of patriarchy, an exercise that appears to be deeply entrenched and internalized by both men and women, because it has been handed over from generation to generation. On a global level, human rights activists have joined forces to neutralize this phenomenon in an effort to put a halt to the corroding and ramifying effects of patriarchy (Mashiri, 2013). There is need therefore, for clarity on the strategies as well as a reliable source of income to finance bodies such as the NGOs championing efforts to weaken forces of inequality.

Unfortunately, many of the NGOs fighting to weaken forces of gender inequalities and gearing to fulfill the gender parity agenda of Millennium Development Goal number three (3) and SDG number 5 appear, in some contexts, not to be adequately supported (Zungura, 2012; Nelson, 2007) possibly because of the misinterpretations of what gender-based NGOs stand for. The success of this process does not in any way have to disadvantage men. This calls for an attitudinal paradigm shift that will challenge men to adjust their thinking disposition towards women so that women's status quo can be improved, in order to increase their contribution to the country's GDP. This will allow the negotiation of ways and mechanism of raising the country's Gender Development Index (GDI) that has remained unacceptably low in Zimbabwe (Human Development Report, 2013; Malaba, 2006). Possibly, Zimbabwe needs to borrow a leaf from its neighbouring countries such as Botswana, South Africa and Namibia whose GDI are among the highest in Africa (Human Development Report, 2015; UNDP, 2004). If NGOs are successful in diluting patriarchy therefore, the socio-economic development of women and Zimbabwe can be enhanced.

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3.6.3 Role of Religion on NGOs interventions in Zimbabwe

In a quest to belong and relate to others, many people tend to affiliate to one religion or the other (Gripaldo, 2008; Melgosa, 1984). Such gatherings have different protocols that influence the behaviour and the way of life of individuals. As such, the researcher has deemed it crucial to examine some of Zimbabwe's religious

groupings in an attempt to articulate their influence on gender issues and the intervention efforts by gender NGOs.

Just as a recap, sometime in 2014, the world was shaken by the collapse of TB Joshua's hostel and many people lost their lives (BBC NEWS, September 2014). Of importance is to highlight that many of the people who lost their lives had travelled all the way from South Africa to Nigeria, to have their spirits lifted in the presence of God. Just two months later, Zimbabwe also witnessed a religious stampede which claimed 11 people including children (ZBC NEWS, November 2014). The Prophetic, Healing and Deliverance (PHD) Ministry led by Prophet Magaya held a crusade in Kwekwe in a stadium and the pressure resulted in the loss of lives. With such evidence of people's commitment and thirst for religious identification, Christianity is the pillar religion in Zimbabwe and hence commands great attention if gender issues are to be eradicated (Mapuranga, 2010). In the pages that follow, the researcher will define what religion is and then discuss Christianity, African Traditional Religion (ATR) as well as Aslam as these are the common religious groupings in Zimbabwe.

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3.6.3.1 What is religion?

The belief, worship and reverent of a seen or unseen god or God is what entails the term religion (Byamugisha et al., 2002). Gripaldo (2008), however, brings a new dimension to religion making a distinction between monotheism and polytheism religion. While mono-theism is the belief in one God, polytheism is the belief in many gods, evil spirits and goddesses respectively. It can then be established that religion is a belief system with one or more deities incorporating rituals, ceremonies, ethical guidelines and life philosophies. Globally, religion is accredited for bringing meaning to people's lives, helping them to appreciate the past, giving meaning to the present and ushering in hope for the future (Curtis, 2008 in Gripaldo, 2008; Byamugisha et al., 2002).

This, for some people, eases the tension, uncertainties and distress that come with everyday challenges (Melgosa, 1984; Fineman, 1984). Observably, every religion is distinguished from others by its set of different beliefs, ways of worship, norms and a way of life upon which humanity is expected to unquestionably follow (Byamugisha et al., 2002). This may denote what to wear, what to eat, when to worship and the treatment of men and women in societies too.

Although many religions may ultimately direct their worship to God, their mediums tend to differ (Curtis, 2008 in Gripaldo, 2008). As far as the incorporation of God is concerned, Gripaldo (2008) defines religion as simply a way of life that can take the form of everyday commitment to worship or fulfill some rituals without dragging God into it. However, the issue of religion is so controversial that Pirzig (1975) cited in Gripaldo (2008) states that a single person experiencing a delusion is called insanity, but when many people suffer from the same delusion, he calls it religion. There is therefore no denying of the truth that people go through a lot to defend as well as to pursue their quest for religious satisfaction. Onyulo (2015) in the Washington Times News reveals the intense violent strife between Christians and Muslims such that many are willing to lose their lives while defending their beliefs. To concur with this, the WorldWatchMonitor News (2014) released the statistics that about 7 to 8000 Christians are murdered every year while many others experience faith-based discrimination. This goes to show the meaning that people attach to religion and how important it is to them. It is therefore crucial to analyse and determine how much influence religion has on gender issues, possibly evaluating if it accelerates or hinders the NGOs' efforts to empower women in Zimbabwe. The common religions are discussed below and literature is reviewed in order to determine how they contribute to gender inequality around the globe and in Zimbabwe.

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3.6.2.1 Christianity

With the demand for gender equality in all fronts by human rights activists, government and international bodies, the issues surrounding the status of women in religion has not escaped the attention of scholars and NGOs' gender experts (Mafa, 2014; Human Development Report, 2013; Zungura, 2012). The influence of religion in moulding a person's life propelled the researcher to evaluate whether religion does promote gender disparities or condemn them. Christianity may be seen as the most celebrated religion in Zimbabwe (Mawere et al., 2012) and many people make sacrifices to show their faith (WorldWatchMonitor News; 2014). As informed by literature in religious studies and the Bible, scriptures will be reviewed to assess their application to the Christian woman in Zimbabwe. The thoughts of the religious scholars will be consulted in an attempt to enrich the discussion through the use of their commentaries. From these, the acceptable behaviour of a woman in the biblical sense will be revealed, bearing in mind that these expectations influence how

women are treated in the religious society as far as politics, economics and household conduct is concerned. Ultimately, how women are regarded has a direct link on the interventions by gender NGOs. All verses will be extracted from the New Version International Bible (NIV).

3.6.2.1.1 Creation of Humanity and gender issues

In stressing out the existence of this subject, the researcher will trace it back to the biblical mythical origin of man-kind in order to understand the position of the first man and the first woman. This may assist to trace if these positions have changed with time. This then takes us to the first book of the bible, the book of Genesis 1 verse 26-27. -Then God said,

> "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them."

This direct extraction from the Holy Bible, believed to be written under the influence of the Holy Spirit (2 Timothy 3:16) seems to imply that God created males and females to co-exist and have dominion over other created things but not over each other. However, it appears as if the word 'man' is appearing more frequently and without being accompanied by the word woman. Whether this is because the word 'man' is an umbrella term that is being used to refer to people irrespective of their biological differences, or maybe that the emphasis is an indication of the distinction in supremacy between male and female human beings is vague (Njoroge, 2005). Another possibility is that maybe the translators of the bible used 'man' instead of 'people' or 'humanity' because of their gender biases (Rakoczy, 2009). Answering these questions may prove difficult if based only on an exclusive verse necessitating the consultation of other scriptures.

Fortunately, there seems to be a detailed account of how man and woman were created in Genesis 2 verse 18 (McArthur, 1997). The male, Adam was created first, but it was later discovered that he could not cope on his own. So, a —suitable helper Eve, had to be made for him. Seemingly, the debate on superiority of men over women lies in these details. Scholars such as Rakoczy, (2009), Claassens (2008) and Njoroge (2005) argue that the fact that Adam could not cope is a reflection of

men's inability to rule on their own without women by their side. This may be reinforced by the fact that indeed Adam had fish, animals and other creation to rule over and subordinate, but what he lacked was a partner, by his side exactly where the rib was taken from. In fact, in verse 23 (McArthur, 1997), Adam calls the woman "bones of my bones and flesh of my flesh" and verse 24 says the two would be "one flesh". Surely, this does not mean physical oneness, but probably the way of relating to each other and valuing each other, for one cannot enslave or rule over oneself.

However, those who insist on male supremacy on the other hand claim that Adam named Eve the same way he named animals, a sign of authority, except of course that he never claimed oneness with animals, neither were they extracted from him (Rakoczy,2009; Claassens; 2008). This argument is further extended to Genesis 3 verse 16 in the event familiarly known as –The Fall of man, not of man and woman (McArthur, 1997). This may help to reinforce the suggestion made earlier that where the bible speaks of 'man', it might be referring to humanity because this chapter informs us that both the male and the female did fall, despite the term coined to the event. The above-mentioned verse led to the punishment of toiling for food for man and increased labour pains for a woman. This may account for the polarization of man to the labour market and women to domesticity as has been practiced in many African countries including Zimbabwe (Baehr, 2013). Here, the Bible clearly says —Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you (McArthur, 1997) because it was a woman who was deceived by the snake. It is however not clear on the issue of submission in the text if it implies to one's own husband or to men in general. The researcher hopes that an analysis of the New Testament may shed light on the matter.

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3.6.2.1.2 Reviewing the New Testament: Judeo-Christianity and gender issues

The coming of Jesus in the Christian community has always been associated with the dawn of light, hope and liberty (John 10:10; John 1:4; Mathew 12:21). Isaiah prophesying the coming of this Messiah proclaims that he would bind the broken-hearted and proclaim freedom for the captives and prisoners (Isaiah 61 verse 1). The discussion that follows seeks to assess if the coming of Jesus lifted the burden of subordination and the subjugation of women.

3.6.2.1.3 Outlining the vertical hierarchical Christian relationship

Ascertaining the vertical hierarchical phenomenon is an attempt to unveil the position of a woman in the Christian community. In 1st Corinthians 11 verse 3 to 12, Paul explicitly says "...now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God" (McArthur, 1997). Here we see a directive in terms of superiority and authority running down from God to the woman. In a nutshell, the concept of domesticity and child rearing surfaces, extrapolating that a woman's obedience to God is through obedience to her husband. However, Masenya (1997) believes that this marks the genesis of subordination and subjugation when a woman's expected responsibility to appease the husband is not reciprocated with love since men in Ephesians 5 verse 33 are commanded to love their wives as they love themselves. This sounds similar to Adams' proclamation that Eve was one with him (McArthur, 1997). Interestingly, verse 19 says men should not be harsh to their women. As such, subjecting one's woman to violence and a state of inferiority is poignantly contrary to that command.

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However, no clear religious directives are given in cases where a man who is supposed to work does not succinctly hold the responsibility; or when the same man decides to oppress and suppress the woman such as beatings prevalent in many African countries (Kabeer, 2005). Another gap arises where the man does not love the woman as expected of him. How then is the woman expected to submit when there is no effort made to pin the man to love his wife as commanded? Therefore, there seems to be realities of life that the apostle Paul did not adequately address, given that we are living in a fractured world with imperfect conditions (McArthur, 1997). There should therefore be a way of sculpting all these scriptures, weighing them against the current times and realities to create a religious environment which is responsive to the needs of everyone. They should not leave many seemingly contrary loopholes that men may use to disempower a woman and strip her of the right to be equally treated, for this has silenced the voice of women in matters which concern them such as politics, economics and sexual health (Mafa and Kang'ethe, 2016; ILO, 2011).

3.6.3.2 Islam and the gender phenomenon

Unlike Christianity, the Muslim community in Zimbabwe is not very big (Chireshe and Chireshe, 2010). Gripaldo (2008) argues that while Christians are monotheists (believing in one God), believing in a personal and supernatural anthropomorphic (God is like us) God, Muslims on the other hand are monotheists but believes in a non-anthropomorphic God (they believe that God is not like human, he is impersonal). As such, the current research will probe around the status of Muslim women in Zimbabwe and project the hallmark of the religion.

3.6.3.2.1The Hallmark of Muslim in regard to women's status

Islam as an expanding religion especially in East Africa is not excluded from the scrutinizing eyes of the scholars, human rights activists and NGO platforms. Like any other religion, Islam moulds its followers' culture; way of life and this inevitably includes the status accorded to women through the eyes of men and of the society (Gripaldo, 2008; Baden, 1992). Chireshe and Chireshe (2010) lay a platform that Islam is a religion characterized by vast dimensions, and as such it lacks a monolithic framework to define its operations on gender aspects. Although Muslim is guided by the Shariah (Islamic Law) that is believed to have emanated from Allah, Baden (1992) argues that its interpretation varies as it depends on different contexts and this has given birth to the rising of the diverse perceptions in treating women. Concerning this, Baden (1992:3) has this to say:

> The different realities of Muslim women range from being strictly closeted, isolated and voiceless within four walls, subjected to floggings and condemned to death for presumed adultery, and forcibly given into marriage as a child, to situations where women have a far greater degree of freedom of movement and interaction, the right to work, to participate in public affairs and also exercise a far greater control over their own lives (Baden 1992; 3).

Despite all that, Aslam some scholars concur that the emergence of Islam accorded women many rights that they were previously denied of (King, 2009; Esposito, 1991; Hashmi, 2010). This may mean the restoration of legal identity, social and economic identity for Islamic women among others. Reinforcing this, Mir-Hossein (2006), Engineer (1992) and Esposito (1991) all agree that justice and equality is the hallmark governing the Islamic law, or at least during the time when Muhammad pioneered the religion.

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However, Hashmi (2010) laments that prior to Islam, culture deemed it a shame to have a girl child, such that many would bury their girl children alive. Who can comprehend the degree of shame that was associated with femininity if it meant burying ones' own children? It still remain to be found whether the theoretical benchmarks that defined Islamic religion then, are still prevalent and being upheld now. Perhaps the interpretation of the Quran is subject to the leader's preferences and values rather than on appeasing Allah. Tracing back to the founder of the religion, Ernst (2004) reveals that the wives of Muhammad functioned as his partners and supporters in the establishment of the new society and their leadership influence is said to have existed even after the sun set for the prophet. Shedding more light on this, Khadijah the wife, is believed to have encouraged Muhammad to start the religion and Warren (2008) stresses that the prophet continually sought advice and assistance from his wives on crucial issues that pertained to his calling. To this, it appears as if Islam is a catalyst of women empowerment together with gender NGOs.

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3.6.3.3.2 A flip-coin of the status of women in Islam

With the death of Muhammad, things changed and this brought a noticeable shift in the gender affairs of Muslime (Warren, 2008; Ernst; 2004). Of course, change is inevitable especially if accompanied by administrative changes. Subsequently, small changes lead to major changes. Engineer (1992) singles out the medieval ethos as responsible for depriving Muslim women of equal treatment, leading to the infringement of their rights. This led to the uprising of a patriarchal system where women became subjugated by their male counterparts (Beckett, 2005; Jackson, 2002). Possibly, this dawn of social injustice and the dominance of cultural practices made it practically impossible to maintain social justice and equality among Muslim women, evidently turning Islam into a challenge to the promotion of gender equality through NGOs.

As if that was not enough, it is in this period that arranged marriages surfaced because parents and guardians took the role of choosing suitors for their girl children, although this was once left sorely to the two people (Al-Faruqi, 2008; Mapuranga, 2010). This inconsistency poses a lot of unanswered questions on the interpretation of the Quran. Definitely, these variations are not because of the Quran

itself as it has not been edited from the original one. It however appears as if the welfare and affairs of women are left sorely in the hands of religious leaders who are mainly their male counterparts, who may biasedly want to maintain an environment that will always stifle women's efforts, as they move up the path of gender continuum aiming for empowerment through NGO efforts.

3.6.3.4 African Tradition Religion (ATR) against NGO's interventions

Zimbabwe, like any other African nation is guided by traditional practices that are embedded in the identity and diversity of its citizens. Tradition is usually preserved by customary custodians and is passed from one generation to the next through the process of socialization (Mapuranga, 2010; Witt, 1997; Kang'ethe and Rhakudu, 2010). As these traditional norms and values are internalized like any other form of religion and they influence the behaviour, expectations as well as the identity of a person.

3.6.3.4.1 Is Gender an Import or an African-embraced Concept?

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Africa's tradition includes a lot of aspects with regard to gender issues, dressing and other practices such as humanity and how to relate to one another (Chauraya, 2012). This may be attributed to the 'African Psyche" or cultural fusion across the continent. As far as gender is concerned, Oyewumi (2002) argues that the phenomenon was imposed on Africa's already existing culture through the process of modernization. The scholar further argues that it was during the industrialization epoch that the first wave of feminism arose in Europe. As such, the gender concept travelled the long journey to Africa both in place and through time (Chauraya, 2012; Oyewumi, 2002). In relation to this, the researcher is of the assertion that since gender is a socially constructed concept making a distinction between male and female, then gender is a universal concept. However, perhaps those who do not understand the concept may argue that it is a Western ideology because many of the gender NGOs, even in Zimbabwe are mainly funded by Western donors. Assuming that gender is an exotic phenomenon in Africa, the question then stands; is it possible through NGOs' interventions to permanently 'vacuum clean" an African psyche of all its internalized way of life, and to replace it with a seemingly strange thought? This is one of the questions that the current research will try to find an

answer to, considering that the government of Zimbabwe had women empowerment enlisted as one of its top three priority goals for 2015 MDGs targets (Malaba, 2006).

Chauraya (2012) reveals that what makes the whole gender aspects a developmental and social challenge is that Africans cannot make a distinction between sex and gender. This may mean that gender for Africans, including Zimbabweans is associated with natural and biological differences. Hence, the notion of fighting gender biases makes little sense to the custodians of ATR where sex and gender are inseparable and viewed as divinely ordained. In line with this, Jenkins (2009) posits that in the African view, life is unpredictable, unknown and seemingly uncontrollable, contrary to the Europeans who believe that humans have the power to change and determine their destiny. Maybe this explains why women subjugation was challenged first in Europe before its waves reached the African soil (Breines, 2002; Springer, 2002). This is in line with the argument by Esplen and Jolly (2006) that gender is learnt and so it can be unlearnt; meaning that one is born a female and becomes a woman, making a distinction between sex and gender.

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Referring to the ATR custodians, Chauraya (2012) further points out that for the ATR custodians, men will always be superior to women and as such, some women even reject gender policies and NGOs' intervention programmes because they have been so intertwined with this tradition and have now accepted it as their normal way of life. It then appears that the advocacy of equal rights and same social status by women NGOs is in direct conflict with the ATR where a patriarchal system is maintained and gender is defined through biological differences.

3.6.3.4.2 ATR in Zimbabwean and its impact on NGOs interventions

Zimbabwe has two main traditions which form the core of its existence, namely the Shona and Ndebele tribe. However, the point to note is that the ever-present conflicts and resentment that exist between the two tribes is not the thrust of the researcher but the influence religion has on the efforts by NGOs to promote women empowerment. Mawere et al. (2012) forward that ATR is the worship or reverent of God through ancestors (dead relatives) while in Christianity, it is through Jesus Christ. The authors further explain that ATR believes in spirit mediums and some people being able to communicate with the dead relatives. It is for this reason that ATR has been associated with such names as "dark continent", "juju", "paganism"

and "heathenism" (Mawere et al., 2012: 26). As such, Maluleke and Nadar (2002) in their assessment of ATR in relation to gender issues have bracketed and labeled gender socialization, culture and religion as covenants of death. This in simple terms is pin pointing the above-mentioned phenomena as the culprits behind all gender-related social ills such as poverty, HIV/AIDS and social injustice. Mapuranga (2010) concurs with these researchers contending that tradition in Zimbabwe indeed subjects women to vulnerability.

In the thesis, Mapuranga (2010) highlighted traditional practices that promote women subjugation in both the Shona and Ndebele tribes namely: *kuzvarira* (pledging of one's daughter to be married while still young); *kugara nhaka* (inheriting a relative's wife); *barika* (polygamy); early marriages; and female genital mutilation among others (Kang'ethe, 2015). Even though the fabric binding these practices is slowly fading away as the government and NGOs are challenging their prevalence, the scars can still be seen on a woman and the girl child today. More so, because this has been practiced for so long, even women have internalized the norms to an extent of embracing and defending the existence of these atrocities.

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McLymont (2013) in McLean (2015) reveals the interrelatedness of the Zimbabwean ATR and masculine concepts that tend to promote the oppression of women in the bible. What is concisely notable is the submissive expectation where women are not allowed to discuss or question the male's decisions even on matters that directly concern them. Probably, this culture has been pronounced by other patriarchal norms such that men are applauded for having multiple sex partners while women are shunned and ridiculed for exactly doing the same thing (Mafa and Kang'ethe, 2016; Kang'ethe, 2014; Patton, 1994).

However, it may be unfair to assume that ATR is a practice of the do's and don'ts that are meant to demean and undermine women. Mapuranga (2010) argues that ATR possess admirable virtues and practices that ensure harmony. For example, a child born in a family is not just for the biological parents, but for the extended family and the extended family contributes in disciplining and providing fees for the girl children. Kang'ethe and Mafa (2014) however, unearths that the family fabric that used to keep extended families as a single unit is slowly melting away and being

replaced with nuclear families mainly comprising of mother, father and children (Witt, 1997; Kaplan, 1991).

Remarkably, the deeply entrenched culture of respect in tandem with *unhu/ubunu* (humanity) in Shona and Ndebele respectively, also instils a sense of morality. McClymont (2013) in McLean (2015) forwards that humanity is a distinctive trait of Zimbabwe as it noticeably upholds the identity of the Zimbabweans. Given the effects of westernization and modernity (Mafa and Kang'ethe, 2016), the research will seek to find if these core values still have their sacredness and emphasis on how they impact the interventions by gender NGOs. Moreover, this will assist in evaluating how NGOs are diluting the dominance of ATR for the attainment of equality in Zimbabwe. The researcher believes that these questions will be answered as the research project unfolds.

3.6.4 Effects of Socialization on Gender NGOs' interventions

In as much as children are born with their own genetic make-up, they are born without any social knowledge of their surroundings (Witt, 1997). This includes the social norms and values upheld by the society (Mapuranga, 2010; Witt, 1997; Kaplan, 1991). It is through the process of socialization that demarcates between wrong and right, what is acceptable and unacceptable (Mapuranga, 2010; Sheldon, 1990). That process of acquainting a child with societal norms and values is what McLean (2015) terms socialization. In fact, the author emphasises on the importance of grafting these values, arguing that those who may dare to ask for any explanation may plainly be told 'That's how it has been and that's how it will always be."

Hence, this is a transformational process of a child by parents, teachers and adults into a socially and culturally adept citizen. Of importance here is the emphasis on the appropriateness of one's behaviour, including how women should behave or be treated, as expected by the majority of the society membership (ILO, 2011; Malaba, 2006). The process of socialization, however, should never be confused with acculturation, which is the reinforcement of a particular culture to be aligned with one's way of life - even though the two terms have a lot in common.

Under socialization, the researcher will shed more light on the agents of socialization, starting from the primary agents and extending to the secondary

agents. More so, a flashback on yester-socialization will aid in understanding how history has shaped contemporary socialization in terms of gender issues. NGOs as a platform for this research will be discussed in relation to their relevance as agents of socialization in Zimbabwe.

3.6.4.1 Agents of Socialization and Gender Dynamics

Socialization as a prolonged and continual way of social interaction does not occur in isolation. Instead, there are units of contact where ideas, values and norms are exchanged and instilled mainly from social custodians to younger generations (Mapuranga, 2010; Witt, 1997; Sheldon, 1990). This is what is termed agents of socializations and can be intimate or generalized, depending on the level and frequency of interaction. The notion of morality according to the moral development theory is determined by the process of socialization. Witt (1997) identifies the role of parents in socialization claiming that there is internalization of parental messages with regard to gender as well as an awareness of differences in sex roles. This suggests that primary agents such as the home, set foundational behaviours and expectations that are reinforced later by secondary agents. In addition to this, Kaplan (1991) states that socialization is a dual process where parents influence and children respond to the influence in behaviour.

A study of children's rooms by Pomerleau, Boldus, Malcuit and Cossette (1990) showed that girls' rooms were mainly pink with dolls while blue dominated in the boys' rooms with equipment, tools and cars. This may be seen as the genesis of the definition allotted to women and men with regard to work. Dolls may be associated with domesticity and childcare while tools and equipment point to the role of men as the legitimate candidate to work (Beckett, 2005). Witt (1997) laments that it is from this socialization process that children learn to adapt to gender roles that are mostly unfair to both sexes.

When parents encourage children to engage in sex-typed plays, (for example daughters playing with pots and dolls while boys play with cars and guns), this greatly influences their behaviour as well as their definition of gender roles. Sheldon (1990) claims that this is so apparent such that children may later on deny the possibility of what they may be told at school, if it is contrary to their gender expectation as defined at home. For example, children who are shown a female

doctor may trigger a denial response because in their mind, only men should be doctors. This brings their reality into a state of dilemma and confusion. Even when they grow up, they will tend to resist empowerment agents such as NGOs because they will be saying something contrary to what they have been socialized to.

3.6.4.2 Son-preference reflected in homes and its effects on gender issues

Witt (1997) notes son-preference and favouritism that may suggest that a boy child by nature is superior to the girl child. Hoffman (1977) in Witt (1997) who denotes that parents with daughters only may continue to have children until they give birth to a son supports this revelation. In Zimbabwe for example, a man can actually get a second wife or have an extra-marital affair in an attempt to have a male heir (Mapuranga, 2010). This suggests that these families are responsible for relaying societal mores from one generation to the next in order to achieve uniformity and a sense of belonging in social settings.

Notwithstanding, these agents of socialization may differ in their definition of right and wrong as there are always shades of grey when it comes to the notion of what is and what is not morally acceptable, even in regard to the treatment and position of women in the contemporary society. Perhaps, it is the prevalence of these disparities and inconsistencies that make gender parity difficult to attain (Human Development Report, 2013) as subjectivity surrounds these internalized social concepts. This indicates the difficulty terrain women NGOs have to tread on in an endeavour to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women. The researcher will now focus on NGOs as agents of women empowerment and gender equality in Zimbabwe.

3.7 Background on the genesis of generic NGOs

In Europe, Gilmurray (1979) affirms that NGOs can be traced back around the 1950s and 1960s, just after the end of the Second World War. The author further reveals that their formation was as a rise of the needy, such that the government was overwhelmed on its own. Supplementary services were sought to revive and awaken the ailing social, political and economic conditions of Europe, which had been wrecked by the callous period of war (Mostashari, 2005; Gilmurray, 1979). As such, NGOs initially intended to extend provision for welfare services in an attempt to aid

the lives of the people affected. NGOs were also promulgated to offer psychological counselling especially to individuals who experienced Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other mental problems associated with the war (Mostashari, 2005).

Gilmurray (1979) reveals that as the NGOs identified other social ills and areas needing developmental intervention, their thrust widened both in magnitude and intensity to cope with the demand. They then extended to take up advocacy roles, lobbying and mediation for the improved holistic welfare of the citizens. This witnessed the dawn of child welfare, welfare for the indigent individuals generally, more so women and the children (Sheafor and Horejsi, 2008; Segal et al., 2007). Some NGOs also rose to address the special needs for the ethnic minorities and the chronically ill who become susceptible to the ravaging effects of poverty, diseases and other dire needs. Despite NGOs having been formally established way before then, Mostashari (2005) argues that the term Non-Governmental Organization, or NGO as it is commonly known, was firstly used by the United Nations in 1945 as they sought to differentiate between specialized inter-governmental agencies from private organizations. This term was used in reference to any foundation or organization separate from the government that would further the interests of the general public either through lobbying, developmental projects or provision of welfare.

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3.7.1 Tracing the development of Gender-Focused NGOs in Zimbabwe

Even though women organizations in Zimbabwe originated in the 1980s, soon after independence, Essof (2013) is of the view that there was not much growth witnessed until the advent of a group from the university and professional class, causing a national liberation movement. These efforts were augmented with the formation of the Ministry of Community Affairs and Women's Development, which was established in 1981 giving an opportunity to bring gender-consciousness as well as to explore feminist issues. The main thrust of these women movements was to improve the living standards, increase the production of agricultural produce and the health and education sectors.

Although initially these organizations were side-by-side complementing the efforts of the government (Win, 2004), the 3rd World Conference on Women in 1985 marked

a turning point. It gave these NGOs a different perspective with discrimination against women taken as personal as any political agenda (Van eerdewijk and Mugadza, 2015). McFadden (2005) argues that these movements were frustrated with the snail-pace at which the government was taking to address this. So, they sought autonomy as their identity is described by the UN and the Private Voluntary Act of Zimbabwe. This may be seen as the genesis of the ever-present tension between the government and women's groups including NGOs. In fact, during this period, Essof (2013) reveals that some activists were arrested leading to the emergence of the Women Action Group (WAG) organization, an NGO with a critical voice that challenged the violation of women's rights.

3.7.2 Formation of Women Coalition of Zimbabwe for increased effectiveness

In response to the overwhelming challenges, the Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA) and Men of Zimbabwe Arise (MEZA) were founded in 2003 and 2006 respectively, urging men and women to press for a better Zimbabwe, which is characterized by social justice (Van eerdewijk and Mugadza, 2015). In response to the division and loyalty questions posed in women's movement, Women in Politics Support Unit (WIPSU) was established to increase the participation of women in political representation and decision-making (Van eerdewijk and Mugadza, 2015). The organization has a Constituency Effectiveness Programme which helps to nurture female Member of Parliament and acquaint them with political and legal roles Van eerdewijk and Mugadza, 2015). Up to this point, the women-movement NGOs in Zimbabwe were registered under any other generic NGO. It was in 2012 however when these women NGOs adopted their own name under which they could affiliate. Today, 79 NGOs have affiliated as Women Coalition of Zimbabwe (WCoZ) Van eerdewijk and Mugadza, 2015). This in simple terms means NGOs that are focusing on women issues. This is the term by which they are referred to in Zimbabwe. Below is a discussion on the forms of intervention strategies adopted by these gender NGOs in Zimbabwe.

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3.8 Interventions adopted by women NGOs to fight inequalities

Even though all gender NGOs may have the ultimate goal of attaining gender equality in Zimbabwe, they tend to intervene in different ways and specialize in different areas. Some of these areas are discussed below:

3.8.1 Gender-NGOs intervening through advocacy in Zimbabwe

Globally, gender-focused NGOs have been seen on the forefront of activism, advocating for the eradication of gender disparities in an attempt to ensure gender equality and gender sensitivity among the government and citizens (Essof, 2013; WOZA, 2009). Lekorwe (1999) asserts that in developing countries with the inclusion of Zambia, Mozambique and Zimbabwe, gender NGOs continue to bring light as their advocacy is bringing in radical change through information dissemination and awareness campaigns. In Zimbabwe, NGOs such as Zimbabwe Women Resource Network Centre, Tag a Life (TALI), Katswe Sistahood, Women of Zimbabwe Arise among others, are on the forefront, lobbying and encouraging citizen's participation for a better Zimbabwe (Essof, 2013). Issues such as the right to participate in the politics of the country, right to a better life and equal sharing of the opportunities and resources of the nation are emphasized through community outreaches and mobilization (Van eerdewijk and Mugadza, 2015). In addition, these NGOs are seen engaging communities, challenging societal and religious practices that are infringing on the reproductive and educational rights of women and girls. Financial support is given to the girl child and women who are willing to advance their education. Safety from gender-based violence and against violation of sexual rights is also emphasized on; from a legal, societal and health perspective (Masvaure, 2008).

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With Zimbabwe facing worrying HIV statistics and high mortality rates (UNAIDS Gap Report, 2014; MDG Status Report Zimbabwe, 2010), women NGOs are again advocating for these fundamental rights, distributing condoms and educating communities on the realities of the pandemic. Pressure is being put on the government in terms of provision of HIV treatment and the general welfare of people living with HIV (Zungura, 2012). In fact, Chokawarika (2011) opines that the existence and advocacy of NGOs is forcing the government of Zimbabwe to reconsider the position of women and this is evident in their implementation of policies that are gender-sensitive. After all, Women Coalition of Zimbabwe came to life primarily to be a voice of the women of Zimbabwe and this includes all areas of a woman in her totality. Hence, Lekorwe (1999) reckons that gender-NGOs in the human rights field sprung forth to remind the government that women's rights are universal rights that demand to be upheld, if the country's development is to improve.

3.8.2 Gender-NGOs challenging the government on the Political grounds

The colonial government through the enactment of restrictive laws such as the Unlawful Organization Act, restricted NGOs who wanted to bring the much needed radical change in the politics of the country (ICNL, 2015). As such, even NGOs carrying the mandate of women still find it difficult to break-through this ground to this day (ICNL, 2015; NANGO, 2006). It is therefore common to find out that NGOs seeking to promote female representation may be hesitant to pursue equality full-force. Well-established NGOs such as Women in Politics Support Unit (WIPSU) continue to put their feet onto this ground for the political emancipation of the women of Zimbabwe (Van eerdewijk and Mugadza, 2015).

This is in response to the SADC's call for increased women participation in politics as well as the New Gender Policy of Zimbabwe that is operational from 2013 to 2017. These NGOs challenges the government through traditional demonstrations and round-table discussions, challenging the government to honour the SADC call for the development of women in politics (Essof, 2004; Makamure, 2012). Their vision as argued by McFadden (2015) is to dilute the dominance of men in the political sect as women are empowered for political positions. WIPSU for example has been applauded for grooming women and empowering them with political information in order to give them a competitive edge against their male counterparts (Van eerdewijk and Mugadza, 2015). Further, communities are also encouraged to vote for women in local and parliamentary elections through information dissemination.

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3.8.3 NGOs erecting empowerment projects for economic development

Gore (1993) argues that gender takes a political and economic dimension. As such, women empowerment may be unsustainable and lacking if the economic status of women is not adequately addressed. This is closely in line with the government of Zimbabwe's Black Empowerment strategy as supported by the government of Zimbabwe's Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (ZimAsset), a programme that extends from October 2013 to December 2018 (Bonga, 2014). ZimAsset is the currently predominant trajectory that has been initiated by the Zimbabwean government in order to revive the economy for development of indigenous people (Government of Zimbabwe, 2014), even though Otto and Kutema

(2011) suggest that this policy was a self-serving campaign strategy by the ruling party, among other policies.

Given the economic situation that is facing both men and women in Zimbabwe (Mafa, 2014; Alao, 2012; Coltart, 2008), it is necessary to try and take positive steps that can aid the lives of people. As such, the gender NGOs have stepped up in order to maximize the opportunity for the recognition of women in this transition, central to the NGP's values of sustainable development, social equity and attainment of social justice. With domesticity and flooding of the informal sector as the well-known position of women in Zimbabwe, feminization of poverty and child poverty is common (Kang'ethe and Mafa, 2014; Bhatasara, 2011; Malaba, 2006). NGOs are therefore battling to turn the tables in order to find and secure the positions of women where they can be economically emancipated for their development through imparting entrepreneurial skills and sustainable projects (Kang'ethe and Serima, 2014; Mafa, 2014). Such skills as poultry, dressmaking, commercial farming and carpentry have been recorded as imparted on women in order to ensure their economic independence. With the high levels of unemployment, this may subsequently lead to employment creation.

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The intervention strategies employed by gender NGOs have been discussed, the researcher focuses on the effectiveness issues in relation to the attainment of women empowerment and gender equality in Zimbabwe.

3.9 Effectiveness of Gender-Focused NGOs in Zimbabwe

Over the past years, the world has witnessed an increase in the number of NGOs (Mostashari, 2005; Gilmurray, 1979). Obviously, this has been accompanied by a dire need for funds to sustain this new development and the interventions thereof. This increase in funding has prompted the need to identify the effectiveness of these NGOs, possibly in order to channel funds where they can be optimized efficiently and for the intended purpose. Mitchell (2010) however, maintains that there is a lack of relevant, credible and accessible information detailing an appraisal of NGOs' interventions. Concurring with the above statement, Riddell et al. (1997) explains:

> "...a repeated and consistent conclusion drawn across countries and in relation to all clusters of studies is that the data are exceptionally poor. There is a paucity of data and information from which to draw firm conclusions about

> the impact of projects, about efficiency and effectiveness, about sustainability, the gender and environmental impact of projects and their contribution to strengthening democratic forces, institutions and organizations and building civil society. There is even less firm data with which to assess the impact of NGO development interventions beyond discrete projects, not least those involved in building and strengthening institutional capacity, a form of development intervention whose incidence and popularity have grown rapidly in the last five years." (Riddell, et al., 1997: 99).

In line with the above statement and the growing need for donors and other stakeholders pushing for evaluation reports, Plan International (2000) reveals that NGOs are doing meta-evaluation of the methods they use for interventions as well as synthesizing their results. Just as the current research is on appraisal of NGOS in the gender field, the impact assessment was discussed as a means to evaluate the effectiveness of NGOs' interventions. This is discussed below:

3.9.1 Impact Assessment: Checking for the effectiveness of NGOs

Mitchell (2010) strongly argues that donors want to support effective NGOs as much as NGOs want to be effective in their interventions and to relay their effectiveness to the government, donors and to the recipients of their services. However, Davies (2001) communicates that there seems to be a problem even though it is not very clear whether the NGOs know what ought to be done or how to do it, or maybe they are just limited by their inability to evidence the impact of their involvement and achievements. Mitchell (2010) further explains that there are definition challenges on issues of how well to define 'effectiveness', 'achievement' or 'empowerment' especially in women empowerment issues. These are very subjective terms and finding a common ground may prove to be a challenge. For example, does holding an educational workshop on the rights of women qualify as an effective intervention strategy? Again, is effectiveness only dependent on what the NGOs do, or also on the reception of the recipients? These are some of the confusion that cloud effectiveness, achievement and appraisal issues, in trying to determine the impact of gender NGOs.

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3.9.2 Defining Impact for effectiveness

In defining impact, Davies (2001) forwards that this is an achievement made in terms of changing people's standards of living. This may mean the positive difference that NGOs have brought in the lives of the girl child and women as far as their social

position, political, economic situation and educational standards are concerned. This leads to the effectiveness of their interventions as far as attaining gender parity and women empowerment in Zimbabwe matters. In congruency with the above definition, Blankenberg (1995) posits that:

> 'Impact concerns **long-term** and **sustainable changes** introduced by a given intervention in the lives of beneficiaries. Impact can be related either to the specific objectives of an intervention or to unanticipated changes caused by an intervention; such unanticipated changes may also occur in the lives of people not belonging to the beneficiary group. Impact can be either positive or negative, the latter being equally important to be aware of.'
>
> (Blankenberg, 1995) cited in INTRAC (2001: 2)

Mitchell (2010) further argues that a proper evaluation of an institution's intervention is defined in terms of goal achievement, stakeholder satisfaction, flexibility, staff competency and resource utility. This is closely linked to INTRAC (2001) and Davies' (2001) assertion that participation is crucial in determining the impact and effectiveness of an organization's interventions - in this case gender NGOs. In community development, one of the methods of Social Work- participation of the intended grass roots people and community members is considered essential as far as the sustainability of any project is concerned (Segal et al., 2007). It is then the participation of the targeted population that ensures that the undertaken projects bring positive outcomes for the empowerment of women.

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Nonetheless, undeniable is that some of the developments and interventions by Women NGOs are immeasurable, even though Riddell et al. (1997) argue that they are verifiable through feedback from stakeholders and all associated parties. This reinforces the importance of participation in gender issues by all citizens in order to evaluate whether the interventions have yielded positive and negative results as proposed by the National Gender Policy of Zimbabwe (Mulenga et al., n.d).

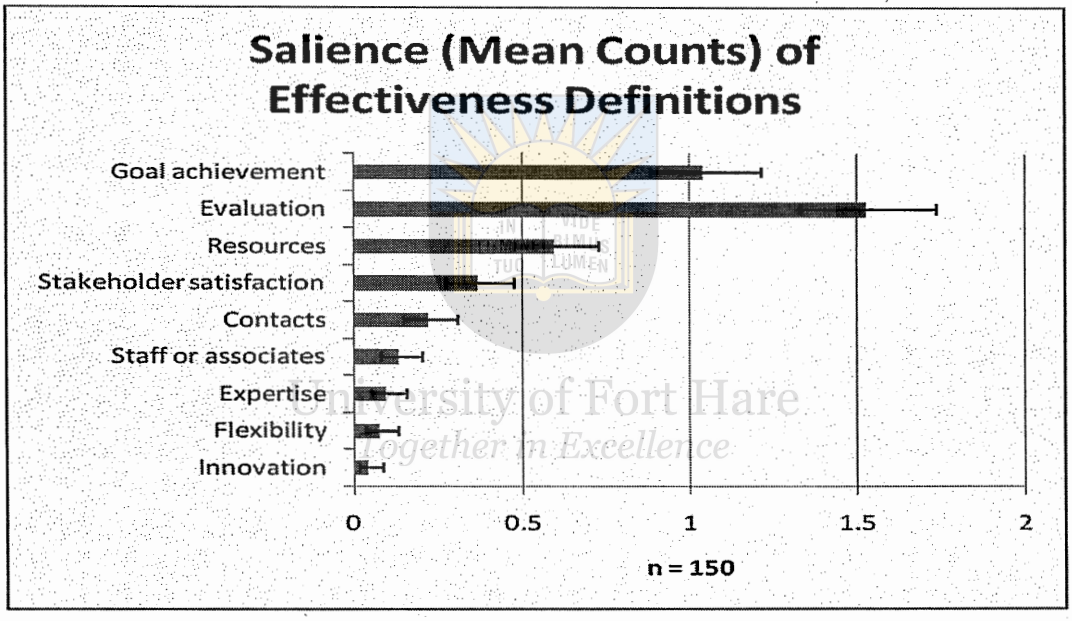
3.9.3 Factors to look out for when evaluating the effectiveness of NGOs

Firestone (1987) cited in INTRAC (2001) establishes that qualitative research methodologies are key in appraising and determining the impact, especially of NGO's developments that are incalculable. The author further elaborates that qualitative methodologies overcome abstractions inherently prevalent in quantitative

studies because these obstructions have led to limited information on the impact of NGOs in eradicating social ills such as gender disparities (Mitchell, 2010; Davies, 2001; Esttrella and Gaventa, 1998; Riddell et al, 1997).

Mitchell (2010) undertook a research to determine important factors that should be assessed if an appraisal of an NGO is to be made. The diagram of the findings is given below:

Fig 4.1 Important factors determining the effectiveness of an NGO



(Source: Mitchell, 2010)

Evidently as portrayed by the diagram above, goal achievement, an evaluation by external experts, resource utility and stakeholder satisfaction are of greater importance even though staff flexibility and other factors should not be underestimated. In support of Mitchell, Riddell et al. (1997) is of the view that when an appraisal is being made, activities of an NGO should be compared with the plan of action while income and expenditure should be weighed against the budget. Some of the factors mentioned above are then discussed below in order to relate them to the appraisal of an NGO.

3.9.4 The Internal structure of NGOs: Issues of effectiveness

The internal structure of an organization mainly includes the administrative set-up (Daoanis, 2012) which is essential in informing the researcher of the operations that

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may determine the success or failure of NGOs promoting women empowerment in Zimbabwe.

3.9.4.1 Administrative structure of gender-based NGOs

In order to enable for a proper appraisal of the NGOs in the gender mainstream, it is highly important to lightly discuss the administrative structure of these organizations. With a country marred with an economic meltdown (Alao, 2012), the high prevalence of corruption (Mashava and Ncube, 2015; Colhart, 2008) and misuse of funds, the researcher has thought it necessary to review on this matter as it may assist in revealing how the set-ups of NGOs affect the effectiveness of their interventions in eradicating gender disparities in Zimbabwe. As such, issues of accountability and staffing will be discussed below:

3.9.4.2 NGOs and accountability - Why NGOs need to give account

In as much as every NGO is registered as a non-profit making organization according to the PVO Act of Zimbabwe, it is crucial to ensure accountability in order to avoid mismanagement and embezzlement of funds. By this, the researcher is suggesting that it is not out of the ordinary that some may initiate an NGO with a hidden agenda to enrich themselves, all in the name of making a difference to the disadvantaged. In regard to this, Cavill and Sohail (2007) argue that in order to ensure transparency, NGOs ought to prove their legitimacy through auditing of their accounts as this has a huge bearing on the attainment of the goal of attaining gender parity. If there is no way of knowing how the resources are being used by NGOs, this might escalate into issues of abuse of power and abuse of funds, where there is no track of funds as it may negatively affect the intervention strategies by NGOs. Such unacceptable behaviour authenticates the need for NGOs to account in order to protect the rights and well-being of the citizens of Zimbabwe.

Through accountability then, quality control of the services provided to the beneficiaries is made easier and this should be able to increase performance and ultimately the attainment of gender equality in Zimbabwe, because gaps can easily be identified and solutions sought. The POV Act of 1996 (Chapter 5, Section 5.10) requires that the books should be audited annually for transparency and as a corruption-curbing strategy.

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3.9.4.2.1 To whom do NGOs account?

Lekorwe and Mpabanga (2007) establish that accountability can be seen as a formal report that gives a detailed account narrating how the funds were used, whether or not the targets were met and reasons for the shortfalls. This is a multi-levelled administrative task that should be presented either verbally or using a hard copy to different stakeholders concerned. Lekorwe and Mpabanga (2007) emphasize on the need for NGOs to account, but it is Cavil and Sahail (2007) who go a step further in identifying three important levels of accountability as given below:

- ***Upward accountability***

In Zimbabwe, all NGOs including those in the gender field are expected to give account of their operations to the government as well as the National Association of NGOs (NANGO), an umbrella body of NGOs in Zimbabwe. It is also the PVO Act's requirement that all foreign and local NGOs of all forms and sizes should observe (Human Rights Watch, 2004). Considering that NGOs in Zimbabwe are now required to register annually, a lack of this accountability may actually lead to some NGOs facing termination of their operating licenses. Also, NGOs ought to give revenue and expenditure break-downs to their donors in order to ensure continual sponsorship especially in Zimbabwe where securing donors is becoming harder every day (Adebanjo, n.d). This is crucial in determining the impact made by the resources available as far as women empowerment and gender parity are concerned.

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- ***Downward accountability***

It is important to note that the funds from donors are not meant for NGOs to use as they please. Instead, they are entrusted to relay the resources to the people, women and girls in Zimbabwe (Zungura, 2012; Nelson, 2007). Therefore, there is a demand for NGOs to go to the grassroots people, the beneficiaries of their services and give an account of how they have allocated and prioritized the resources received, evidencing their progress and shortfalls. It will evidently instill confidence in the beneficiaries in that they will feel valued as participation is a crucial principle that ascertains ownership of any development project, thereby leading to sustainability (Zastow, 2010; Segal et al., 2007). Accountability is also

a rapport building exercise that can strengthen the relationship of NGOs' representatives with the beneficiaries of their services.

- ***Horizontal accountability***

NGOs, especially those affiliated under WCoZ have a sisterhood relationship (Van eerdewijk and Mugadza, 2015), mainly because they have the same vision - which is the attainment of gender equality and the empowerment of the girl child in Zimbabwe. They might have their differences but they engage in referrals and support to ensure that they all realize their goal. This then calls for horizontal accountability to sister-organizations as well as other professional peers and staff members. This is essential for communicating progress, planning purposes as well as in prioritizing projects (Mitchell, 2010).

3.9.5 Impact of gender-NGOs in Zimbabwe

Criticism of the state's authoritarianism in the early to late 1990s and on structural adjustment in economic programmes affected the lives of women and children, leading to increased civil society movement (McFadden, 2005; Win, 2004). As such, advocacy, legal reform, protests and mobilization sprouted with voluntarism and solidarity in an attempt to cope with the increasing numbers of women in need (Van eerdewijk and Mugadza, 2015). This witnessed the birth of some of the giants NGOs focusing on gender issues in Zimbabwe, that is the Musasa Project in 1988, the Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre Network (ZWRCN) in 1990 and the Women AIDS Support Network in 1999 (Van eerdewijk and Mugadza, 2015). These NGOs have been accredited for advising the government on policy issues as well as challenging the government on governance issues. Policy amendments have been witnessed as well as a formulation of policies that are gender-sensitive, in order to correct the skewedness that forces women into a state of despondency (Gudhlanga et al., 2012). A new consciousness and vibrant activism then followed these births between 1990 and 1999. This was a turbulent period marked with Economic Structural Adjustment (ESAP) in 1991. Financial conditions which were imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank led to a fall in the government's expenditure on education, health and other social services and this adversely ravaged the life of a woman and female-headed households (Kang'ethe and Mafa, 2014; McFadden, 2005).

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Women NGOs responsively increased as they stepped in the gap to effectively eradicate emerging social challenges, with the establishment of the Girl Child Network (GCN) and Zimbabwe Women Legal Association (ZWLA) in 1992 (Van eerdewijk and Mugadza, 2015). Advocacy against poverty, governance and participation strengthened against the backdrop of political resistance and other challenges (Essof, 2013). The economic dependence state of women has since been challenged by gender NGO as they seek to economically and educationally empower women in Zimbabwe. Funding and resources are being sort as gender equality and women empowerment is being prioritized, although the political and economic environment is contrary. These are some of the positive achievements that NGOs have recorded in relation to women empowerment and gender equality in Zimbabwe. The challenges thwarting the effectiveness of interventions by gender NGOs are discussed below.

3.10 Challenges faced by Women NGOs in Zimbabwe

An appraisal of gender NGOs may not be complete until the highlights are weighed against the challenges faced by women empowerment NGOs in Zimbabwe. It is only after identification of these drawbacks that a solution can then be sought, for increased efficiency and the attainment of gender parity. Below are some of the challenges.

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3.10.1 Restrictive laws

The formal recognition of women NGOs in Zimbabwe was closely followed by the opening of national boundaries which enabled attendance of the UN conference in Cairo and the 4th World conference on Women in Beijing in1995 and this created a platform for women participation in matters that concern them (Van eerdewijk and Mugadza, 2015). This is a period that demanded great attention and intervention on the impact of HIV/AIDS and women's reproductive rights. This again was not without resistance as the law still intended to promote gender biases as the Women Movement organizations were faced with women's denial of their right to inheritance (Win, 2004). McFadden (2005) calls this the contingent of women's citizenship through the use of biased and seemingly tilted laws. In line with this, Win (2004: 23) concurs that, —It was patently clear by 1997 that the biggest problem underlying the Zimbabwe policy was the governance framework "that is the constitution". Perhaps,

restrictive policies coupled with political resistance may be a reflection of the government's reluctance to commit to the change that these women organizations were seeking.

3.10.1.1 The NGO Bill and its effects on the interventions by NGOs

Recently, according to ICNL (2015) the government of Zimbabwe gazetted the NGO Bill with harsh and strict rules by which all NGOs must adhere to. Failure to observe such restrictions may lead to the ceasing of the permit or license to operate as an NGO. Increased deteriorating relations among the government and NGOs, churches, independent media and Trade Unions as revealed by Van eedewijk and Mugadza (2015) and McFadden (2005) prompted the crafting of this Bill. This piece of the law was gazetted with the objective "to provide for an enabling environment for the operations, monitoring, and regulation of all non-governmental organizations", although it was deemed to be violating the constitution (ICNL, 2015). For this reason, the anti-NGO Bill activists argue that it has been put in place by the government on a fast-track to frustrate NGOs' operations as the government suspected them to be allies with the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), the opposition party (Osrim, 2001). Evidently, this is contradictory to the "freedom of association" right that is stated in the Constitution of Zimbabwe under the Private Voluntary Organization Act of 1996, since there was no concrete evidence to validate accusations of partisan. Instead, the bill clearly awards the government the right to oversee and control the NGOs' operations.

Moreover, the bill gives power to the Ministry of Public Services, Labour and Social Welfare over the decision to appoint the NGO Council - a board in charge of the registration and deregistration of NGOs (Human Rights Watch, 2004). Despite that, there is a further burden that has been put on NGOs that include annual registration and an annual registration fee to go with. The Zimbabwe's NGO Bill further denies local NGOs that are involved in 'issues of governance', access to foreign funding (clause 17) and it also prohibits the registration of any foreign NGO engaged in 'issues of governance'. The bill defines 'issues of governance' as any act that involves the promotion of human rights and political involvement. Van eedewijk and Mugadza (2015) however are of the view that the sanctions imposed from the USA and the European Union on the government of Zimbabwe stopped the government-

to-government assistance leading to the aid being channeled directly to the NGOs instead. The bill is therefore known to be the counter-attack of the government, targeting western donor-sponsored NGOs involved in democracy and human rights activism.

3.10.2 Political and economic challenges

As if the restrictive laws were not enough, the sharp decline in Zimbabwe's economy, which started in 1997 accelerating economic crisis led to unprecedented strike, food riots and intensified pressure on the government from NGOs to open up political space (Van eerdewijk and Mugadza (2015). This meant more protests, picketing and radical advocacy by these NGOs as they sought to better the lives of Zimbabweans especially of women and children (Mafa, 2014; Musekiwa, 2013). Manifestations of poverty, unemployment and other related challenges put intense pressure on the already strained resources of NGOs, thereby increasing the number of the people in need.

With the governance of the sitting government already in question (Coltart, 2008; Tevera, 2015), the political environment of Zimbabwe continued to worsen as the ruling party adopted uncalculated policies in an effort to secure their political dominance. Notably so, after the "NO" vote against the 2000 Referendum, there was a political shift in the country and this led to fragmentation and confusion on the landscape of women movement in Zimbabwe (Van eerdewijk and Mugadza, 2015). In 'disarray' (Win, 2004), McFadden (2005: 15) argues that the claims were that "...the consequences of teaming up with male dominated structures in the struggle for social justice at the national level must receive urgent feminist interrogation". It seemed as if women movement was now associated with partisan, hence their entanglement in the political fuse. This adversely affected the effectiveness, form and shape of women movement in Zimbabwe as international sanctions slammed on Zimbabwe affected the relationship of these NGOs with their western donors. With reduced funding, the interventions by NGOs were greatly affected, compromising the attainability of gender equality and women empowerment in Zimbabwe.

3.10.3 The challenge of limited coverage

With the unfavourable economic challenges as outlined above and supported by Alao (2012) and Coltart (2008), this may mean the increase of women and children in need of legal, social and financial assistance. Given the reduced funding and political challenges, it is possible that some NGOs in women issues may have closed or downsize as the economic challenges take their toll on them. Sadly still, the information gathered from the Women Coalition of Zimbabwe's database revealed that there are only 79 NGOs dealing with women issues in Zimbabwe, with 65 of them situated in Harare. The ZimStats (2012) estimated the population of Zimbabwe to be at 14 million and that of Harare to be 1.5 million. When this population is compared with the number of NGOs, the issue of coverage may be a challenge as it may be difficult for everyone to get the required assistance. Mostashari (2005) in regard to this reveals the pressure that mounts upon the civil society in cases where the government fails to meet the socio-economic demands of its citizens as is the case in Zimbabwe. More so, Essof (2013) reveals that even though there has been an increase of gender NGOs in Zimbabwe, the number is still significantly below the needed NGOs if gender gaps are to be adequately and speedily filled for parity in Zimbabwe.

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3.10.4 Funding and budgeting challenges of Zimbabwe's NGOs

The issue of funding and budgeting in the NGO sector, of which those in the gender field are not an exception, is very critical. This is so mainly because NGOs have to strategize on their own to source funds from donors. Financial sustainability according to Layton (2006) mainly determines the closure or the functioning of an NGO. Layton (2006) further reveals that many NGOs are entangled with a dependency syndrome such that this has crippled their financial base. For women NGOs, having to depend on the donors that may be inconsistent in honouring their promises makes budgeting a hassle in many NGOs because many times they will be working with estimated promises, rather than available cash that is within their reach and control. Smith and Bornstein (2001) and Lekorwe (1999) concur with this view lamenting that NGOs generally are failing to be financially self-sustaining and this is causing financial instability, downsizing and sometimes closure of these organizations.

3.10.4.1 Government of Zimbabwe's attempt to hijack NGOs' funding

In 2014, the former Minister of Information Professor Jonathan Moyo, recommended that funding from the international donors to Civil Society Organizations be diverted to the government as an alternative (ICNL, 2015). His justification for this controversial statement was that, channeling of aid through NGOs was equivalent to the disapproval of the sitting government. With all these restrictions and complications, the responsiveness of the government in appreciating the efforts of the NGOs in the attainment of gender equality becomes questionable as it seems like all governmental efforts are channeled towards frustrating the NGOs (Essof, 2013; McFadden, 2005). Whether this is due to the government's state of political insecurity and the supposedly influence and manipulation of the West to NGOs, remains unknown. However, what is clear is that the government is financially detached from financing gender NGOs and with the reduced international sponsorship, resource shortages seems to negatively affect the pace at which gender parity is reached in Zimbabwe. The researcher moves on to discuss the relationship between the NGOs and the government of Zimbabwe in an attempt to reveal whether the government is a promoter or inhibiter to the attainment of gender equality in Zimbabwe.

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3.11 NGOs and Government - nature of the relationship

As already outlined in the political-economy theory, the influence and attitude of the government towards NGOs and their operations should never be underestimated as this has a bearing on the effectiveness of such organizations. More is discussed below:

3.11.1 Government as an overseer of NGO operations

Any government according to the constitution is accountable for the well-being of its citizens (Constitution of the Republic of Zimbabwe, 2013; Osrim, 2001). Constitutionally then, every NGO is governed by the requirements of the host government. It is therefore the responsibility of the government to craft policies, put in place programmes and laws that pertain to women empowerment and the attainment of gender equality in Zimbabwe, by which NGOs should adhere to. This

relationship then entails NGOs abiding by the rules of the government, even though they are separate entities.

In Zimbabwe, the government of Zimbabwe has crafted various policies including the National Gender Policy which gives guidelines as to how gender issues are handled in Zimbabwe (UNDP, 2013; Mulunga et al., n.d). By gazetting the NGO Bill of 2004 and other policies therefore, the government was probably attempting to keep NGOs in check, lest they operate outside the expectations of the government. The government of Zimbabwe through the Ministry of Public Services, Labour and Social Welfare holds the power to approve or reject the registration of any NGO (Human Rights Watch, 2004). As such, they have total control to deny any NGO the license to operate in the event that they feel threatened or unsettled by their agenda. For example, due to intimidation, many NGOs are hesitant to trade in any political affairs and clause 17 of the NGO Bill clearly makes restrictions in the political arena. The NGOs Code of Ethics then operates as a bench mark to highlight the 'dos' and 'don'ts' of the NGOs' operations even in the gender field.

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3.11.2 NGOs and government as partners

There are some collaborative relationships that are prevalent among NGOs and the government as supported by Zungura (2012) and Adebanjo (n.d). NGOs and the government have been seen supplementing each other's efforts for the development of the country. This does not in any way mean that the government of Zimbabwe is always in conflict with NGOs. There are cases where women NGOs and the government partner, especially on matters that are not political. NGOs according to Davies (2001) and Riddell et al. (1997) are applauded for their ability to reach the people at grass roots level while the government is known for policy crafting. Therefore, this collaborative relationship involves NGOs advising the government on how best to improve the lives of people, leading to policy amendments and other necessary implementations that are done in the parliament.

3.11.3 Rivalry and suspicion between the government and NGOs

Arguably, NGOs are said to be independent from the government, but this is just on paper because realistically, the two are connected in more ways than one. Even in Africa including Zimbabwe, for the legitimacy of an NGO, Ullberg (2010) argues that

this heavily depends on the politics of the sitting government. While it remains logical that many governments oversee the operations of NGOs in order to ensure transparency and efficiency (Lewis, 2005; Human Rights Watch, 2004), some governments are too tight on their grip such that the environment created makes it hard or impossible to effectively pursue any desired agenda. According to Zungura (2012), some countries especially those with questionable political gimmicks, appear to display a hostile attitude towards NGOs as though they were political rivals. Of course, this cannot be applied to all countries especially the more developed world as they are more tolerant and welcoming to these development bodies.

In Zimbabwe however, literature reveals that there has always been an antagonistic relationship between the two (Adebanjo, n.d; McFadden, 2005; Essof, 2013). This conflict according to the ICNL (2015) begun with the colonial government as they restricted NGOs from operating in the other sects of development such as the political and human rights terrain. Possibly, this is because politics and the economy are the central affairs of any government as emphasized by the political-economy theory (Scott, 2006). It seems as if many governments are territorial on the political and economic aspects of the country because even women in the three waves of feminism faced such resistance (Breines, 2002; Springer, 2002). After independence in Zimbabwe, Win (2004) reveals that at some point in time, gender NGOs and the new government were working hand in hand for the development of the newly born Zimbabwe. A drift then occurred when all NGOs sought autonomy due to the differences that rose with the government (McFadden, 2005). This enmity was aggravated by the dawn of the MDC political party in 1999 mainly because it mushroomed from civil society where gender-based NGOs stemmed from. This was the first opposition party to openly and fiercely challenge the ruling government. Hence, organizations in advocacy were suspected of supporting MDC.

Makamure (2012) reveals that in Zimbabwe, the ruling party especially during election times harasses NGOs including the gender organizations as they are accused of being puppets of the MDC and the Western countries. These violent attacks are so intense that many women activists especially those advocating against political oppression have been arrested in the past, some tortured and women raped (Essof, 2013; Makamure, 2012; Masvaaure and Wamwanduka, 2008). WOZA has registered about 8000 members since its establishment and more than

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3000 of the members at some point in time were held in custody for more than 48 hours and more than once (Asoka, 2012; WOZA, 2009). Apart from that, the elections held in 2000, 2001, 2005, 2008 and 2013 were marred with violence (Essof, 2013; Makamure, 2012; Masvaure and Wamwanduka, 2008;) and this made other activists to lie low and possibly others gave-up, in fear for their lives.

This goes to show that operating as an NGO in Zimbabwe can be life threatening, especially if someone demands their rights and autonomy from the government. This calls for NGOs to embark on awareness for good governance and influence the government to enact policies that are responsive to the well-being of not just the citizens but also the NGOs that are brokers and mediators of service delivery as proposed by the Human Right Forum (2013). If this antagonistic relationship is not resolved, the attainment of gender parity in Zimbabwe may be compromised, leading to continual subjugation of women and the girl child.

3.12 Conclusion

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The chapter sought to discuss the gender issues in Zimbabwe as well as to discuss the policy environment that sculpt and direct NGOs and other philanthropic organizations in the gender field. The processes and manifestations of gender disparities in Zimbabwe have been elaborated on in order to clarify and give a glimpse of the circumstances that NGOs focusing on gender issues are dealing with. The nature of relationship between the government of Zimbabwe and gender-NGOs has also been explored on in an effort to evaluate the effectiveness of the interventions by NGOs for the attainment of women empowerment and gender equality in Zimbabwe. The next chapter focuses on the research methodology which has been used in the current study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

Research methodology is a plan that outlines the processes of data collection, the choosing of study respondents and the way the researcher carried out the data analysis processes. This chapter brings clarity on the research approach that was chosen for the current study as well as justifying why the particular approach was preferred. Concerning this, Bryman (2012) and Idemudia (2008) argue that cautious consideration must be taken when choosing an approach that is relevant to the objectives and purpose of the research.

Apart from that, this chapter provides the foundational framework detailing how the researcher gained entry into the community for data collection. A detailed narration of the fieldwork process, challenges faced as well as the study limitations that were encountered is given in an attempt to orient the reader to the practicality of the process. The importance of the research methodology lies in its ability to justify the design, analysis and approaches used in relation to the research topic and the aim thereof as broken down into research questions and assumptions.

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As such, the research methods of a study should not be taken lightly as they form the epistemological and ontological groundings of the study (Greasley, 2008). This includes the philosophical debates that are put forward by various scholars in trying to emphasize the relevance of one method over the other. Pertinently also, other aspects and several factors utilized are explained in the subsequent pages.

4.2 Research Paradigm

To understand the study's research design, it is pertinent to discuss its paradigm. This is because the paradigm is an important component of the research design after topic conceptualization (Creswell, 2009). The current study espoused both the qualitative and quantitative paradigms, but leaning more on the qualitative assumptions. Nevertheless, the research likewise relates with the quantitative assumptions. The following discusses this study's paradigm.

Ontological assumption

This assumption is concerned with the nature of the world and people in social settings. Ontologically, the research was largely subjective (Denzin and Lincoln, 2010) as informed by multiple participants' ideas surrounding gender issues in Zimbabwe. There were also minor elements of objectivity and singularity from the quantitative information (Greasley, 2008; Mellenbergh, 2008).

Epistemological assumption

The epistemological assumption focuses on the relationship between the researcher and the participants as well as the respondents on how the data was collected (Creswell, 2009). To a greater extent, the researcher interacted with the participants for the qualitative information (interviews and focus group discussions). A detached relationship was maintained for quantitative data.

Axiological assumption

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An axiological assumption examines the role of the values in relation to the level of bias (Yeasmin and Rahman, 2012). Axiologically, the research to a greater extent interacted with participants for key informant interviews and focus group discussions. The trustworthiness of the findings was therefore increased through the triangulation which was made possible with the quantitative data.

Rhetorical assumption

This assumption discusses the language used in the research (Creswell, 1994). Informal and personal voices were mainly used in the qualitative paradigm while formal and impersonal standards were incorporated in the questionnaire used for the survey.

Methodological assumption

The methodological assumption concerns itself with the research process and analysis (Bryman, 2012; Creswell, 1994). Largely, the inductive process was utilized, with increased trustworthiness and context-bound verbatim. In addition, the deductive and generalizable process was utilized for the quantitative paradigm.

4.3 Research approach

The researcher espoused both the qualitative and quantitative research approaches. The mixed method approach was found to be the most applicable because it maximized the strengths of both the qualitative and quantitative methodologies (Bowen, 2005; Hunt, 1991). However, even though the researcher has used both approaches, the research is predominantly qualitative; and to a lesser extent quantitative. The quantitative method was incorporated for confirmatory and complementary purposes, as well as to improve the validity and reliability of the research findings. The paragraphs below explore further on the two research approaches, revealing why the mixed method approach was preferred for the current study.

4.3.1 Qualitative Research Approach

The qualitative research approach is founded on its phenomenological base which views human behaviour as a product of the interaction of people with the world around them (Denzin and Lincoln, 2010). The approach allowed the incorporation of several human characteristics and behaviour codes manifested during the data collection process. Such included body language codes such as sighing, hesitation and emotional language that added vital value to the analysis of the collected data. The process was predominantly inductive in nature in that it taped into what the research participants contain within themselves. Babbie and Mouton (2001) praise its inductive approach to social phenomena explaining that it deviates from the deductive quantitative norm where the researcher starts the research with an already existing frame of reference. Instead, the qualitative researcher delves into the natural setting, allowing systematic formation of themes as data collection enrols.

Emphasis here was focused on the perspectives, feelings and views of the participants on social issues. This is directly contrary to the quantitative deductive style where deductive frames are used as benchmarks upon which analysis is based (Tewksbury, 2009). In this way, the research was enriched with valuable information that gave detailed insights to the issue at hand. In the current research, the qualitative approach tapped into deep insights, feelings, thinking and attitudes from the research participants who were selected from particular NGOs that are dealing with gender and women empowerment.

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2010), qualitative research encompasses personal values into the study, thereby enabling meticulous information to be incorporated in the findings. This brings life, meaning and mobility to voiceless matter that surrounds humanity. The transformation of this matter into useful data for the current study occurred through the use of field notes, conversations, observations and recordings. Qualitative researchers believe that this form of inquiry can be viewed as naturalistic, anthropological and interpretive (Denzin and Lincoln, 2010; Creswell, 2009). This, in their view is a way to bring realistic and unrestrictive meaning to bulky and meaningless data.

According to Creswell (2009), it is the interaction skills and observation, sometimes augmented with participation that highlights the significance of qualitative inquiry. Participation is like stepping into the shoes of the participants to have a feel of how they view the social environment. Denzin and Lincoln (2010: 4) put an emphasis on this, stating that in order to extract comprehensive and exhaustive data "...qualitative research allows for the use and collection of a variety of empirical materials from case studies, personal experience, introspection, life story, in-depth interviews, artifacts, and cultural texts and productions, along with observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts—that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives". This notion of 'getting close' to respondents gives unfathomable insights that are crucial to aid on the importance of any research project.

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The researcher was also a vital tool in lubricating the collection process for qualitative data. A process which is viewed as subjective because what comes out of the participants is usually dependent upon their whims, sentiments, thinking, attitudes, emotions and direction. It may not be based on any standardized expectations, the characteristics of a quantitative approach to enquiry (Creswell, 2009; Babbie and Mouton, 2001). Instead of utilizing standardized instruments, qualitative inquiry allowed probing and follow-up questions to increase clarity on grey areas (Tracy, 2013; Creswell, 2009). This greatly improved the relevance of the data that was collected as filtration of information was made possible; the process which strengthens data credibility and trustworthiness.

Quinn and Cochran (2002) reveal that the qualitative methodology enables the researcher to answer questions such as "what", "how" or 'why" of a phenomenon rather than "how many" or "how much", which are answered by quantitative methods. This justifies why this research is predominantly qualitative, because the aim of the current research is to appraise the strategies, programs and operations being implemented by NGOs in Harare to facilitate the process of gender equality and women empowerment. This was followed by a question as to what is hindering the fruition of their efforts. Such information is unfathomable and cannot be numbered, tabulated or drawn on graphs (Babbie and Mouton, 2001; Creswell, 1994). The quantitative method was therefore scantly used to determine the frequency distribution of Harare residents in terms of their use of services as well as their perceptions on gender NGOs in Harare.

The issues surrounding gender are engrained in policies, bureaucratic complications, political-economic environments, administrative operations and red tapes that can only be unveiled using qualitative methods such as interviews. The researcher, therefore, employed the Focus Group Discussions and semi-structured interviews as qualitative methodologies to discuss NGOs' service-delivery interventions towards gender equality in Zimbabwe. Nevertheless, the justification for the use of the quantitative approach is explained below.

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4.3.2 Quantitative Research Approach

Undeniably, numbers have always been central to the quantitative approach. In his definition of quantitative research, Creswell (2009) attests that this approach to research seeks to explain social phenomena through the collection of numerical data and then analysing it using statistically proven methods. Some view it as a factual method to data collection, where numbers and not subjective words are honoured. The issue of objectivity according to quantitative researchers rests on the consistency of the data if it is repeated over and over even if it is carried out by different people (Greasley, 2008; Mellenbergh, 2008). As such, measurements are controlled in trying to explain phenomena under scrutiny. This includes pre-determined variables, controlled experiments and the use of structured instruments such as questionnaires. Hancock et al. (2009) concur that the quantitative methodological approach is a highly structured approach where the facets of the research process are outlined prior to data collection.

Evidently, the researcher was detached from the whole process of data collection as the feelings, views and sentiments of the researcher were controlled and kept in check. In regard to authenticity, Tewksbury (2009) contends that this is the conventional and traditional way to empirical investigation even with social aspects such as gender equality. Some researchers argue that the quantitative approach is preferred because it is characterized by the terms positivism and empiricism (Leach, 1990; Duff, 1985). Concerning this, Jupp (2001) reveals that this approach is based on Auguste Comte's positivism which celebrates the use of the empirical data collection through testing of hypothesis in order to predict and explain "how much" or "how far" of the phenomena being studied (Jupp, 2001; Cormack, 1991).

Another distinctive aspect of the quantitative approach is that it adopts a deductive approach (Mellenbergh, 2008). In the current study, the researcher started with more general information, such as biographical information and then narrowing down to the particular topic at hand. Some scholars have named this kind of approach a 'top-down' methodology because it involves funneling down information until a knot is tied on certain concluding remarks. These conclusions are drawn mainly from the testing and mathematical calculations done on existing theories and variables. Another outstanding attribute of quantitative research is that the researcher takes a passive and neutral role according to Creswell (2009). This means that the researcher was invisible, non-active and detached from the data collection process, apart from handing over questionnaires and introducing herself. As such, the research tool that is the questionnaire, did all the informing and elaborations, except the respondents who needed assistance in answering the questionnaires. This is made possible because the questionnaire (which is the most used tool) can be sent online or with the third person (Creswell, 2009; Mallenbergh, 2008; Jupp, 2001). In other cases, the questionnaires can be posted to the respondent to maintain that detachment.

Having given a brief discussion of the qualitative and quantitative approaches, the research will give a justification of having to use the two methods in tandem, or what is scientifically referred to as mixed methods. The theoretical aspects of these approaches are broken down to their applicability in the current research. This is discussed in the following paragraphs.

4.3.3 Justification for the use of mixed methods

Each of the approaches mentioned above has its own strengths and inevitably, drawbacks. Hence, the utility of mixed methods has been preferred in order to take full advantage of the strengths of both methodologies in an attempt to blur biases and maintain a balance of subjectivity and objectivity (Tracy, 2013; Hatch, 2002). That way, the authenticity of the research's findings would be justified because the twin-fold methodology increased the validity and reliability of the current research. Basically then, the benefits of using both approaches is for confirmatory, complementary functions, and also for increased validity and reliability of the findings (Bowen, 2005). More is discoursed below:

4.3.3.1 Complementary aspects

The reality of the matters surrounding gender inequality issues are engrained in policies and constitutions, making the qualitative inquiry more applicable in drilling beneath the surface to unveil information that can inform the phenomenon at hand. Information such as the National Gender Policies, NGO registration process, funding, internal and external relationships associated with NGOs can only be uncovered through qualitative methodologies. This justified the use of in-depth interviews and FGDs because these allowed probing and follow-up hints and questions (Bowen, 2005). Such information is incalculable and hence it could not be quantified, numbered, or tabulated. It involved narrations of historic stories, feelings, points of view and perceptions from the participants (Tracy, 2013). Ultimately, this limited the quantitative methodology as this information from interviews was subjective in nature.

Undeniably, the qualitative methodology can be commented for its ability to obtain rich information, but it was not enough to make sound conclusions of a social phenomenon where the general public was concerned. If social ills are to be eradicated, there is need for thorough investigations to make sound conclusions. It therefore necessitates the adoption of the quantitative approach for complementary

purposes (Tracy, 2013; Bowen, 2005). This way, the weaknesses of the qualitative methodology was curtailed by complimenting them with the strengths of the quantitative elements. Yeasmin and Rahman (2012) strongly believe that the combination of multiple observers, theories, methods, and empirical materials, assists researchers in overcoming the limitations, biases and uncertainties that emerge from the use of a single-method, single-observer and single-theory studies.

As far as the need for complementary is concerned, Yoshikwa et al. (2008) are of the view that the epistemological assumption underlying the use of mixed methods is understanding that there is no one way of doing research. As such, the issue is not on debating which of the two methods is better than the other. Instead, researchers should be concerned with determining which method yield relevant results that can answer their research questions. Therefore, relevance should be emphasized over supremacy because the world as we know it is neither just numbers, nor just words. It is a representation of both worlds. Hence, the need to appreciate both approaches in order to yield better results. In saying this, the researcher does not rule out the fact that these two methodologies are placed in diametrically opposed positions in the hierarchy of both epistemology and ontology continuum (Bowen, 2005; Hunt, 1991). However, the advantage of these differences is that it increased the validity and trustworthiness of the findings.

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In this study therefore, the weaknesses of the predominant qualitative approach (such as subjectivity and influencing the outcome of the research due to the researcher's direct involvement with the respondents in interviews and FGDs) were neutralized by the objectivity and detached approach inherent in the quantitative approach, which was achieved through the use of questionnaires. For example, the use of a non-probability sampling methodologies and techniques inherent in qualitative studies may be prone to sampling bias (Yin, 2014) because in this case, all gender NGOs and all the key informants did not have equal chances of being selected to participate. Nonetheless, the sampling bias was largely reduced as this was complemented by the data from the mini-survey, whose data was based on the probability technique of simple random sampling.

4.3.3.2 Confirmatory purposes

The qualitative inquiry to studying social phenomena is highly scrutinized for its subjectivity (Creswell, 2009; Bowen, 2005). This poses a lot of questions surrounding the biases of the findings. Yeasmin and Rahman (2012: 158) identified three forms of biases that may affect the research findings and these are "...the measurement bias, caused by the way in which data is collected; and secondly, the sampling bias arising from the fact that only a small section of the population under study is covered; and thirdly, the procedural bias which occurs when participants are put under some kind of pressure to provide information." There is no denying the possibility of the qualitative researcher putting pressure on respondents to answer questions through probing and emphasizing certain aspects. The scale was balanced off and the procedural bias brought to minimal through the administration of questionnaires that gave participants the freedom to willingly answer in accordance to the right to participation principle. Moreover, the NGOs held FGDs and data that was obtained through a discussion rather than a private interview. In such a scenario, lies and hearsays are minimal because the other FGD members would not concur.

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Overcoming information contradictions from the findings

Pivotal to the current study is the appraising of NGOs in their advocacy for gender equality in Zimbabwe. This means that NGOs'representatives are primary data sources, providing information central to the current research. Although this was done through FGDs, the researcher through the confirmatory advantage of triangulation analysed data from all participants and respondent in order to make valid conclusions (Yin, 2014). One method of corroboration adopted is a qualitative key informant interviews and the other is the mini-survey method through the use of questionnaires. The views of the Harare city residents and the key informants were crucial to either confirm or complement the findings from the NGO representatives.

Of great importance again is the issue of generalizability of the findings in qualitative studies (Creswell, 1994). Anti-qualitative researchers suggest that the sample size in qualitative studies is too small and almost insignificant to allow the findings to be generalized outside the study domain (Jupp, 2001; Cormack, 1991). The views of

the general public from the city of Harare that included different people from varied social status increased the reliability of the findings of the current research study.

As far as confirming the results is concerned, Foss and Ellefsen (2002) identified a challenge that may rise where there is contradictory information. The question rests on which category of results would influence the conclusions of the study more than the other. In addressing such an occurrence, Hussein (2009) argues that the primary method should override the secondary method especially so if there is triangulation within the dominant approach. This solves any inconsistencies in the current study because the target participants, the NGOs' directors were interviewed using the FGDs and the Key Informant method was also incorporated to aid their responses.

4.4 Methods of data collection

The present study adopted three methods of data collection in order to improve the trustworthiness and credibility of the findings. A triangulation of a focus group discussion, key informant method, as well as a mini-survey was used as explained in the succeeding paragraphs below:

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4.4.1 Utility of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

Focus groups by virtue of their name are aimed at exploring a specific topic scrupulously, through the interactions between participants (Tracy, 2013). Group dynamics in focus groups were essential in unearthing aspects that individuals might have been uncomfortable to unveil in isolation. This may explain why sometimes it is said that humans find comfort in numbers. Morgan (2006) makes a distinction between FGDs and other group interviews. The author argues that group interviews do not necessarily lead to data collection. They may be work-related, business group discussions or political gatherings. On the other hand, a FGD is primarily aimed at collecting data that is relevant to the social issue under study (Creswell, 2009; Bowen, 2005), in this case appraising the capacities and terrain of NGOs towards achieving the state of gender equality. Through the utility of FGDs, study participants were unconsciously reminding each other of left-out information and this enhanced the research findings. The strength of FGDs is their ability to upgrade a mere interview to a rich discussion.

While it still stands that other people are a bit uncomfortable to say out their views in the presence of other people, especially a stranger researcher (Morgan, 2006) (perhaps because of fear that their intelligence may be judged), people of the same socio-economic status are usually comfortable around each other. In referral to the current research, the fact that the participants who formed the FGDs were all in senior managerial positions of gender empowerment NGOs eased away all the tensions. The possibility of previously shared professional moments among the participants facilitated the discussion as they were all affiliated with the Women's Coalition, and hence a possibility that they knew each other. For example, the researcher realized that the participants of the FGDs had already established professional and somewhat personal relationships, they had shared experiences and the same sentiments by virtue of them being NGO directors in pursuit for gender equality in Zimbabwe. They would also from time to time refer to documents that they were all familiar with, for example Zimbabwe's National Gender Policy, various records of press conferences, United Nations guidelines, MDGs and SDGs. However, the role and the prowess of the researcher was likewise critical and pertinent in driving a research process (Denzin and Lincoln, 2010; Jupp, 2001).

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4.4.1.1 The researcher, the FGD's facilitator

The researcher assumed the role of the facilitator as she ensured that the discussions remained relevant to the services, challenges and highlights of NGOs in the gender mainstream. This does not imply that the researcher was rigid, demanding and inflexible. The process was characterized by laughter, sarcasms and sometimes sensitive questions, but at the end of the day, the discussions were fruitful. With the utility of communication, questioning and listening skills of a social worker (Zastrow, 2010), the researcher probed and made follow-up questions to ensure that relevant issues were adequately addressed (Tracy, 2013; Babbie and Mouton, 2001). For other participants who seemed overshadowed or a bit reserved, the researcher would, for example say "Ms Makuringa (Pseudonym), can you comment or add to what has just been said?" This way, everyone was given equal opportunities to make their views known. This was made possible mainly because FGDs allowed the researcher to tap and gain entry into the everyday clues, jokes and anecdotes, including teasing (Kitzinger, 1995).

The possibility of bringing under one roof and on the same round table the participants who could have been apparent rivals in the NGO fraternity is one of the possible drawbacks of using focus group discussions (Tracy, 2013). The researcher would have needed to apply conflict resolution skills (Zastrow, 2010). If such a conflict is not resolved carefully, it can be a challenge even though nothing of that sort happened in the current study. However, it is vital to indicate that balancing and managing such a group was a bit demanding. Notably, grouping of the directors for a particular FGD was a bit challenging, as the researcher had to check the availability of the participants. More on this is discussed below.

4.4.1.2 Grouping of participants in Focus groups

Three (3) focus group discussions were conducted for the current study. The researcher felt that carrying out more than just one FGD was more effective in order to accommodate the times that these NGOs' directors were available. In addition, the groups were sorted in terms of their location, as well as their specialty in order to ensure a productive focus group discussion (Tracy, 2013). NGOs focusing on women empowerment deal with different issues; ranging from the health sector, educational, economic and political aspects. As such, in order to gain more on the subjects, homogeneity in function was an element that influenced the grouping of participants as suggested by Morgan (2006). The findings obtained from the FGDs in this research were collaborated with the key informants for confirmatory purposes. More on the key informant method as a method of data collection used in the current study is discussed below.

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4.4.2 Key Informant Method (KIM)

Although the research is centred on NGOs and an appraisal of their contribution for the attainment of gender equality, the researcher thought it empirically sound to seek confirmation of the NGOs' responses from key informants. Key informants are meant to give third-party views and insights on the subject at hand (Creswell, 2009; Jupp, 2001). In carrying out this research, the researcher sought professional information from five different organizations. She purposively enlisted the opinions of one representative from each of the following groups: Ministry of Finance representatives; Political Analysts; Human rights experts; Cultural and religious experts; and the Ministry of Gender, Women Affairs and Community Development

representatives. Individual interviews were carried out because these are high-profiled people with busy schedules, making it difficult to put them under one roof (Hatch, 2002). The justification as to why the researcher specifically chose the above-mentioned organizations or ministries is addressed just after discussing the use of document analysis and a mini-survey in the research.

4.4.3 Document analysis utility in the research

Document analysis should never be undermined as a reservoir for research data because it is still relevant in providing rich information that may aid research findings on social phenomena (Magalakwa, 2006; Bowen, 2005). Neglecting or abandoning the use of document analysis as a critical method of data collection process may be discarding information that cannot be easily found from random people. This is true even with gender issues. The notion of gender equality or the lack of it is a global concern (Human Development Report, 2015; 2013). As such, there is rich information that has been documented probably since the rise of the first wave of feminism.

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Prior (2008) commends on the importance of document analysis emphasizing that documents assist in giving trends of issues under study. Gender issues, for example, are guided by policies, constitutions and conference papers. The researcher used national and international reports from the United Nations, guidelines from the SADC as well as the National Gender Policy, Newspapers, relevant pictures and other supporting constitutions and documents that were highly relevant, from 2000 to 2017 to augment her research findings.

In regard to this, Bowen (2005) stresses that document analysis leads to probing for further questioning, more so because it allows the tracking of trends on the subject under study. The researcher obtained these documents mainly from the internet. However, some of the documents were obtained from Zimbabwe Women Resource Network Centre (ZWRNC), a Women Coalition (WC) NGO that archives and distributes women-related information.

The advantage of documents analysis is that it gave the researcher access to information that the researcher would not have obtained otherwise. Also, document analysis is cost effective and unobtrusive (Bowen, 2005; Prior, 2008). This entails that the presence of the researcher does not influence the research process or the

findings. Examples of such documents include parliamentary discussions that are held by top governmental officials where the researcher might not gain access to and proceedings from meetings that have already been held such as United Nations conference in Beijing or United States of America.

Apart from that, document analysis has its own peculiar advantages given that there is no need to persuade research respondents to cooperate as in the case of interviews and filling in of questionnaires (Magalakwa, 2006). In a nutshell, the utility of documents in the current research was an aid to breeding of credibility and boosting the richness of the information that was extracted through the use of interviews, FGDs and questionnaires.

4.4.4 Use of a Mini-Survey in the study

The triangulation of the qualitative and quantitative methodologies is satisfied and fulfilled with the adoption of the mini-survey. A survey is the most commonly used method in quantitative researches as it seeks to provide numeric descriptions and trends of opinions on social phenomenon (Tracy, 2013; Denzin and Lincoln, 2010; Tewksbury, 2009). In this case, a mini-survey was critical in appraising the prevalence of gender inequality in Zimbabwe as well as the efforts being made by NGOs for the attainment of gender equality and women empowerment. This method of data collection was ideal for making inferences on a large population. A mini-survey instead of a survey was preferred because the research is predominantly qualitative and the quantitative aspect was incorporated just for confirmatory and complementary purposes and not as a primary data collection methodology. Creswell (2009; 2003), emphatically points that a survey provide voluminous numeric descriptions of trends, attitudes or opinions of a population by studying a representative sample of the total population. Babbie and Mouton (2001) also correspond that surveys are multi-functional as they serve descriptive, explanatory and confirmatory purposes. It is this multi-faceted purpose function that has made them gain popularity in research.

In the present study, questionnaires, as singled out as common tools in surveys (Tracy, 2013) with the help of three (3) ad hoc research assistants, were personally handed over to men and women residing in Harare city. Notably, survey research

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grew within the positivist approach to social science because it allows findings to be deductively interpreted (Greasley, 2008; Mellenbergh, 2008). According to Hancock et al. (2009), survey studies can be cross-sectional or longitudinal in nature. The former involves gathering of data at a single point in time and the latter entails data collection over a period of time for comparison or confirmation purposes. The current study employed the cross-sectional nature because the information was meant to confirm and complement the responses gathered from NGOs not necessarily to compare responses from the same respondents over time. The sample selection criteria is discussed next as it justifies why a certain population was preferred.

4.5 Sample selection criteria and inclusion

In order to lessen sample, procedural and human bias, triangulation of methods or approaches is essential (Creswell, 2009: 2003; 1994). In the same way, to improve the authenticity and trustworthiness of the research findings, the researcher incorporated various departments that she thought were relevant to the current study. The justification for that is made below:

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4.5.1 Justification for selecting the gender-NGOs' Directors

When it comes to the functioning of an organization, the amount of information revealed to an individual may depend on the hierarchical position of the person. The period of employment of an employee may also determine the information and experiences they know about that particular organization. For example, the security guard or cleaner of an organization may not have structural and functional insight. Important information such as budgeting, long-term plans and strategic plans may only be privileged to employees in senior positions. For these reasons, the researcher selected gender-NGOs' directors instead of randomly picking any employee. That way, rich information that could satisfy the qualitative requirements of the study (Tracy, 2013) could be obtained.

4.5.2 Why the Ministry of Finance representatives?

In as much as NGOs are legally "stand-alone" and autonomous organizations detached from the government, in practice this is not the case (Human Rights Watch, 2004). These stakeholders cross each other's path in more than just one way. Among those ways are the financial aspect and policing. Since the Bill of Rights

clearly states that it is the sole responsibility of any nation to ensure low Gender Inequality Index to its citizens, it is crucial to enlist the financial and economic department of the government in relation to gender issues (Constitution of republic of Zimbabwe, 2013). As such, the Ministry of Finance is in a better position to address monetary issues. The researcher sought to find out how financially involved is the Ministry as far as funding the gender NGOs is concerned. Apart from that, they also have great insights on the economic situation of Zimbabwe, extrapolating it to its influence on NGOs' interventions.

4.5.3 Enlisting the Human Rights' perceptions

Among a host of inalienable rights in many countries such as the right to education, the right to protection and health is again the right to be treated equally (Constitution of Republic of Zimbabwe, 2013). This is not the reality in Zimbabwe as evidence is contrary (Human Development Report, 2013). Other manifestations of women subjugation are gender-based violence (Mashiri, 2013), ill-treatment and alienation in important decision-making processes (Gore, 1993). It was therefore important that a representative of the human rights be selected for research inclusion because such a representative have great insights on how the gender NGOs tackle these challenges in order to ascertain gender equality. They also have great information about the constitutions and legal procedures that are necessary to attain gender equality in Zimbabwe.

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4.5.4 Political Analyst

Before the laws are passed at national constitutions - including those on gender issues and NGOs, they are presented in parliament to the ruling and opposition parties where they are debated as revealed by Van eerdewijk and Mugadza (2015). The party with the majority members of parliament usually wins and therefore determines what passes and what is rejected out of the parliament house. In order to get more reliable information, the researcher considered enlisting thoughts from a neutral person instead of political representatives as they may be biased.

4.5.5 The Ministry of Women Affairs

Due to the rising concern over women's issues in Zimbabwe, a new ministry was established to deal exclusively with women affairs. This is the branch that stems from the government, and it represents the voice, the needs and challenges of

Zimbabwean women (Human Rights watch, 2004). Since the issue of gender equality is inseparable with women empowerment, the researcher concluded that it was crucial for her to understand the position of women's affairs in Zimbabwe from a representative of the ministry. This includes the relationship that exists between gender-focused NGOs and the government, the friction that may be prevalent and what the ministry has done to ensure that the Zimbabwean woman is empowered in terms of opportunities like her male counterpart.

4.5.6. Religious and cultural expert

The laws of any country are usually informed or influenced by the culture and beliefs upheld in that particular nation (Mapuranga, 2010). This therefore justifies the researcher seeking the opinions of such an expert in order to discuss how religion and culture affect gender issues and the interventions by women NGOs. A neutral person, who is a lecturer was therefore selected in order to get unbiased perceptions.

4.5.7 The role of the general citizens

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All the efforts by the NGOs, the government and other related stakeholders are aimed at eradicating gender inequality in order to enhance the living standards of all citizens as stated by Zungura (2012) and Osrim (2001). Many may think that gender issues are only about women, but nothing could be further from the truth. Both men and women need to participate in gender issues because this will eliminate resistance and accelerate the process. As such, the views of both men and women in Harare city were sought in relation to how they view the services being given by NGOs to ensure gender parity. Their role, therefore, was to corroborate responses by NGOs as well as to give suggestions and recommendations to NGOs on matters that need more attention. Following is a discussion on the instruments that have been used to collect data from the above-mentioned data sources.

4.6 Data Collection Instruments

The data collection tools used in any research endeavour are highly influenced by the methods of data collection adopted for the research project (Bryman, 2012). In the current research, semi-structured interview schedules were used as well as questionnaires as indicated below. Responses from FGDs and interviews were captured using the audio recorder.

4.6.1 Semi-structured interview schedules

For all the focus group discussions and key informants' interviews, semi-structured interview schedules with open-ended questions were used. According to De Vos et al. (2005), this is preferred for the interview to remain centred on relevant elements, while flexible enough not to hinder or restrict participants. Adams et al. (2002) differentiate between semi-structured interviews and unstructured interviews stating that the former are considered as the sole data source for a qualitative research project whilst the later are often conducted in conjunction with the collection of observational data.

The researcher found semi-structured interview guides to be ideal in the current research because she could make follow-up questions on interesting aspects and also clarify on grey areas where the participants had a bit of confusion as indicated by Woods (2011). For both the FGDs and key informants' interviews, semi-structured guides proved to be highly effective tools because they were a reminder to the researcher on the issues that had to be discussed, thereby enabling fluency in the discussions (Creswell, 2009).

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The questions on the interview schedules for key informants and NGOs' representatives were almost the same except that for NGOs' representatives, direct questions were used while with key informants, their professional views as third-party respondents were sought, leaning more on their area of occupation or ministry. (Copies of these interview guides are attached at the end of the study as Appendices E, F, G, H, I and J). The responses were audio-taped for familiarization and fluency (Woods, 2011; De Vos et al., 2005). Hence, spontaneity, clarity and probing were the elements that made semi-structured interview schedules to be favoured.

4.6.2 Use of Questionnaires

Gault (1907) reveals that this instrument of data collection was invented in 1838 by a London Statistical Society. The objectivity of the quantitative approach lies in the structure of the tool. This instrument confines respondents to particular responses (Greasley, 2008) - that is; there is no flexibility that may lead to irrelevant information

and subjectivity is minimized. Data-cleaning was an easy task because the participants were kept 'in line' with the information required to answering the research questions.

Questionnaires according to Mellenbergh (2008) are either closed or open-ended. While open-ended have a certain degree of flexibility to enable a variety of responses (for example what do you understand by gender equality), close-ended ones may have two responses for example a 'yes' or 'no'. The current research used both closed and open-ended questions in the questionnaire. Mellenbergh (2008) further emphasizes on the importance of structuring the questionnaires itself correctly. Questions for the current research started with the screening ones which checked if the participant is relevant or not and this was followed by warm-up questions and detailed questions came at the end. The reason for this being that respondents would have accelerated into the 'response mode'. As suggested by Greasley (2008), the researcher avoided asking two questions in one sentence or structuring questions in a way that is suggestive of the answer being expected. The researcher observed these "off the shelf" rules in order to come up with a standardized questionnaire that is relevant, yet fit for the current research. The questionnaire was used to collect information from the 270 responses in the city of Harare. (Copy of questionnaire attached as appendix K). With the data collection instruments discussed, focus is turned to the research domain where the current research was carried out.

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4.7 Research Domain

A geographical location where the research is conducted is what is meant by a research domain. Fox and Bayat (2007) define a research domain as a place or site where accessible individuals willing to give distinct information about a phenomenon being studied are found. The research was carried out in Harare city (map of the city attached as appendix L), the capital of Zimbabwe with about 1.5 million citizens (ZimStats, 2012). Just like any third world country with centralized operations, Harare is the core centre for economic, social and political activities. As such, it houses the head offices for most NGOs, political parties, and human rights activists proving it to be ideal for the current research. Of all the 79 NGOs affiliated with Women Coalition, Harare houses 65 of them making it a perfect research domain

(information received from the Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe database, copy attached as appendix M).

Due to the above mentioned attributes, the researcher selected the research to be conducted in the heart of the country of Zimbabwe as it attracts people from all around the country. This form of internal factors is influenced mainly by the belief that big cities provide more opportunities for educational, carrier and business breakthroughs. Its economic viability ensures that people of all cultures and socio-economic statuses are migrated to it, thereby making the sample more representative of the country as suggested by Creswell (2009).

4.8 Study Population

A population in research is any set of people from which a sample is selected and to which the study's results will be generalized (Bryman, 2012). In this study, the population consisted of Women Coalition NGOs' representatives, Government representatives (Ministry of Women Affairs and the Finance Ministry), Political analysts, Religious and cultural experts and Human Rights experts as well as an estimated 800 000 ordinary citizens from both gender categories from the age of 18 to 60 years (ZimStats, 2012). This population is the frame from which the actual sample size was drawn from.

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4.8.1 Sampling method

According to Creswell (2009), depending on the research approach being used, the availability of the respondents and the research questions, either the probability or non-probability methods of sampling could be preferred. Small (2009) defines sampling as the utility of a subset which is representative of the total research population. Mathematically speaking, the whole population is reduced to a manageable size that can enable the practicality of data collection. The present research adopted both a probability and non-probability methods in an attempt to blur any form of biases (Jupp, 2001). This was done in order to increase the validity and reliability, as well as the trustworthiness of the research findings. These are discussed in detail below:

4.8.2 Specific Sampling Technique

This section gives a detailed account of the actual sampling techniques utilized in the current research.

4.8.2.1 Purposive sampling

The purposive sampling method falls under the non-probability sampling category. With non-probability sampling, there is no way of calculating the possibility or chance of respondents being chosen (Yin, 2014; Small, 2009). This then makes the non-probability sampling method more applicable to qualitative researches. For the selection of research participants for the focus group discussion and the key informants, the purposive sampling technique was selected because it is based on the researcher selecting participants that have relevant information to the subject at hand. Taking for example NGOs, not all of the organizations deal with gender issues. By choosing NGOs in the gender mainstreaming, that was a selection for a specific purpose. Furthermore, not every employer is acquainted with the vast knowledge of the overall affairs of NGOs' operations. The researcher, therefore purposefully picked the NGOs' directors for they had the rich data that the study required (McBurney and White, 2009). This was the same with the key informants. They were chosen specifically for their relevance and acquaintance with NGOs' operations.

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4.8.2.2 Simple Random Sampling

For the mini-survey, a non-probability method and specifically the simple random sampling technique was preferred. This probability sampling method ensured that every person fitting in the sampling frame had an equal chance of being selected to respond (Creswell, 2009; Berg, 2006). This was ideal for the quantitative approach because of its ability to have a wider coverage compared to qualitative inquiries. Small (2009) and Berg (2006) maintain that probability sampling requires a sampling frame, that is the population of interest. In line with that argument, the researcher's sampling frame for the mini-survey consisted of men and women from the age of 18 to 60 years. This sample of above 18 was chosen because the people were legally eligible to answer questions without permission from their guardians.

Apart from that, they were knowledgeable enough to give meaningful feedback and perceptions that led to valid conclusions. The simple random sampling technique is

then applicable where the researcher knows little about the population (Yin, 2014). This is true for the residents in Harare. With an estimated population of 1.5 million citizens (ZimStats, 2012), there is no practical way for the researcher to know the exact number as well as their distribution across the city. As such, there is a possibility of a bias caused by sampling error (Yin, 2014). For example, in a population with a 50:50 male to female representative, the final sample extracted through simple random sampling may reflect a 35:65 ratio. This means that the researcher had no control over who can be chosen in simple random sampling where anyone in the sampling frame can be chosen. For this reason, triangulating the probability and non-probability methods of sampling helped to neutralize any possible sampling errors.

4.8.2.3 Unit of Analysis/ Sample Size

Statisticians are of the view that a sample is like a subset that is carefully extracted from the larger set (Babbie, 2012).The calculation of the most appropriate sample size is key to the data collection process. Even though it is true that a larger sample reflects a better estimate of the total population, benefits in increasing sample size diminishes as the population gets closer to the total population (MEAL, n.d). For example, the researcher observed that the RAOSOFT software suggested the same 271 sample size for the population of either 600000, 700000 and 800000 respectively as long as they had the same margin of error and confidence level percentages.

In her own words, the researcher calls the sample a smaller and workable version of the total population. Hence, it has to be as representative of the total population as possible. Twenty-one (21) representatives from NGOs specializing in gender mainstream were selected to form three focus groups. NGOs that are registered in the Women's Coalition (WC) group are seventy-nine (79), with sixty five (65) being in Harare. As such, the researcher selected twenty one (21) NGOs taking into consideration the concept of saturation. Simon (2011) is of the view that the point of saturation in data collection is said to have been reached when the researcher does not get any new information from the participants. Finally, for key informants, one from each of the following five (5) ministries/organizations was selected: Ministry of Finance (1); Political analyst (1); Traditional and cultural expert (1); Ministry of

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Women Affairs (1); and Human Rights Experts (1), making a total sample for qualitative approach twenty six (26). For the survey, 270 respondents were chosen. The 271 (although the researcher used 270) sample size for the mini survey was informed by RAOSOFT, a software which calculates and recommends sample sizes. With an estimated population between 18 to 60 years at 800000, and with the margin of error at 5% as well as a confidence level of 90%, that is how the researcher chose 270 respondents for the mini-survey. Altogether, the sample constituted of 296 individuals. After the sampling issues have been explained, the table below which links research questions to the research methods is given.

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Table 4.1 Research methods linked to research questions

Research Questions	Data Sources and Methods	Justification
1. What prevalent gender challenges do NGOs in Harare focus on?	Key informants through interviews, NGOs' representatives through focus group discussions and the general public using a mini-survey	They are all Zimbabwean citizens and they are all aware of the social, economic and political inequalities that are being tackled by gender-focused NGOS.
2. How do NGOs in Harare tackle gender disparities to attain gender equality and women empowerment?	Key informants through interviews, NGOs' representatives through focus group discussions and the general public using a mini-survey	The general public in Harare, the NGOs' representatives and key informants should all be able to point out how NGOs are fighting gender disparities.
3. What are the perceptions on the effectiveness of the interventions employed by gender-focused NGOs in fighting gender inequality in Harare City?	Key informants through interviews, NGOs' representatives through focus group discussions and the general public using a mini-survey	All these groups have different views and observations of the progress NGOs are making and recommendations to ensure a lower GII in Zimbabwe.
4. What challenges do NGOs in Harare encounter while promoting women empowerment and gender equality?	Key informants through interviews, NGOs' representatives through focus group discussions and the general public using a mini-survey	Both the participants and respondents from NGOs' representatives, key informants and the mini survey have knowledge on the challenges faced by NGOs in gender issues.

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4.9 Data Collection Process

All the theoretical preparations and choosing of the research methodology was eventually followed by the practicality of getting into the field to collect data. For the data collection process, the researcher had questionnaires, interview guides, notebook, pen and audio recorder ready for the fieldwork. According to Stoecker

(2005), the research procedure is an overall outline of the data collection process from seeking for permission to the actual interaction with participants and respondents. Following the approval of the researcher's proposal by the Faculty's Higher Degree Committee (FHDC) at the university, the next ethical step was to apply for the ethical clearance according to the university's requirement. The ethical clearance certificate is an acquiescence proof that allows the researcher to collect data (A copy of the clearance certificate is attached as an Appendix B). Since the research was based in Zimbabwe, the application for the ethical clearance was followed by the researcher commencing on the data collection process.

4.9.1 Getting the qualitative data

The researcher was fortunate enough to be received well by the director of Zimbabwe Women Resource Network centre (ZWRNC), an organization which disseminates information on gender issues. She was very helpful in explaining the whole procedure and providing guidance on how to obtain relevant people and information for data collection. Of utmost importance was that she booked an appointment on the researcher's behalf, with the Deputy Director of Gender Issues in the Finance Ministry and the Human right expert, after the researcher had obtained permission to collect data from the Ministry of Women Affairs.

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The researcher sought permission to collect data from the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development for both NGOs and the citizens of Harare urban, a process known in research terms as gaining entry into the community (Bryman, 2012). The purpose of gaining entry into the community is to familiarize with the environment and to explain to concerned parties the importance of the research. The contact person from the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development asked the researcher to produce the letter (copy attached as Appendix D) from her university, the Ethical Clearance and proof of her identity card for verification. After that, the researcher was asked to sign a letter that was filed as acknowledgement that they knew about her data collection process. Even though the ministry provided overall permission, the researcher was told that consent was also to be given by each respective NGOs, key informants and Harare citizens, and that the researcher needed to carry the same documents to seek permission from each and every individual NGO.

After being cleared to start the data collection process, the researcher booked an appointment with the director of the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development, which was scheduled. It was an honour and insightful to have a one-on-one interview with all these key informants as they are very busy persons with tight schedules. Hence, all the interviews lasted between 35 and 45 minutes. The interviews were very fruitful such that they even suggested some of the organizations they thought would add value to this research project.

The director of ZWRNC also assisted in giving the researcher a list with all the seventy nine (79) NGOs affiliated with Women's Coalition. All the needed information such as addresses, contact details and vision of the organizations were there. This was very helpful in selecting NGOs that were relevant to answering the research questions. The purposive sampling technique that was employed relies on the judgements of the researcher (Creswell, 2009). Therefore, the researcher chose NGOs that are intervening in different forms of empowerment from advocacy, to economic and educational organizations. From the information on the database, the researcher also chose NGOs with varied periods of establishment in order to have different views about women empowerment and gender equality in Zimbabwe. After purposefully making the selection, the researcher called the organizations one by one, explaining the purpose of her research and her intentions. Frankly, it was an arduous task and making a breakthrough to reach the requisite NGOs, the exercise took longer than was expected. This made the researcher to concur with Tracy (2013) and Babbie (2011) that getting the stakeholders to avail themselves at a particular time and neutral place is one of the drawbacks of using FGDs.

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The researcher had a note-pad where she was writing comments from the NGOs' representatives. These comments included the receptionists who said she should call later, the directors who wanted to meet her personally and the ones who could not make it and those who were out of office. Sometimes the numbers on the database were going on voicemail and others were answered with 'wrong number" replies. However, the writing pad was helpful for follow-up purposes in order to save time. With perseverance and patience of negotiating for a neutral venue and time, the researcher managed to conduct three (3) FGDs at different locations in order to accommodate all the requisite participants. Only one representative who was

supposed to be in the third focus group discussion cancelled on a last minute notice due to other commitments. The FGDs lasted between 70 and 90 minutes.

The semi-structured interview schedules were used for FGDs and individual interviews with key informants to maintain fluency and for probing purposes (Creswell, 2003). The researcher assumed the role of a facilitator for the discussions as she was ice-breaking, probing and making follow-up questions to ensure that the conversations were well organized to obtain valid and relevant data (Babbie 2012; Hatch, 2002). The questioning and listening social work skills were also vital for the interviews with key informants.

4.9.2 Getting the quantitative data

Even though the theoretical outline of qualitative and quantitative data collection processes are discussed separately, these processes were carried out simultaneously in order to maximize time and save on costs. The Director of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development put the researcher's fate into the hands of the Harare residents because there was no way of addressing the whole city for the researcher to explain to them about her research and also to seek their approval. Therefore, it was up to the researcher to convince and explain to the potential respondents why it was pertinent for them to take part in the current research.

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The questionnaires were divided between the researcher and the three (3) research assistants for easy distribution and for follow-up and collection purposes. The questionnaires were literally given to anyone who was willing and able to answer, fill and return them. Some of the questionnaires were handed over to congregants at churches; some were handed over at residents' workplaces. Apart from that, some questionnaires were distributed at people's residential areas, door- to-door. Still, some were given to men and women selling at the market place. This was done randomly in an attempt to cover all cultural, social and economic backgrounds of Harare citizens. As proposed by Small (2009) and Creswell (2009), researcher sought to make the sample representative enough.

In order to ensure a higher return of the questionnaires (Bryman, 2012), ad hoc assistants were left in charge of the collection wherever the questionnaires were

handed out. While some respondents filled in the questionnaires at the spot, some requested that the researcher and the assistants collect the questionnaires within varied periods of a day to a week. The researcher would call the assigned ad-hoc assistants from time to time to check if the questionnaires were returned. The sampling method for the distribution of questionnaires was simple random. Hence, the strategy was to try and make the sample as reflective of the total population as possible (Babbie, 2012; Jupp, 2001). With the help of three (3) research assistants, 270 questionnaires (as informed by RASOFT software) were handed out.

The researcher in a quantitative enquiry is detached from the collection of data process through questionnaires and this poses the possibilities of some respondents omitting some sections of the questionnaire, some did not fill them at all, yet others did not return them (Babbie, 2011). This is one of the drawbacks associated with administration of questionnaires in a quantitative research enquiry. Nevertheless, the application of ethical rules in the current study is detailed below.

4.9.3 Application of the ethical considerations

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Central to the undertaking of the research project are ethical principles that are benchmarks to ensure that a standardized way of data collection was maintained (De Vos et al., 2005). Bak (2004) further posits that research that involves people should be carefully handled in order to avoid harming participants. In honour of this, the researcher explained to all the participants of their rights to participate willingly without feeling coerced or manipulated. As such, they were at liberty to skip any question/s they felt uncomfortable to answer and to stop when they felt overwhelmed or unwilling.

Important to this research was the principle of confidentiality and informed consent (Bak, 2004). Issues that concern the government and policies in Zimbabwe are highly sensitive. The researcher therefore observed confidentiality, making sure that responses by key informants and NGOs' participants and respondents are not traced back to them through the use of pseudonyms. Apart from that, many people were expectant of some reward or promises whenever there is any research around NGOs as they are philanthropic organizations. It was therefore important to explain that the researcher was only collecting data for academic purposes, and that they should not take her for a donor orNGO representative. The informed

consent forms were therefore available for the participants to sign before the commencement of the data collection as recommended by Welman et al as well as permission to use an audio recorder. (2005). The copy of the informed consent form is attached at the end of the research project as appendix C.

4.10 Data Analysis

In order to make conclusions that the reader can understand, collecting data is followed by analysing it. Raw data is like the raw materials or ingredients that need baking to bring out something usable and meaningful. Greasley (2008) emphasizes on the importance of data analysis citing that no matter how insightful and informing data may be, it is extremely useless if not meaningfully analysed. The use of triangulation in the current research entailed the utility of two methods of data analysis. For qualitative data, thematic analysis was used while content analysis was preferred for document analysis. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used for quantitative data. Of importance is that these two different but rather related ways to synthesizing data did not compete for supremacy but rather complemented each other to enrich the findings of the research. More on these methodologies is outlined below:

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4.10.1 The Analysis of Qualitative Data

In Bryman's (2012) view, data analysis in qualitative studies involves a transformation of bulky data into clarified, understandable, insightful, trustworthy and original findings. Caudle (2010) further elaborates that qualitative data analysis is the synthesis of data collected from primary and secondary data sources to bring about answers to social phenomenon. In referral to the current study, this was the breakdown of data collected from NGO representatives and the key informants to bring authentic meaning.

4.10.1.1 Data reduction for analysis

In analysing qualitative data, there are basically two approaches that can be adopted. The first approach is referred by Pope et al. (2000) as the framework analysis. As the term is self-explanatory, this approach has pre-determined frames or themes that are used as benchmarks for analysis. Whatever is out of the frame is thrown out as being irrelevant. This first method is closely aligned to policy makers

with pre-determined interests. The second one is more liberal and non-confining as it considers serendipitous findings. The researcher considered all the data and gave room for the emerging of new themes and impressions that led to the interpretations taking an unexpected and different direction all together. Attride-Stirling (2001) calls this a thematic network analysis mainly because it is open-minded and it acknowledges the possibility of serendipitously finding vital information where it is not expected.

In the current research, the researcher used both methods in order to maximize on their strengths (Babbie, 2012). From the richness of literature, themes were generated to assist in the guidance of the data collection process. Moreover, the objectives, assumptions and overall aim of the research worked as the frameworks to direct the kind of information that would be considered as relevant to answering such questions (Creswell, 1994). However, the researcher maintained an open mind to allow undetected themes to emerge as long as they aligned and were reflective of the aim of the research. Pre-determined themes were expanded to form semi-structured interview schedules. Since the research is centred on appraising the NGOs interventions, there was no way of knowing what to expect.

In as much as literature on past studies gave a hint (Human Development Report, 2013; Zungura, 2012; Osrim, 2001), such studies were conducted in different places under different circumstances and in different times. Hence, this validated the use of both frameworks and free-floating thematic analysis in order to allow the research to take its own direction, but still maintaining a sense of relevance to the study (Jupp, 2001). To make this possible, MEAL (n.d) argues that familiarization with the collected data is key to analysing qualitative data. To ensure that in the current research, the FGDs and interviews were tape-recorded in order to preserve the richness and originality that was buried in non-verbal connotations such as hesitations, sighs and even examples that sought to emphasize or clarify matters. Word for word transcriptions were made through transcribing and familiarizing the researcher with the recorded response. The transcripts were read over and over while notes were jotted down for theme and for coding. A code can be a word or phrase which can be a heading and a base for thematic analysis (Attride-Stirling, 2001). While examining the transcribed data closely, the researcher identified themes and codes that were emerging and recurring on transcripts.

MEAL (n.d) is of the assertion that in analysing qualitative data, there is great need to give attention to the direct words, the context in which they are spoken as well as the intensity and frequency of the comments as this will lead to realizing the emerging themes and trend. Maybe this emphasis breeds from the argument by other scholars that the participation of the qualitative researcher may influence the results, thereby making it less sound than quantitative researches (Tewksbury, 2009; Jupp, 2001). This then necessitates the researcher to be cautious in giving possible explanations and reasons to the findings' variations and consistencies. Therefore, thematic analysis traces out common ideas and singles them out as overarching frames of analysis. After the qualitative data analysis was dealt with, next to be discussed is the analysis of data collected through the quantitative approach.

4.10.2 Analysing quantitative data

Piles of quantitative data were not worth much in the hands of the researcher; it had to be analysed in order to come to some concluding remarks. According to MEAL (n.d) and Welman et al (2005), statistical analysis is utilized in order to describe and summarize quantitative data for better interpretation. It is used to describe and recapitulate voluminous numeric data and tables and graphs can be used to present this data. Greasley (2008) affirms that analysis of quantitative data can be overwhelming to an extent that once put on a spread sheet, it may seem as if the researcher is drowning and consumed by the data. As such, analysing data using the SSPS software involves multiple approaches with diverse approaches. The current study adopted a uni-variate analysis because the analysis was used to describe, summarise and find patterns from the data. No attempt was made to find relationships between variables because quantitative data was scantly used because the study is predominantly qualitative in nature.

Of importance in Tewksbury's (2009) eyes is the realization that quantitative data mainly has categorical and continuous data. The first one is identified by questions with limited and restricted numbers of possible answers for example gender and marital status. Categorical data may also include categories or groupings that follow a progression of values in a logical pattern, for example answers that range from 1 being strongly disagree to 5 being strongly agree. Continuous data however, can take up any numeric value for example age or weight.

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The initial step in the analysis of quantitative analysis according to Jupp (2001) was to ensure that data is sorted for easy access in case there is need to refer to a particular questionnaire at a letter time during analysis or reporting of the findings. Once numbering is done, the next step was to code data in a way that is uniform on all the questionnaires. Attride-Stirling (2001) refers to coding as the assigning of words, letters or numbers that clearly differentiate one variable from the next. In other words, variables did not have space or a full stop at the end and that the names for each variable must be distinguishable and unique. Once the data was entered onto the SPSS spread sheet, it was run electronically and interpreted through the use of graphs, tables and any other way that the researcher preferred. Once the data was analysed, it was then presented. A summary of the whole research design for the current research is given below in a diagram.

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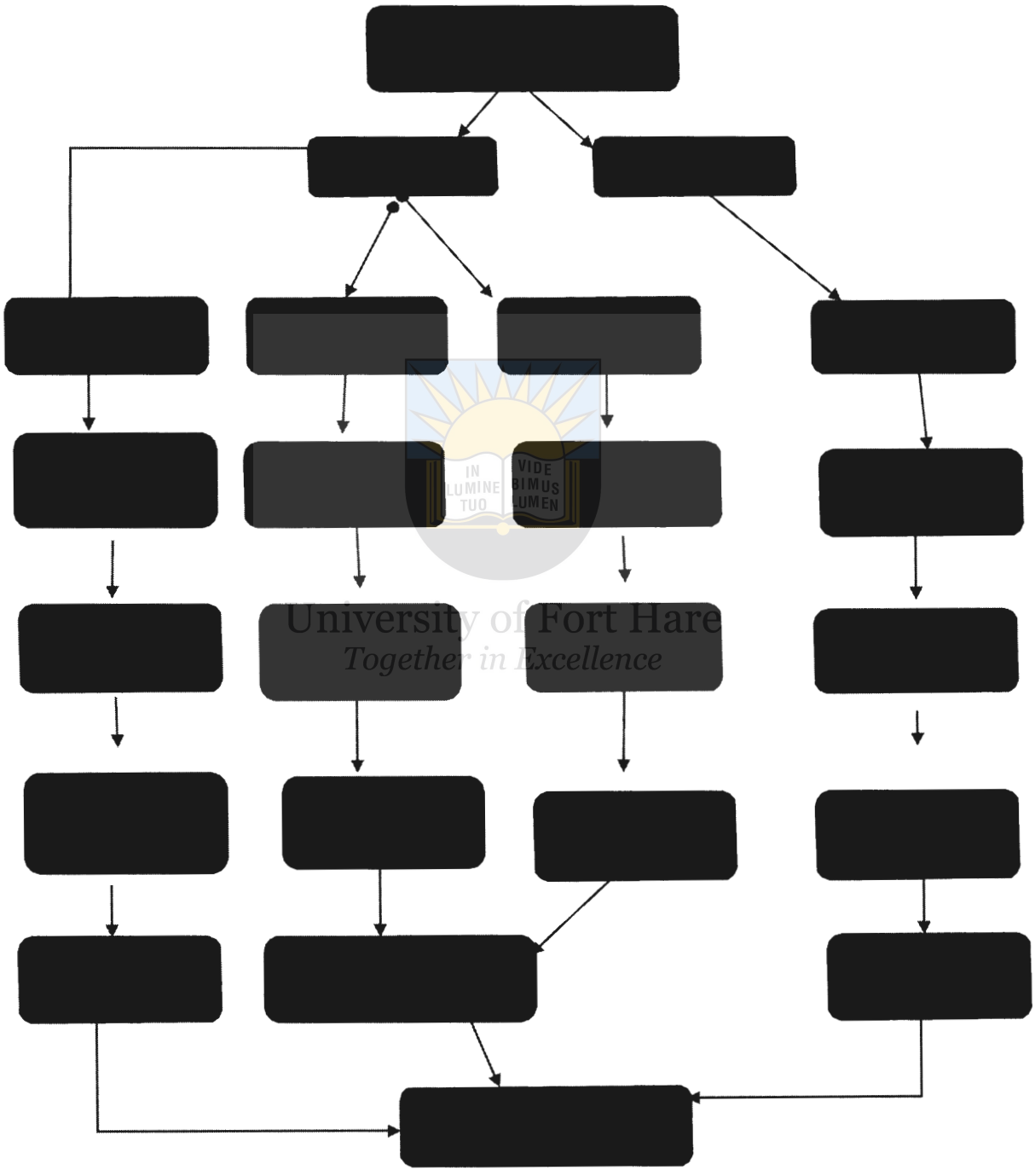

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Fig 4.1 A summary of the Research Methodology

4.11 Study's Limitations and Delimitation

There were a couple of challenges that the researcher encountered while undertaking the current project. First of all, getting the NGO representatives to gather in one room at a particular time was not an easy task. Their schedules were tight and as such, it proved difficult to mobilize them. However, the researcher decided to break the discussions into three focus groups in order to accommodate their diversity in availability.

Another huge challenge was that issues central to government policies and making comments on them are highly sensitive in Zimbabwe. Hence, at first, some people were hesitant in making comments as they feared for their lives and security. The researcher explained that the information was purely for academic purposes and that there would be no way of tracing their comments back to them as the principle of confidentiality was to be strictly upheld. This emphasis by the researcher that she was non-partisan and not championing the interest of any particular political party eased the anxiety among the study respondents and participants.

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Lastly, because NGOs are known for bringing aid and relief, to some people, when the researcher mentioned her topic, other respondents were expectant of some kind of relief or promise that I would come back with help. In correction, the researcher emphatically explained that she was not a representative of any NGO, but that she was a student. Further, she explained the benefits of respondents participating in the research project.

Drawbacks of the research methodology

The focus group discussion is an approved method of data collection. However, it is possible that some NGOs' representatives might have been uncomfortable to talk. The researcher used follow-up and probing skills to make everyone comfortable to participate. The research also lost the contribution of one NGO representatives because the focus group discussion clashed with her commitments. If it was individual interview, it would have been possible to reschedule. However, the researcher believes that the information received from other participants met the requirements of the research. Issues of validity and reliability are discussed below:

4.12 Trustworthiness, Validity and Reliability (V and R) of the findings

Validity can be viewed as the extent to which an empirical measure adequately reflects the real meaning of the concept under consideration (Stoeker, 2005). Triangulation was essential in the current study because it necessitated verification and increased the validity and reliability of the findings through the utilization of a dual methodology of enquiry (Yeasmin and Rahman, 2012). According to Stoecker (2005), the issue of validity is considered to be of paramount importance because the objectives of a particular research should be pointers towards what the researcher intends to investigate while reliability is concerned with the consistency and similitude of the data. In simpler terms, the findings are considered to be reliable when they remain the same after being restudied or re-analysed. Rubin and Babbie (2011) are of the view that, reliability is an investigation of whether a particular technique, applied to the same object, would yield unchanged results each time.

Ironically though, Golafshani (2003) argues that reliability and validity are common terms applied in quantitative paradigms where numbers are widely used to understand various phenomena. In other words, the author suggests that the issues of validity and reliability are inapplicable to qualitative studies. However, Patton (2001) as cited in Golafshani (2003) forwards that validity and reliability are widely used concepts to be observed and applied to ensure the analysis of the quality and soundness of any study, including qualitative inquiries.

Maybe this creates the need for a redefinition of the terms reliability' and validity' to align them to the qualitative inquiry whose focus is on natural settings. According to Shenton (2004), qualitative researchers have distanced themselves from the positivist paradigms by redefining reliability and validity. Trustworthiness in qualitative research has therefore substituted reliability and validity in quantitative studies. As highlighted earlier on, the current research has espoused both the qualitative and quantitative methods. As such, the researcher will discuss the validity, reliability as well as trustworthiness of the research findings in order to reflect the triangulation element of the methodologies. One of such scholars who noted this distinction is Guba (1981), cited in Shenton (2004). The substitutes that he proposed are therefore summarized in the table below:

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Table 4.2: Substitutions of validity and reliability

Quantitative Paradigm	Qualitative Paradigm
Internal validity	Credibility
External validity	Transferability/ Applicability
Reliability	Dependability
Objectivity	Confirmability/ Neutrality/ Consistency

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4.12.1 Trustworthiness, Validity and Reliability of the current research findings

Many theories have been put forward by researchers who emphasize on the trustworthiness of their findings. In qualitative methods, other people may however question this trustworthiness as this approach does not measure variables or use numbers to draw their conclusions (Pitney and Parker, 2009). Trustworthiness is then an umbrella term that makes a reasonable claim to methodological soundness in qualitative research (Erlandson, 1993, cited in Pitney and Parker, 2009). In order to accommodate both methods, the following terms, which are equivalent to validity and reliability are explained in detail:

4.12.1.1 Credibility/ Internal Validity

These terms can be defined as the plausibility or accuracy of the study's findings (Pitney and Parker, 2009). In other words, the terms seeks to check if the researcher has the correct information which can be accredited or validly recognized by research bodies. To ensure the credibility of the findings, long term engagement and examination are mandatory (Shenton, 2004). In the present study, the researcher is well acquainted with the area as she resides in the research domain. Information was thoroughly cross checked by her immediate supervisor.

412.1.2 Transferability/ External Validity

Guba (1981), cited in Shenton (2004) defines transferability as the applicability of the findings of the study to other areas of interest. On the other hand, external validity in

quantitative studies is viewed as the degree to which findings can be identified with other places. The contradiction between these approaches always emerge where other scholars may argue that quantitative studies are more generalizable compared to qualitative ones. In the present research, the findings on NGOs in their pursuit for gender equality, though conducted in Harare should be diffused across Harare and possibly other developing countries. Result transferability is ensured through interviewing all kinds of NGOs and also seeking the views of the general citizens of Zimbabwe residing in Harare, which is the capital city attracting people from around the country (Pitney and Parker, 2009).

4.12.1.3 Dependability/ Reliability

According to Stringer (2004), cited in Pitney and Parker (2009), dependability or reliability refers to the appropriateness and clarity of the research process to ensure that the findings are honourable and trustworthy. In the present study, this was achieved through a combination of interviews with FGDs and a way of seeking confirmatory data through a mini-survey (Golafshani, 2003). Provision of a detailed research design clarifying how respondents were selected, the data collection process and the data analysis procedure as suggested by Golafshani (2003) further attests to the dependability and reliability of the findings. Therefore, the triangulation of the data obtained from in-depth interviews, FGD and the mini survey sought to authenticate the findings of this research.

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4.12.1.4 Confirmability/ Objectivity

Confirmability in qualitative studies has been proposed to be equivalent to the efforts of maintaining objectivity in quantitative researches (Tappen, 2011). It should be noted that confirmability cannot be fully guaranteed just as objectivity is unattainable in quantitative approach. In qualitative inquiries, this is attributable to the fact that qualitative researchers tend to incorporate their perspectives and reactions instead of neutralizing them (Tappen, 2011). Hence, Morse et al. (2002) cited in Tappen (2011) maintains that confirmability is inapplicable to phenomenological and feminist researches. However, confirmability was augmented through the use of focus group discussions and key informants interview schedules as well as availing of the verbatim quotes with the exact words from the respondents. For quantitative data,

the researcher maintaining a distance from the data collection process and solely analysing numeric data indicate objectivity.

4.12.1.5 Ascertaining the trustworthiness of the current findings

In order to acquit any doubt on the trustworthiness of the findings of this study, the researcher has outlined the strategies that have been implemented to boost the validity and reliability thereof. According to Guba (1981), cited in Shenton (2004), qualitative research needs to implement strategies that will ensure that their findings are not biased, hearsays or mere speculations. In this way, the findings can be accredited as adding to the block of knowledge to ensure the evolvement of social theories. These strategies are delineated in table 2 below:

Table 4.3: Strategies adopted to improve trustworthiness, Validity and Reliability of the findings

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Measurement	Strategy	Application in the Present Study
Credibility/ Internal Validity	Triangulation	A focus group discussion, semi-structured interview, documents and mini-survey were combined to enrich the findings.
	Authority of the researcher	The researcher is a qualified social worker with a vast knowledge on research methods and interpersonal skills.
	Long term engagement	The researcher resides in the city under study and therefore has knowledge about the phenomenon under study as well as the gender NGOs.
Transferability/ External Validity	Choice of sample	A purposive sampling method which relies on the judgement of the researcher and simple random sampling were jointly used to cover-up any possible biases.
	Comparison of samples	The final sample was selected from three diverse populations to allow representation from the total population.

	Dense description	Thorough explication of methodology including supporting literature and exact quotes from focus group discussions and individual interviews. Mini-survey also blew any possible biases by the NGOs representatives.
Dependability / Reliability	Triangulation	A combination of FGDs, interviews, documents and a mini-survey ensured trustworthiness.
	Peer change	Research etiquette was discussed with supervisor and approved by the Faculty Higher Degrees Committee.
	Code-recode procedure	Accord discussion between researcher and supervisor.
Confirmability / Objectivity	Confirmability audit	The study is guided by numerous ethics and has been granted ethical approval.
	Triangulation	A focus group and semi-structured interviews merged for rich data. Mini-survey also augmented the objectivity of the findings.

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After outlining efforts to enrich the research findings, the researcher wishes to unveil the methods of data collection utilized in the current study.

4.13 Conclusion

As a recap, this chapter sought to explain the research design for the current research. The present research adopted the mixed methods in order to maximize the strengths of both methodologies. No attempt was made by the researcher to try to find out which approach is better than the other. Instead, the aim was to increase the validity and credibility of the present research. The debate as to which methodology deserves more recognition is considered to be outside the scope of this study. The understanding that both approaches have their own weaknesses justifies the use of them both in order to blur any inherent biases. In order to effectively appraise NGOs,

the researcher conducted three (3) FGDs with the Women's Coalition NGOs. Five (5) Key informants were individually interviewed to substantiate the responses from the NGOs. Similarly, the researcher incorporated the views of the general citizens for they are the recipients and potential beneficiaries of the services provided by NGOs. As such, their input and views are crucial to making conclusions for the current research.

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CHAPTER FIVE

PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

"From our lived experiences, we have so many practical ways to support the empowerment of girls at home, school, and community so that what happened to us should never happen to women and girls again. We want a new breed of girls who will walk in the fullness of their potential,"— Muzvare Betty Makoni — Director and Founder of Girl Child Network

5.1 Introduction

This chapter serves to present the research findings as they were extracted from the field through focus group discussions, key informant interviews and a mini-survey. No attempt is made at this point to discuss the findings in relation to theoretical frameworks or literature as this will be done in the following chapter. To refresh the mind of the reader, the aim of the present study was to appraise gender-focused NGOs in their pursuit of gender equality and women empowerment in Zimbabwe. This central aim was broken down into four (4) research questions as stated below:

1. What are the prevalent gender challenges that gender-related NGOs in Harare focus on?
2. How do gender-focused NGOs fight gender disparities in Harare City?
3. What are the perceptions about the effectiveness of the interventions that are employed by gender-focused NGOs in fighting gender inequality in Harare City?
4. What challenges do NGOs in Harare encounter in promoting women empowerment and gender equality?

From the above research questions, themes and sub themes have been drawn for easier presentation of the findings as stipulated in the methodology chapter (Chapter 4). Just to recapitulate on the methodology, the research has adopted a mixed methods approach but dominated by the qualitative method. The quantitative aspect has been incorporated merely to corroborate the responses from the NGOs' representatives with that of the potential recipients of the services. In the same manner, the key informants have been enlisted to substantiate the information from the NGOs participants. For this reason, all the findings from the NGO

representatives, key informants and responses from the public are presented in this chapter, but a distinction is made between qualitative and quantitative findings. Since most of the NGOs are largely active on the social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter, some would recommend that the researcher go through their website to trace their activities and the projects that they have embarked on. Therefore, the researcher included relevant pictures (some activities the researcher had the privilege to be part of), stories and articles in an attempt to clearly capture the activities of these NGOs as far as gender issues are concerned, thereby fulfilling the content analysis aspect (Jupp, 2001).

Prior to the presentation of the research findings, the researcher gave details of the NGOs that participated in the research. Biographic information from the key informants is also given. However, the names of these organizations bore pseudonyms in line with upholding the principle of confidentiality (De Vos et al., 2005 and Bak, 2004). This was done to protect the identity of the participants and the NGOs themselves. This is important since gender issues in Zimbabwe are highly sensitive as they are inextricably linked to the politics and policies of the country.

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5.2 Qualitative Findings

Findings from the NGOs' participants, key informants and varied documents are presented under this section.

5.2.1 Biographical information

As already indicated in the methodology section, the researcher only enlisted the views from the directors or founders of the NGOs. In order to give a complete appraisal of these NGOs' interventions, it was crucial to reveal the biographical information of these participants. The age, qualifications and working period within these organizations were presented below:

Table 5.1 Age of the NGO Participants

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
35 – 40 years	3	15 %
41 – 45 years	6	30%
46 – 50 years	4	20%
51 - 55 years	2	10%
56 – 60 years	2	10%
61 – 65 years	0	0%
66 – 70 years	3	15%

Biographic findings on the age of the participants indicated that the majority of them (65%) had ages that ranged from 35 to 50 years. The age of the NGO representatives is crucial in determining their experience in dealing with gender issues. It is very possible that the participants had some wealth of experience that promised to make the results both credible and trustworthy. Possibly, the conspicuous absent of the participants of ages younger than 35 could be explained by the fact that one may need experience in order to be a director of an NGO.

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Educational status of the NGOs' directors

Table 5.2 Educational Qualifications of Directors/ Founders of the NGOs

Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
College	3	15 %
Graduates	7	35%
Post graduates	10	50%

The table above attested to the findings that virtually all the directors were educated, with 85% of them possessing either a degree or postgraduate degrees. This indicated that they were adequately qualified to run the offices and that given a conducive working environment, they could be trusted with the running of the office.

Experience of the NGO participants

Table 5.3 Period of work at listed NGOs

Working period category	Frequency	Percentage
4 - 7 years	4	20%
9 - 12 years	7	35%
13 - 16 years	2	10%
18 - 22 years	4	20%
27 years	1	5%
31 years	1	5%
43 years	1	5%

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The findings as portrayed in the table above indicate that the NGOs' directors had a wealth of experience to run the NGOs. Their working experience ranged from 4 years to 43 years. It can then be said that the directors evidently had adequate experience and knowledge as far as gender issues and NGO leadership is concerned. It is worth mentioning that six of the directors were founders of the organizations they worked for. This may imply that given a conducive policy and economic environment, the directors' vast experience was instrumental to make the empowerment goals and objectives of the NGOs feasible.

Period of existence of the NGOs

Findings depicted in the three tables below (5.4, 5.5 and 5.6) attest that the period of establishment for the gender NGOs ranged from 4 to 78 years. This reflects that most of these NGOs were accustomed to professional establishments; they were able to sustain the running of the organizations for a long time; clients were aware of their interventions and the services they offered. They have been dealing with gender issues long enough to be in a position to empower women and girls in Harare.

The areas of specialization for NGOs under the study

The information displayed in tables 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6 below reveals the horizon of domain coverage by these NGOs. Findings depict that the NGOs specialize mainly in advocacy, while a few were in research, women economic empowerment and governance. This possibly points to the fact that there are many other gender-domain gaps that lacked the coverage of NGOs; such as NGO addressing issues of culture and patriarchy, empowering women in religious leadership and women empowerment in trading.

Table 5.4 Information of NGOs represented in Focus Group Discussion 1

Name of the NGOs	Period of Establishment	Area of Specialization
NGO 1	24 years	Gender Legal Representation, Gender Advocacy
NGO 2	6 years	Gender Counseling, Gender Advocacy
NGO 3	27 years	Advocacy for Sexual and Reproduction Health Rights
NGO 4	78 years	Gender Skills Building, Gender Advocacy
NGO 5	33 years	Advocacy against Gender Based Violence and promotion of sexual and reproductive rights
NGO 6	10 years	Gender Research, Gender Advocacy, Gender Awareness Building
NGO 7	8 years	Advocacy for Human Rights

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Table 5.5 Information of NGOs represented in Focus Group Discussion 2

Names of the NGOs	Period of Establishment	Area of Specialization (Vision)
NGO 8	26 years	Gender Research, gender Advocacy, Gender Awareness Building, Dissemination of gender Information
NGO 9	4 years	Women digital activism and advocacy
NGO 10	18 years	Educational Empowerment and Advocacy
NGO 11	15 years	Advocacy for good governance, Media Advocacy
NGO 12	15 years	Political Empowerment Advocacy
NGO 13	9 years	Advocacy for Health and Reproduction Rights
NGO 14	26 years	Educational Empowerment and Advocacy

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Table 5.6 Information of NGOs represented in Focus Group Discussion 3

Names of the NGOs	Period of Establishment	Area of Specialization
NGO 15	26 years	Gender Advocacy and Counseling; Economic Empowerment
NGO 16	43 years	Economic empowerment, life's skills training
NGO 17	38 years	Economic Empowerment
NGO 18	14 years	Economic Empowerment
NGO 19	59 years	Advocacy, Capacity Building
NGO 20	17 years	Advocacy for Human Rights

Biographical information of the key informants

Gender of the Participants

The findings inserted in the table below (Table 5.7) indicated that 3 females and 2 males were involved in research as key informants. This does not show a big difference, but perhaps indicates a fairer gender representation of perceptions

pertaining to gender. Both men and women have been included because issues of women empowerment are not confined only women.

Expertise of the key informants

As indicated in the table below, the experience of the key informants ranges from 6 years to 23 years. This shows the ability of the key informants to give valuable and relevant information in their respective fields of expertise. Such insights and perceptions are crucial in informing the empowerment of women in Zimbabwe.

Table 5.7 Key informants Biographical Information

Pseudonym	Department/ Area of Specialization	Position Held/ Occupation	Sex	Experience in years
KI 1	Ministry of Women Affairs and Gender	Director	Female	6
KI 2	Human Rights Activist	Private Human Rights Lawyer	Female	13
KI 3	Political Analyst	Former Political Science Lecturer at the University of Zimbabwe	Male	23
KI 4	Ministry of Finance	Deputy Director	Female	9
KI 5	Cultural and religious Expert	Lecturer at Women's University	Male	7

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Emergent themes and sub-themes

Findings are now presented below according to the emergent themes.

5.2.2 Wider and glaring gender disparities tackled by NGOs in Harare

In response to the question on the gender-challenges that gender NGOs' are tackling in Harare, qualitative findings indicated a prevalence of wider and glaring gender disparities in the country. Evidence from these participants showed that gender inequalities are visible to everyone and that one does not have to be a specialist in gender issues to ascertain that. In opening up the discussion after ice-breaking, one NGO's representative narrated:

> Uum, I would like to start by saying, inequalities are still evidently prevalent here in Harare, in Zimbabwe, Africa and even in western countries. I'm sure everyone here agrees to this. Women have not yet found their position, be it in politics, society, economics or even in private homes. I believe it is the seriousness of the situation that has pushed the UN to come up with MDG targets and SDGs too. Women cannot continue to suffer, its time their voices are heard and their needs considered. That's what we are here for. *(Talking to everyone in the group discussion)* Women of Zimbabwe arise! *(Everyone replies)* Women of Zimbabwe arise! (NGO 6, FGD 1)

And

> Yes. If you look around you, and the challenges that women and girls bring to our organizations everyday shows that we still have work to do for women to be empowered...(NGO 11, FGD 2)

The human rights key informant concurred with the assertions above by making the following statement below:

> First of all, I want to address that women's rights are human rights because women and girls are humans. Sadly, it appears as if, even today, women are excluded in crucial matters that concern their dignity and development. This is not just a Zimbabwean problem by the way, no, it's a global challenge. The African Union and the United Nations among other human rights bodies have acknowledged women challenges. The human rights watch and activists are lobbying every day because of this prevalence. So to answer your question, yes, the women are still suffering abuse, deprivation, social exclusion, injustice and neglect. (KI 2, Human Rights Expert)

The statements from the representatives of NGO 6, NGO 11 and the Human Rights expert reflect the inequalities that are prevalent in Zimbabwe. The statements attest that in both private homes and public spaces such as the society and political positions, women are still under-represented and facing exclusion. This then justifies the need for NGOs to be appraised for their effectiveness in eradicating such disparities. Among the gender challenges is domestic violence and it is discussed below:

5.2.2.1 Domestic violence against women and the girl children

Responses from participants in all the focus group discussions revealed that women's rights were still largely violated and this undermine their comfort and security. Upon probing on the forms of abuse that women and girls in Zimbabwe were facing, findings indicated a constellation of them ranging from physical abuse, emotional abuse, financial abuse and sexual abuse. Participants indicated that domestic violence was experienced by both the girl children and women across all age groups. The finding was emphasized by the director of NGO 10 and NGO 5, organizations that champion for the rights and education of the girl child. In her response, the participant explained that:

> Yes, domestic violence against women cut across all ages in Zimbabwe. But people tend to forget that girls suffer gender-based as well as age-based violence. A girl child because of her tender age is more vulnerable to violation because as we grow up, we may be able to at least defend ourselves from the perpetrators. But children, they are easily taken advantage of by perpetrators...(NGO 10, FGD 2).

And

> ...I know there has been policies and campaigns against violence against women and girl children, but the truth is that women are still being abused, especially in the homes, by people close to them for that matter... (NGO 5, FGD 1).

And

> ...what makes domestic violence against women and girls to be serious is that it happens in private settings, so it continues to be prevalent...(KI 2, Human Right Expert).

Maybe the fact that women and children are physically weak makes them to be easily threatened and silenced, thereby necessitating repeated violation. Repeated violation may be precipitated because domestic violence occurs in private homes where it is difficult for NGOs and other people to know of its prevalence. This points to the glaring gender-based mistreatments and violations meted against the girl child, possibly thwarting her capacity to grow and enjoy her citizenship as the boy child. Considering the prevalence of violence against women despite all campaigns,

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maybe a review of the forms of interventions used by NGOs is necessary in order to come up with other forms of interventions that may eradicate domestic violence.

5.2.2.2 Social Injustice

This indicated the continuance of the traditional forms of abuse in the country even though newer forms were emerging. There seemed to be a new form of abuse, which NGO 1 called 'violence against women in public places'.

> ...and there are men who think they have the right to tell women how to dress. At Mbare and 4th street (places where taxis are usually parked), they strip women who are wearing what they call unacceptable dressing. As long as they are not naked, women have the right to wear what they want and be free anywhere without men calling them names...(NGO 1, FGD 1)

And in commenting about violence against women in public places, NGO 7 commented:

> ...some of the things men do to women, you just wonder what makes them think they can do that. Stripping women in public...NGO 7, FGD 1

This is a phenomenon where women would be mistreated because of what was perceived to be indecent clothing in the public places. Such included stripping naked those women who wore miniskirts in the public places. This prompted the official of the NGO 1 to refer the researcher to its organization's website to see the video of a woman who was stripped naked at the taxi rank by two men because she was wearing a mini-skirt. The video showed a woman who was made to walk along the road naked, with men and women jeering at her and taking as many pictures and videos as they wanted. The most unusual thing about the video was that people enjoyed seeing the naked woman instead of intervening to cover her and control the situation. This indicates that most of these social injustices are created and reinforced by the attitudes of people in the society. Another challenge in Harare is about revenge as explained below:

5.2.2.3 The emergence of "pornographic revenge"

Study findings in one of the FGDs unearthed a kind of women subjugation whereby men may take sexual videos and nude pictures of their girlfriends (probably initially for personal viewing) only to leak them later on social media as revenge to the women for leaving them. This was a kind of women harassment with men taking advantage of increased technological advancement and the popularity of the social

media such as Facebook, YouTube and WhatsApp. The participants informed the researcher that the purpose of the revenge was to bring shame and embarrassment to the victims. However, such kind of 'pornographic revenge' took place despite the distribution and possession of pornographic material in Zimbabwe being an illegal process (under the Censorship and Entertainment Control Act, Chapter 10: 04 of 1996). This law was enforced in order to protect the privacy as well as dignity of people, especially minors. Almost getting emotional, representative of NGO 13 narrated a story of two beauty peagents who had their careers ended through 'pornographic revenge":

> Seriously, this trend is getting worse every day. The sad thing being that you rarely see nude pictures of men. I mean I have not seen any men's pictures and videos circulating on the social media. Why does it have to be women? It is destroying people's lives and careers. Remember in 2014 Thabiso Phiri had to resign from Miss Zimbabwe's title and now Emily Kachote has also recently been stripped of Miss World title due to scornful ex-lover who posted nude pictures on social platforms. Something has to be done. This is infringing on someone's right to privacy... (NGO 13, FGD 2).

The above scenario borders on infringing the rights of women to clothing style and taking women as sexual objects. However, the phenomenon may have serious economic impact in that some women due to negative publicity on the social media lost their jobs. Also, it has a labeling and stigmatizing effect due to social judgments that come with it. Largely also, there is emotional and psychological trauma associated with the phenomenon and this may lead to low self-esteem for the victims as well as the development of a suicidal tendency.

The scenario of posting women's nude pictures also attracted comments from the key informant as she was interviewed after focus group discussions. In commenting about this, the human rights key informant had this to say about the issue:

> ...It seems like there is still a long way in educating women of their rights as well as challenging the communities and perpetrators of the need to respect each other's right... And you see, this thing of naked pictures and naked women, it's a shame especially to people doing it and forwarding it. The social media is seriously contributing to demeaning women. Agh and something has to be done. Fast. (KI 2, Human Expert).

While tackling the phenomenon driven by social media poses a challenge to the NGOs and even the government, the scenario above indicates men's negative attitudes and ignorance of women's inalienable right to existence, clothing style etc.

The society may be seen as equally responsible for demeaning these women victims because it participates in circulating the nude videos and pictures.

5.2.2.4 Sexual exploitation of the girl child

All three FGDs revealed the prevalence of episodes of sexual exploitation of the girl children sometimes with the law enforcement agents turning a blind eye and deaf ear to the situation. On this, the researcher forms a source of evidence because on the day that she went to request for permission to include NGO 15 in the Focus Group Discussion, she heard the following story that was almost unbelievable.

> Two men came to seek assistance. Apparently, there was a religious leader (name withheld) who had taken their 13 year old niece into his home. The man also has an insurance company so he is wealthy and uses money to silence the police and even other relatives of his many victims. According to these men, the man had over five underage girls he had taken as wives and no one could stand up against him. The police officers who had tried to raise the issue, are purported to have been given $800 each to buy their silence.

Apparently, the information above attests to corruption of some police officers as a crucial factor forming a fertile ground for exploitation of the girl children. This means that issues of gender disparities can be tackled if the government machinery and law enforcers embrace goodwill. Another NGO representative commented on the exploitation of the girl child saying,

> The majority of the girls are abused in their homes or by people they know, but they may not speak out because of fear...(NGO 13, FGD, 2).

Again, the issue of homes being the place for exploiting the girl child was mentioned, indicating the need for NGOs to channel their interventions in the homes if the girl child would be protected. The violation of women for political reasons is also among the challenges as presented below:

5.2.2.5 Politically-motivated violence against women

Results from the majority of the participants indicated that despite the violation of women in their respective homes and communities due to religious, cultural and personal reasons, politically-motivated violence was also reported as a challenge in Zimbabwe. According to the contributions of NGOs' representatives, while men may be killed or beaten up, women are raped, abducted and disgraced. To this end, a representative from NGO 1, an organization that does research and advocacy for the rights of women attested to this finding by giving the researcher some videos of

women who had been violated for political reasons. Below is a story of one woman (pseudonym given) from the video who lamented of her ordeal in 2008

> On the 11th of June 2008, the ZANU PF youths came and took me from my work place. They took me to the base. They took all of my clothes and said to the people who were there 'this is what we do to people who support Tsvangirai' (leader of Movement for Democratic Change, the main political opposition party in Zimbabwe). Three men came and raped me one after the other in front of all the people... *(silence)*. What pained me is that many of the people who were being beaten and raped were women. You would see elderly women being asked to open their legs because they wanted to see their private parts. They would throw soil at them, some would throw hot charcoal to burn their private parts... *(silence)*. For me at first they wanted to cut my private part with a knife, but they resorted to raping me instead. Now I am HIV positive. I see one of the persons who raped me at the HIV clinic and I wonder if he knew his status when he raped me. But nothing has been done to them. So I ask, if it was your wife who had been treated the way I was treated, what would you have done? Why is it that nothing has been done, no legal action has been taken against my perpetrators, why...? (Story of Mary, a political violence victim).

What makes this sad is that even though the actual act of violence occurred almost 6 years ago, the painful aftermaths of the ordeal are still apparent. Like many other women, the psychological health and physical trauma embedded in their experiences might haunt them forever. The research participants indicated that even though the violence was most common during election times, everyday women are violated and threatened with the repeat of 2008 and 2013 experiences, if they dare to support Tsvangirai. This concurs with the statement made by the representative from NGO 12, FGD 2 who stated that:

> Sexual violence eee, against women has been used as a tool and weapon to repress political dissent, inflict psychological damage and fear as well as intimidate the supporters of other political parties. They target women because they are weak and they can have sexual gratification with them… (NGO 12, FGD 2).

The revelation above from NGOs' representatives points to the role of governing structures of the country in instigating violence against women and violating their rights, especially the sexual and reproductive rights. This is ironical in that the government agents who are supposed to support the empowerment are the ones pushing for their disempowerment. The challenge of poverty and reproductive rights follows.

5.2.2.6 Poverty and the denial of sexual and reproductive rights of women

The majority of the responses also revealed that impoverishment exposed women to vulnerability, leading to the violation of their sexual and reproductive rights. A representative of NGO 13, an organization that is specializing in advocacy for sexual and reproduction rights, emphasized this finding. She explained that due to poverty, a couple of women disregarded their sexual rights in order to get money for survival. Sadly, some women found themselves sexually engaging with animals or other substances and in awkward environments of their clients' choice. She said:

> We should understand that selling sex is one thing, but having to sleep with a "snake" or a 'thing" is another. I'm sure that these women despite their desperation would bargain better if they knew exactly what they were dealing with. Can you imagine being used to sleep with those things to enrich someone? It's like you are being taken advantage of because of your desperation... (NGO 13, FGD 2).

This comment was made when the focus group was discussing about what had been broadcasted on the national broadcasting NEWS, ZBC in December 2015. There were a couple of women who testified that they had slept with what looked and felt like a snake after their clients wooed them to have sex with strange animals for financial gain. The other one according to the story was asked to have sex with the client at the cemetery for $100, which she agreed to, only to realize later that it was for ritual or satanic purposes. The story that was shared in the second FGD implied that women were viewed as objects that can be used as a means to an end, even if it means putting them in jeopardy. This indicated that it was difficult for women to exercise their rights as long as poverty loomed around them. Culture also seemed to be among the challenges in Harare as outlined below:

5.2.2.7 Cultural issues violating women's sexual and reproductive rights

With one voice, all the representatives in the three focus group discussions lamented over cultural practices that are used to camouflage women subjugation and subordination. It came to light that even though these occurrences are fading away with time, child marriages, genital mutilation, forced marriages, polygamy and ancestral appeasement are glaringly prevalent and forming an opportunity for increased women subjugation. To attest to this finding, the representative of NGO 11 and some members of FGD 2 revealed the following:

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> You know uum, people do not want to talk about these things because they are family secrets. But when one family member cracks, that's when they come for help. Child marriages and uum forced marriages, forced virginity tests...those things are there. Go to Binga to Chiredzi they are still doing it even today. That's why we had to all support the outlawing of child marriages. One by one, we will deal with all of them. It's still happening I'm telling you even here in Harare...(NGO 4, FGD 1)

And

> Here we deal with these cases every day. Sometimes they might have been done a long time ago but the families are still crying over what happened you see. In these offices we hear untold stories that may sound unreal I'm telling you. Like *kuripa ngozi* (when someone kills a person and send the girl child as payment) (NGO 11, FGD 2).

The above information indicates that cultural practices may be catalysts or hindrances to the attainment of gender empowerment and equality, depending on how they are interpreted and implemented among the Harare residents.

The KI from the religious and cultural aspects had something to say about culture forming the basis of women subjugation.

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> You have to understand that some of these practices have always been there ever since we were born. Our forefathers used to do things like that and back then, no one questioned it or challenged it because that's how it was done. *Kuripa ngozi* (appeasing the spirit of an offended dead-man by giving it a girl as a wife) *kuzvarirwa* (pledging a child for marriage) and all that. Those things we accepted even though they violated the freedom of women and girls...

When a girl is used for example to appease the ancestors, her future is doomed because she will be seen as an instrument to satisfy the dead, with no regard for her preferences or plans. Her right to education and to marry a person of her choice are also disregarded because she will be set aside for the ancestors.

5.2.2.8 Religious factors vis-à-vis women subjugation

Study findings further showed that religious beliefs and faith systems were a platform that was robbing women of their rights. The majority of the participants echoed that religious instruments and conventions have to a larger extent, relegated the place of a woman to be a secondary one, where one has to follow the whims and the desires of the man. In explaining this, one NGO participant said,

> When we look at religion here in Zimbabwe, it is mainly Christianity we are talking about because the African Tradition Religion although they worship

> God, they think and act almost like culture as far as their respect for women is concerned. It seems like there is a lack of a blueprint that clearly articulates the position of women in church. So, um in other churches women can lead, let's say in preaching. But generally, women take the supportive role. They are not as legitimized as men as far as leadership is concerned. Which is a bit confusing to say because they talk of acceptance and love in churches but we see a different attitude all together. (NGO 6, FGD 2)

However a representative from a Christian organization, which seeks to empower women in politics had a different view and in defence she said:

> Personally, I think there is a problem of painting all churches with one brush. I'm not rejecting the idea that women leadership in churches is minimal. But, I think it's all about some particular churches. Yes the church is founded on love without discrimination or prejudice. But sometimes people do the opposite of what the bible commands. I mean for example it says do not commit adultery, yet Christians continue to do so. In the same way, everyone should be treated equally and supported. So are we judging the church based on the shortcomings of its members or on its true principles? (NGO) 12, FGD 2)

The NGO representative posed a very important question in relation to the role of Christianity as far as the attainment of gender equality is concerned. Nevertheless, it appears as if the status of women in churches is a contentious and a sensitive one as the treatment of women differs from one congregation to the next. Realistically, the above scenario attests that religious beliefs were pertinent stumbling blocks towards the attainment of gender equality and women empowerment in Harare.

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5.2.2.9 Education deprivation of women and the girl child.

The findings of the research added that the girl child in Zimbabwe is still deprived from accessing education. Although a closer look into this form of inequality suggests that there is no rule or policy that clearly cuts-off girl children from educational advancement, instead there circumstances surrounding them that disadvantage them and limit their chances to educational advancement. This is to say that the girl and the boy child may start-off educational advancement together, but social, cultural, biological and religious aspects are more likely to derail the girl child than the boy child. In shedding more light on this point, NGO 10 from FGD 2 revealed the following:

> ...yes on paper, the girl and the boy child are both allowed to go to school. But we should not forget that a girl child is expected to cook, wash dishes, and do other domestic chores before and after school. All that time, the boy child will

> be studying. You see. This does not give them the same footing because the chores will wear her energy to study. We have not even started talking of child marriages and teachers who make sexual advancement on these girls sometimes even raping them. So how can we say there is fairness in accessing education for the girl and boy child? (NGO 10, FDG 2).

The scenario and description above suggests that socio-cultural factors form an important impediment derailing the possibility of equal opportunities between the boy and the girl child in accessing education.

Pregnancy of the teenagers a drawback to education empowerment

In concurrence with the prevalence of the girl child being disadvantaged vis-à-vis the boy child in the pursuit of her education, another NGO representative referred the researcher to the story that had been reported by the *Chronicles* National Newspaper dated 12 April, 2016 with the headline reading, "1 man: 6+ school girls pregnant". In short, the story was about a man working at Beitbridge (border town of Zimbabwe and South Africa) who allegedly and simultaneously impregnated six school girls who were due to sit for their ordinary level (matriculation). All the girls had to drop out of school.

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There is no doubt that the future of these girls has been altered by the seemingly selfish actions of one person. Probably all of them will never write their examinations, let alone come back to school after giving birth, since abortion is not an option in Zimbabwe (at least not legally). This is just one form of interception that the first NGO was referring to. If the boy child had engaged in sexual activities just like the girl child, there would not have been any pregnancy to make him pull out of school. Perhaps this brings back the debate on whether to make abortion for unplanned pregnancies an available option. The above scenario depicts that male dominance especially through the use of resources to win young girls' sexual favours, is a serious form of women disempowerment for the girl child.

Allocation of domestic chores to girls disadvantages them in education

While on the issue of equal educational opportunities, NGO 10 representative gave the researcher a poem that was written by a primary school girl child known as 'Mary'. In her poem, she laments over the domestic chores that are left on the girl child's shoulders, while the boy child is pursuing his education. The poem reads:

They regard us as special,

Yet they abuse us culturally.

We are the slaves of the home,

We cook, clean the house, And

look after children.

We are never given the chance to go to school.

We are used to appease the evil spirits. We

are forced to marry in times of hunger. But

why the girl child and not the boy child?

Parents, you need to change your attitude towards girls.

Give us equal opportunities

And we will prove you wrong.

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Parents, if you educate a girl

You educate a nation.

We need our nation to be educated (Poem by Mary on education)

This points to the unequal allocation of household chores between the boy and the girl children if the potential for educational advancement could be compared. Commenting on the educational deprivation of the girl child, one participant's comment is given below:

> …our girls from the homes are disadvantaged because they do all the household work including washing for their brothers. In as much as there is nothing wrong with a child helping around the house, it is not fair when only the girl child has to work because she has to put her school work aside and cook while the boy is continuing with his school work…(NGO 17, FGD 3).

This shows how culture and socialization are skewed to favour the boy children over the girl by having the domestic chores allocated and allotted to the girl children. If children, both girls and boys are socialized as equal from the tender age, maybe the work of NGOs may easily be accepted in societies. The vulnerability of women to HIV as a challenge in Harare is presented below:

5.2.2.10 Economic marginalization and women's vulnerability to HIV and AIDS

As revealed by the findings of the current study, women in Harare and Zimbabwe generally are more vulnerable to HIV than their male counterparts. The focus group discussions and key informants concurred that the circumstances and challenges that surround women expose them to HIV and AIDS. In emphasizing this, a representative from NGO 3, which deals with HIV and AIDS issues echoed:

> What we are saying is that, as long as women still depend on men for financial stability, they will always be vulnerable and more prone to HIV and AIDS. This is because their need for economic stability makes them to compromise their sexual preferences. *Unoona kana mukadzi achishingirira nyange murume achihura nekuti haana pekutangira nevana (*You find that a woman may still stay with the husband even when he is promiscuous because she can't take care of herself and the children in case she decides to leave). The result is that she will be infected by this man. That's why we are saying real power for a woman to make decisions that concern her is economic freedom. That way, some challenges will automatically be dealt with (NGO 3, FGD 1).

In the above words, the participant revealed the undeniable link that exists between poverty and HIV/AIDS. Once a woman is financially challenged, her capacity to make decisions is compromised and undermined. This may explain why some women go into prostitution in order to cater for their children and themselves. Poverty does not give them a choice of pride and dignity, but causes them to make the choices that they would not have taken under normal circumstances.

Cultures a platform of feminization of HIV/AIDS

Findings also revealed that cultural practices largely form a fertile ground for women subjugation and this makes them vulnerable to HIV and AIDS. Among those that surfaced in the focus group discussions include child marriages and polygamy. These cultural practices disempower women and rob them of their voice to speak when they are uncomfortable in matters of their reproductive and sexual health. Another factor that precipitated the spread of HIV among women was the prevalence of gender-based violence such as rape. A representative from the NGO 15 in the FGD 3 clarified:

> When a woman is sexually violated, it literally means that her consent has not been sought or it has been by-passed. So there will be no room to negotiate safe sex or anything like asking about the HIV status of the perpetrator. The

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> most traumatizing thing about rape may not necessarily be the action itself, but the after effects such as HIV infection, feeling worthless and lowered state of self-esteem. Because the victims of sexual violation are mostly women, this explains why women are more vulnerable to HIV/AIDS. Cultures make men to feel that they are entitled to sex and therefore coerce it. That's how it is… (FGD 3, NGO 15)

The scenario above indicates how some cultures reinforce women disempowerment by supporting men who develop attitudes and behaviours which undermine, condescend and deny women of their rights, more so the sexual and reproductive ones. This reflects and explains the genesis and reinforcement of the concepts of feminization of HIV/AIDS as well as feminization of poverty in relation to the MDG 3.

5.2.2.11 Resistance against women promotion in the political arena

The findings from the focus group discussions allude to the fact that there is still resistance against women's equal participation and assertion in politics. The discussions revealed that despite challenging the government to implement the 50-50 SADC Gender-Development Protocol as well as the '*vote for the woman*" campaign, Zimbabwe still falls far below the benchmark in terms of opening up spaces for women in decision-making processes. Cultural resistance was cited by NGOs' participants as the causal factor because women even in their homes are not considered fit enough to lead. Speaking on behalf of Christians in Zimbabwe, a representative from NGO 12 explains the ordeal that befalls women in Zimbabwe:

> As Christians, we side-line ourselves from politics and economic issues. Hence we are impoverished, but more so for women considering the fact that people think politics is a manly thing. In a way, the society condemns Christians who are involved in politics, more so women. If the society does not have faith in your abilities, how then can they support you or elect you? So they (women) are side-lined from farms, loans and other benefits that result from political involvement. But we are saying let's have faith in ourselves first and the society will see that we are capable (FGD 2, NGO 12).

The above statement suggests the possibility that women through attitudes, socialization and religious reasons appear to have allowed men to dictate what they can or cannot do, with the result that they have a secondary position in platforms such as leadership. Shunning such responsibilities have had the consequences of poverty and other related implications. In trying to explain the government's position in this matter, a political analyst employs his political expertise in the matter:

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> This matter is a sensitive issue...however I will try to address it as it is. Uum, you see politics in Zimbabwe is about power and association. Women are not treated any better in politics than they are treated in their homes. Zimbabwe is a country what do they say...ugh with a patriarchal foundation. So yes eeer the constitution has demanded for more women representation and to an extent the number has increased. But still, right now *Mai* (Mrs) Mujuru was dismissed over unsubstantiated grounds. And nothing was done about that dismissal. So, in a way it shows that men still decide when to elevate and demote you. That is not real empowerment. You can take it as in the home, a wife can just be divorced for no reason and she will pack and go. So the issue of politics can be traced back to the place that is given a woman in the home because if she is not leading the home when the man is there how can she lead the country when men are there. You see, this has nothing to do with her abilities by the way. But it's about masculinity ego or whatever you may call it, but not necessarily a personal issue...(Key informant, political expert).

The scenario above shows that factors such as socialization, attitudes and patriarchy have shaped the power dynamics that have placed the women in a secondary position, depriving her of the acquisition of resources while men are supported.

5.2.2.12 Women's economic exclusion

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The findings obtained alluded that women in Zimbabwe continue to be side-lined as far as economic empowerment and development is concerned. The focus group discussions explained that the policies that the government has incorporated in trying to revive the economy among the others the ZIMASSET, are gender-insensitive. The focus group discussions further reported that women are still polarized in the informal sector where the returns are both minimal and inconsistent. According to the discussions, the formal sector is still dominated by men. In light of this, women are said to be financially excluded as they cannot be absorbed by the formal financial channels. In stressing the importance of economic empowerment and economic freedom, NGO 16 from FGD 3 had the following sentiment:

> Ugh, but honestly, as long as women are still not empowered economically, it seems like we might be fighting a losing battle in virtually all areas. Look, women are the ones swimming in poverty because the policies the government has put in place are blind to the needs and exclusion that already exist against women. So eer they can't get loans for business, houses or any development. And the economy as we know it is not helping at all. Women are still deprived. I know this is affecting everyone, but ugh look at women in the streets and children. Sustaining any project in this economy is really difficult because things are tough out there, and most women are into these small projects, buying and selling things from South Africa...(NGO 16, FGD 3).

The issue of an economic challenge ravaging, especially the female-headed households severely and women generally in Zimbabwe was emphasized by the key informant from the Ministry of Finance as more light was shed on the matter.

> Well, it is not a secret that as a country we are facing an economic meltdown and that this is affecting the lives of the people of Zimbabwe. But eer, as a Ministry we have put in place measures to make sure eer that the national budget is gender-sensitive. Honestly, these things take time and right now there is little of budget to talk about in the practical terms so I would not say there is much progress honestly. The Ministry of Gender Women Affairs and Community Development with other NGOs are pushing for policies to remember women as well. These are new systems we are putting in place to balance the inequalities that we see among women in Zimbabwe today. So yes, we are aware of such gaps and we are taking corrective action to correct them as a ministry, but as you know there is no money to really make changes that can be visible. Yah, there is no money. I'm sure you know about the challenges we are facing as a ministry...(Key Informant, Ministry of Finance)

The scenario above shows that the prevalent societal environment was disempowering, with the situation still favouring men at the expense of women. The scenario again reveals that the government was owning and admitting to the numerous gaps pertaining to the exclusion of women in economics. The testimony by the representative from the Finance Ministry that there is no money to implement women empowerment interventions and programmes however, may explain the gaps that are still prevalent as far as the attainment of women empowerment in Zimbabwe is concerned. Land issues also proved to be challenges in Harare as presented in the following page.

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5.2.2.13 Issues and women poverty

Findings from both the NGOs and key informant research participants highlighted immense exclusion of women as far as land-access and ownership was concerned. This was touted as one of the reasons explaining the preponderance of poverty and hunger in the country. The third FGD observed that the majority of land in Zimbabwe is owned by males. Given that Zimbabwe is an Agricultural country, land is the economic base of the people. However, it emerged from the discussions that those responsible for allocating land have side-lined women from the process. NGO 20, from the FDG 3, representing an NGO that deals with land rights for women explained:

> There are inequalities between achievements of men and women in reproductive health, empowerment and economic activity. There is also evidence of partial opportunities in trade, government, land and industry. So long as women are side-lined from crucial elements such as land rights, they will continue to be impoverished. The so-called poverty reduction strategies do not take into account variances in income and influence between men and women. The Famer Development Trust and Inception Phase Frameworks, (programmes that sought to give technical agricultural training to new farmers) if you look closely, only men benefitted from it. The land Reform Programme, women were displaced and promised to be resettled in better places, if you do not have the card (ZANU PF connection) you won't get anything especially if you are a woman. (NGO 20, FGD 3).

Further on land issue, findings from key informant 3 who offered a political insight revealed that the 2008 Land Grabbing episode policy and the redistribution exercise was an "on-the-spot" thought. He said,

> ... there was really not much thought that was given to the idea in making sure that issues such as the sustainability of the economy and the possible beneficiaries were well outlined. The process although it was an empowering one seemed to have been driven by political rather than economic reasons so it ended up favouring men than women because it was about who you know... (KI 3, Political Analyst).

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The above observation supported by the verbatim statement above shows that gender equality and equity as well as women empowerment was hugely stifled through unfair practices that favour men at the expense of women. With land allocation skewed to favour men than women, the phenomenon explains feminization of poverty as land is the backbone of the country's economy. With the gender challenges explained, the study focuses on the methodologies of intervention by NGOs in Harare.

5.2.3 Interventions used by NGOs to tackle gender disparities

Study findings from the representatives of the NGOs further indicated that NGOs are tackling different aspect of gender disparities, for example empowering women and the girl children to be aware of the constitution, policies and lobbying strategies that can urge the government to address the disparities for equality among the general citizens. One respondent from an organization that fights against gender-based violence put it this way:

> Our organization both prevents and responds to gender inequality through the nature of our programming.1) Direct services to empower women and girls so that they can make informed decisions about their future. 2) Addressing GBV legislation through formulation of new laws and revision of laws. We initiate and try to influence the law. 3) Social transformation, addressing retrogressive beliefs, attitudes, laws and policies. 4) Peace building initiatives ..(NGO 8, FGD 2).

The scenario above reveals that NGOs in Harare engage in various interventions to fight gender inequalities and inequities. In all the three focus group discussions, different modes of eradicating gender inequality in Zimbabwe emerged and are presented below:

5.2.3.1 Gender-NGOs mobilizing communities to embrace their rights

The findings in the current research reflected that NGOs in the gender line were mobilizing the societies to hold protest demonstrations in the streets in order to attract the attention of the government and the perpetrators. These findings suggest that protesting and demonstrating in order to present grievances can be a strong tool for the gender organizations to achieve various aspects of gender equality, equity and women empowerment. The scenario motivates people whose rights are violated to unite and protest together in order to raise their chances of being addressed by the government over their concerns. Below are pictures with NGOs' representatives and other women, carrying banners with a message they are communicating.

Fig 5.1 NGOs leading in the demonstration (March, 2016)

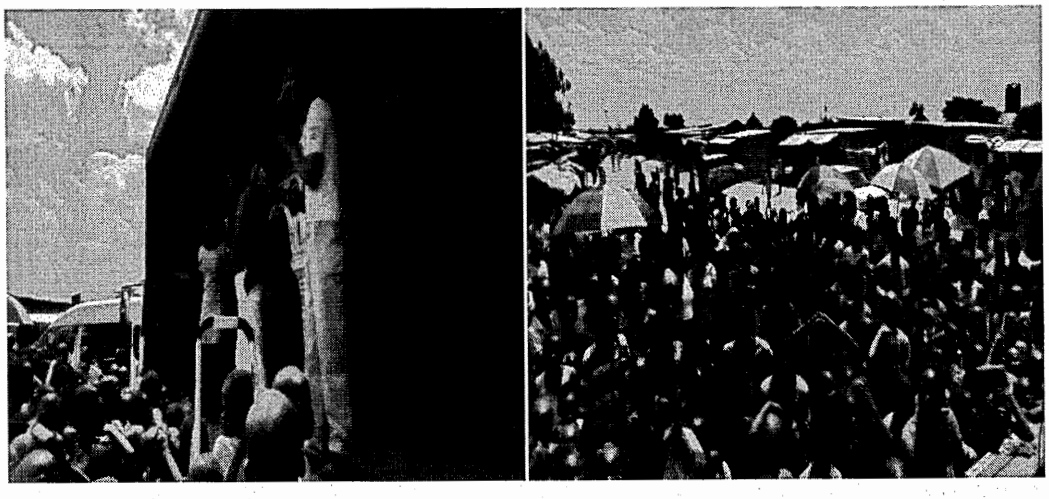
The pictures above demonstrate a sign of solidarity in condemning sexual abuse and child marriages. The utility of road shows is explained and presented below:

5.2.3.2 Staging "road shows" by NGOs to fight gender inequalities

In the same manner that road shows are used by companies to market products, the researcher found out that gender-NGOs in Zimbabwe have adopted the strategy to get their message across to the people. Findings from one of the NGO representatives reported that in these road shows, they teach men, women and children about their rights, the consequences of their actions as well as explaining the concepts surrounding gender equality, educating the girl child and condemning cultural practices that are harmful to the development of the girl child. Shedding light on this, NGO 1 from the FGD 1 explained:

> Us, we use any platform that can put our message across. We say that you can't stop women with an agenda. Our agenda is gender equality. So we do anything and everything to reach to people. We are using our local celebrities to be voices of reason especially Kapfupi and Gringo (Zimbabwean national comedians). Even though they are funny people, but in entertaining people, we also educate them on the cultural practices that are destroying the girl child and also child marriages. Women being raped and abused it's not funny. But they are crowd pullers and that is what we need. So we don't have one way of doing it but we do what we can...(NGO 1, FGD 1).

Fig 5.2: Advocacy Roadshow at Hopley Farm (March, 2016)



The scenario above shows that gender-based NGOs use a constellation of public attention-capturing strategies, especially the popular ones to reach to the communities. Gender equality as a global and national goal needs community mobilization in order to empower as many people as possible.

5.2.3.3 Using the art of film-making to expedite gender-equality messages

Sentiments from the NGOs' representatives in the focus group discussions revealed that the NGOs were using whatever form of medium at their disposal for information dissemination, advocacy and lobbying, so that their messages can be received as effectively and efficiently as possible. The use of movies, films and screens was mentioned as an intervention to promote gender equality and to fight gender disparities in Zimbabwe. The wider the range of the methods adopted, the better the chances for the attainment of gender equality and women empowerment in Zimbabwe. To attest to the above finding, the representative of NGO 10, in FGD 2 explained on the methodology in detail:

> It's very simple. You have to know that some issues such as rape, politically motivated violence and even physical violence are highly sensitive matters. The survivors may not be willing to share their story or to be made point of references. So what we do is that we compile those stories and make a film from them using actors and pseudonyms. We then travel around the country screening those stories to educate people as awareness campaigns as well. This has been working very well especially during the 2008 violent elections. People can relate better to a drama or film than to engage themselves in reading pages upon pages of information. We also post these videos on YouTube and Facebook for easy access, you can check on our page… (NGO 10, FGD 2).

NGOs pursuing gender equality in Zimbabwe emphasized that they are employing all mechanism including film-making. The beauty of images according to the participants is that they tend to stay longer in people's minds and that it is entertaining to follow rather than having to read piles of information. Although reading the material may work for some people, screening covers the gap for those who cannot read and those who do not have libraries close to them. As these films are screened from place to place, there is a wider coverage of those that are reached, which is critical for the dissemination of information on gender issues.

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Use of songs and poetry to relay gender-mainstreaming messages

Study findings moreover revealed the utility of poetry and songs to relay gender-mainstreaming messages. All these artistic methodologies are maximized in accordance to people's different taste and preferences. Such songs are compiled and sung by the founder of NGO 2 featuring other artists such as the gospel artist Fungisai Zvakavapano and the late Chioniso. One of her song is a plea to men and the society to respect women and not abuse them. In unpacking the motivation behind the song, she said:

> When I wrote the songs, specifically '*Ndakateerera*" (I'm Listening) it was to inform people of the dilemma that befalls, eer a faithful woman between the vows that she made, you know "in health and in sickness, till death do us part" and the promiscuity of her husband knowing well that she may be infected with the virus. So it's more of a plea to God saying speak to me what should I do in this situation. At the same time, uum I am reminding men of their responsibilities to protect, care, love and be faithful to their wives as well and not take advantage of their faithfulness. The song was recorded in 2007 at the Gramma Awards and it is available on YouTube as well you can get it or I can send it to you directly. Umm, we try to reach as many people as we can so yes we use even songs when we can...(FGD 1, NGO 2).

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The information above indicates the need to use as many people-friendly methodologies as possible to relay gender messages that would expedite gender equality, equity and women empowerment.

5.2.3.4 Radio and other social media as forums of gender information relay

Besides the utility of songs in reaching out to people, the researcher found out that a few NGOs were also utilizing the radio and other forms of social media to penetrate the airwaves in the fight against gender inequality and women disempowerment. They revealed that they discuss crucial issues such as HIV and AIDS, human rights issues, child marriages, legal rights, good governance issues and any other issue that may be important to the wellness of women and the girl child in Zimbabwe. Upon asking them which media they use, it surfaced that these NGOs regularly host talkshows at "StarFM" radio, they have been on "Good Morning Zimbabwe" NEWS hour and even the "Mai Chisamba Show", just to mention a few. Below is a message from the radio.

On international platforms, NGO 6 indicated that at one point they had been on the South African Broadcasting Cooperation (SABC) in South Africa discussing the issue of political violence against women in Zimbabwe. This was done as a way of pushing forward this matter to the minister of International Relations so that the matter could be taken up to the South African Development Committee (SADC) Summit.

The information presented above proves that the use of the media has been utilized as a strategic tool in gathering support from international bodies especially where the local government may be unable to contain or unwilling to act on the matter. An international platform such as that attracted attention leading to speedy action that resulted in peace, especially in the 2009 violent election, the cholera outbreaks and the unstable economic situation. Rumbidzai Dube from Research and Advocacy Unit (RAU) had a privilege to also speak at "StraightTalkAfrica", a show that discusses issues in Africa. (*the name is given because the interview is publicly available online)* She was reported saying,

> Some of the things that we want our leaders to address first include increased participation in many decision-making processes because it is from the grassroots that the leaders can understand what it is that women actually want from them. After all, we are in a social contract. We put them in there so they could serve us and give us uum what we assigned them to deliver- social services, education, health... (NGO 6 representative, extract from the interview on StraightTalkAfrica).

The above interview is an example of how the NGOs in advocacy use the media in challenging the government to enhance good governance and accountability to their citizens. The interview was a discussion about the Summit that was to be held in Ethiopia by African countries and NGOs' opinions were sought regarding what they needed for gender equality to be a reality in Zimbabwe. The representative from NGO 2 in emphasizing the importance of using the media indicated that :

> As activists for women and the girl child, we don't shy away from the media. We get there and talk about inspirational messages, confidence building words and we use our own personal experiences. For example, I grew up in a rural area but here I am. So we will be telling the girls that if we could make it so can they. So the media helps in that it reaches not only to the victims but the perpetrators too. For I believe there will be a gap if the message does not reach the men and boys too...so the media gets the message out there...(NGO 2, FGD 1).

The representative from NGO 2 emphasized on the need to involve men too in issues of women empowerment. This is important as it will assist to neutralise attitudinal resistance and stereotyping of NGOs that are pursuing gender issues. Below is the picture of NGO 2 as they unpack the legal issues surrounding women and girl children:

Fig 5.3: NGO 1 at Star FM radio Station (March, 2016)

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Using the media as a gender information-relay instrument to achieve various kinds of gender equality goals cannot be over-emphasized as it attracts a wider audience. Possibly, this is because some media tools such as the radio are cheaper, efficient and effective in information relay.

5.2.3.5 Maximizing on gender grassroot outreaches to fight gender inequality

The majority of NGOs in all the focus group discussions concurred that in as much as they were situated in the urban area of Harare, their services were utilized by people from the surrounding rural areas. As such, they indicated that they engaged in grassroot outreaches where they penetrate the rural areas around Zimbabwe, mainly those at the peripheral of Harare urban in order to empower women there as well. Some of the NGOs revealed that they had managed to conduct these outreaches more regularly because of the reception they received as well as the perceived need for their programmes and services. A representative from NGO 11 explained,

...but people may not be able to come to our organizations due to various reasons. So we go out there to meet them especially in the outskirts of towns where there is confusion about our agenda when we talk of women empowerment...(NGO 11, FGD 2)

And

We have to be strategic in order to relay our messages. We may use drama, or speeches to communicate depending on the targeted population. Resistance too is strong in rural areas because they are the custodians of the cultural practices, you see, so we are needed there also... (NGO 15, FGD 3)

In these outreaches, they use screening, road shows and drama as a way of entertaining and educating the public, whether men, women or children - depending on the targeted audience. It came to light that bringing the knowledge of the services to the grassroot levels was important as these are areas with strong cultural and religious strongholds. Due to attitudinal and resistance issues, gender disparities were said to be more prevalent in these areas, even though the phenomenon is evident across all the divides in the country. The picture below is the evidence of some of these NGOS as they mobilize people in the rural and grass root areas.

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Fig 5.4: Utano Hall, Chitungwiza (March 2016)

(Source: NGO 3 website)

Largely, it is important for the NGOs to consider directing their gender mainstreaming messages to the rural areas. Due to factors such as patriarchy, low educational and poverty levels, they tend to experience higher levels of gender inequality, inequity and a gender disempowerment disposition. This is also true

because some people especially in the deeper rural areas, due to poverty are bereft of apparently commoner forms of media such as the radio, let alone a television set.

5.2.3.6 Play therapy intervention

Sometimes, what campaigns and teachings cannot do, a little bit of fun can accomplish the desired result. The research findings identified the use of play therapy as another method used by some NGOs in relaying and mainstreaming gender empowering messages. The picture below is an example of play therapy, a form of intervention that empowers girls. The photograph below was given to the researcher by a representative from NGO 13, FGD 2.

Fig 5.5: Play Therapy at Mbire (March, 2016)

(Source NGO 13 website)

Evidently, the girls are dancing to a song, but it is not just a random song. The song and dance according to the NGO representative is significant in declaring what these young girls would desire to see happening in the society. The circle represents a grinding utensil or mill used to grind peanuts, round nuts and the like (*duri).* The girl running in the circle represents the problem manifesting in the society that has to be eradicated, for example child marriage. The song is sung as written below:

Dudu muduri! (what shall we put in the grinding mill?)
Katswe! (grind it!)
Dudu muduri!(what shall we put in the grinding mill?)

Katswe! (grind it!)
Kushungurudzwa muduri! (victimization in the grinding mill)
Katswe! (grind it!)
Kurohwa muduri! (being beaten in the grinding mill)
Katswe! (grind it!)
Kuroodzwa muduri!(child marriage in the grinding mill)
Katswe!(grind it!)
Kushaiswa dzidzo muduri! (being deprived of education in the grinding mill)
Katswe! (grind it!)

From the data gathered then, it is safe to report that NGOs in the gender line in Zimbabwe are fighting gender disparities using varied channels and modes of interventions. While others are on the streets educating women about their rights, others are in the offices assisting with legal representation and counseling of all nature. Yet still, some are holding meetings with the government, debating on the need to be gender-sensitive in economic, social, legal, political matters and issues of good governance. Apart from that, other NGOs are initiating projects that can free women from poverty, illiteracy and marginalization for the social and economic inclusion of women. This shows that the NGOs are adopting different methodologies in an attempt to empower women and the girl children for the attainment of gender equality in Zimbabwe. Perceptions on the effectiveness of such interventions are presented in the following paragraphs.

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5.2.4 Effectiveness of NGOs in the gender mainstreaming

After discussing the forms of gender disparities rampant in Zimbabwe specifically in Harare, the researcher asked the question whether the interventions by these NGOs were bearing fruits. The researcher wanted to find out if the NGOs believed that they had what it takes to ensure gender equality in Zimbabwe. All the NGO representatives thought that there was a paradigm shift on gender issues through their interventions even though there was still a lot to be done in empowering the women and the girl child for gender equality and equity to be a reality in Zimbabwe. Below are some comments from NGO representatives:

> ...yes if we look in the homes, economy, schools and eer politics, women are still behind. But even though we have not yet achieved a state of gender parity, from the indicators as outlined in the MDGs and even our National Gender Policy, there has been a lot of achievement. As Women

> organizations, we have influenced many policies which try to include women in economics and especially in the homes. We have also supported the girl child with her school fees and economically empowered women with skills and knowledge to free her from poverty. So yes, there is indeed a change even though we face other challenges on the way…(NGO 8, FDG 2).

And

> Also the issue of rights social inclusion. In the rural areas for example, there were cultures which excluded women from land ownership and sometimes inheritance. Now the law is on the side of the widows who would usually be deprived of their husbands' properties. The outlawing of the child marriage practice. There are a lot of battles we have won…(NGO 17, FGD 3)

The information provided indicated that women in Zimbabwe were still facing challenges, but gender-NGOs were also intervening to bring equality. This shows that the issue of women empowerment is a long process that needs resources and time for equality to be attained. The following findings on the perceptions of NGOs directors concerning the effectiveness of their interventions are given:

5.2.4.1 A debate on the effectiveness of NGOs interventions

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Findings on the perceptions from all the NGOs' representatives indicated that there was positive and visible progress as far as the effectiveness of interventions to achieve the processes of gender equality, equity and women empowerment were concerned. They argued that commitment and passion to serve communities were the key drivers to the process and that collaborating with the government was crucial. The use of information technology especially the social media was also cited as essential for effective information relay. To emphasize on this finding, the first FGD, NGO 7 representative had the following to narrate:

> Gender equality is possible to achieve in Zimbabwe. NGOs however need more than to be financially equipped in order to make this a reality. NGOs need to bring back that passion and drive to see change and be agents of community development not be driven by a passion for salaries, cars and iPads. To achieve gender equality demands the collaborative work of NGOs working through government structures and to make use of ICTs' too (Information and Communications Technology). (NGO 7, FGD 1.)

The representative from the Ministry of Women Affairs and Gender also concurred with the above participant on the loss of passion or rather fire by NGOs. She urged:

> If you compare the NGOs and women movement in the 1990s and what they are now, it has died down.... but they are strategically positioned for gender

> equality for sure. Like I was telling you that they have a very strong way of doing advocacy, lobbying and taking the government to account, they can make a lot of noise, they can even demonstrate and now the parliament is even inviting them to portfolios committee meetings to get their perspective on how the government is doing in terms of mandate and so on. They are very well positioned in terms of capacity building of women and helping women to access justice, having legal assistance against gender-based violence and turnarounds on economic issues and uum they have access to women through grassroots structures. (KI gender ministry)

The verbatim of the participant shows that the weakening of passion for NGOs to serve the communities may be compromising the effectiveness of their interventions in eradicating gender disparities. The key informant however thinks that NGOs are still relevant and positioned for women empowerment in Zimbabwe. Findings again indicated that the unavailability of resources was a huge impetus in effectively running gender-based NGOs. To emphasize on this, a representative from NGO 19, FGD 3 had this to say on the matter:

> Yes, well gender equality and women empowerment, equity and a better Zimbabwe for women is a possibility and there is positive progress if you look around. However, it's a gradual process and we might not want to face it, but it's going to take a long time before it is achieved in its totality. NGOs can only address this if they work together and not compete. Yes we have systems, but as NGOs we need more resources to be more effective and also assistance from our government. (NGO 19, FGD 3).

However, in an attempt to substantiate their claims that they were indeed making changes, taking bold steps to the attainment of gender equality, equity and women empowerment in Zimbabwe, the NGOs in the focus group discussions narrated the achievements and highlights that they believed changed the position of women in Zimbabwe. Below are the thematic highlights as discussed in the focus group discussions.

5.2.5 Perceptions on the effectiveness of interventions by gender NGOs

From all the three focus group discussions, almost every organization had achievements to share. In the discussions, the NGOs' representatives and even the key informants were stating these achievements randomly, one participant after the other. As such, they have been presented in bullet points for clarity. This ranged from successful campaigns, increased numbers of people who received counseling and legal representation. For some organizations in the advocacy line, they commented on having been able to influence policy development and amendments

of the constitution to the government. Among the most recent ones was the outlawing of the child marriage ruling. However, these achievements, proof of positive impact, have been presented according to the major specializations of these NGOs.

5.2.5.1 Perceptions on the effectiveness of interventions by NGOs in Women's Health and Reproductive Rights

- They reported having contributed greatly to the enactment of the Domestic Violence Act (DVA) and its implementation.

The gender NGOs' intervention in this regard was effective in that it enabled the enactment of the DVA which is meant to protect women from abuse and charging the perpetrators. The act seeks to empower women by protecting them from acts of violence. As such, its enactment is perceived to have brought some degree of security to women as perpetrators would be threatened by persecution.

- NGOs in women's health pointed out that they had managed to secure and continue to provide Anti-Retroviral Treatment for pregnant mothers in order to Prevent Mother To Child Transmission (PMTCT).

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The effectiveness of this achievement may be attributed to an increase in the number of babies that are prevented from being infected with HIV, improved maternal health the reduced number of mothers who die due to lack of HIV/AIDS treatment.

- They have again established various centres in Harare that house HIV and AIDS sufferers as well as provide treatment and counseling for them.

The establishment of more centres through NGOs' interventions is a sign of their interventions causing positive impact by allowing more women to get treatment and counseling. Treatment was perceived to prolong life while counseling reduces HIV transmission because women will be empowered with information on safe sex.

- These NGOs also revealed that they hold a number of workshops that are aimed at increasing awareness on the need to practice safe sex and the

promotion of the female condoms had increased even though the paucity of resources to an extent was limiting their visions.

Increased awareness on gender issues and on safe-sex practices are the result of these interventions and it is believed that this has a potential to increase the use of female condoms.

- The findings showed that the NGOs in sexual rights have successfully partnered with the University of Zimbabwe to assist with empirical research on the health and reproductive aspects of women.

The organization in the reproduction health also indicated that they were pushing the government to consider legalizing abortion as it was happening any way, and that women should be given the right to make decision on issues that concerns their sexual reproductive health. Additionally, findings indicated that the issue of legalizing prostitution was also among the debated ones under the Sexual Offence Act.

5.2.5.2 Perception on the interventions by NGOs in Economic Empowerment

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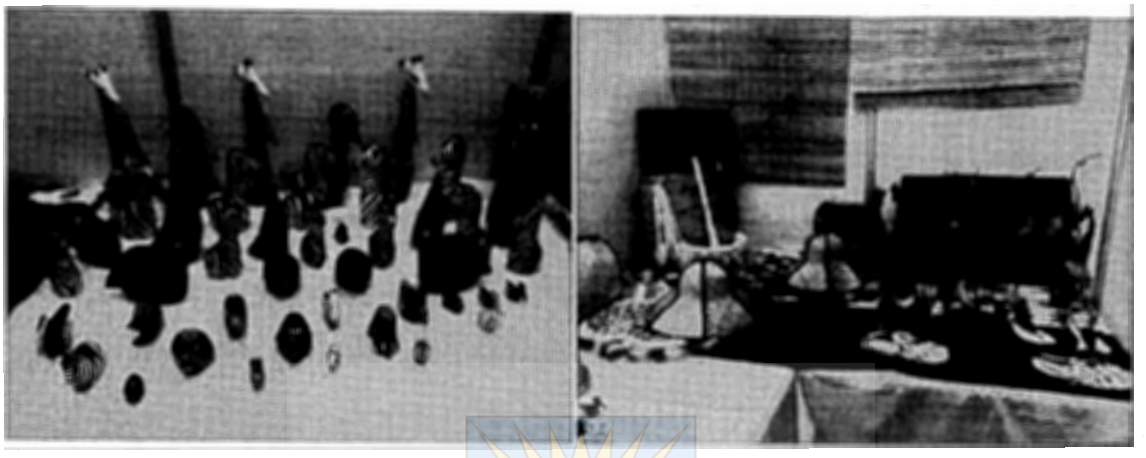
An organization aimed at improving the socio-economic status of women through training and skills building also revealed that they had managed to get graduates in vocational skills such as tie and die, shoe making, carpentry and pottery. Those in the agricultural and land sector reported having their members graduating from potato planting and tobacco planting every year. As such, their interventions can be acknowledged as being effective because it is empowering women with skills that they may use to free themselves from the grips of poverty. They further indicated that it has been their culture every year to make these exhibitions at the Harare Agricultural Show (a national show where people see and buy different stuff). Some of the items exhibited are pictured below:

Fig 5.6: NGO 17"s Exhibition at the Agricultural Show



(Source NGO 17 website)

Again, the NGOs in poverty eradication and economic empowerment for women also cited the achievements stated below:

- They have urged the government to formulate the Tourism Policy which is meant to increase the participation of women in the formal sector in tourism. They reported that they also demanded that the government comply with their proposal for 30% of women to be absorbed in the tourism sector, of which the struggle is still continuing.
- They further reflected that they are engaging more women, imparting in them entrepreneurial skills for their economic development. They cited bread-making, sewing, piggery, poultry, shoe-making, tobacco farming and potato farming as some of the programmes they are empowering women with.

The attainment of these goals and these achievements show that the interventions made by NGOs are causing a positive impact in the lives of women in Harare, thereby causing positive development and a positive shift towards the attainment of gender equality in Zimbabwe. Below is a picture showing a graduation ceremony for the potato-growers.

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Fig 5.7: Graduation of potato growers (December, 2015)

(Source NGO 17's website)

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5.2.5.3 Perceptions on the effectiveness of interventions by NGOs in advocacy

Study findings showed that advocacy and campaigning for the dissolution of the child marriage was one of the important milestones that gender-based NGOs achieved. The findings indicated that what made the achievements pertinent was the fact the all the sister organizations rallied to support these women and others who are in the same situation. The discussions reflected a commitment to a cause and for that reason, there was success. Other achievements by gender advocacy NGOs are bulleted below:

- The advocacy of the NGOs assisted and accelerated the formulation of the Pension Policy which assists widowed women from unregistered customary laws to access their husbands' pensions.
- Increased advocacy by women NGOs assisted in diluting male dominance in politics but they however reported that the change is not as significant since it is way below the 50-50 ratio they are targeting.
- Through a women caucus, they reported to have played a vital role in spearheading the formation of the Anti-Domestic Violence Council, which is set to regularly monitor the problems of domestic violence in Zimbabwe.

The women committee that NGOs have set up monitors the police reports on domestic violence in order to determine their patterns and frequencies. This is aimed

at reducing the prevalence of domestic violence thereby protecting women and the girl children.

- They also indicated that they have been conducting successful empirical research which they have used to demand the amendments of various laws from the government.

Below is a pictorial expression of the lawyer, Advocate Biti with the two defendants on the child marriage court-case after a milestone judgment of outlawing the child marriage.

Fig 5.8: The media centre just after the judgment on outlawing child marriages

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(Source: NGO 1 website)

What the researcher and other practitioners drew from the episode is the importance of collaboration and synergy in pushing an agenda. This is because the frontrunner NGO (NGO 1) was fully supported by other NGOs. This proved that even with meagre resources, collaboration can enhance the NGOs to accrue meaningful and optimal results for the attainment of gender equality, making their interventions to be more fruitful.

5.2.5.4 Perceptions on the effectiveness of interventions by NGOs in Education

NGOs' representatives who promote the education of a girl child and women mentioned a number of the achievements they have made towards the advancement of gender equality in Harare and Zimbabwe at large. They said:

- They collaborated with the government in the enactment of the National Strategic Plan which has yielded positive results in increasing the enrolment of girls and women in school. They again reported that through this policy, enrolment in tertiary institutions has increased now to around 50% for women.
- The participants indicated an increase in the number of girls whom they are assisting with payment of school fees and meeting their basic needs.
- Through their advocacy, they pointed out to the crafting of a National Strategic Plan for the education of vulnerable and orphaned girls. This plan according to the participants and the reinforcement of the key informants made it possible for girls who fall pregnant while at school to be granted permission to deliver their children and go back to school.
- The NGO participants also revealed that they have increased in their campaigns and advocacy for female education through the "Go Back To School Campaign" which is sponsored by UNICEF.

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The achievements outlined therefore testify to the effectiveness of the interventions because they have managed to yield positive results and meet the goals that have been set. Where interventions are ineffective, there is likely to be a lack of achievements. In wrapping up a discussion of the evidence of the effectiveness of NGOs' interventions in the attainment of gender equality and women empowerment in Zimbabwe, one NGO representative says:

> Yes we may not have achieved the targets set by UN on MDG 3 or SDGs, but I believe the woman today has better opportunities than was given to her mother or grandmother. We believe women empowerment is not a one night thing. We will not rest, we will not quit, we will continue fighting for the rights of women. With more resources and support we can do better. But right now we are going to do what we can with what we have, without making excuses because the lives of women and girls are in our hands. (NGO 17, NGD 3)

The quote above speaks of the determination of women NGOs vowing to put extra effort in their interventions in order to effect more change and bring about greater

positive impact in the lives of women and girls in Zimbabwe. The challenges that may be weakening the interventions are discussed in the subsequent paragraphs.

5.2.6 Challenges hindering the effectiveness of NGO"s interventions

With the achievements showing a degree of positive impact being made by women-NGOs presented, the researcher moves on to present the factors that are compromising the effectiveness of NGOs' interventions.

5.2.6.1 Gender-NGOs operating on a shoe-string budget

Virtually all the NGOs' participants were in unison that their organizations faced dire financial challenges and that they were resource-strapped to an extent of rendering most of their functions redundant. Upon probing on the matter deeply, the majority of the NGOs' representatives revealed that the issue of finances was largely affecting their operations and projects such that they had to cut-off some of the staff in order to stay afloat. This obviously meant a heavier load on the remaining staff or worst still, letting go of some planned projects. For any organization to run effectively, financial sustainability is important in meeting the expenditures and to finance the projects that are necessary. NGO 13 had this to say:

> ...the budget is tight. I'm sure I am speaking for every other organization here. There is so much to be done but little budget to sustain our visions and goal...(NGO 13, FGD 2)

And NGO 3,

> ...yes yes. The challenge is that the funding is not difficult to secure except for a few loyal donors. It is not the same as when we were still using the Zim dollar, foreign currency meant more income, not now when we are using the US dollar as well...it tight (NGO 3, FGD 1)

The NGO reveals how the phasing out of the Zimbabwean dollar negatively affected the income of many NGOs. Back then, foreign currency could be exchanged for more Zimbabwean dollars. In support of the financial challenges, the key informant had this to say:

> ...But the issue now is that they face dire challenges in terms of funding. You find out that NGOs are now competing for resources. They are now leaving their mandate and running with any agenda that has funding at that particular time. Like during the times when the constitution was the talk of the day, every NGO was running with the constitution. The days when we were doing advocacy for the domestic violence act, all the NGOs were supporting that. So

> I think there is need for NGOs to be organized and stick with their mandate and focus on it. Yaa, but, they are facing financial problems and as you know as the government we don't offer them any financial assistance...(KI 1, Ministry of Women Affairs)

The findings evidenced that funding may be the biggest challenge faced by gender NGOs in Zimbabwe. This is because as the country goes through the worst economic melt-down in its history, perhaps not much assistance from the government and local donors may be forthcoming.

5.2.6.2 NGOs suffering from donor- dependency syndrome

Findings indicated that the NGO's operations in Zimbabwe were insufficient because donors either had reduced their funding significantly, or had stopped completely due to the country's bad relations with the western world. The NGOs' representatives indicated that perhaps the NGOs relying on the foreign donors created a dependence syndrome that needed to be annihilated altogether if ever the NGOs were going to win their perpetual sustainability. This concurred with the key informant's response when asked what she thought about the funding and budgeting of NGOs in the gender line. She explained:

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> ...the truth is that donor supply has declined sharply due to the overwhelming numbers of NGOs. The dependence on foreign funding has apparently led to a syndrome at the expense of NGO perpetual sustainability. Again, Zimbabwe is not the only country in need of financial aid. The competition is not just national, but internationally too with countries such as Zambia, Mozambique and Malawi. Also the sanctions imposed against Zimbabwe have made donors to withdraw their support. Those NGOs that have remained are restricted from doing developmental and economic projects, just humanitarian issues. That's why many NGOs are into advocacy and awareness support. Because developmental projects require capital to start and also that international donors have been asked to withdraw support, otherwise they will be accused of developing a country which is under sanctions...(KI 4, Ministry of Finance).

On the contrary, findings indicated that there were a few NGOs that were still economically viable to realise their goals and objectives. For example, a representative from NGO 9 confidently revealed that their funding was stable. In her own words she indicated that:

> I can say that we have managed to secure funding with international donors for all our operations and expenses. I understand the financial challenges that

> NGOs are facing, but I can safely say that we have finances to do what we have to do, at least for now ... (NGO 9, FGD 2)

As far as financial sustainability is concerned, the researcher strongly believes that this is one if not the most prevalent challenge affecting the NGOs in the gender line. While she was trying to contact NGOs to discuss the data collection process, the researcher found out that over eight (8) of the NGOs had moved from the addresses that were recorded in the yearly database. In trying to track down the new locations for these NGOs, three (3) of the NGOs indicated that they had now moved their offices to their residential areas. They were running from home because they could not afford to pay their rents. The other two (2) NGOs had moved to the outskirts of the town because rentals were a bit affordable. Sadly, there were others whose phones were not going through and who did not reply to the emails. Whether the financial problems had forced them to close the NGOs or maybe they had lost interest, was unclear.

Nonetheless, the researcher strongly believes that the issue of funding had surely taken a heavy toll on most NGOs' operations. Some of the NGO's offices, by just looking at the furniture and the atmosphere, showed that the organizations were merely surviving waiting for the next donor to inject some funding, but nothing productive was happening. Perhaps the fact that a fewer of the NGOs had managed to keep afloat financially, is a realization to the NGOs' directors that they need to be visionary and intuitive to come up with tangible and strategic fundraising modalities and mechanisms. They should learn from the current funding doldrums they are facing that relying on foreign funding may not be sustainable for attaining NGO sustainability.

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5.2.6.3 The "skeletal" nature of NGOs and limited coverage

The researcher's intuitive observation suggested that gender-based NGOs were glaringly skeletal with many being concentrated in the urban area of Harare and its peripherals; with rural areas scantly covered. Apparently, these NGOs faced the dire challenge of poor infrastructure. Largely so, such NGOs were small and located in inconspicuous settings that proved hard to locate. The researcher provides empirical evidence on this as she struggled to locate and trace some of these NGOs. This makes it clear that many citizens struggle to know about their existence and the services they offer, let alone their geographical locale. This may have a huge bearing

towards their effectiveness and people accessing their services. This was pointed out by the key informant from the Ministry of Women Affairs and Gender who indicated that:

> We may say that they are doing what they can, but most of these NGOs only have offices here in town and in Harare so it becomes difficult for them to be located or to help the people that really need their assistance. It is a huge struggle to achieve their core business then… (KI 1, Ministry of Gender).

This goes to show the importance of accessibility as well as their capacities in the dissemination of information that can direct people as well as inform them of the services offered. In as much as there is online coverage of these NGOs through Facebook and YouTube, not everyone may have access to these.

5.2.6.4 Unclear visions by some NGOs

On the role, task and vision of the NGOs, observations and empirical validation from some of participants suggested that some NGO persons do not adequately embrace the vision and operations of their goals, but only serving the interests of their funders abroad. The researcher forms part of the source of data because while collecting data, she met a woman who was complaining about NGO registration hiccups with the government. The conversation led to the researcher asking her what her organization was about. She explained that it was a women-organization with the goal of taking the prostitutes off the streets. The researcher further asked the woman what she intended to do with them once they were off the streets. Her reply was shocking, as she said "I did not think of it that far. I have to take up that point to our sister organization in the United Kingdom where the founder is". She actually ended up taking the researcher's number and thanking her for observing that gap. In as much as they may have good intentions, it clearly shows that not enough planning and thought had been put in initiating the vision and mission of the NGO. While the above scenario may have represented an unclear goal and vision, the view of possible dubious agendas operating within the NGO mainstream was shared by a representative from NGO 8, FGD 2. She explained:

> You have to know that the intentions of people in running NGOs especially in the gender mainstream may differ. I don't know who told people that if you start up an NGO you will make quick money for yourself. There is no money

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> to be made in NGOs. So you find many people with a different purpose all together. If their heart is not in it, obviously they cannot be effective in what they are doing because they are thinking for themselves and not for the people they are supposed to assist (NGO 8, FGD 2)

This goes to show that it is possible that there may be NGOs with hidden agendas who seek to enrich themselves. In that case, the sad thing about it is that other NGOs may share in the bad publicity with those that are ineffective. A revelation from the NGO's representative above led to the researcher asking some key informants if they thought that these NGOs were in for the good of the people or for selfish reasons. A response from the key informant in the human rights forum summed it all up saying:

> Aagh, I don't think it can be a blanket for all NGOs. I know that they have their own limitations. But yes, they also need to survive with salaries. But I have seen some directors with a passion for what they do. I want you to go and meet the director at Musasa Project, her name is Netty. In terms of the way they handle gender-based violence, you can actually see a passion in what they do. So I don't think it is fair to blanket all the NGO in the gender line. (KI 2, Human Rights)

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The quote showed that it is not fair to label all NGOs as fraudulent or corrupt as there are other directors who have a deep passion for women empowerment. Apart from that, the findings indicated that if the government displays laxity in controlling the NGOs, that may create an opportunity for dubious characters to operate within the NGO mainstream for their selfish ends, contrary to what they claim.

5.2.6.5 "Sweet-sour" relationships between the NGOs and the government

The responses that came from all the three focus group discussions attested that their relationship with the government of the day took different dynamics. For some NGOs, it was sweet-sour and sometimes indifferent; likening it to a fruitcake, while others commented that it was lukewarm. This is so because other NGOs praised the government for assisting them. A representative from NGO 8 that distributes information on gender issues, in the FGD 2 indicated that:

> You know these things are different. For us we have no problem with the government. In fact, the Ministry of Gender and Women Empowerment invited me to accompany the Minister to Addis in Ethiopia for the African Summit in January (2016). We have a good understanding. In 2007, we launched a gender budgeting programme with the government. So as far as I can tell, they always assist us when we need them, but not with resources or money

though, because that's what we would love more. Hahahah (chuckles) (NGO 8, FGD 2).

On the other hand, NGO 12, also in the FGD 2 expressed great grief over their relationship with the government saying:

> Ugh, I beg to differ. Our attempts to get women absorbed in the political arena has been met with a lot of resistance from the government. Sometimes the replies sound more like threats or warning of some sort such that even the women become afraid for their lives. Do you remember the violence that occurred in 2008, 2013 and so on. That intimidation is still fresh in our hearts and we are scared for our lives. I don't know who told them we support MDC because the way they view political activists, it's like we are a political rivalry...and let's not forget that up to now Itai Dzamara is still missing... (NGO 12, FGD 2)

And

> There is mistrust and misconceptions associated with pre-conceived ideas between the government and NGOs in regards to the work that we do. Most NGOs like many Zimbabweans have not accepted the legitimacy of the sitting government because many people are advocating for change in government leadership. You see, so the government knows and therefore see the NGOs as an enemy of the state driving the agendas of the white Imperialist and MDC. (FGD 1, NGO 7).

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From the verbatim above, the government may be resisting the efforts of the gender NGOs fearing that NGOs are mobilising to rise up against the sitting government. Yet still, there are some NGOs who showed indifference as far as the government is concerned. NGO 9, which empowers women in technology advancement had the following comment:

> Our organization does not work with the government. We do our own thing and our paths don't cross. So we have no direct link with the government whatsoever… (NGO 9, FGD 2)

Perhaps the nature of the relationship between one organization and the government is directly linked to the form of intervention being offered by that particular organization. This may mean that the government, unlike those that are into land ownership advocacy, governance, policies, may tolerate the organizations that are dealing with the school fees, gender-based violence and the cultural aspects of women empowerment more. For a country that heavily relies on agriculture for its economic growth, land in Zimbabwe is the stronghold of the government, the very same reason that led people to fight for their freedom against the British regime. It is therefore not surprising if the government displays hostility towards NGOs that are

treading on land issues. In order to get the nature of the relationship that should exist, the researcher turned to the representative of the ministry of women affairs and gender and found the following explicit explanation:

> I think the starting point is that the government, us as a Ministry we are supposed to coordinate all the programmes about gender equality and empowerment of women. We are not supposed to run the programmes, the government provides both the policy and legislative framework under which all stakeholders and partners who work in gender and women empowerment are guided from. You understand what I'm saying? For example the government can come up with the National Gender Policy which includes strategic areas which we see fit to prioritize if we are to eradicate inequalities. For example maybe the gender policy will provide uum a guiding framework on how issues on gender inequalities could be handled for example in the women and decision-making for example in terms of women's access to resources, in terms of women and health etc. Now it's up to the relevant NGOs in those particular areas to go and take the national priorities and to run with them and effectuate change. The government can come up with a framework on girls and young women's empowerment, we will be open to every NGO to come up with advocacy tools or fundraise or to take issues that fall within their mandate and run with them. The government, for example for gender-based violence, we came up with the national strategy on gender-based violence and NGOs are running with it. So what I'm trying to say is that in terms of... (*phone rings*) ...the gender based Violence Act is the framework that the government provides to NGOs....so the government has infrastructures upto ward level, and the NGOs can partner at provincial level going down in implementing their mandate...(KI, Ministry of Gender)

The findings then show the importance of the relationship between the government and the NGOs on the effectiveness of the interventions by NGOs in achieving their gender equality mission, vision, goals and objectives within the planned timeframe.

5.2.6.6 Cultural and religious factors derailing women empowerment

Upon asking NGOs what factors were thwarting their efforts, the findings further revealed that indeed both cultural and religious resistance hindered the efforts by many NGOs. However, virtually all the NGOs' representative acknowledged increased commitment of cultural leaders and religious leaders to support the need to respect the rights of women as well as according them decision-making powers.

> Sometimes early this year (2016), we had a very promising discussion with church leaders, community members, the district administration and importantly the apostolic sect at Holiday Inn (a hotel). We were making them see the importance of sending children to school, family planning and taking their children to clinics for vaccinations. Yes, they have their own beliefs, but

> we were pointing to them how they are violating the rights of the girl child in giving her out for marriage early and all that. I should say that the discussion was fruitful. There was no hostility or defence from them and they promised to address these issues with their members, which is a positive stride to empowering a girl child and respecting her reproduction rights ... (NGO 14, FGD 2).

To the contrast, further findings did indicate that there are some areas and families where the issue of empowering a girl child or equal rights to men is totally disregarded. In line with this, a representative from NGO1 further revealed that:

> Well, on that note, I think we should all understand that we will not attain our goal overnight. Women have been subjected to subjugation for a very long time such that it has been normalized and equality doesn't make sense to them. So it is going to take some time for people's minds to really understand and accept and also realize the need for women empowerment and equality (NGO 1, FGD 1).

The findings similarly revealed that there was a division as to whether the church supports gender equality or facilitated women subjugation. It appeared as if the representatives in the focus group discussions knew little about Moslem women except that the women are required to obediently follow the orders of their husbands and that they are required to be covered up in their dressing. This may mean that Islam views women as inferior to men and thereby facilitating or maintaining the subjugation of women.

A lot of debate, however was stirred concerning Christianity and gender equality. The two polarized poles emerged as the mainline church took the other extreme and the Pentecostal church took the other end of the discussion. From the discussions, it was clear that the mainline church or traditional churches observed stricter rules and they resist women from preaching or taking leadership roles. For the Pentecostal churches on the other hand, the discussions showed that they were more liberal in the way they treated women, starting from the way they dress and their conduct in church. However, to a certain degree, everyone agreed that inasmuch as women were given some leadership and decision-making roles, men were still dominating many positions. The expert in religious and cultural aspects shed more light on this:

> I think religion goes hand-in-hand with the doctrine and the views of the leadership. Because take for example Christianity, there are many verses that talk about how women should behave or be treated. But I find the verses saying one thing now and the other later. So I'm saying that other people are

> using the bible to oppress women when they are boosting their own selfish agendas. Look, times are changing we see women on international TVs preaching and actually owning ministries, but here in Zimbabwe, which Ministry is founded by a woman? None. So women in my view are still brainwashed by the doctrines. You remember the Gumbura story. (Gumbura was a church leader who was convicted for raping many women in his congregation in Zimbabwe). The apostolic sect rape and marry young girls saying they dreamt them being their wives. All that puts a woman at a disadvantage. ZCC, that one lead by Mutendi, they take as many wives as they want. So to a larger extent women are still oppressed by the church, of course there is some change but it's very slow, very slow. (KI 3, Religious and Cultural expert).

The above scenario testifies that religion and belief systems form conflicting ideas that need to be clarified on, if ever women and the girl children are going to be liberated and be treated in the same way as men. Maybe the fact that of all famous churches in Zimbabwe, none of them is led by a woman clearly sends out a message on the position of women in religious terms. This shows the legitimacy in leadership and decision-making positions given to women in churches.

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5.2.6.7 Misinterpretation of gender concepts

The findings on whether citizens in Zimbabwe really comprehend what gender equality, women empowerment and equity mean revealed that the concepts are barely understood as revealed by representatives in the group discussions. Below is what a representative from NGO 7 had to say:

> Women empowerment is understood but mostly in the social and economic aspect, with the political aspect largely being ignored and not viewed as important. Gender equality on the other hand is understood by some to mean equal opportunities for men and women in all aspects of society, the economy, politics and governance. However, many fail to relate it to day to day life with a few who have mistakenly pinned the issues of gender equality to only mean women. (NGO 7, FGD 1).

The researcher further asked the focus group how well grounded is the belief by some people and authors that the concept of gender equality is in direct conflict with the African values. The majority of the panel rejected this belief with one representative from NGO 4 almost emotional, saying:

> An author is any individual and therefore whatever any individual says is not always true. This came about through colonialism and as long as we speak without thinking we blame ourselves. The resistance we are facing is from the older women who think that women are to serve men.... (NGO 4, FGD 1).

The verbatim reveals the resistance that emanates from older women perhaps because they have been socialized to view men as superior. The NGO representative was strongly refuting that gender equality was a Western idea and argued that Zimbabweans should embrace it. In terms of resisting help, another representative from NGO 15 quipped:

> Some remote communities still believe in myths, beliefs and practices that are harmful, for example, some religious sects abuse the verse in proverbs 'women be submissive to your husbands'. This makes women to be exposed to all forms of abuse and some of them are brainwashed to the extent that they resist change and help… (NGO 15, FGD 3).

This shows how myths and unfounded truths can be passed from one generation to the other and form the foundation of destructive behavioural and attitudinal patterns. For example, once many people believe that gender equality is not African, this may lead to resistance which has the potential of rendering the efforts by NGOs of no effect to the lives of Harare citizens. There was however one NGO representative from NGO 8, who shared the same view that gender equality concepts are 'unAfrican', but she encouraged it to be applied in the Zimbabwean context just like any good thing that has been embraced. In her explanation she said the following:

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> We are living in a globalized world and true as it may be that gender equality is a Western ideology, it's not a bad idea to adopt and use it in our own Zimbabwean context. In as much as our interventions are geared towards gender equality, the communities we operate in are still tied down to their religious and cultural beliefs. However, the very emancipation and empowerment that they seek will not be fully achieved if they do not challenge and question some of these ideologies. (NGO 8, FGD 2).

The expert in religious and cultural issues rejected that recognizing women's equality and women empowerment processes were foreign concepts arguing that the phenomena traced back to the traditions of Zimbabwe.

> Not at all, if you remember *vatete* (an auntie) was very important in the family. She was consulted on important issues and only she could make influential decisions in a family. For example, when a girl child was impregnated and out of anger the father banishes her, it was the auntie who would come and talk to the father and calm him down. I mean, even the brothers would not make the father change his mind, but only the auntie. That was the respect given to her. She had power to influence and run the family. So what do people mean when they say it is from America. Agh, those are just excuses used by weak men who think oppressing women will make them appear strong but it does not. In fact, that's weakness. Look at *Mbuya* Nehanda (she was a spirit

> medium who led the First war uprising in Zimbabwe) people followed her and respected her. There is nothing western about this. (Key Informant on Cultural Issues).

The comment above puts emphasis on the ability of a woman in the traditional setting to make family decisions. The mention of Nehanda and an aunt in Zimbabwe demands respect and this shows that recognition of women's abilities and potential has always been there in Africa.

5.2.6.8 Zimbabwe's ailing economy and political instability

Concerning the issue of the current economy of Zimbabwe, all the representatives of the NGOs in all the three FGDs lamented that the impact of Zimbabwe's ailing economy and a chaotic political environment were undermining the intervention strategies mooted by gender-based NGOs. Firstly, the NGOs in legal representation pointed out that they were overwhelmed with the number of women who needed legal representation who could not afford it. As a result, this was putting a lot of strain on their meagre and dwindling resources. The researcher can attest to the fact that when she visited one legal organization to make an appointment for data collection, just upon arrival at around 14:00 hours, she was asked to return the following day because they were fully booked as she was mistaken for someone needing legal assistance. It is possible that some of the people who are asked to go back may never return and might view the services as ineffective, yet the numbers for people in need of assistance is overwhelmingly high. One representative from NGO 9 commented on the fact that due to the biological responsibility of child bearing and childcare, child poverty and feminization of poverty further pushes women into the callous hands of HIV infections and abuse as they seek to survive and send their children to school in this harsh economy.

> …have you also realized that whether you get a job or not, the kids have to be fed? And the responsibility of childcare is primarily on women. They end up being exposed to abuse and HIV infection, trying to raise money to look after their children…(NGO 9, FGD 2)

As such, this is increasing the cases that they are dealing with, making it appear as if their interventions are not effective enough to eradicate gender disparities in Zimbabwe. One NGO representative narrated:

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> What can I say? The economy on one side, the political issues on the other side. Women are suffering out there. There are no jobs and who sufferers the most but the women and the children? If you look at it closely, it is affecting both NGOs and women because the sanctions and the bad economy are negatively influencing our abilities to secure funds. At the same time, the number of people needing help increases. So at the end of the day it's as if we are just moving around in one place. What can we do really? We are doing all we can, given the circumstances... (NGO 16, FGD 3).

Secondly, it was pointed out that the closure of many companies in Zimbabwe negatively affected donors, given that some NGOs benefited as recipients from these companies. As a result, the effectiveness of these NGOs is compromised as they have to operate under an unfavourable economy. It was also reported that the unstable economy is contributing to the subjugation of women because they have to look up to men for survival. This made women to stick to their abusive husbands or partners because the political-economy situation is too unfavourable for them to make ends meet on their own. Having to venture into the informal economy according to the focus group discussions, many may not make it because the streets are already flooded with jobless people that are selling anything sellable in the informal sector. The Key Informant brings in a link between the political and economics and relates it to gender issues:

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> For a country as Zimbabwe where politics is the powerhouse influencing all other critical areas, as long as the political stand of Zimbabwe is not straightened out, our economy will continue to suffer because investors do not trust in the legitimacy and capabilities of the sitting government. That's why if you remember in 2009 after the Government of National Unit was set up, the economy recovered. But now, investors are holding back because others are afraid of the recurrence of the land grab policy when whites were chased out. Recently the government demanded through the indigenous policy that every company with a certain capital should have 51% of its shares owned by indigenous people. The people benefitting from all these fast track policies are the influential people in the government while the majority are suffering. There are a lot of issues embedded in these two issues in determining the welfare of people. Also, the issue of dollarization and multi-currency payment system among many others. So I should say the economy and the current political position is antagonistic to women empowerment or any developmental work for that matter. (KI 3, Politics expert).

The above elaboration was put to emphasis on the unfavourable policies that are pushing away investors in Zimbabwe. This has led to many people losing their jobs as companies close due to an unstable economy. The comment is therefore suggesting that perhaps if the politics of the country stabilises, the economy would

also recover, and this would increase the impact of gender NGOs' operations. An explicit link between the gender phenomenon and the economic-political environment of Zimbabwe is highlighted.

5.2.6.9 Excellent, but poorly supported policies

Despite all the already cited challenges, the discussion groups showed great concern over the prevalence of blueprint policies. In exploring this challenge further, the NGO representatives did salute Zimbabwe for having excellent policies reflecting that if they are implemented right, they could facilitate the phenomenon of gender equality to be realized faster than in the current dispensation. According to them, these policies and programmes were not backed-up with the appropriate action that can ensure that what is on paper comes to actualization. Among the policies cited were the National Gender Policy, the ZIMASSET policy, the Women Empowerment Programme, Women Farmers Association and the Constitution. The NGOs lamented over the fact that the government seemed detached from the practical pursuit of gender equality even though now and again on public platforms they state their desire to support the cause.

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However, the key informant from the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development defended the government's position in regard to their commitment to actualizing gender equality in Zimbabwe. Upon being asked on the practical steps taken to ensure this, the responses given were more theoretical than practical as they were devoid of resources. In explaining this, she said:

> Yes, the government through this ministry is highly committed to the attainment of women empowerment. Gender equality is among the three eer as you know MDGs that were prioritized by the government because we are taking poverty, HIV and gender inequality seriously. There are policies, amendments and programmes that have been put in place by the government. Like gender sensitizing of the national budget, outlawing child marriages. You know, we are signatories of many international programmes that give guidance on how to empower women....well, as a ministry; we do not give NGOs any funding. We just make frameworks, we support their agenda and mandate. But securing resources, they do that on their own...(Key Informant, Ministry of Gender)

This finding then speaks of the importance of policies as well as the importance of policy implementation for the effectiveness of any agenda being pursued by NGOs. The key informant also reveals the partnership that exists between the government

as policy makers and NGOs as translators and implementers of such policies for women empowerment. There is also a confession about the government being unable to offer financial support to women NGOs. This may be the reason why the policies may appear as merely blueprints because they are not supported with the necessary resources that are essential for the realization of the goals.

5.2.6.10 Message distortion by the media outlets

The panel discussants, although they commended the media for being a great platform for reaching out to people far and near, expressed their concern over how media outlets biasedly report their stories. These NGO experts indicated that the internalization of gender messages pertaining to women empowerment and emancipation of the girl child depends on the way the media presents the message to the society. Furthermore, there was great concern that the social media such as Whatsapp was being used to demean women and emphasize on their subordination. Their concern was that this brings a diluted and contradiction to their efforts for the attainment of gender equality and women empowerment in Zimbabwe. In this vein, a representative from NGO 10, which focuses on dissemination of information through the media commented:

> ...uum, we deal with the media every day. I mean we are in the media circulation. There is no denying that the media to a greater extent has assisted in distributing information and advocating on our behalf. But understand then that ugh, the media is just a platform. It distributes whatever you feed in the system. So yah, sometimes the blog writers publishes articles that demean women and some articles that are gender-insensitive. There was this headline by Daily News sometime early this year with the topic, I mean headline "School girls fuel New HIV Infections". I mean seriously. These are minor children and the ones victimized, yet the news people make it look like they are protecting the perpetrators. After reading the story I realized that these were orphaned children that were being taken advantage of by truck drivers and again being infected. So in their bait u know, to phrase headlines that sell more newspaper to people, they end up victimizing the victims again. You see... (NGO 10, FGD 2)

The quote above shows how the writers and editors of newspapers and blogs are insensitive about how they report their stories. It appears as if sometimes the headlines do not clearly depict the truth or facts about the story. Headlines are therefore written in a way that will attract more readers. Another representative from NGO 18 in congruency with the above concern highlighted:

> Yah I agree, look at the nude pictures that circulate on the social media, it is always women. What does that show? It makes women look like their bodies are not important at all and that they shouldn't be respected. In Zimbabwe, possessing or posting those degrading pictures is illegal but come on, it's happening every day and nothing is being done about it. So there must be a way I don't know, if maybe filtering what gets on public forums but who knows. So yes technology is good but it has brought many eer problems. (FGD 3, NGO 18).

As the findings have shown, the media plays a crucial role in either supporting women empowerment or promoting the subjugation of women. However, the media platforms are operated by humans and therefore relay whatever information is uploaded. As such, it may be unfair to blame technology advancement as such, but rather educate the people so that they use the media constructively. If used properly, the media may have the potential to positively influence on the impact of the work of by gender-based NGOs.

5.2.7 Strategies adopted to enhance the effectiveness of NGO"s interventions

After realizing the challenges that they are facing in their interventions to attain gender equality and women empowerment in Zimbabwe, representatives of these NGOs revealed the mechanisms that they are implementing in order to overcome these challenges. These are presented below:

5.2.7.1 Income-generating projects: the way forward

Given that finances have been presented to the researcher in the focus group discussions as the most pressing challenge, the majority of the NGOs' representatives did reveal that they were engaged in diverse projects and programmes that were aimed at liberating them from donor-dependency. Again, they commended that the economy was antagonistic to their efforts of starting any successful projects. They further indicated that they were employing various mechanisms to sustain themselves financially. Some of the projects that were cited included starting poultry projects; renting out part of their buildings; providing spaces for weddings and conferences; buying commuter omnibuses for transport business and hiring out; building accommodations for bed and breakfast; provision of decorations services for events and events planning for a fee. NGO 5 revealed:

The NGO 5, FGD 1, in agreement to the need for a stable financial base added:

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> Well, I know many of us face financial challenges and yes it gets tough. But as an organization, we have set up many programmes otherwise we would probably have closed by now. Hahaha (chuckles). Eer, we have a number of them actually. We have a 300-seater hall where people can hold conferences or workshops, weddings and all that. Err, a training facility, a commuter (minibus) that can be hired out to schools or functions. Uum, we also have accommodation, it's like a B n B people can sleep over and eat. Yah we do have projects that generate income (NGO 5, FGD 1).

And

> ...uum yes we are renting out part of our building because we cannot use the whole of it. We feel letting it would be good for our income as well. I mean you came to our organization, our sister organization (name withheld) here is renting part of the building. Yah and other activities too. (NGO 8, FGD 2).

When asked on how she would advise NGOs as far as securing their financial base is concerned, the key informant from the finance ministry had this to say:

> Well, I should agree that of all the challenges that NGOs face, the issue of insufficient and inconsistent funding is of great concern. Unfortunately, the government eee and us as a ministry we don't offer any financial assistance to NGO. Also you find out that the issue of sanctions, the economy, ee the politics, all that is making it hard for the finances of NGOs including the ones you are studying on, the ones in gender or women affairs. So they should find ways to raise funds at least for their daily operations, rentals salaries and all that so that they are operational. Everyday NGOs are closing, it's true, why, because they do not have funding. You see, they are depending on other channels when they should be generating their income and have donors subsidize them...(KI 4, Ministry of Finance)

Inasmuch as NGOs need to raise funds for the running of the organizations, this may derail them from the core business of empowering women and girl children. Deviating from their mandate may negatively influence the effectiveness of their interventions. For example, the directors may need to redirect some funds meant for women empowerment to starting some projects. If those projects fail to bring back the money, the goals of the organization might be compromised. Therefore, NGOs should get funding which is specifically for starting up financial projects so that the empowerment of women and girls is not jeopardised. However, there was an NGO representative who showed that they had tried doing some projects but they were not successful. Almost getting emotional she said:

> We realize there is need to raise funds yes for the growth and even for the NGO to survive. But what should we do. We are struggling to pay rentals and in order for any project to be sustainable or even start-off it needs capital. You see. At least if we could get a bit of funds, then from there we can set up a

> project because waiting for help from someone out there, agh it's hard. For an organization that is into empowering women in the informal sector I know sustainability is crucial. And now how can we even talk of sustainability to these women when we are struggling to sustain ourselves? You know it's like we are fake or something (silence).That's why we have even moved the offices to the house, at our home. It's because of money... (NGO 16, FGD 3).

The findings presented above, speak of the importance of sufficient funding in ensuring that the interventions by gender-NGOs are both developmental and sustainable in eradicating gender disparities.

5.2.7.2 Promoting the culture of tightening the budget

The discussions from the NGO representatives showed that they implemented some budgeting mechanisms in trying to save and sustain themselves financially. Some NGOs indicated that they had to down-size from expensive rental areas to cheaper ones. Still others indicated that they had to let go of some staff members in order to cut on administrative costs. One representative commended:

> We just have to do with what we have...we do what we have to. We let go of some stuff members and we try to keep expenses at a minimal (NGO 8, FGD 2).

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Even though this might have kept these organizations functional for women empowerment and gender equality, being under-staffed may also affect the efficiency of the organizations. Upon asking the NGO representatives how the organizations are coping with a shortage of staff members, they highlighted that they were depending mostly on the students on attachment and the volunteers as they were mostly working for free. In fact, some organizations revealed that there are times when they cannot afford to pay their full-time staff salaries. A comment on this follows:

> ...NGOs were once known for paying higher salaries compared to the government, but we are honestly struggling to pay our staff these days... (NGO 20, FGD 3).

This then translates to the suggestion that it may be arguably difficult for an organization that is under-staffed to operate at its full-capacity.

5.2.7.3 Implementation of research-based interventions

It also came up in the discussions that NGOs were highly involved in programmes that increased their knowledge on gender issues in order to improve the methodology for their interventions. Findings revealed the following desirable areas they could invest in:

- Attending local and international conferences
- Multi-sectorial training
- Facilitating community dialogues
- Empirical research
- Workshops with other gender experts

The trainings, research and conferences are meant to expose NGOs' directors to the new methodologies and experiences of other gender experts. Learning from other people who are in the same field is very important for the growth of individuals and the organizations. Such conferences can also be platforms to connect to potential donors and sponsors. In line with this, a representative from the NGO 8 shed more light on this highlighting that:

> For an organization such as ours, having current information is very important because we specialize in advocacy and dissemination of information. We can't be giving stale information to the public. People need current information. So yes, last year (2015), I attended a gender conference in Grahamstown in South Africa, another one in Johannesburg and another one in Botswana. I also went to Addis Ababa with the Minister of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development for the AU summit. And uum currently our organization with other women organizations, we are making preparations to host the 4th African Feminist Forum (AFF) here in Zimbabwe from the 10th to the 12th of April 2016, at Rainbow Tours. We will be discussing gender issues, challenges, way forward and the like. Uum, so yes we are increasing our knowledge base. You are welcome to come as well, leave me your email and I will drop you an invite. Hahahah (chuckles).

The findings above reveal the need to glean as much quality information as possible in order to give the public relevant information on gender issues. The role of research and attending other forums where gender knowledge is generated has been highlighted as pertinent.

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5.2.7.4 Collaboration of gender bodies critical

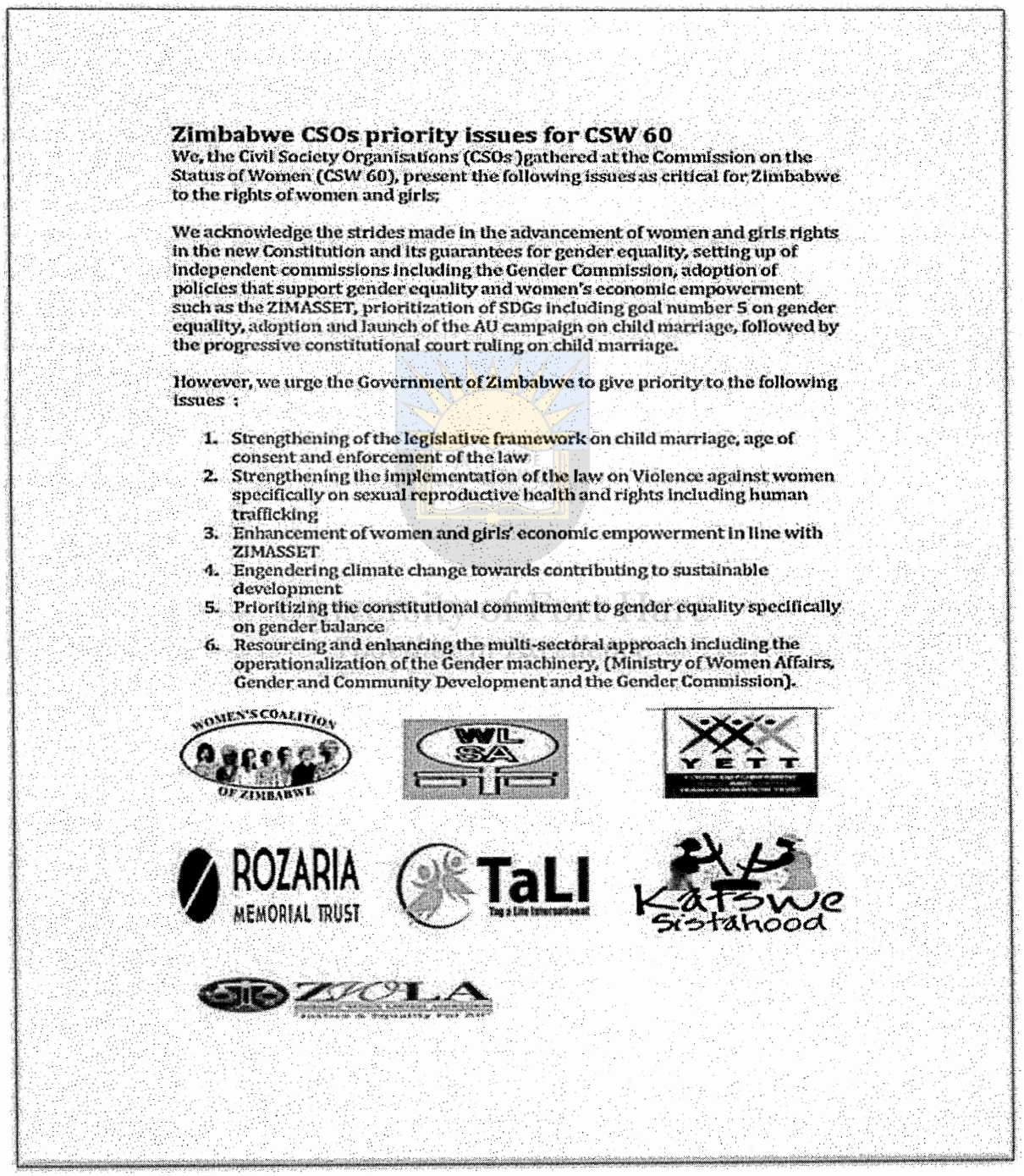
Findings further emphasized on the importance of all gender NGOs to work both collaboratively and synergistically if the effectiveness of interventions for gender equality and equity is to be enhanced. For example, findings reported that these gender bodies made a stand to fight a gender disempowerment vice such as the increased harassment of women in public places. They are also able to consolidate their efforts and challenge the government to come up with favourable laws and policies. According to the responses from NGOs, it appeared that this is not just a once-off thing, but actually a culture of what they called "sistahood" where they put their differences aside and put the needs and demands of women and the girl child at the fore.

For example, when the issue of the child marriage was popular, the NGOs reported that the women coalition organizations went full throttle with the mandate until the government had to promulgate a law abolishing child marriages. They did the same with the "violence against women in public places" case and the Domestic Violence Act. They said that they believed in the power of numbers in advocating for change and dismantle resistance; whether from the government, the public or the perpetrators. One of the representatives from NGO 17, FGD 3 narrated:

> Women organizations like us, like this, um we got here because of unity among ourselves. That's why we always say 'you can't stop women with an agenda". We are like sisters, you know and we unite and run after an agenda. This has helped us achieve our goals, a lot. When we are doing demonstrations, addressing the government and wanting to be heard, you know people take you seriously when you are more, they realize the urgency of the matter and the need to take action. So yes, we work together. We realize that this is not about us, you see, it's about the women and girls that have no voice, and, and we can't let our differences come in the way of the cause. They know us, the ministry and the government, that when we say something in one voice we mean it. The constitution, sensitizing the national budget... It's war I tell you.(NGO 17, FGD 3)

This was confirmed by the representative from the Ministry of Women Affairs, who revealed that women organizations team-up whenever there is a mandate and they run with it until the end. Below is an example of women organizations teaming up to outline their concerns to the government over the status of women in Zimbabwe (CSW 60):

Fig 5.9: A presentation by NGOs in women affairs



Zimbabwe CSOs priority issues for CSW 60

We, the Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)gathered at the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW 60), present the following issues as critical for Zimbabwe to the rights of women and girls;

We acknowledge the strides made in the advancement of women and girls rights in the new Constitution and its guarantees for gender equality, setting up of independent commissions including the Gender Commission, adoption of policies that support gender equality and women's economic empowerment such as the ZIMASSET, prioritization of SDGs including goal number 5 on gender equality, adoption and launch of the AU campaign on child marriage, followed by the progressive constitutional court ruling on child marriage.

However, we urge the Government of Zimbabwe to give priority to the following issues :

1. Strengthening of the legislative framework on child marriage, age of consent and enforcement of the law
2. Strengthening the implementation of the law on Violence against women specifically on sexual reproductive health and rights including human trafficking
3. Enhancement of women and girls' economic empowerment in line with ZIMASSET
4. Engendering climate change towards contributing to sustainable development
5. Prioritizing the constitutional commitment to gender equality specifically on gender balance
6. Resourcing and enhancing the multi-sectoral approach including the operationalization of the Gender machinery, (Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development and the Gender Commission).

WOMEN'S COALITION OF ZIMBABWE

WLSA

YETT

ROZARIA MEMORIAL TRUST

TaLI

Katswe Sistahood

ZWOLA

(Source: NGO 2 Website)

The Commission for the Status of Women is like a platform where the civil societies can petition the government on matters that concern or challenge the empowerment

of women in Zimbabwe. As noted at the foot of the letter, the NGOs signed as a reflection of their support and contribution to the agendas that are written on the letter.

5.2.8 Concluding remarks for qualitative data analysis

While wrapping up the discussions, the findings revealed that NGOs had final words that they thought would be beneficial to the current study. These final remarks ranged from recommendations to the government, to advices to the general public. Most of what NGOs requested was a conducive environment where the government can support them financially and view them as having the best interest of the citizens of Zimbabwe, not as rivals in a political contest. Below are some useful pieces of information from NGOs' representatives:

> In order for women empowerment to be realised, higher budgetary allocation in the national budget should be made to the Ministry of Women Affairs so that the ministry can support us NGOs too. Also, to the public people who benefit from our services, they should maximise the projects and services available to them and ensure that projects are sustainable for everyone to benefit even the children to come. They should not neglect projects because it will be a waste of resources. (NGO 4, FGD 1).

The concluding remarks above put emphasis on the need for the government of Zimbabwe to financially support gender NGOs. Also, the representative is making a plea to the public to utilise the services that are being offered by NGOs because without the participation of the citizens, there is no relay of information or impartation of the skills which are necessary for women empowerment and gender equality in Zimbabwe.

And

> The government should make funds available. The government should also assist NGOs through funding them and it should ensure safe spaces in which NGOs can operate without fear of harassment or closure. And uum, the government should work hand-in-hand with the NGOs to increase and make NGOs' involvement more efficient. These fights and enmity should end. It's about the women and children out there not political power. Not everything is about ZANU PF and its legitimacy as the ruling party. The welfare of people should be put first, not driving new cars and fancy houses or misusing public funds. The government should be accountable to the citizens and respect the rights of women as equals. (NGO 9, FGD 2).

The issue of a politically conducive environment as ideal for the operations of NGOs was highlighted with emphasis on the strife that exists between NGOs and the government. That way, social justice and social inclusion can be made possible when the rights of women are prioritised over political factions. As far as the recipients and potential recipients of the NGOs' services are concerned, one NGO representative had this to say:

> You know it's sad that many times we find resistance of women empowerment from the people we are trying to help. It is really sad because we are here for them yet it's as if some women especially the elderly who are from deep rural areas are against us. On the other hand there are these young women who blow the idea of equality and women empowerment out of proportion. Instead of coming to our organizations or attend workshops to understand, they are challenging their husbands saying eeer we are equal eeer we are equal without an understanding of what it truly means... So the older ones have to accept and embrace change and read widely and know the rights and laws governing them. They need to also cultivate a spirit to do things individually and as communities and not to over depend or rely on NGOs. We do not have enough resources and there are a lot of people who need help. (NGO 2, FGD 1).

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The participant was commenting on the ignorance and misunderstanding surrounding the issue of gender equality. Maybe the younger women who challenge their husbands without knowledge on what empowerment entails may be instigating the resistance that is usually shown by some men on women issues. The recognition that women should make efforts to free themselves from subjugation and not sorely rely on NGOs is also critical. This may mean making efforts to know how the law protects women and the steps that one may take when they are violated. These are some of the efforts that may augment the efforts by NGOs for women empowerment in Zimbabwe.

And

> ...the elders and cultural custodians need to embrace change. I mean the old way of doing things has failed a woman and the girl child. It's time to consider her and restore her dignity and worth...(NGO 13, FGD 2)

With women movement and the pursuit of gender equality, the representative of NGO 13 advised the citizens to let go of attitudes and aspects that promote gender gaps. Change is therefore necessary in all educational, societal and political spaces.

This marks the end of the presentation of qualitative findings, the quantitative aspects are presented next.

5.3 Quantitative Findings

As already explained earlier on that there will be a demarcation between qualitative findings and quantitative findings, this section is a platform for the presentation of quantitative data. The responses of Harare residents intended to find out their perceptions about the services being provided by gender NGOs. In addition, the understanding of gender concepts by the public was sought in an attempt to find out the challenges that may be compromising the efforts being made by NGOs to attain women empowerment in Zimbabwe. The perceptions of the Harare residents are crucial because these are the targeted recipients and potential recipients of the services. As such, their feedback on the interventions is important to improve the methodologies and coverage being offered.

5.3.1 Biographical information for respondents from the mini-survey

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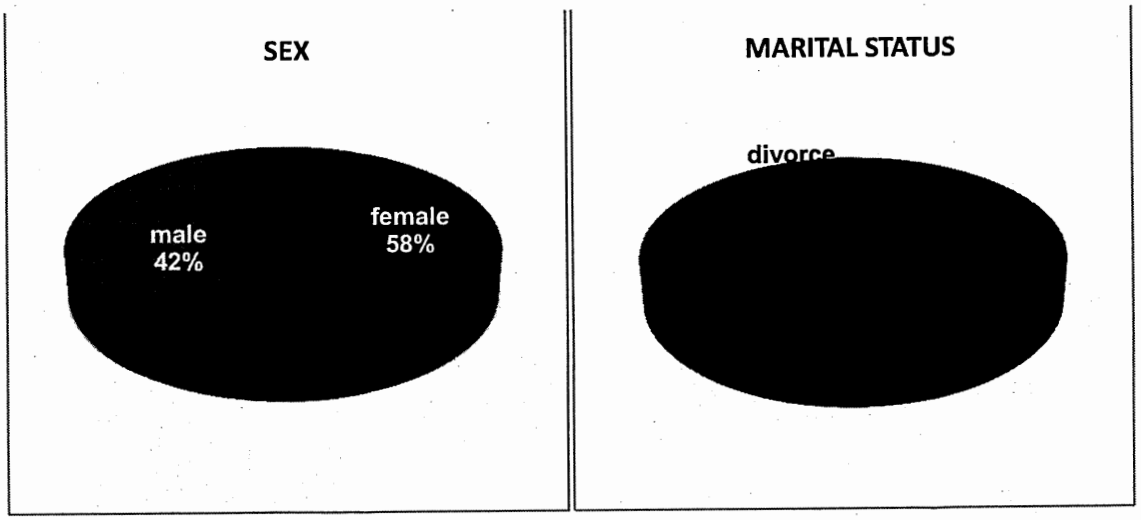
Even though the researcher dispatched 270 questionnaires (as recommended by the RAOSOFT software and as already explained in the methodology section) 202 of these questionnaires were returned, giving a response rate of 74.8%. Of the returned questionnaires, 58% were from the females while 42% were from the males. Also, 47% of the respondents were single, 13% divorced and 40% married. The table below and the corresponding pie chart helps to clarify the scenario.

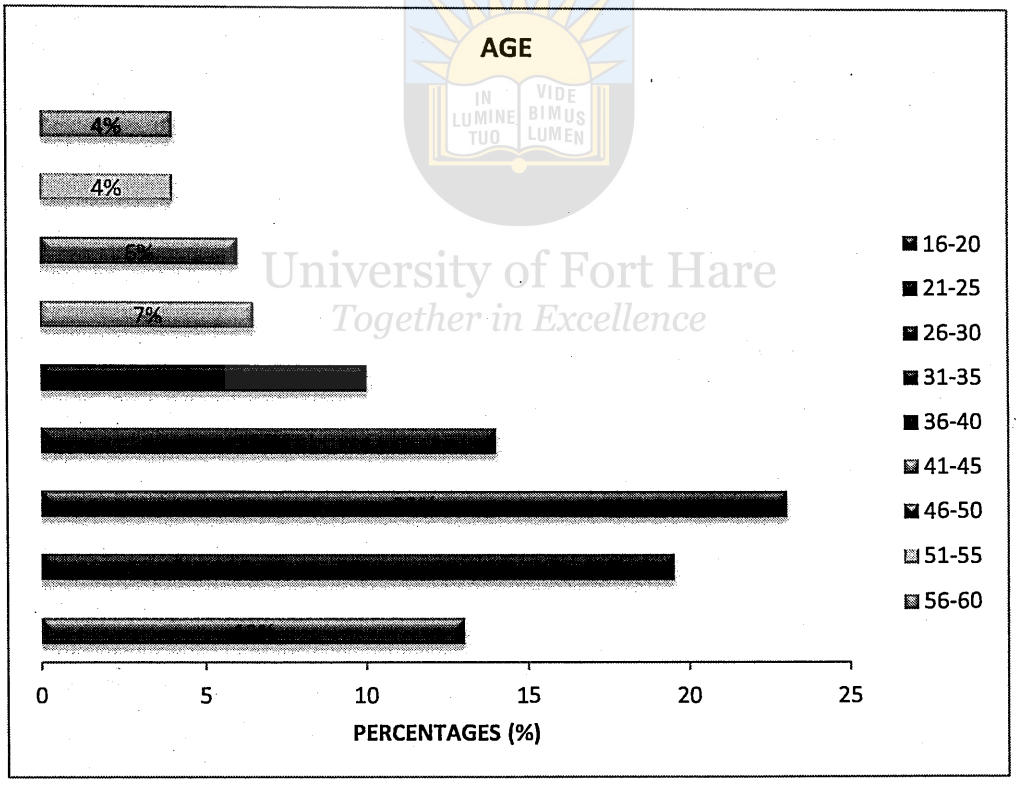
Fig 5.10: Sex and marital status of the mini survey respondents



Age of respondents

In order to determine the socio-economic status of the respondents, the researcher sought to gather information on age, occupation and educational levels and these are presented in the graphs below. The actual age for respondents ranged from 18 years to 60 years, with the majority of the respondents being between the ages of 21 to 35 years. This implied that this group of respondents demographically formed the most economic productive part of the society and generally the greater population in Zimbabwe.

Fig 5.11: Age distribution chart for the respondents of the current study



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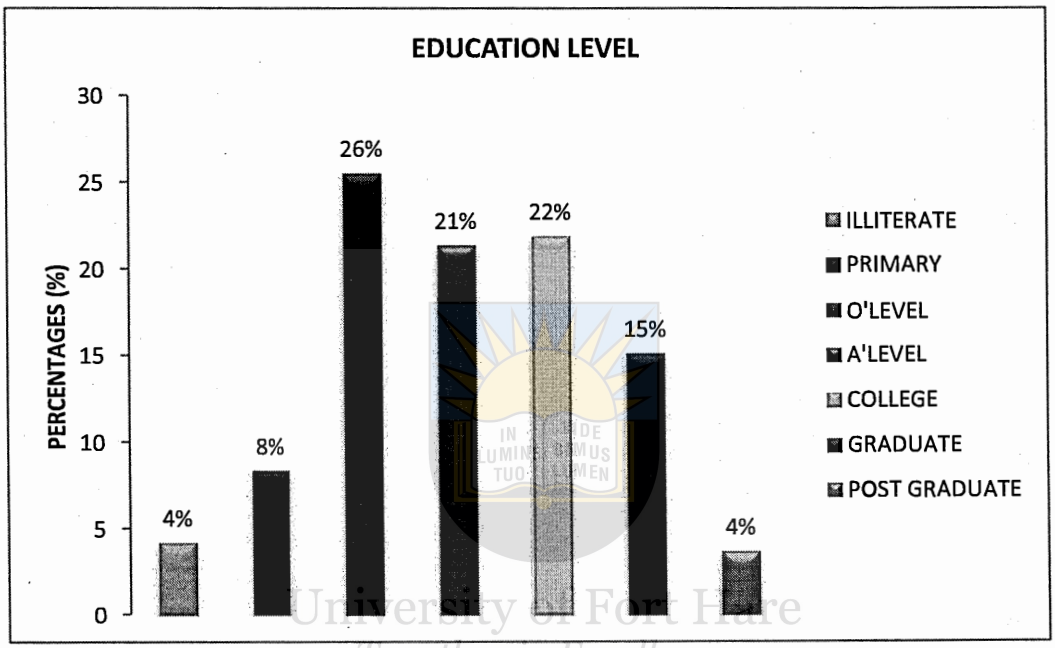
Level of education

On the education level of the respondents, findings indicated that the majority of the respondents had ordinary level (26%), advanced level (21%), college (22) and university qualifications (15%). Comparatively, ordinary level is equivalent to matriculation in other countries. The findings showed that only 4% of the respondents were illiterate. This then meant that more than 90% of the respondents

were literate, leaving the researcher with no speck of doubt of their capacities to adequately understand the research questions.

Fig 5.12: Educational levels for respondents



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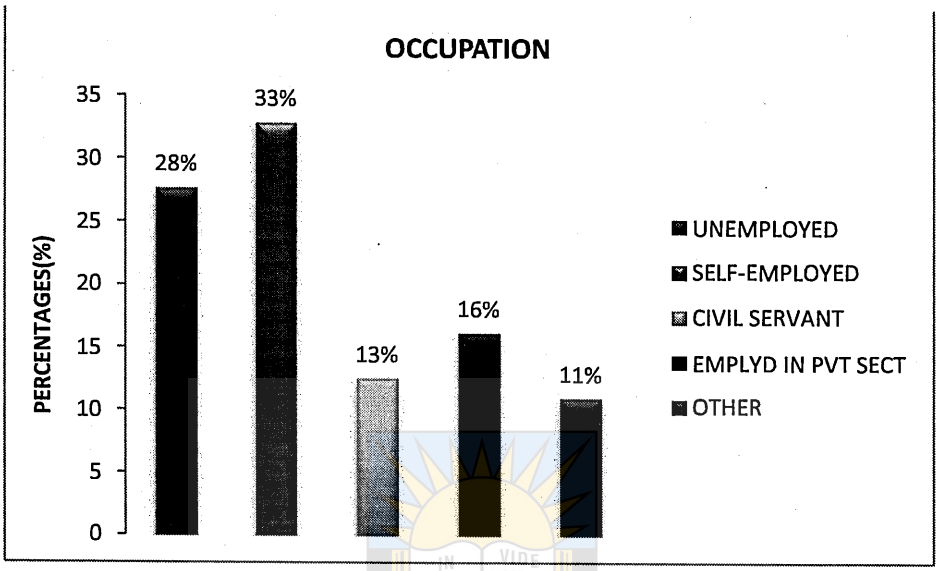
Socio-economic status

Occupational findings of the respondents indicated that 33% were self-employed while 28% were unemployed. Only 13% and 16% were employed in the government and private sector respectively. Largely, these statistics mirror the current bad economic situation the country is undergoing, mainly driven by political autocracy and failure of the leadership to put economic interests before political ones.

Fig 5.13: Occupational status of respondents



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5.3.2 of gender concepts by respondents in Harare

Study findings indicated some grey areas as far as conceptualizing the concept gender was concerned. About 76% of the respondents agreed that they understood the gender equality concept while 24% did not understand it. Again, 72% agreed to knowing what women empowerment entails while 28 % did not comprehend it. This reflects that the concept was confusing for other people, though a minority, especially when it has to be pitted against the concept sex. Maybe, this could be due to the fact that the concept gender and its concomitant components appears to have gained popularity only in the last few decades especially after the promulgation of the 8 Millennium Development Goals, of which one may easily confuse the concepts.

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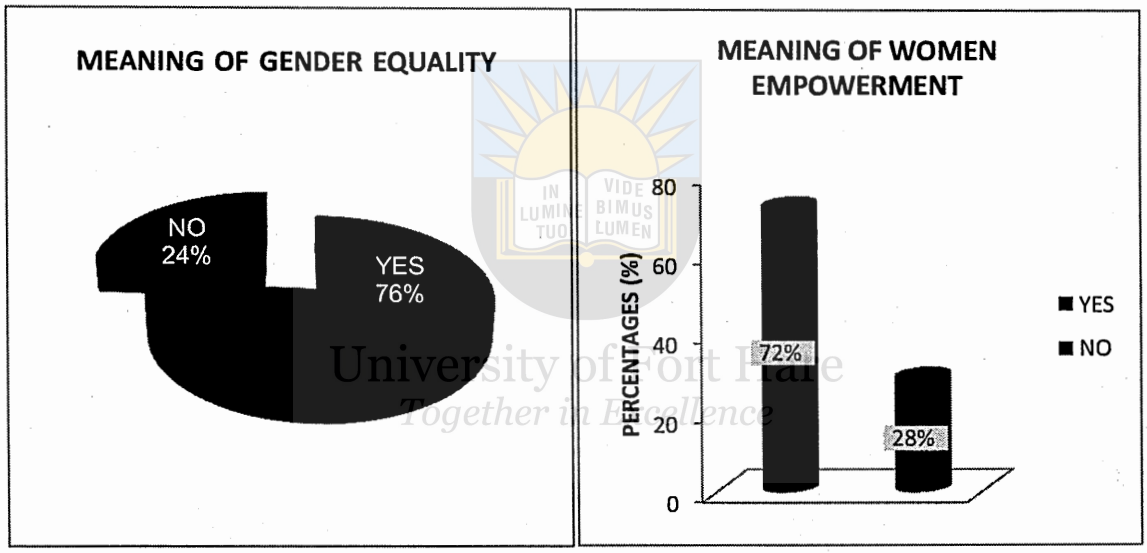
A lack of understanding of the concepts was also suggested by the fact that a number of respondents left the spaces in the questionnaire blank where they were asked of their understanding of the concepts. Indeed, the issue of gender do attract grey areas among most people especially the illiterate; with most people thinking that it is synonymous with the concept sex, or with women. In explaining gender equality, one respondent (Questionnaire 34; male, 18) wrote, "It is the appreciation of the capabilities of both sex and giving equal rights to both females and males". However, there was another definition among many, that was not very clear as to the context to which it was applicable. Questionnaire 45, male 31 wrote, "Allowing them to do

what they want." This glaringly indicated that the concept gender is an elusive one among many members of the society. Such a gap calls for more educational interventions on gender concepts and to also actively involve men as their participation is crucial. This may explain why many people may not support issues of gender empowerment if they do not succinctly understand what the concept entails. The figures below show the respondents' understanding of gender equality and women empowerment:

Fig 5.14: Understanding gender concepts



When the researcher turned to the general public in order to enlist their views and beliefs on the concept of gender equality and its applicability to Zimbabwe and Africa, about 24.6% of the respondents agreed that it was a Western phenomenon while 14.9% strongly disagreed. The majority of the respondents, however, disagreed (35.1%), while the rest seemed indifferent or undecided. With the majority concurring that gender equality is African, the citizens of Zimbabwe should therefore support NGOs that are pursuing women empowerment. Table 5.8 below shows the findings on the statement below as it was extracted from the questionnaire.

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Table 5.8 Ascertaining whether gender is a western concept

Q: Is gender equality a foreign concept (it conflicts with our culture and beliefs) in Africa and Zimbabwe. Mark appropriate box.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	5	2.5	2.5	2.5
	Agree	50	24.6	24.6	27.1
	Neutral	36	17.9	17.9	45.0
	Disagree	71	35.1	35.1	80.1
	Strongly disagree	30	14.9	14.9	95.0
	Don't Know	10	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	202	100.0	100.0	

(Source: Printout table from the findings of the current study)

The finding that about 25% of the population view gender equality as a phenomenon that is in direct conflict with the beliefs and cultural practices of Zimbabwe and possibly Africa may explain why culture was cited as one of the hindrances of women empowerment. This then necessitates informative advocacy that can dismantle such beliefs in order to educate men and women on gender issues in the African context. That way, attitudinal factors may be solved adequately.

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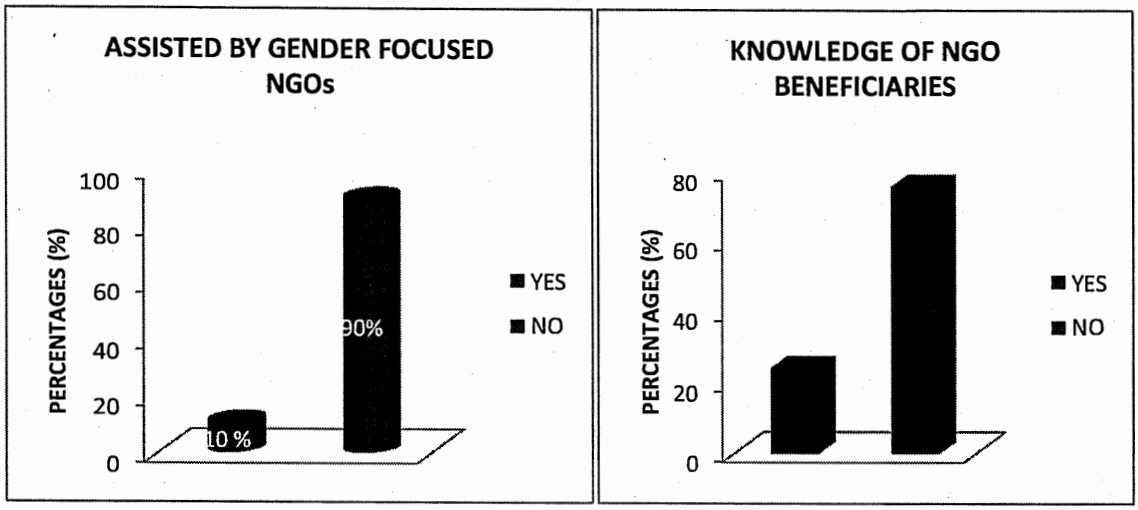
5.3.3 The "skeletal" nature of NGOs and limited coverage

The responses from the general public alluded that gender-based NGOs were skeletal and served only an insignificant number of people. This was demonstrated by the findings that of all the people who filled in the questionnaire, only 10% acknowledged having received some sort of assistance from gender NGOs. Also, 24% indicated that they knew someone who had received gender-related assistance by NGOs operating in Harare. This is clearly depicted on the diagram below:

Fig 5.15 Coverage of gender NGOs in Harare.



The finding that 90% of the respondents had not been assisted at any one time by any NGO can suggest that the coverage of NGO's is either minimal or that the majority of people in Zimbabwe do not need the services being provided by gender NGOs. However, considering the inequalities that have been established as prevalent in Zimbabwe, it is likely that many people are unaware of how women NGOs can assist them. The finding on the coverage of NGOs is further supported by the fact that 76% of the respondents did not know of any beneficiary from the women-NGOs. This could also indicate that due to many economic challenges that the country of Zimbabwe is facing, the role and position of NGOs has been weakened to an extent that their capacities to achieve their goals and impact the societies through their interventions has been minimised.

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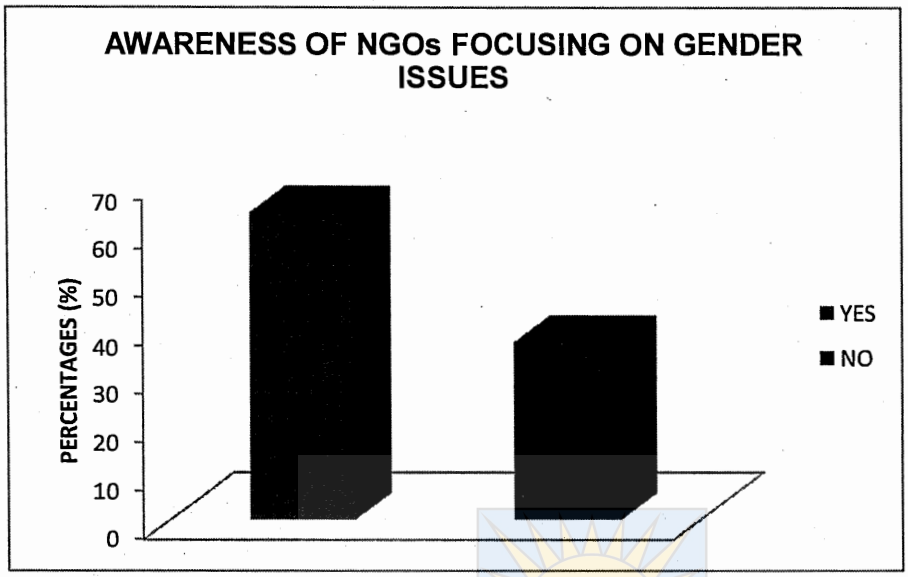
Knowledge of Gender NGOs

Upon asking the respondents of their knowledge of NGOs that are focusing on gender issues in Harare, the findings showed that 37% did not know any. However, this researcher thinks it could be because the respondents could not adequately differentiate between generic NGOs and those in the gender mainstream. This kind of ignorance in relation to gender NGOs, according to the researcher, begs for community mobilization by NGOs in order for the citizens to know the organizations and the services they offer. If people do not know what organizations offer, they are not likely to utilize those services. The bar graph below shows the data on this.

Fig 5.16: Knowledge of NGOs focusing on gender issues by respondents



5.3.4 der challenges that NGOs in Harare are tackling

The findings from the mini-survey showed that 35% and 44% of the Harare citizens who took part in the current study strongly agreed and agreed respectively to the susceptibility of women and the girl child to gender-based violence. This clearly indicates that the country suffers from higher prevalence of gender inequalities and that patriarchal power dynamics were still very strong and working against the empowerment of women and girls.

Findings also established different manifestations of gender inequalities including political alienation (65%), domestic and social injustices (79%), economic deprivation (71%), vulnerability to HIV/AIDS (75%), education deprivation (55%) and food insecurity (52%). (The figures mentioned above are for the respondents who agreed and those who strongly agreed on their prevalence, Table 5.9 below). The following table indicates the scenarios discussed herein:

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Table 5.9 Prevalence of forms of Gender Inequalities in Harare

Q: How would you scale the prevalence of the following forms of gender inequalities? Mark appropriate box.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
Political alienation	27%	38%	18%	9%	2%	6%
Domestic and social injustice	35%	44%	12%	2%	0%	7%
Economic deprivation	24%	47%	11%	5%	4%	9%
Vulnerability to HIV/AIDS	26%	49%	14%	7%	1%	3%
Educational deprivation	24%	31%	29%	11%	2%	4%
Food insecurity and poverty	13%	29%	20%	16%	9%	13%

(Source: Printout table derived from the findings of the current research)

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The forms of gender inequality shown on the table above points to the need for interventions through NGOs, for the empowerment of women in Zimbabwe. The prevalence may therefore mean that, either the efforts by NGOs are not yielding the expected results because of different challenges or that the inequality gap is too wide and therefore cannot be closed overnight.

5.3.5 Perceptions on the effectiveness of the interventions by NGOs

The recipients and potential recipients of the interventions by NGOs had the opportunity to contribute their views pertaining to the possibility of gender equality and women empowerment in Zimbabwe. Approximately, 25% of the respondents agreed that gender equality is possible in Harare and Zimbabwe through NGO advocacy. On the other hand, 35% disagreed while 15 % strongly disagreed. 17.9% however were neutral while 5% did not know if it was possible to effectively attain gender parity through NGOs interventions. The table below clarifies on the findings.

Table 5.10 Perceptions of respondents on the interventions by NGOs

Q: Gender equality can be achieved through NGOs' advocacy and interventions in Harare and Zimbabwe. Mark appropriate box.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	5	2.5	2.5	2.5
	Agree	50	24.6	24.6	27.1
	Neutral	36	17.9	17.9	45.0
	Disagree	71	35.1	35.1	80.1
	Strongly disagree	30	14.9	14.9	95.0
	Don't Know	10	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	202	100.0	100.0	

(Source: Printout table derived from the findings of the current research)

Plausibly, the finding that 50% did not see Harare NGOs as being capable of addressing spates of gender inequalities through their interventions, against slightly above 25% who thought in the affirmative, could be an indicator of the public losing confidence in the ability of NGOs. Also, the citizens of Harare may view NGOs as incapable of closing the gender gaps because of the limited resources at their disposal as well as the antagonistic economic environment which they have to operate under.

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Gender NGOs' interventions weak to ensure women and girl child empowerment.

Findings on the capacity of gender NGOs in empowering women and the girl child for equality show that 20 people (12.6 %) of the respondents indicated having hope in their capacity while over 50% of the respondents did not see them with capabilities or capacities to execute that. This is an indication that the society perceived that the current efforts of the NGOs were insufficient and incapable of emancipating women and the girl child. These perceptions from the residents might have been reinforced by the strong cultural forces that maintain women subjugation. The table 5.11 below are the findings obtained.

Table 5.11 Evaluation of NGOs interventions in addressing gender disparities

Q: Are gender NGOs currently doing enough to eradicate gender inequalities and empower women and the girl child? Mark appropriate box.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	5	2.5	2.5	2.5
	Agree	15	7.6	7.6	10.1
	Neutral	56	27.3	27.3	37.4
	Disagree	81	40.2	40.2	77.6
	Strongly disagree	20	10	10	87.6 100.0
	Don't Know	25	12.4	12.4	
	Total	202	100.0	100.0	

(Source: Printout table derived from the findings of the current research)

5.3.6 Factors affecting NGO"s efforts of women empowerment in Zimbabwe

The researcher enlisted the thoughts of the respondents concerning their perceptions on the influence of certain aspects on gender issues, and the promotion of women empowerment through gender NGOs. About 63% of the respondents indicated that culture posed a huge detrimental effect. Also, patriarchy (69%) was cited as a huge factor which negatively resisted women empowerment. There are many other factors that may influence the attainment of women empowerment in Zimbabwe such as people's thinking, attitudes and their willingness generally. This may imply that gender equality and women empowerment processes may only succeed if those different factors and dynamics are tilted to the advantage of elevating the position of a woman and the girl child vis-a-vis- the men and the boy child.

The impact of Industrialization on gender equality

Study findings showed that 68% of the respondents indicated that industrialization was advancing aspects of gender equality and women empowerment; while 19% thought to the contrary. Possibly, this is because industrialization points to the dangers of human rights violations especially for women and the girl children. Even though this in most societies has been viewed as an effort to offset the traditional

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norms of living, at least both men and women appear to embrace most of the tenets of industrialization, as well as globalization.

Impact of media on gender equality and women empowerment

Findings on the impact of the media on aspects of gender equality revealed that 63% of the respondents emphasized on the positive role that media was taking in advancing and promoting aspects of gender equality and women empowerment, while 16 % thought otherwise. This can be because the media emits material, especially the information that is informative and educative. Importantly, issues such as those of human rights, violation of the rights of women and the girl child have always been given prominence in different media sources, whether print or electronic.

Table 5.12 Factors and their influence on the interventions by NGOs

In order to identify the challenges that may be negatively affecting the interventions by women NGOs, the researcher asked for the perceptions of Harare citizens concerning different factors. This may assist in directing resources where they are really needed as NGOs will be aware of antagonistic factors. Some factors appeared to accelerate women empowerment in Zimbabwe while others proved to be challenges delaying or hindering the attainment of gender equality.

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Q: How do you think the following aspects influence the attainment of gender equality through NGOs' interventions? Mark appropriately.

Factor	Highly positively	Positively	No effect	Negatively	Highly negatively	Don't Know
Culture	8%	9%	11%	44%	19%	9%
Socialization	2%	23%	16%	40%	7%	12%
Patriarchy	1%	9%	8%	45%	24%	13%
Modernisation	16%	49%	9%	7%	2%	16%
Christianity	7%	27%	18%	26%	4%	18%
African Tradition	10%	10%	5%	54%	17%	13%
Industrialization	15%	53%	7%	13%	6%	13%
Media	19%	44%	8%	12%	4%	11%

(Source: Printout from the findings of the current study)

5.3.7 Economic factors derailing gender-based NGOs" interventions

Zimbabwe's ailing economy, a deterrent to the attainment of gender equality

Study findings revealed a host of factors that compromised the achievement of gender equality and women empowerment in Harare. About 83% responses were in the affirmative that Zimbabwe's ailing economy formed a fertile ground in disempowering gender-based NGOs. This is clear because with the current Zimbabwean economy, NGOs may not again receive any financial assistance from the government. This is also worsened by the current complicated relationship that exists between the government and some women NGOs. It could also be possible that the government would be reluctant to allow the western countries to help the NGOs, considering its relationships with the West that has resulted in economic sanctions.

Paucity of funding possibilities, a deterrent to gender equality

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Study findings from the respondents showed that 82% of them indicated that NGOs' efforts were thwarted by lack of funding from the government of the day and other local donors. This may be because of the country battling to fight off its political-economy which is failing to sustain the development of its citizens and also the raging drought in tandem with unfathomable levels of poverty.

Diminished international funding

Research findings from the respondents showed that 82% of them indicated that a decline in international funding and sponsorship detrimentally affected the efforts of the gender NGOs in attaining the process of gender equality and women empowerment. Apparently, this is clear because of the sanctions that spoiled the relationship between NGOs and their international donors. Other factors that were cited include lack of trained staff, misinterpretation of gender concepts, limited coverage, among others as shown in table 5.13 below:

Table 5.13 Respondents" views on the factors hindering NGO"s interventions

Q: To what extent do you think the following aspects affect the efforts being made by NGOs towards attaining gender equality and women empowerment?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
Unclear vision by NGOs	9 %	42%	11%	19%	5%	14%
Misinterpretation of gender concepts by the general public	15%	51%	10%	10%	2%	12%
Lack of trained personnel	4%	45%	19%	18%	6%	8%
Zimbabwe's bad economy	40%	43%	6%	2%	2%	7%
Conflicting partnership with government	34%	45%	7%	1%	0%	13%
Unclear line between NGOs and government responsibilities	17%	56%	8%	2%	0%	17%
Corruption in NGOs	6%	43%	17%	3%	3%	28%
Lack of government funding	24%	56%	7%	3%	1%	9%
Decline in international sponsorship	25%	57%	3%	3%	2%	13%
Restrictive gender policies	7%	47%	15%	6%	1%	24%
Lack of monitoring and evaluation of projects	16%	49%	11%	2%	2%	20%
Limited information about services provided by NGOs	15%	63%	10%	3%	0%	9%
Resistance from potential beneficiaries	8%	47%	20%	7%	1%	17%
Small coverage by NGOs	25%	54%	9%	1%	0%	11%

(Source: Printout derived from the findings of the current study)

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5.3.8 Proposed recommendations to improve the interventions by NGOs

The respondents of Harare city had the privilege to communicate their recommendations in regard to NGOs' interventions for women empowerment and gender equality in Zimbabwe. Among the findings, 82% recommended that NGOs raise their own finances, considering the inconsistency and conditions associated

with donor-funding. While 87% recommended on the clarity of gender concepts, 86% recommended the hiring of qualified personnel. Other suggestions include increased coverage (89%), good relationship between the government and NGOs (83%), among others. Again, it is evident that even though the financial state of an NGO does not directly lead to more effectiveness, resources are a necessity for the translation of the National Gender Policy and the goals of NGOs into programmes and projects that can effectively empower women. The findings that show all the recommendations are reported in the table 5.14 below.

Table 5.14 Recommendations for improved NGO interventions

Q: What do you think NGOs should do to improve their interventions for the attainment of gender equality? Mark appropriate box.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
NGOs invest in self-financing projects	22%	60%	8%	0%	0%	10%
Clarify govt. and NGO responsibilities	20%	67%	2%	0%	0%	11%
Increased coverage by NGOs	24%	65%	3%	0%	0%	8%
Clarity on gender equality and women empowerment	26%	63%	3%	1%	0%	7%
Independent audit for NGOs	19%	65%	5%	2%	0%	9%
Productive partnership between NGOs and govt	23%	60%	3%	4%	1%	9%
Targeting people at grassroot level	28%	58%	8%	1%	0%	5%
Injection of more finances	33%	58%	4%	1%	0%	4%
Hiring of qualified staff	25%	61%	7%	2%	0%	5%
Improved government relations with the West	29%	55%	4%	2%	1%	9%

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Better relationships among NGOs	23%	59%	9%	0%	0%	9%
More empirical research on current gender issues	22%	59%	7%	1%	0%	11%
Initiating research-based solutions to gender issues	20%	56%	9%	1%	0%	14%
Specialisation for more efficiency	22%	59%	8%	1%	0%	10%

(Source: Printout derived from the findings of the current study)

5.3.9 Final remarks from respondents

The questionnaire had space for respondents to freely write their concluding remarks. These responses were directed mainly to the NGOs and these inputs are quoted from the questionnaires:

> NGOs should reach out to people especially with information on what it is they mean by gender equality and how it affects the everyday life of a woman. People may seem like they know but they don't know this empowerment thing maybe just a few. (Questionnaire 41, Female aged 41).

The concluding remark urges NGOs to continue with gender sensitization advocacy and educating the general public on how women empowerment or gender equality affects the overall being of women and men in Zimbabwe. The misinterpretations and assumptions surrounding these issues need to be clarified in order to break the resistance that is caused by ignorance. Therefore, educational empowerment is crucial.

And

> In my view, culture is the number one enemy followed by the government, the way they treat NGOs, the policies and not creating an environment that enables NGOs to function fully. So unless NGOs win the war with traditional leaders and the government, they won't go further than they are right now. (Questionnaire 44, female aged 38).

Culture and the government were cited by the respondents as primary challenges resisting women empowerment in Zimbabwe. Maybe this is because culture moulds the communities and influence the way people relate to one another, while the government influences the policies that lead to formal laws. Partnership between communities, the government and NGOs is therefore important for the eradication of

gender disparities. There was a man who seemed to insinuate that gender equality was responsible for breaking homes. In his final remarks, he says:

> *Imi vezve gender equality ndimi muri kutonetsa culture yedu. Ngazviperere kumabasa kwete kuuya nazvo midzimba. Ndo saka dzimba dzava kuwa zuva nezuva (*it is actually this emphasis on gender equality that is bringing changes to our culture. Gender equality should remain at work not to bring it in the homes. That's why divorce rates are high these days. (Questionnaire 16, 43 year old male).

The respondent's understanding was that gender equality is applicable to work only and not in domestic homes. He also linked the supremacy of men to culture arguing that gender practitioners were violating the cultural order by empowering women in the domestic settings. This shows the misconception of women empowerment because sustainable empowerment needs to start from an individual, to the family then outside the home to the economy, educational and political areas. Resistance in the homes subsequently leads to resistance outside the home. Hence, the need for NGOs to focus more on the domestic settings. Finally but not least was a man who was getting emotional over child marriages and child abuse. He reinforces:

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> ...Young girls are being harassed and abused. If I could be a police man even for one day and I catch an old man taking young girls to bed I would gladly arrest them and throw away the keys...(Questionnaire 145, Male aged 31).

It is indeed developmental for men to be eager to stand for the rights of girls and women. The respondent may be suggesting that there is need for stricter penalties for people who infringe on the rights of women and girls. Gender organizations that focus on the development of men such as MEZA are important in this regard to make men realise the need to support women empowerment efforts. More of such people could probably have a positive influence on the dilution of cultural practices and attitudes that flout and nullify the rights of girls.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter was the interpretation, analysis and presentation of both qualitative and quantitative data. Data has been presented using pictures, stories, poems, graphs and verbatim quotes in order to enrich the findings. The following chapter discusses major findings of the current research with the qualitative and quantitative findings discussed simultaneously.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

"We have now a phenomenon of NGOs, or shall I call them phenomena, for they really are a type of government in the background of a formal government. I don't know whether this creature is for the better or for the worse, but in our country we have seen a situation where they have exceeded their terms of reference, and perhaps we might have to reconsider the advisability of having NGOs." (Robert Mugabe speech in 2008)

6.1 Introduction

As stated earlier in Chapter 5, the current section discussed major findings in order to give meaning to the data presented in the previous chapter. The findings are linked to theoretical frameworks outlined in Chapter 2 (Feminist Theory and the Political and Economy Perspective), the literature review in Chapter 3 and the practicality of Social Work. The generalizability of the findings of the current study was also made by comparing it with the findings of other researchers. The researcher has applied scientific imagination and scholarly discretion while discussing the findings as suggested by Gibbs and Grey (2011). As such, the meanings drawn have been funneled down to conclusions and extrapolated to possible policy amendments and recommendations for future research, marking the end of the current research project.

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6.2 Discussion of the findings

The section below is a discussion on the findings of the current research. Findings from the NGO respondents, the key informants and the mini survey have been merged.

6.2.1 Biographical Information

The NGO Directors

Study findings on the age of the main participants (directors and founders of various gender-based NGOs) showed that their ages ranged from 35 to 70 years. The representatives appear to be mature enough to be directors of NGOs. The scenario of the elderly directors in NGO leadership could somewhat be compared to the experience of the country's political leadership, of course with perfidious

ramifications on the country's state of development as reflected by the Human Development Report (2013) and Coltart, (2008). Considering that the legal retirement age in Zimbabwe is pegged at 60 or 65 years, it would be rational and plausible that the elderly directors who have reached retirement age, consider leaving leadership positions to the younger generation as youth unemployment in Zimbabwe continues to be a challenge according to the findings of Mafa (2014), Makina and Kanyeze (2010), Gebre-Egziabher (2010) and Kanchense (2008). This proposal is in line with Mhetu (2016), who suggested that the retirement age in Zimbabwe should be reduced to 45 in order to absorb jobless youths on the job market.

The working experiences of directors at respective NGOs varied from 4 to 43 years. Findings also revealed that the majority of directors (35 %) have been directing respective NGOs for the past 18 to 43 years. Further findings on the educational qualifications testified that all the NGOs' directors had tertiary education certification; with 50% of them holding post graduate degrees. This confirms the findings by Shivji (2007) who established that NGOs in Africa are led by educated personnel. This is a testimony that as far as the curriculum vitae of the directors is concerned (as required by the Objective Clause during the NGO registration process), they are qualified for their positions, with an academic capacity to interpret the National Gender Policy (NGP) (UNDP, 2013), MDGs targets (Chauraya, 2011) and the SDGs pegs.

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However, a demarcation is noted that having a degree conferred on someone does not necessarily validate the person's ability to tackle issues in that field. While some of these directors have international recognition for their reputation in understanding gender issues (NEWS Day, 19 November 2015), this then poses a question as to why the terrain of gender equality as championed by NGOs has not been reached yet. This suggests that the problem could be an amalgamation of many factors.

Key Informants

The findings from the key informants showed a diversified picture of the occupations and positions held. The positions held included the director in the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development; Deputy Director in the Ministry of Finance; a lawyer by profession; a former lecturer in the political science department

and a lecturer in religious and cultural studies. Their experiences in related fields varied from 6 years to 23 years, a reflection of rich knowledge on such aspects that influence the attainment of women empowerment in Harare. Their expertise and perceptions richly brought great insight as different aspects of phenomena relating to gender issues were explored. The scenario clearly indicates the possibility of the study achieving its validity and reliability, as well as data credibility and trustworthiness (Creswell, 2009).

Respondents from the mini-survey

From the findings of the current research, 58% were female and 42% were male. While 47% were single, 13% were divorced and 40% married. Perhaps the high stake in the divorce rate and the single persons is coherent with the findings by ILO (2011) that feminism and an emphasis on gender issues are responsible for the increase of the divorce rate. Regarding this, Beddoes and Borrego (2011) forward that some people have a mentality that feminists are people with nothing better to do, but want to try to change nature. However, a questionnaire return of 42% by men for the current research may be an indication that men are starting to embrace gender issues and the empowerment of women. The educational status for the respondents that showed a literacy rate of 96%, which is closely supported by the UNICEF (2015) report that shows Zimbabwe's literacy rate of 91.2%.

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The finding of the statistics on unemployment rate of 28% is way lower than the official rate of over 80 % as revealed by Kanchense (2008). The 33% in the informal sector however, coincides with the findings by Otto and Katema (2011) and Dreeze and Sen (2002) who established that the majority of the people in Zimbabwe are absorbed in the informal sector, more so the women. All these factors point to the socio-economic status of the Zimbabwean population in relation to their standards of living and access to resources. This biographic information is crucial in mirroring and providing a sample of the social, economic and age-characteristics of the people that are recipients or potential recipients of the services that are provided by NGOs in Harare.

6.2.2 Wider and glaring gender disparities handled by NGOs in Zimbabwe

The research findings from all NGOs' participants, key informants and respondents from Harare city confirmed that women and girls in Zimbabwe continue to suffer multi-faceted forms of gender-skewed inequalities. The gender disparities revealed in the current study among others include domestic violence, social injustice, political-economic exclusion, sexual exploitation and cultural-religious exclusions. Human Development Report (2013) testified to this prevalence revealing that Gender Inequality Index (GII) of Zimbabwe was 0.544. This finding is again supported by the Human Development Report (2015). While making evaluations of the MDG 3, the report concluded that gender disparities were still prevalent, even though the GII for Zimbabwe had lowered to 0.709. The forms of gender inequalities that were revealed by the current study are discussed below.

6.2.2.1 Domestic violence directed at women and the girl child

The NGOs' participants cited domestic violence as the most common form of women suppression, as they reinforced that the majority of cases go unreported. There was also a revelation from one NGO representative that even though domestic violence may occur to anyone, the girl child suffers double-jeopardy of age and gender susceptibility. In concurrence, 79 % of the respondents through questionnaires attested that this was the most common form of violation against women and the girl child. These findings find support from Mashiri (2013), who discloses that in Zimbabwe, GBV, especially domestic violence is much serious in causing death than is malaria and traffic accidents combined. The author further reveals that one in every ten women (1:10) between the age of 30 and above have suffered one form of gender-based violence or the other. This shows the seriousness of the violence that is targeted at women in Zimbabwe, prompting women organizations to form organizations that challenge such oppression.

Loewe and Rippin (2015) reveal that it is due to this prevalence that the SDGs 5th goal has the 2nd target which is aimed at eliminating all forms of violence against women and the girl children. Possibly, having a stand-alone target that seeks to address violence against women may significantly reduce its prevalence. ILO (2011) and Musasa Project (2008) in Mashiri (2013) discloses that many cases of gender-based violence are never reported, sealed with the signet ring of shame and fear,

making it difficult to know the actual figures. Concerning this, feminists argue that the societal imbalances reinforced by patriarchal systems inferiorities women and this expose them to numerous forms of vulnerability (Smith, 2010; Collins, 2000). Cultural feminists further explain that cases of gender-based violence may not be reported in societies where women subjugation is normalised.

The findings on the silence of the victims are not a new thing as the Zimbabwe Health and Demographic Survey (2005-2006) discovered that 34.7 % of survivors who participated in a research indicated that they had not told a person about their victimization. This may be a global culture because in America also, the 57 sexual assaults leveled against Bill Cosby (Harris, 2016) may be a clear reflection that this habit of silence is nurturing and breeding violence into a seemingly obstinate social ill. As advocated for by the feminist theory, there is therefore need for self-empowerment for victims to stand up to their perpetrators (Kabeer, 2005; Saleebey, 2005) and social empowerment (Sheafor and Horejsi 2008; Segal et al., 2007) to support victims and not further victimize them through name-calling and alienation. The researcher is therefore suggesting that maybe exposing the perpetrators to the social court of condemnation and the long arm of the law can assist in curbing its prevalence. Campaigns without justice are not enough because the perpetrators may continue to victimise the same women or others.

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Also, without speaking out, NGOs cannot intervene as they may not be aware of the occurrence of the violence. This explains why in Zimbabwe the Shona people say *'Mwana asingacheme anofira mumbereko'* literally translated to say (a child who does not cry will die inside the baby carrier), because as long as the child is not crying, the mother will assume all is well with the child. Other cultures for example in Setswana, the same message is in the form of a proverb that says: *'ngwana o sa lelang o swela tharing'* (the child who does not cry dies while in the baby carrier). In Setswana the solution therefore says, *'Buwa motho rego thuse'* (speak out so that we may help you).

The need to speak out to organizations that may assist them is succinctly supported by Breines (2002) and Haslanger and Tauna (2012) who clarified that it was not until the feminists in Europe spoke about their discomfort and concerns that the government started making legal efforts to empower women politically and

economically. Even though these feminists were initially resisted, they persisted as indicated by the different levels of engaging with the law formulators (first, second and third waves of feminism). This researcher, embracing and believing in a constellation of social work values and ethos, thinks that women and girl children, who constitute the most vulnerable segment of any society need to be helped to help themselves. Dissemination of information may be necessary to empower them to seek help concerning the problems devilling their lives as reinforced by Zastrow (2010). Otherwise, without communication, intervention is not possible because the profession does not merely prescribe solutions like the medical field.

6.2.2.2 Social Injustice

As the discussion on gender disparities that are prevalent in Harare continued, all the representatives in agreement bewailed that women were treated as second-class citizens by their men counterparts. The discussion on the prevalence of social injustice among women led to a narration of a recent story by an NGO participant, of a woman who was stripped of her clothes and made to walk in the public street naked (the act referred to as violence against women in the public places). Apparently, this finding mirrors the trend that has been happening in Kenya also. To this end, Sara Malm on the MailOnline NEWS on 17 November, 2014 reported that numerous women were victimized, assaulted and raped for wearing mini-skirts, as they were accused of 'asking for it". In Pakistan in another case of social injustice, a teenager was burnt to death for refusing a marriage proposal advanced to her (DunyaNews, 1 June 2016). These cases reflect that some men still view themselves as superior and hence they believe that they can control the behaviour of women even if it means killing those who may refuse to yield to their requests.

The prevalence of social injustice in Zimbabwe is supported by Mapuranga (2010) and Mapuva (2013) who argue that women are seen as the possession of men and as such, the society tends to associate manhood with having control over women. For this reason, feminists argue that empowerment should focus on giving women power over their lives (Chopra and Muller, 2016; Collins, 2000). When women cannot make choices, for example who to marry and what to wear, they are imprisoned by those who make decisions on their behalf, in these cases men. To further support the findings on social injustice against women through beatings, ILO (2011) also revealed violence that is targeted at women who do not conform to

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men's expectations or demands that may include wearing a mini skirt and refusing a marital proposal. The social inequalities subjected to women trigger a lot of questions on the issue of moral fibre and humanity, not just Zimbabwe but around the globe. It is difficult to find an explanation that can justify such behaviour. Human virtues such as tolerance, respect, love and justice that are central to upholding other people's rights (McLean, 2015) appear to be melting away.

In explaining the genesis of social injustice, some scholars explain that even Zimbabweans' rich and once admired moral values, which were noted by Mafa and Kang'ethe (2016), Mapuva (2013) and Mapuranga (2010) have suffered acculturation and moral decadence. The excuse by the perpetrators that "women ask for it by wearing mini-skirts" is however rejected by Picton (1996) who in tracing the dressing of Africans revealed that women used to walk bare-breasted and sometimes only covering the front. Even today, some cultures still embrace this, thereby refuting the justification that women's dressing is the problem. Probably, the current generation is highly over-sexualized according to Mafa and Kang'ethe (2016), that seeing a full-grown woman naked, an act that was once frowned upon as a taboo (Zastrow and Kirst-Ashman, 2013) has now been normalized.

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Regarding the ill-treatment of women, the feminists movement (Haslanger and Tauna, 2012; Kabeer, 2005) fought against domesticity and the oppressive government laws, being fully persuaded of the need to empower woman's domestic position as it influences how the society gives her decision-making and power positions. A community is just a subset of a country or nation, borrowing the research terms of Small (2009). Hence, the indignity attached to women in their homes can be generalizable to the views of the society. The need to challenge the attitudes and beliefs which make some men to believe they can treat women anyhow, just because they can, is therefore both critical and urgent.

6.2.2.3 The emergence of "pornographic revenge"

From gender-based violence and social injustice, the findings unveiled what was referred to as 'pornographic revenge'. According to the participants, this is when a bitter ex-lover publishes naked pictures or videos of her erstwhile partner in order to spite her. Apparently, this has been happening in Zimbabwe and women are suffering the most from this trend, possibly because of the social judgment, and the

shame associated with the nakedness of a woman as forwarded by Mafa and Kang'ethe (2016), Mafa (2014) and Mashiri (2013). The NGOs' representatives shed light on this revealing that this was happening even among celebrities in Zimbabwe.

Understandably, NGO participants expressed disapproval and emotions over these cases because the careers of these young women were aborted and compromised. These findings however are contradictory to the report of Zaslove (n.d), top writer of Qura who argues that Kim Kardashian's sex-tape with Ray Jay in 2007 paved the way for her into fame. Zaslove (n.d) further points out that Kim markets her naked body to remain on the spotlight as she recently posed naked on Paper's website (a magazine in America) and received 15.9 million views in a day. Perhaps this is closely linked to Chauraya (2012) and Ngara's (2002) findings that made a distinction between what is acceptable and unacceptable between Africans and Americans. Still in America though, some celebrities, like the two Zimbabwean pageants have had their names tainted also. On this note, Remling (2014) of the International Business Times reported that about 26 celebrities have been adversely affected by this trend as their nude pictures were hacked and leaked, and went viral on iCloud.

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The shame, disgrace and embarrassment associated with this can be left to the reader's imagination. Such levels of injustice and revenge against women are disempowering and the sad thing is that pictures such as these go viral over seconds because of the degree of controversy attached to them. It is an interplay of phenomena like this that prompt the researcher to poignantly state that some of the laws of Zimbabwe are merely theoretical because there is a Censorship and Entertainment Control Act Chapter 10:04 of 1996 which prohibits the possession and circulation of nude pictures, yet this continues to happen. Maybe the radical feminists were right in suggesting the need for a total overthrow (Ghodsee, 2004; Pedwell, n.d), in this case of all cultural and societal systems that create and reinforce the inequalities that exist between men and women.

Realistically though, keeping trend on what circulates on people's electronic devices through Whatsapp, Facebook or Youtube may prove to be an impossible thing, especially with the current level of technological advancement. Advisably,

prosecuting those who commit such deformation of character may help to curtail the circulation of such graphic materials.

6.2.2.4 Sexual exploitation of the girl child

The findings on the forms of unfair circumstances that women are subjected to additionally revealed that the girl child in Harare is exploited and sometimes the corrupt law enforcement officers are paid by the perpetrators to overlook the crime. The findings on the prevalence of sexual exploitation against the girl child are supported by the Zimbabwe Statistical Agency (ZimStats) (2015) which revealed that at least one (1) girl is raped every two (2) hours in Zimbabwe. ZimStats (2015) further indicated that they recorded a 30% increase of the girl-child rape cases from 2013 to 2015. What is heart-rending about the story that the researcher overheard, of the police officers who were bribed to cover-up the case, is that US$800 was used as bait for the girl's dignity and worth. Worst still, the custodian of the law, the police officers were the one participating in this treacherous act. Even though the civil servants' salary is insufficient, as revealed by Mafa (2014) and Coltart (2008), it should not be an excuse for perverting the course of justice.

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Concerning the findings on the corrupt officers in Zimbabwe, Chitemba in the SundayMail NEWS (6/8/2015) is in agreement with the findings and reported the notoriety of the police force over bribery issues leading to the sacking of over 300 officers. This is a case where the justice system is failing to support the efforts of NGOs to support women empowerment. Such loopholes by law enforcers discourages victims from reporting their cases if they lose trust in the justice system. Perhaps these are some of the structures that need to undergo significant changes as advocated for by some feminists (Helman, 2012).

In cases such as these, some may ask Why don't these girls who are held against their will just run away from their abusers?' The answer may be the revelation by psychologists that victims or survivors may develop a traumatic bond with their perpetrators, what Namnyak et al. (2007) calls the "Stockholm Syndrome". In this case, victims may actually cover-up for their perpetrators or just remain silent as supported by the findings of Mashiri (2013). Whether this would be prompted by fear or not, it seems as if this may lead to repeated abuse, either of the same person or others as in the case of Bill Cosby (Harris, 2016). For children, it may be fear as they

may easily be threatened into silence. Feminists believe that societies where the voices of women and girl children are disregarded, the victims of sexual exploitation are likely to remain silent. Mapuva (2013) in Zimbabwe argues that the law has indeed failed to protect women and the girl children from perpetrators.

To this, the research participants advised that to ensure safety for the girl child, parents and caregivers should be watchful for any form of abuse on their children. This may entail the reinforcement of children's rights in the school curriculums and other agents of socialization. Also, teachers and parents should explain to children the forms of abuse and encourage them to report any suspicious behaviour from any third person. Witt (1997) and Kaplan (1991) recognize the importance of the family and the school in constructing the foundational behaviour of children. Socializing the girl child to view herself as good enough as the boy child may be the self-empowerment feminists were advocating for (Kabeer, 2005). Simultaneously instilling respect towards girls into the boys' psyche may be fundamental in dismantling the roots of perceived superiority by men. Internalized gender-skewed behaviour if not corrected has the potential to breed into attitudes and actions that unjustly subordinates women.

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6.2.2.5 Politically-motivated violence against women

Notwithstanding the brutality against women in their respective homes, the research participants revealed that violence that is prompted out of political reasons was also reported to be prevalent amongst women in Harare. Such atrocities were said to vary from physical battering, being burnt by hot plastics, sexual assault, verbal threats and kidnapping. In concurrence, Reeler (2013) who argued that about a fifth of elections in Africa were marred with violence, with women and children being the most sufferers also filed these findings.

The participants from NGOs did not deny the fact that men were also victims of assault and killings. However, the scale seemed to tilt more against women as the struggle for power in politics continues in Zimbabwe. In a bid to defend themselves and to revenge, the opposition parties perhaps would retaliate and fight back using the same tactics of violence such as physical battering, rape and intimidation. The findings of politically-motivated violence against women being evident in Harare was further elaborated on by Reeler (2013) whose research also revealed that

perpetrators identified as responsible for political violence were 31% ZANU-PF supporters, 24% ZANU-PF youths and 18% government militia.

In agreement, Tevera (2015) and Essof (2013) argued that political violence in Zimbabwe is the sitting government's pre-mediated strategy to cling on to power evidenced by the setting up of the Boarder Gezi militia camps (where all youths in Zimbabwe were forced to attend the training after high school). The authors therefore suggest that the militia youths were being groomed for political violence as revealed in the findings on the forms of gender inequalities evident in Zimbabwe. It is possible that the youths are brainwashed to behave in a certain way in order to protect the interests of a particular political party.

The researcher also gathered from participants that these attacks are most reported towards and during election periods. Perchance, the fact that the country obtained its liberty through waging war against the white regime as stated by Tevera (2015) and Masvuure and Wamwanduka (2008) may help to explain the use of violence to retain power, even when it means harming one's own people. Findings on politically-motivated violence against women finds support in a similar case of political violence in Nigeria, in April 2014, where 276 female students were abducted, raped and impregnated by the Boko Haram people in a political-religious feud (CNN News, 24 April, 2014). This goes to explain the implications of the nation's political environment as facilitating or prohibiting the attainment of gender parity and women empowerment. A nation with a government that supports violence or that does not protect women from political violence hinders the efforts by gender NGOs in their pursuit for women empowerment.

The use of political violence against women in Zimbabwe can also be explained by the fact that the country only had one ruling party since independence in 1980. Perhaps, the ruling party imagining any other party unseating it is just out of the realm of their reality. Hence, Rowland (2006) in Tevera (2015: 15) argues that the ruling party uses "seductive cultural heritage" to manipulate people and justify itself as the only legitimate party in Zimbabwe. In support, Ndlovu-Gathseni (2011) sarcastically reckons that there seems to be some level of induced cultural amnesia as the government pays little attention to events in the past that have been traumatic to the citizens of Zimbabwe especially women, such as the *gukurahundi* massacre.

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All these events are an indication that it is not a strange thing for violence to be implemented in Africa as a mechanism to cling on to power at all cost. A country that does not uphold practical democracy as a political right is unlikely to uphold or make practical efforts to ensure equality among her citizens. Such manipulation is evidence of the infringements of the people's rights, including those of women and girls. Sad is the revelation by some authors commenting on the priorities of the government suggesting that it puts its unruly quest for power in satisfying its dictatorship appetite first, at the expense of the security and welfare of its citizens as lamented by Egbedi (2015) and Coltart (2008).

6.2.2.6 Poverty and the denial of women's sexual and reproduction rights

Yet again, the discussions led to what one of the participants called "the exploitation of sex workers" as another form of gender challenges being tackled by women NGOs in Harare. According to the NGO's representative, some sex workers were being used for ritual purposes, being paid US$100 to sleep with "snakes" or to have sex at awkward places such as the gravesite. These findings are contrary to those of Mafa (2014) in her Master's thesis where she interviewed sex workers and found out that some would get as little money as $2 from a client. A US$100 bill is therefore 'too good to be true', thereby in a way validating the rituals allegations.

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The findings about rituals are in congruence with the revelation made by the BBC NEWS on the 7th of July in 2011, where sex work was associated with illicit sacred cultism. These secret covenants were linked to possession of wealth, power and a prestigious life. In as much as the researcher is not an expert in ritualism, however, graves have always been associated with fear. This shows the degree of impoverishment among Zimbabwean women and the extent to which they are willing to put their lives in danger just to free them themselves from poverty. McLean (2015) supports these findings arguing that in the name and excuse of the need to survive, Zimbabweans, due to economic hardships are celebrating immorality sometimes even doing the unthinkable. On the other hand, Sachinyoka (2011: 175) observes what he called 'get-rich-quick' methods such as taking other women's rich husbands and trafficking children and being involved in financial scams. Impoverished women are therefore pushed by circumstances to employ whatever mechanism they can in order to cope with poverty.

Economic challenges may be contributory factors pushing women to initiate these survival strategies, irrespective of the associated dangers. The political-economy theory shows that when the formal sector fails to sustain the economic needs of the nation, informal ways that may be illegal, are likely to emerge (Lewis and Opaku-Mensah, 2006). In congruence, the cultural branch of feminism asserts that total and sustainable empowerment should challenge the economic and societal structures, as these are the anchors of gender inequalities (Helman, 2012).

6.2.2.7 Cultural issues infringing on women's reproductive rights

Almost as if in concert, the participants from all the three focus groups showed disapproval against a number of cultural practices which directly infringe on the sexual rights of women, citing patriarchal socialization as the cause. Sixty one percent (61%) of all the respondents in the mini-survey confirmed that cultural practices tend to present women as inferior to men. To these findings, the key informant concurred to this, highlighting that these practices are slowly fading away with time. In line with these findings, a doctoral thesis by Mapuranga (2010) concluded that cultural practices such as child marriages, genital mutilation, forced marriages, polygamy and ancestral appeasement were normalized in Chipinge district and this was compromising the dignity and worth of women, pushing them into a state of vulnerability. In agreement, Narayan (1997) as quoted in Pedwell (n.d) posited that women in Africa, especially traditionally leaning countries such as Zimbabwe are imprisoned by their culture. This shows that even though culture may be credited for admirable virtues such as respect, it restricts women from realising their potentials and making personal choices. As such, culture is likened to a prison because of its ability to limit the development of women.

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However, the socialist feminists such as Alcoff (1988) and Beckett (2005) partly reject this finding arguing that patriarchy is not the major cause of women subjugation in the societies. Instead, they claim that financial dependency by women on men gives culture power over the affairs of women. Culture has therefore put the sexual rights of women in the hands of men as the perceived heads of the families. Below is a diagrammatic presentation of the scenario showing how the society, through cultural values has stripped women of their reproductive rights. Maybe these

cultural values have also influenced policies and formal laws because in Zimbabwe for example, abortion is illegal in whether a woman wants to abort or not.

Fig 6.1: Culture and reproductive rights

(Source: NGO 13 website)

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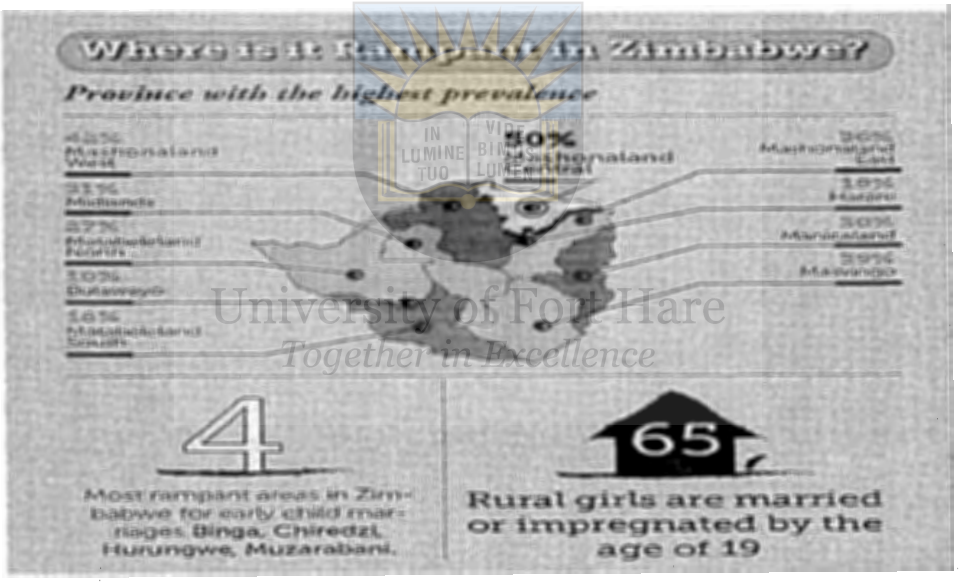
The picture above in line with the findings, is an illustration where men stand up to defend their rights against government control but on the other hand they are controlling the reproductive rights of women. The picture therefore reflects that men in many societies make decisions for themselves and for women as well, irrespective of the women's position. This is reinforced by Baehr (2013) and Breines (2002), who revealed that cultural feminists argue that cultural practices such as traditional heterosexual relationships and patriarchal norms, restrict women's choices and limit their capabilities. Breckett (2005) in commenting on the sexual and reproductive rights of women simply calls this the politics of childbirth. This shows that sexual and reproductive rights are marred with complications that can only be clarified if the NGOs intervene to speak on behalf of a woman because it looks as if her voice in this matter has been ignored in Zimbabwe.

Moreover, other areas where destructive cultural practices are prevalent in Zimbabwe according to the document from NGO 1 are Chiredzi, Hurungwe, Binga and Muzarabani. Evidently, these are areas physically located at the periphery of the country. As such, they still hold dear their cultural practices, understanding that modernity usually emanates from the urban areas spreading its impact outwards.

These areas may therefore be resisting the issue of gender equality viewing it as a personal attack on their values and culture, as the findings from the NGO representatives revealed. In line with this finding, Chauraya (2012) and Ghodsee (2004) identify some societies who reject women empowerment on the basis that it is an American ideology and also because women subjugation has been prevalent for so long such that it has been normalised by some communities. Below is a map showing areas where child marriages are prevalent in Zimbabwe thereby generalizing the findings of the current study to other areas.

Fig 6.2: Distribution of child marriages in Zimbabwe



(Source: NGO 1 Website)

In reinforcing these findings, Kabeer (2005) argues that some cultural frameworks and ideological constructs actually reject any empowerment efforts, sometimes even justifying the prevalence of women subjugation. This is true in that many people, including women reject the idea that a husband can actually sexually violate his wife. The justification to this may be that he has paid lobola and therefore "owns" the wife. Chireshe and Chireshe (2010) in their study in Zimbabwe found out that 64% of the participants agreed that the payment of lobola as upheld by the Zimbabwean culture, forced women to stay in abusive relationships while 60% agreed that lobola contributed to women's oppression.

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If culture is now a scapegoat for imprisoning African women, there might be need for the custodians of culture as well as the government to employ a cost and benefit analysis in determining if culture is doing more harm than good. This may lead to re-evaluating what has been passed on from generation to generation, starting with the purpose of lobola and what being married entails. The study by Chireshe and Chireshe (2010) however reflected that the majority of the participants upheld the payment of lobola as it unifies families and signifies men's value upon women. Commenting on the cultural practices that violate women's rights, cultural feminists are concerned that some heterosexual marriages are imprisoning women because a woman is expected to submit to her husband without questioning his authority (Baehr, 2013), leading to infringement of women's right to freedom of expression as stated in the Constitution of Zimbabwe (2013). So perhaps the abolition of lobola may bring equality as lobola would not be used as a reason for a woman to submit to her husband. The findings obtain support from European feminists in the third wave who sought to liberate themselves from practices that undermined their economic, educational and political abilities through a culture of domesticity (Smith, 2010; Springer, 2002).

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In trying to find the root cause for ill cultural practices, Phillips (2004: 11) in Pedwell (n.d) ascertains that culture is not widely understood and that there has risen a tendency to call "culture" whatever we do not understand or whatever we are not willing to confront, probably to camouflage the glaring truth of reality. As long as families protect these practices, the hope of empowering a girl child through NGOs' efforts in these rustic areas remains a fantasy. Exposing them is the first step in breaking their hold over the lives of women and the girl child.

6.2.2.8 Religious factors vis-a-vis women subjugation

The study findings ascertained the effects of religion towards the attainment of gender equality and women empowerment in Zimbabwe. The NGOs panels and even the key informants commented very little about the practices of Islam in Zimbabwe. Possibly, this is because the religion constitutes only 2% of the total population (Islamwebnet, 29 October 2015). Concerning the treatment of Muslim women, Rasool and Suleman (2017) revealed that refusal of the processing of divorce papers imprisons women in violent marriages. Further findings by Shafaat

(2000) revealed that men in Islam may even beat their wives. In support, Wadud (1999) also explains that scriptures in Islam are sometimes translated literally, void of the related context and this leads to women subjugation. These findings may therefore suggest that Islamic religion is oppressive to women. In congruence, Rasool and Suleman (2017) recommend the challenging of the patriarchal interpretation of the Quran in order to restore the dignity and worth of Muslim women. Custodians of the Quran may be brainwashing their congregants in order to promote the status of one gender while subordinating another, practices that contradict the efforts by NGOs.

However, there was no distinction that was made between the culture of Zimbabwe and the African Tradition Religion. Almost unanimously, the focus group discussion panels, key informants and respondents (54 % agreed and 17 % strongly agreed) indicated that ATR subjugated women's dignity and worth. These findings tally with Mawere et al. (2012) and Mapuranga (2010) who reveal that the tradition of the Ndebeles and the Shonas generally placed women at an inferior position to men. Some interesting insights, however, came to the fore when the issue of *tete* (auntie) was brought up. With modernity, nevertheless, her role seems to be insignificant in Zimbabwe. To this end, Mafa (2014) unveils the melting away of the extended family, leading to the emergence of a nuclear and matrifocal family, where the traditional family structure is slowly eroding away.

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The focus group panel was however divided about the role of Christianity in relation to gender issues. While one half noted that it fosters gender equality, the other half condemned it for wrong and skewed indoctrination. This division was also noticeable even with the respondents who filled in the questionnaires (27% said it positively complimented the interventions by NGOs, 26% said it hindered while 18% said it had no effect on the interventions by NGOs). Those who perceived Christianity as a religion that supported the efforts of the NGOs towards women empowerment argued that Christianity is based on loving one's neighbour as loving oneself (McArthur, 1997). Therefore, subjugating another human being basing on gender was against the Christian doctrines and ethos (Mawere et al., 2012; Banana, 1993)

These findings on the oppressive side of Christianity reflect the bible, a story (John 8) of a woman who was caught in adultery and it is striking that traditionally among

the Jews, it was only the woman who was supposed to be stoned to death. A gender question therefore arises as to why the women's sexual partner was not accused, because they were caught in the act. This suggests that the traditional norms, attitudes and practices were gender skewed; and oppressive to women fraternity as reinforced by Gripaldo (2008). Suggestively, this may entail that the coming of Jesus brought equal treatment between men and women as the holy book itself says in Galatians 3 verse 28 that there is no Jew or Gentile, male or female and all are the same before God (McArthur, 1997; Banana, 1993). So possibly, the church as a place of solace displaying non-judgmentalism may be seen as giving hope and strength to the rejected and abused women in the society.

On the other hand, other findings from research participants showed that it is uncommon for church leaders to brainwash women and exploit them mentally, physically and sexually. The researcher wishes to point out some churches and prophets that seem to enjoy the limelight of controversy because of the way they treat women in their ministries. Below are two examples:

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1) The Pastor in Africa who banned women and girls from wearing panties when coming to church so that the spirit can enter (Christian Post, n.d).

2) Pastor Gumbura from End Times message in Zimbabwe who has 11 wives yet was prosecuted and sentenced for raping numerous congregants. (Nehanda Radio, 9 February 2014)

The above cases are some of the treatments that women encounter when they go to church. It is shocking that the instructions on how to worship or dress are only directed to women and not to men. Is this real Christianity or religion as it is now marred with criticisms and church appearing as a pretext for sexual transactions? In answering this question, Pirzyg (1975) in Gripaldo (2008) argues that when one person suffers delusion it is termed insanity, but when many people suffer such delusions, he called it religion. The author further suggests that some women appear to leave their brains outside their worship as if holiness is associated with farcicality. Nzenza in *The Herald* (23/5/2012) cited in Mawere et al. (2012) calls religion a schizophrenic disorder because of the confusion associated with it. It is therefore crucial for religious leaders to clarify their doctrines in order to evade controversies

and attacks. In addition, women may need to seek clarity on some requirements that are set by religious leaders so that they are not lured into deceptive doctrines.

Tracing the link between religion and women subjugation, it is possible that the economic desperation for a better life as discussed above has pushed Zimbabwean women into a position of hopelessness even to a point where they swing from one 'prophet' to the other as though they are caught on a pendulum. Such commotion once rose in a church in Zimbabwe, with women leading the pack to see the Man of God when the issue of "miracle money" was preached by one prophet (The Herald, 27 December 2013). But still, should the role of religion, especially in the promotion of gender equality and women empowerment be judged according to the acts of 'controversial religious leaders' or on the basis of the religious manuals such as the Bible and the Quran?

Mawere et al. (2012) in commenting about the credibility of some prophets and the prevalence of false prophets say that the origin of some mushrooming churches remain unknown without any opportunity given to question their 'God', and that this is exposing women to vulnerability of many kinds. Nevertheless, even though the constitution of Zimbabwe awards citizens the rights to choose religion and preferences in worship (Constitution of the Republic of Zimbabwe, 2013), perhaps the government should intervene to an extent in order to quell some religious challenges, especially if they are exposing women to vulnerability. This may be one of the radical changes needed to ensure the attainment of women empowerment in Zimbabwe as suggested by the radical feminists (Essof, 2013; Masvaure and Mwandauke, 2008).

6.2.2.9 Depriving the girl child access to education

Findings on the educational status of women and the girl child in Harare indicated that they are still deprived of their right to education. The NGOs' participants explained that indeed there were appreciable efforts to position the girl child to overcome some challenges on the way to her educational access. These participants also highlighted that cultural practices were loosening with time and this was confirmed by responses from the general public, with only 29% showing that educational deprivation was among the challenges faced by women today in Harare.

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However, when comparison was made between the boy's access to education vis-à-vis the girl child; apparently, social, cultural, religious and the economic environment posed a huge deterrent to the education of the girl child. These findings are supported by the Human Development Report (2015) that revealed that even though some of the countries had reached the Net Enrolment Rate (NER) parity, yet in Zimbabwe, disparities were still recorded at higher educational levels. This may mean that on the way, cultural practices and religious beliefs were diverting young girls into brides and housemaids through the emphasis of domesticity, thereby cutting short their educational span in Harare. Moreover, these findings correspond with the findings by Baehr (2013) in her feminism work, who established that cultural practices such as domesticity restricted women's choices and opportunities. Again, Mapuranga (2010) in Zimbabwe condemned some cultural practices and religious beliefs as the author viewed them as death traps for women and girls' socio-economic development. This shows that parents in Zimbabwe are now appreciating the need for a girl child to be educated, even though they have not yet embraced that she needs to obtain not only basic education, but tertiary education as well.

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The researcher also argues that the government, through the way it treats the teachers in Zimbabwe may be playing a role in demoralizing children from desiring academic achievements and excellence. Currently, the teachers in Zimbabwe are earning between US$200 to US$400 (New Zimbabwe Newspaper, 29 December 2015). Although they have degrees and certificates yet, their living standards are lower than the majority of people in the informal sector. Students upon looking at their teachers, who are supposed to be their role models, may be de-motivated; supposing that going to school is a waste of time. Apart from that, the unemployment rate in Zimbabwe has reached unbelievable levels, and is pegged at approximately over 90% (Makina and Kanyeze, 2010). The job market is flooded with graduates who are willing but not able to work.

Fig 6.1 below shows graduates in Zimbabwe playing a hand-made soccer ball and others selling airtime recharge cards and snacks on the streets, demonstrating that the government has failed the country, such that being a graduate has no significance in Zimbabwe due to youth unemployment. Where the future is uncertain, empowerment efforts by NGOs to send girls to school may be fruitless as education appears to have lost its value in Zimbabwe. This finds support from the political-

economy theory that reinforces that the environment under which the NGOs are operating greatly influences the attainment of gender equality in Zimbabwe (Woza, 2009; Cohn, 2008). Smelser and Swedberg (2005) argue that a job market that is flooded with labour reduces the demand thereby discouraging the pursuit for educational qualifications.

For these economic, political and unemployment reason, an immature young girl's mind may push aside the idea of pursuing educational dreams and perhaps look for other options, maybe to go to South Africa or to get married instead. These findings concur with Mawere's (2012) who suggested that girls dropped out of school because of economic hardships and abject poverty and they get married for survival purposes. On the other hand, Mafa and Kang'ethe (2016) identify female students who engage in pseudo-prostitution for the payment of their university fees and other living expenses, exposing them to HIV, rape and the possibility of not having enough time to study. This displays a scenario which is contrary to the development of the nation because Runhare and Gordon (2004) in their work revealed that teachers who participated in their study indicated that girls possess the potential to at least match or even outperform their male counterparts but the environment of their upbringing thwarts their potential. This therefore shows that the gaps which NGOs are trying to fill are linked to each other, for example educational challenges and socio-economic challenges. This then calls for intervention methods that focus on the root cause of the disparities if women and the girl children are to be holistically empowered. These are some of the factors that may be reinforcing the education gap which exist between girls and boys.

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Fig 6.3 Unemployed graduates demonstrating (April 2016)

Apart from that, findings revealed the son-preference that is displayed in Zimbabwe was singled-out by NGOs' participants as being responsible for these gaps. The boy child is treated with respect as the 'father" of the house and therefore develops the need to be responsible in order to be the "head" of the family. On the other hand, the girl child is reminded that one day she will get married and be taken care of by a future male partner. In a way, this takes away responsibilities for provision from the hands of the girl child and she may not see the need to pursue any carrier since the husband will be coming to rescue and take care of her as pointed out by Runhare and Gordon (2004) and Kaplan (1991). It is against this belief that women need to be 'rescued" that all the branches of feminism are seeking to empower women and the girl child so that they can make their own choices on matters that concern their wellbeing and welfare (Smith, 2010; Lots, 2003; Breines, 2002; Springer, 2002). In Zimbabwe, Essof (2013) emphasises on the need for women to be empowered for their personal and economic development so that they can conquer poverty and all associated challenges.

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Witt (1997) agrees with these findings, claiming that son-preference displayed by some parents creates a prideful spirit in boys, while simultaneously creating timidity, dependency and a spirit of inferiority on the girl child. Beckett (2005) in addition argues that women and girls are a subjugated difference within a binary opposition and this could largely limit their abilities to develop academically. Parents are then urged to socialize their children in a manner that will ensure that both genders realize their potential and are given equal opportunities for their development as recommended by the teachers interviewed in Runhare and Gordon's (2004) study. Importantly, gender roles at home should ensure fairness and reflect equality. Families as primary agents of socialization are responsible for moulding behaviour in the psyche of their children, bearing in mind that it is a foundation upon which beliefs and attitudes about gender issues emanate from.

6.2.2.10 Women's economics exclusion

Closely related to the alienation of women in the political arena, study findings showed that women faced both economic and financial exclusion. The focus group discussants together with key informants and respondents (24% strongly agreed while 47% agreed) concurred that women were polarized in the informal economy

sector where the returns were unreliable, minimal and insufficient. In their discussions, these participants did not turn cover-up the fact that the economy of Zimbabwe was struggling. In fact, they did indicate that this was affecting everybody irrespective of colour or gender.

Findings on the exclusion of women on economic benefits were supported by other researchers in Zimbabwe, who explained that the other forms of subjugation such as educational deprivation (Runhare and Gordon, 2004; Witt, 1997) denied women of the opportunity to compete with men in the economy sector. Ultimately, women find themselves excluded from the financial benefits such as loans, savings and other viable financial transactions because they do not "qualify". To further concur with the findings, Zimbabwe's Civic Society's Shadow Report to the Cedaw Committe (2012) criticizes the policies that have been introduced to revive the economy of Zimbabweans, arguing that they were gender-blind to the gender-gaps that already exist between men and women. In line with this, the radical feminists proposes a total removal of policies and structures which are maintaining such inequalities in order to create structures that are developmental and inclusive of the needs of women and the girl child (Smith, 2010; Helman, 2012). In Zimbabwe however, there is need to backing-up policies with adequate resources in order to practically empower women. The National Gender Policy (NGP) of Zimbabwe for example is crafted well, except that with little resources, it is difficult to translate it into programmes and projects that can effectively eradicate gender disparities.

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In support, Osrim (2001) opines that political and economic rights of women are critical in ensuring gender equality in Zimbabwe. Evidently, failure to address such inequalities has led to a cycle of feminization of poverty, feminization of HIV and AIDS, social injustice and increased infringement of women rights (Saungweme, 2013; Malaba, 2006). With the biographical information of this current research having revealed that 28% of the respondents were unemployed and 33 % self-employed (in the informal sector), the majority of which were women, this is a reflection of women being excluded in economic benefits. Hence, feminization of unemployment can be a rising phenomenon in Zimbabwe.

This then calls for radical advocacy for women economic empowerment through sustainable and developmental projects. Women should also think outside the box of

domesticity and child bearing, if empowerment is to be a holistic process. Also, efforts should be made by the sitting government to stabilise the economy and the political dispensation in order to usher in hope for many women and girls in Zimbabwe.

6.2.2.11 Economic marginalization and women's vulnerability to HIV and AIDS

According to the findings extracted from the focus group discussions, women and girls in Zimbabwe are still more susceptible to HIV/AIDS in comparison to their male counterparts and the boy child. In discussing the causal factors driving the phenomenon, poverty, cultural practices and broken families were cited as foundations of such disparities. Furthermore, 75% of the mini-survey respondents indicated that women bore the heavier burden in terms of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. These findings find confirmation from Mafa and Kang'ethe (2016) who identified university students who engaged in selling sex for tuition fees while Mafa (2014) identified single mothers who engaged into prostitution to feed their children, thereby reinforcing the inextricable relationship between poverty and HIV/AIDS.

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The findings on the vulnerability of women to HIV is also in congruence with the Zimbabwe's Ministry of Health (2014) which revealed that HIV/AIDS prevalence between women and men aged between 15 and 24 years was 11% and 4.2% respectively, showing how huge the gap is. To further provide empirical validation, Malaba (2006) revealed that in Zimbabwe, 21.1 % of women are infected by HIV compared to the 14.5 % of their male counterparts. Clearly, this skewedness of the statistics is an indication that HIV is a gendered phenomenon. These differences although to a lesser extent are attributable to biological differences and are mainly precipitated by cultural, economic and social factors in Zimbabwe.

The socialist feminists strongly assert that as long as women are still economically bound, gender disparities perhaps such as feminization of HIV will never be eradicated (Kang'ethe and Chikono, 2014). This is because women will always be forced by life's circumstances to compromise their health and reproductive rights in order to secure basic needs such as food and accommodation. This was supported by the findings by Mafa (2014) of single mothers who opted to sell sex as a survival mechanism, and in the process, all the sex workers interviewed had contracted the

HIV virus. Therefore, there is need for personal and social empowerment of women and the girl child as proposed by social feminists, Tong (2009) and Lober (2001).

For Zimbabwe, a country which emphasizes on the sacredness of marital vows (Mapuranga, 2010), women may suffer in silence, being infected in order to enjoy the social status that comes with being "married" and needing economic support for survival. Although not applicable to all unions, in Africa it may appear then as if marriage is equated to signing away ones' body for a plate of food and HIV. This is the dilemma that Nyaradzo Mashayamombe, in her song is talking about: whether to stay with an unfaithful husband because of marital vows or to risk being labeled a way-ward woman because one has divorced her husband in fear of being infected with HIV.

Apart from that, gender-based violence and rape were cited in the groups as factors hindering the eradication of HIV and AIDS among women and girls. These findings are globally applicable as emphasized by Human Development Report (2015; 2013).

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The susceptibility of women to HIV due to economic hardships is generalized in South Africa also. The eNCA documentary program revealed a trend in Johannesburg called '#Blessed'. Young women who are economically challenged get into sexual relationships with wealthy men (and sometimes married) who will be having five to six women at a time. The arrangement is more of a 'sugar' daddy norm except that the #Blessed trend has a website for 'recruitment'. In light of this, the transactions involve huge amounts of money up to RSA 100 000 per 'blesee'. The men with the deep pockets are called 'blessers' while the girls are the 'blesses'. (eNCA, 11 May 2016). This then goes to show how the health of these girls is compromised because of financial challenges. The susceptibility of women to HIV, therefore, seems to be a by-product of other social mishaps thereby necessitating their eradication if gender equality and women empowerment is to be a reality in Zimbabwe. This finds support from feminists who seek to economically empower women in order to liberate them from abuse (Tong, 2009) and promiscuous behaviour (Mafa and Kang'ethe, 2016; Mafa, 2014).

6.2.2.12 Resistance against women promotion in the political arena

Regarding politics in Zimbabwe, it was clear from the focus group discussions, the key informants and even the respondents that women were still misrepresented, as far as decision-making positions were concerned. The responses from the Harare residents also indicated that 64% of them cited political alienation as one of the exclusionary practices women are exposed to. These findings find support from the Zimbabwe MDG Progress Report (2012) which revealed that women constitute only 14% in the lower house and 24% in the upper house of the parliament, far below the SADC peg. Commenting on the 50-50 Gender Development set by SADC, NGOs' representatives indicated that achieving that needed time, even though they were pushing and reminding the government of this obligation. To succinctly show the misrepresentation, the Human Development Report (2015) showed a GII of 0.175 for the political indicator in Zimbabwe, which is far from parity.

In generalizing these findings, The Human Development Report (2015) revealed that there is a 77% political gap in the world, which needs filling to attain global political parity. This means that more women are needed to occupy political positions in order to have equal representation with men. This is closely linked to Loiseau and Nowacka (2015), who reveal that the number of women representation globally has changed to 22 % in 2015 from 11% in 1995. World's Women (2010) in stocktaking the inclusivity of women in politics agrees with the findings above lamenting that globally, only 17% of the members of parliament were women. The gap widened with top positions as the report further established that only 7 of the 150 heads of states were women while 11 of the 192 heads of government were women. This then highlighted that globally, women indeed were severely under-represented in political affairs. Without women standing in the gap for the rights, needs and wishes of women in parliament, attempts to empower women may appear adamant and arduous as the few women would succumb to the patriarchal power-dynamics of men. Political recognition is very crucial as it influences governance and economic issues as reinforced by the political-economy theory. This explains why it was the leading reason for the first wave of feminism as it influences the development of women and their rights as citizens (Smith, 2010).

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The research hence reflected that the political status of women in Zimbabwe is merely a mirror of the status of women in their families and respective societies. Charity begins at home, and as long as women are not accorded decision-making powers over matters that concern them in their homes, the hope of them occupying 50 % of the parliamentary seats may be a pipe dream. Suspiciously, the utility of political violence to keep women from expressing their political freedom (Essof, 2013; Makamure, 2012) may be likened to the domestic violence experienced by a woman especially when they try to question issues pertaining to their oppression, suppression or decision-making in matters of running their families (Mashiri, 2013; ILO, 2011). Legal frameworks such as the 50/50 SADC protocol and the constitution should therefore be duly implemented in order for parity and political empowerment to be realised in Zimbabwe. This may require the SADC committee to do a follow-up on the governments to check if they have honoured the commitment because some governments may be reluctant to take corrective actions that may meet such protocols.

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6.2.2.13 Land issues and women poverty

Findings from the research showed that women in Zimbabwe experienced dire land deprivation as well as susceptibility to poverty. The data collected evidenced that the 'Land Grab' policy that was spear-headed by the ruling party indeed had benefitted some people, yet the majority of women had been side-lined and alienated from the benefits intended. These findings fall in line with Gore (1993) who identified 'unruly practices' that are used by those in power to influence the distribution of land and the means of production. Also the NewsDay (26 May, 2016) revealed that the local government Minister Saviour Kasukuwere recently gave 150 residential stands to Mubuso Chinguno, a ZANU PF Manicaland leader for personal use. Indeed land in Zimbabwe is a tool for necessitating political leverage. In agreement, the UN (2010) established that gender is associated with political and economic dynamics as it is central to the distribution of resources and labour. This speaks of the possibility of one group of people being in a position to benefit more by virtue of their gender. Since women are already alienated from the politics of the country, they are also excluded from the benefits, of which land is among them.

Emphasizing on the importance of land for poverty alleviation and economic revival, Bhatasara (2011: 316) argues that "The failure of the government to seriously consider women's land questions of ownership and control does not only reflect the indifference of hegemonic masculinity to the gender-land interference, but a crisis in development." The statement above explains that when the government fails to give women opportunities and resources necessary for their development, such gender-bias actions are anti-developmental to the whole nation. This may be explained by the fact challenges such as poverty and HIV surrounding women are not just social, but developmental challenges. Giving further reinforcement on the exclusionary practices, Utete's Land Reform Report of 2003 in Bhatasara (2011) reflects that men in Zimbabwe own 82% and women 18% of the land in the A1 model. Still, men own 88% and women 12% of the land in the A2 model. Clearly visible is a trend where women are treated as second-class citizens, where they are expected to scramble for the crumbs that fall from men's tables. Without a doubt, this is one of the scenarios that explains and upholds the feminization of poverty in the country (Mawere, 2012; Malaba, 2006).

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Obviously, the reason why the lives of Zimbabweans hinge on access to land is the fact that the country is an Agricultural one and her economy heavily relies on it. This then suggests that the land reform programme did not have people's interests at heart, but was hurriedly executed towards elections possibly as a campaign strategy, thereby explaining the gender-gaps that remained barely closed. Bhatasara (2011) reinforces that having land is not an automatic ammunition to economic freedom and poverty eradication. Nevertheless, inclusivity in land allocation is a means to the end if, ever the state of glaring gender disparities is to be addressed. Maybe the *'Fourth Shemurenga'* where women will be claiming for the equitable sharing of land with men is necessary to attain social justice and social inclusion as emphasized by the National Gender Policy.

6.2.3 How NGOs are fighting gender disparities in Harare

With gender disparities having been discussed, the researcher turns to discuss the intervention methodologies being implemented to tackle such inequalities in Harare.

6.2.3.1 The utility of "roadshows" to relay gender information

While discussing the methods of interventions that are adopted by NGOs to fight for the equality and equity of women in Zimbabwe, the researcher found out that roadshows were among them. Some of the NGOs that utilized this methodology indicated that there was a need to "spice" things up in order to keep people interested in gender issues. Information revealed on road shows explained that there were informative musical items, dramatization, question and answer sessions on gender issues as well as the giving away of branded t-shirts and hats with messages of equality and women empowerment.

Participants enlightened the researcher that they would use this opportunity to educate the societies on the rights and the consequences of infringing on other people's rights. Apart from that, road shows where the local languages would be used can be very strategic as they will accommodate illiterate people who cannot read or understand English pamphlets. This is in line with the National Gender Policy, which reveals that one of the strategies for employing the policy was to translate it into indigenous languages for easy implementation (Mulenga et al., n.d). The use of celebrities such as the Zimbabwean comedian Gringo may also add weight to the message and increase the attendance.

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The use of celebrities finds corroboration from Bazaar website where the use of celebrities to take advantage of their fame to promote gender equality and women empowerment was also adopted. In September 2014, HeforShe Campaign was launched in America by celebrities such as Beyonce, Jennifer Lawrence, Jessica Chastain and others, and gender dynamics were discussed. Possibly, the brain behind this strategy is that if celebrities can influence people with their music or acting, they can charismatically influence the attitudes and beliefs of people in relation to gender issues, a thought supported by Brayman (1992).

As far as 'marketing' gender issues is concerned, Lazarevic and Petrovic-Lazarevic (2007) suggest that the best marketing strategy or tool is the one that takes information or services where it is needed, packaged in a way that promotes loyalty. With the same reasoning therefore, if people are more responsive to entertainment, NGOs should use methods that will make people to be interested in the gender

equality phenomenon, in order to increase participation and impact. This finding finds support from Helman (2012: 21) who speaks of 'consciousness-raising groups' as a way of information dissemination.

However, Takala (1999) argues that in the event where for some reason these celebrities find themselves in matters that contradict what they say (for example if Gringo was to beat his wife after addressing a road show against gender-based violence), some men may take it as an excuse to justify their violence against women saying, 'even Gringo who talked about it beats his wife too'. Nevertheless, any methodology should be utilized by women NGOs in Zimbabwe, as long as it catalyses and accelerates the attainment of gender equality and women empowerment.

6.2.3.2 Using the art of film-making and music to promote gender issues

Closely related to roadshows was the use of films and music in the fight against gender inequality in Zimbabwe. The findings drawn from NGOs' participants with the verification of key informants revealed that these mediums were used to relay information in Harare. Elaborative information on this mode of intervention unveiled that films were created out of the real life experiences of survivors. Due to the sensitivity of issues such as politically-motivated violence, rape cases and physical abuse, plays would be produced using professional actors and not the actual victims and then screened in communities. The films were also circulated on social media such as Youtube, Facebook, Whatsapp and Twitter. The identity, security and vulnerability of survivors are therefore preserved through the creation of pseudonyms instead of the real names of victims. In many professional fields such as psychology, medicine and social work practice, there are issues of confidentiality that are held with utmost importance because they encourage clients to speak out without feeling vulnerable or repeatedly victimized (Zastrow, 2010).

Story-telling may have the ability to present the gender phenomenon as a complete package, for example filming the forms of GBV and then also showing the aftermaths. People may relate better to that than they would from mere words by a gender advocate telling people not to abuse women – the issue of impact is critical. In explaining the process of film-making, Young et al. (2008) support that films engage people on matters which happen on a daily basis. This then justifies and

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reinforces the authenticity of filmmaking and music in advocating, teaching and championing equality.

Despite the obvious fact that film-making and music production are expensive ventures as indicated by Young et al. (2008), the process may be lengthy and time consuming. However, as long as the methodology delivers the desired result of women empowerment, the researcher is convinced that it will be worth the wait and the money even though the current economy of Zimbabwe may not support projects that need huge sums of money (Alao, 2012; Coltart, 2008). Also, films may have their own challenges because there is a possibility of some survivors experiencing post stress traumatic disorder (PSTD) as revealed by psychologists (Namnyak et al., 2007), upon seeing similar circumstances they were subjected to in life. This therefore shows that people are diverse, as such diversified methodologies should be utilized to accommodate the needs of people. The wider the audience, the more likely it is for people to benefit from services by NGOs.

6.2.3.3 The use of print, waves and electronic media

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The findings of the research unearthed that the social media and the radio were other platforms that were used in promoting women empowerment and gender equality by women NGOs in Harare. On this, 62% of the respondents applauded the use of the media platform for advancing women empowerment and gender equality in Zimbabwe. The Mai Chisamba Show (a TalkShow in Zimbabwe where all matters about life are discussed on Zimbabwe Televison, ZTV), GoodMorning Zimbabwe NEWS, SABC, Star FM Radio Station and StraightTalkAfrica (a TV show that discusses political, economic and any other important issue concerning Africa) are some of the channels where NGOs' participants have used to promote gender issues. To add on that, the Newspapers such as DailySun, Herald and Chronicles were cited as avenues of destroying gender inequalities in Zimbabwe.

These findings closely resemble those of Loiseau and Nowacka (2015) who claim that the media is strategically built for advocacy and education. The authors believe that gender sensitization, hash tagging (#) campaigns and information dissemination are possible if the media system is programmed with the right information. For example, the #ThisFlag and #Shutdown campaigns in Zimbabwe were circulated through the informal channels of Whatsapp, Facebook and YouTube (DailyNews, 12

July 2016). This is supported by McPherson (2014) and ICRW (2010) who revealed that globally, more women than men are active on the social platforms such as Facebook and Youtube, thereby conveniently giving them direct access to information on gender issues. Nonetheless, Loiseau and Nowacka (2015) warn activists to be cautious of what they called activism fatigue where there will be information overload but on a smaller audience. The authors explain that this may be overwhelming, hindering the spread of the campaign to reach a greater audience.

Considering that some of these women organizations only have offices in the CBD of Harare and not in other towns or places as revealed from the findings, the researcher believes that the utility of national platforms as mentioned above is strategic in spreading the word for women empowerment around the country. The researcher also emphasises that men need to access this information in order to challenge attitudinal reactions and misconceptions that may be breeding the prevalence of gender disparities. The efforts of men organizations can therefore be augmented by women organizations utilizing the print and electronic media.

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6.2.3.4 Mainstreaming gender messages through grassroots outreaches

Despite the revelation that the majority of NGOs have their offices in the urban areas of Harare, the findings revealed that NGOs employ grass root outreaches in order to extend their assistance for inclusivity and social justice. In the discussions, it came to the fore that instead of waiting for the citizens of Harare to come to the offices to inquire on crucial information, the NGOs were mainstreaming grass root outreaches for individual and social activism because feminism believes in challenging social stereotypical standards that oppress black women (Collins, 2000). These outreaches according to the information from the participants are meant to penetrate the remote areas where there is cultural resistance, dire poverty and religious practices that have detrimental effects on the lives of women and the girl child in honour of the National Gender Policy's principle of inclusivity (Mutanana and Bukaliya, 2015).

This form of intervention is related to the findings of Shivji (2007) who refers to NGOs as foot soldiers because they seek to fight their battles from the root source. In support of this, Lewis (2001) celebrates NGOs for their commitment and flexibility in engaging communities for women empowerment and equality. Probably, this is with the understanding that in order to intervene successfully, the principle of

participation is important and that solutions should not be prescribed on people. Instead, NGOs should be facilitators of projects, assuming the roles of advocacy and that of a broker, in line with the principles of community development and the roles of social work practice (Zastrow, 2010; Trevithick, 2005).

Without the citizen's participation and engagement, sustainability and commitment cannot be guaranteed. It is from these grass root outreaches that NGOs in the gender line are able to access the practicality and applicability of gender policies in order to make amendments where gaps are evident. Given that NGOs have recently been accused of losing their edge by Lewis & Opaku-Mensah (2006) and Nelson (2007), community engagement through outreaches may be essential for Zimbabweans to put their hope in NGOs once again. The equality agenda is therefore facilitated by wider participation as was encouraged by the first women movement groups in Zimbabwe (Van eerdewijk and Mugadza (2015).

6.2.3.5 Play therapy in psycho-social empowerment

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Borrowed from the psychology field, the findings also indicated that NGOs employed play therapy as one of their intervention strategies in order to bring hope to the young survivors. According to Homeyer and Morrison (2008), play therapy entails a special kind of therapeutic play (song or dance) which is intended to heal the mental health and soul of the survivors. The findings from an organization that utilizes play therapy revealed that these plays are usually administered to survivors who will be staying at the shelters designed for their recuperation. These findings are supported by the Regional News (10 January 2012) which revealed that the Caricom TV together with the UN secretary general successfully engaged in play-therapy empowerment activities while addressing issues of gender-based violence in the Caribbean community.

Perhaps, play therapy can bolster other interventions such as counseling which may be difficulty to the younger victims. In this researcher's contention, offering verbal counselling, for example to a 6 year old may be frustrating if the child finds it difficult to open up, or feels uncomfortable to do so. Counseling sessions are usually more productive when there is a two-way communication relationship. In such cases, group and play therapy may be the best intervention as the mind of the survivor is liberated through a play (Homeyer and Morrison, 2008). A song such as *'du du*

Muduri' as it is, may be liberating on its own. For a girl who might have been abused and feeling like she is in prison, having to run around freely in a circle may be a symbolic dance of realizing that she is now free, the abuse has ended or has been crushed in the grinding mill. The research now discusses the perceptions of the participants in relation to the effectiveness of the interventions implemented.

6.2.4 Views on the effectiveness of NGOs interventions for gender equality

Despite NGOs' representatives overly acknowledging facing some challenges, when the general respondents were asked if gender equality and women empowerment was possible through NGOs' interventions, 27% agreed while 20% disagreed. Nonetheless, when the researcher asked if the current efforts by these gender NGOs were enough to eradicate gender disparities in Harare and Zimbabwe, 10 % believed the efforts were enough while 50% posited that the efforts were insufficient for the needed transformational development. This may show that some citizens do not appreciate the impact of NGOs in gender because of the overwhelming challenges that they are facing while fighting for women empowerment. These challenges may have caused the relevance of women NGOs to be questioned by some people.

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The findings on the majority of Harare citizens who questioned the sufficiency of NGOs' interventions are similar to that of the president of Zimbabwe. According to the quote at the beginning of the chapter, he was questioning the relevance of NGOs in any developmental work. However, this may have been a politically motivated comment as research has revealed a conflict between the government and women NGOs (Essof, 2013; Makamure, 2012; Masvaure and Wamwanduka, 2008). In addition, these findings are similar to those of Davies (n.d) who when commenting on the impact of NGOs including those in gender, questions if they knew what ought to be done and how to do it. In support, Riddell et al. (1997) also refutes the ability of NGOs to bring any desired changes, arguing that they are often impulsive in their operations, biting more than they can chew, instead of being tentative and careful. As a result, they fail to deliver and to translate their visions into noticeable changes such as a nation with empowered women.

However, Howard and King (1985: 25) bring in a different angle to the possible cause of NGOs' ineffectiveness explaining that "state dominated development has failed, but so will stateless development. Development without an effective state is

Impossible". This may suggest that as long as the antagonistic relationship between women NGOs and the government exists, gender equality and women empowerment remains a paper plan. On the other hand, as far as the attainment of gender equality by NGOs' interventions is concerned, Zungura (2012) and Julia (1999) claim that NGOs have been and will always be important agents in the development of Zimbabwe. The comment above suggests that without these NGOs, the welfare of women and girl children will greatly be compromised as the government on its own is overwhelmed by other issues to adequately finance women empowerment developments. It is suggested then that before sacrificing NGOs on the altar of incompetency, it might be profound to analyse the environment under which they operate in order to fairly judge their engagements and efforts. This point is emphasized by the political-economy theory that put great emphasis on the political environment of a nation in determining the living standards of the citizens.

6.2.5.1 Perceptions on the effectiveness of interventions by NGOs in women's reproductive rights

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NGOs in women's health and reproductive rights with the support of the key informants, highlighted on their achievements and the perceived effectiveness of their interventions. They reported having assisted in the formulation of the DVA and in the implementation of the policy. Such an achievement is perceived to have increased the security of women in their homes because the perpetrators will be threatened by the law. Where there is no law to protect women, oppression is believed to be more prone, even though laws are not a guarantee against women suffrage. Apart from that, they pointed out that they are providing more treatment (ART) for HIV positive pregnant women. The impact of their interventions together with other stakeholders is supported by the UNAIDS Report (2005) in Zungura (2012) which revealed a decline of HIV prevalence of 14% between 2000 and 2005. However, the UNAIDS Gap Report (2014) rejects any positive progress reinforcing that HIV/AIDS is still a national disaster in Zimbabwe with 1.4 million people, which is approximately 4% of the global population estimated to be living with HIV.

Perhaps the contradiction between the two reports is explained by the economic challenges in Zimbabwe between 2008 and 2015, given the established relationship between poverty and HIV by Mafa (2014); Kang'ethe and Munzara (2014) and

Malaba (2006). As the political-economy theory has established, the economy of a state largely affects other micro interventions in the country such as health. In line with the above findings, NGOs have managed to set up a number of workshops and educational activities that are believed to have increased the promotion of contraceptives especially the use of the female condom. Nonetheless, Mapuranga (2010) rejects any positive results in the use of female condoms contending that due to cultural and traditional beliefs, a woman who is vocal in sexual matters may be associated with promiscuous behaviour. Hence, patriarchal thinking holds that sexual decisions between partners have to be steered by men. Further, Kabeer (2005) identified cultural ideologies where masculinity is associated with power over women even if it means using force to overlook their preferences, in this case the use of female condoms. This may mean that NGO's statistics may be based on condom distribution and not necessarily on female condom use.

Saungweme (2013) and Mapuranga (2010), while refuting the increase of the female condom use especially amongst married couples revealed that men in Zimbabwe, maybe because of the payment of lobola, insist on unprotected sex with their wives, regardless of the woman's inclinations, making them vulnerable to HIV infection. The findings of the study carried out by Chireshe and Chireshe (2010) in support, revealed that 49% of participants agreed that the payment of lobola made it seem as if women were the property of men. This calls for a redefinition of the purpose of the payment of lobola if the exploitation of a woman is to be totally annihilated. In generalizing the susceptibility of women's health, Baehr (2013) while commenting on cultural feminism states that traditional heterosexual marriages are unfair to women.

Such a state of affairs necessitates continual and widened partnership between women organizations and men organization such as MEZA (Men of Zimbabwe Arise) and Padare (organizations that challenge men's attitudes and toxic cultural beliefs that subjugate women). It is not enough to tell women of their sexual and reproductive rights if the perpetrators are not included as well. If women empowerment and gender equality is to be accelerated in Zimbabwe, there is a greater need to have men actively involved. This is because many men have been socialized to believe that women by nature are inferior to them as reported by Chauraya (2012) and Ngara (2002). Men organizations would then assist to challenge patriarchal and traditional attitudes that infringe on the rights of women.is

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therefore not strange if they resist the issue of equality because it is an eccentric thing to them and may perceive it as a direct threat to their manhood, a thought shared by Owuyemi (2002). Information that desensitizes gender issues is important to break such resistance, which is caused by ignorance.

6.2.5.2 Perceptions on the effectiveness of interventions by NGOs in economic empowerment

Findings on the achievements made by women NGOs in eradicating poverty, according to the sentiments from NGOs' representatives and key informants included imparting vocational skills on women so that they can be self-sufficient. These participants explained that they understand that they should not give women fish but teach them how to fish in order to give them the fulfilment and satisfaction that comes from economic independence. Largely, if the NGOs would just provide aid to impoverished women, they would mentally reinforce the economic dependency syndrome, which has been cited by some feminists as the genesis of women's abuse (Tong, 2009; Springer, 2002).

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In contrast though, the responses from the population in Harare did not attest to the effectiveness of these interventions claiming that the impact of NGOs was minimal. The achievements of poverty alleviation also diverts from the findings by Mafa (2014) who found out that the economy of Zimbabwe was thwarting any poverty alleviation projects by matrifocal families or NGOs. The United Nations (2014) further establishes that poverty in Zimbabwe is severe especially among female-headed households and reinforced by the unconducive political-economy environment. It is possible that the overwhelming number of people in need of assistance, due to economic factors and the closure of industries (UNDP, 2013) is diluting these efforts bringing them almost to insignificance and ineffectiveness. The challenge of NGOs' invisibility has also been documented in many studies such as that of Kajiita (2015) in South Africa and that of Kang'ethe (2010) in Botswana. In both of these scenarios, NGOs have been reporting of doing wonders but when one goes to the ground, their coverage is minimal and the impact of their interventions yields little returns.

The UNDP (2013) further clarifies that as long as women are still politically, socially and educationally subjugated, feminization of poverty in Zimbabwe will remain a glaring prevalence, with interventions by NGOs not realising the desired change

because poverty displays a manifold topology. More so, with the economy of Zimbabwe flooded with the informal sector, it may not be surprising if the majority of these entrepreneurial set-ups are butted out of business due to stiff competition and a harsh political economy. For example, the government of Zimbabwe recently introduced a policy that bans Zimbabwean citizens from bringing in goods and groceries from neighbouring countries such as South Africa and Botswana, arguing that people should get permits (DailyNews, 12 July 2016). Many families especially female-headed, were surviving on buying and selling as revealed by the study by Mafa (2014) and Musekiwa (2013). Therefore, such a policy is contrary to the economic empowerment of women in Zimbabwe. Perhaps some of the policies put in place by the government such as the Zimbabwe Economic Development Strategy (ZEDS), National Economic Development Priority Programme (NERDPP) and Zimbabwe Agenda for Socio-Economic Transformation (ZIMASSET) should be gender-inclusive and accompanied by financial resources that can strengthen the financial base of women. That way, NGOs' interventions may be significantly effective.

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To add on that, the findings alluded to the realization that NGOs have played a vital role in the formulation of the Tourism policy, which puts a demand for 30% of tourism activities to be accorded exclusively to women. Tourism is a major source of foreign currency in Zimbabwe and if inclusivity as outlined in the National Gender Policy (Mutanana and Bukaliya, 2015) and ILO (2011) is to be observed, women need to equally enjoy these opportunities. However, it should be remembered that women may need training and qualifications that would give them a competitive edge against their male counterparts in this trade, if they are going to be taken seriously. Therefore, the need for educational empowerment prior to penetrating these male-dominated sectors is critical.

6.2.5.3 Perceptions on the effectiveness of interventions by gender NGOs in advocacy

The research findings showed that women organizations in advocacy and the dissemination of information were numerically more. Reported highlights included more workshops, more campaigns, increased number of people receiving counseling and legal aid and amendments in the policies and women's rights. One

of the recent cases where these NGOs joined forces and intervened for legal action early this year (2016) was the child marriage issue and the episode of the woman who was stripped naked in a public place. The fact that the lawyer for the defendants on the child marriage case was advocate Biti – a man and also a public figure (Biti is the former Minister of Finance affiliated with the MDC-T political party), this researcher believes might actually dilute the patriarchal beliefs of some men who think gender issues are about women. His involvement for the outlawing of child marriage in Zimbabwe is an open cry for men to stand for women and not against them in their development and the security of their rights.

Findings further emphasized on policies and legal instruments. The argument of NGOs on the need for legal instruments stems from the fact that once laws are put in place, women will have a form of reference to claim their liberty. Maybe this is the explanation as to why the liberal branch of feminism appears to dominate the others– its emphasis on the legal frameworks, as noted by Lober (2001) and Tong (2009). However, the researcher is not by any means undermining the importance of other branches for the attainment of gender equality because Lots (2003) argued that not one faction of feminism is able to completely eradicate the prevalence of gender inequality even in Zimbabwe. This is attributed to the realization that inequalities exists in all facets of life including the political and economic arena (UN, 2010). This is a direct emphasis on legal, social and individual empowerment for holistic empowerment of women and the girl child in Zimbabwe. Nevertheless, the researcher strongly believes that having the legal instruments such as the constitution is a warning even to the perpetrators to reconsider their behaviour and attitudes towards women, as resisting the law could get them prosecuted (just as the two men who stripped naked the woman were prosecuted by the state).

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Regarding the effectiveness of the interventions, of interest to mention is the Small to Medium Enterprise (SME) Policy that the gender advocates pushed the government to put in place in order to reserve 30% of loans for women. The participants mentioned the Pension Policy that ensures access of widows to their husbands' pensions. These are noble achievements that changed the face and status of women not just in Harare, but in Zimbabwe because they are national policies. That positive impact which is as a result of the policies shows effectiveness of their interventions. Increased participation in women politics is something worth noting as

it significantly shows the impact of NGOs' interventions, although at a small scale. An NGO representing women legally also indicated an increase in the number of people receiving legal representation and legal information, and the launching of the 'She Can' project that seeks to stop violence against women in public places. When the number of people receiving aid increases, it is perceived that those people would have been empowered in one way or the other.

6.2.5.4 Perceptions on the effectiveness of interventions by NGOs in Education

The findings on the effectiveness of women NGOs in education revealed an increase in the enrolment of women in tertiary education. Apart from that, what came to the fore was that the 'Go Back To School' campaign was successfully launched and is receiving positive feedback. On the list of these achievements, was granting the girls who fall pregnant permission to go back to school after delivery.

The impact of these outcomes is supported by UNICEF (2015) which praised the country for having a higher adult literacy of women pegged at 91.2%. In corroboration, UN Zimbabwe (2012) indicated an increase of women enrolment in Zimbabwe's university, accrediting it to the net enrolment ratio (NER) at primary level of 97.9% for girls and 97.5% boys. The NER is the official enrolment of a particular age group for a particular educational level expressed (as a percentage) against the corresponding population. The findings therefore show that the efforts being made by NGOs have managed to significantly close the education enrolment ratio, with more girls than boys enrolling for basic education. This finding finds global verification from the Human Development Report (2013) which reveals a general narrowing of the gender gap on the education indicator. Education is a basic right in Zimbabwe according to the constitution and as such, everyone ought to be given an opportunity to go to school irrespective of gender.

Responses from the general population also consented that the educational aspect in Zimbabwe was improving. However, the economy of Zimbabwe appeared to be negatively affecting the education system of Zimbabwe. These findings are similar to Mawere (2012) who identified that economic hardship accounted for 80% of the girl children who drop out of school. As an indication of the country facing a state of economic malaise, the governor of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, John Mangudya recently announced the return of bond notes in Zimbabwe (ZBC NEWS, 12 May

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2016), due to acute cash shortages. Currently most parents are struggling to pay for school fees for their children. In concurrence, Makina and Kanyeze (2010) commented that the economic situation of Zimbabwe is pushing many youths, to drop out of school and seek employment in neighbouring countries especially in South Africa where over two million Zimbabweans are believed to be living. However, with many Zimbabweans still leaning on patriarchy and therefore embracing the norm of preferring the boy child, when it comes to prioritizing who deserve to go to school in an environment of dwindling resources, the current economic hardships further disadvantages the girl child.

An overall appraisal

While discussing on the effectiveness of interventions by women NGOs in promoting women empowerment and gender equality, it was evident that much of the work covered was centred around gender advocacy and policy formulation with the government stakeholders. Even though legal empowerment is of great importance, very little was raised on the projects that promote sustainable development. This is contrary to the practice of Social Work where emphasis is put on looking at individuals, groups or communities holistically (Zastraw, 2010). It also remains true that some of the remarkable achievements are untraceable and sometimes difficult to evidence. Not because they did not impact the lives of people, but simply because of the immeasurability of the interventions. This remains one of the glaring gaps that the Harare NGOs displayed. This researcher believes that NGOs can only make tangible and meaningful contribution if together with advocacy, NGOs come up with economically empowering interventions that are sustainable and developmental, because it seems as if all social ills are emanating from the economic challenges by both women and NGOs. In agreement, Ulleberg (2010) strongly believes that paucity of finances to support development projects negatively affects the impact and role of NGOs.

Maybe, this is the reason why only a fraction of the responses from the citizens indicated that they had benefited or knew anyone who had benefitted from the gender NGOs' interventions. For this reason, it may not be surprising that advocacy workshops may be attended by only a handful of citizens while meetings involving launch of projects may witness an overflow in attendance. Apart from that, the

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researcher realized that the achievements were more like descriptions that lacked accuracy in numbers and in monetary value as well. Such a lack of specific information, whether it was held intentionally or unintentionally poses a great challenge to ensure a fair appraisal and to really determine the extent to which these interventions were effective in attaining gender equality in Zimbabwe. In relation to this, Mitchell (2010) and Ulleberg (2010) argued that effectiveness should involve budgets compared against actual expenditure as a way of finding out how the interventions utilized available resources.

Mitchell (2010) again posits that to effectively make a proper appraisal, there is need to tally goals met against the goals set. Realistically then, the first National Gender Policy (NGP) of Zimbabwe which stretched from 2004 to 2012 failed to deliver in terms of attaining gender parity in Zimbabwe, despite the gender NGOs and the government working on women empowerment strategies. Also, the 10 year period for the MDGs showed that NGOs with government partnership in Zimbabwe was unable to adequately fill the gender-gaps as revealed by the Human Development Report (2015). The currently operational NGP will soon expire in 2017 and with the current state of affairs; there is no hope of gender equality and women empowerment having been reached by then. The goal of the policy is eradicating all forms of disparities and ensuring inclusivity mainly in economics and politics (Mutanana and Bukaliya, 2015). The disparities prevalent as discussed earlier in this chapter give evidence of the gaps that are still prevalent. This finds support from the political-economy theory (Scott, 2006; Lewis and Opaku-Mensah, 2006), which makes the researcher understand that the interventions by NGOs are greatly affected by the interplay of the political and economic development of the country, making it practically difficult for NGO's efforts to yield the desired goal.

What is evident though, is women NGOs in Zimbabwe evolving from the first generation, the second up to now where women NGOs have taken an autonomous identity as Women Coalition of Zimbabwe (NANGO, 2006), but failing to close gender gaps completely (Human Development Report, 2015; 2013). This resembles the feminism trend, which also travelled through the first, second and third wave, but likewise failing to bring equality in the Western world (Human Development Report, 2015). This does not in any way discredit NGOs as champions of gender parity in Zimbabwe nor is the researcher ruling out the possibility of gender equality through

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NGOs interventions. The researcher has hope that although women organizations have been operational since the 1980s (Moyo, 1995), more time and an enabling environment may assist them to effectively scrap-off gender inequalities in Harare. Loewe and Rippin (2015) object that perhaps the reason why gender disparities remain prevalent is that the SDG 5 out of all the 17 SDGs is not time-bound. In fact, the authors argue that the mere fact that the goal has no time limit "...is a political statement in itself, the impact of which should not be underestimated' (Loewe and Rippin, 2015: 31). The absence of the timeframe for the attainment of gender equality may therefore translate to mean that either the policy crafters do not perceive the urgency of the need for women empowerment or that since it is a cross-cutting goal, its attainment depends on other goals.

Therefore, despite all the policies, all the campaigns by NGOs, this realization creates uneasiness as to why then these socio-economic atrocities are still so prevalent and why gender gaps in Zimbabwe still remain unclosed. Is it that Ngara (2002) was right in establishing emphatically that it is practically impossible to 'vacuum-clean" the African psyche that has been socialized to accept men as superior to women? In that case, this may probably explain why the efforts by NGOs advocates and governments have not yet achieved gender parity.

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Nonetheless, Malaba (2006) strongly posits that inequalities are not natural, but are socially and cultural constructed, insinuating that the same people responsible for constructing inequalities can deconstruct them. Or probably NGOs, once regarded as "magic buttes" to social menace by Lewis and Opaku (2006) have simply lost their punch. If that contention is true, it may be critical to try and find out the factors that are thwarting efforts being made by NGOs in attempting to realize gender parity and women empowerment in Zimbabwe.

It remains to be seen as the research unfolds where the challenge lies. If it is the NGOs or the environment under which it operates, or maybe they are just unable to provide evidence and communicate their achievements. NGOs possibly need to find a way to communicate their achievements and challenges to the public if they are to win back the trust of the general population who to an extent have bracketed NGOs' incompetence with that of the government of the day. This will assist them in self-evaluation, where they can determine how far they are from reaching internal,

national and international benchmarks such as the SDGs and post 2015 MDGs. Otherwise, the issue of accountability to the general public, the government and concerned stakeholders as emphasized by Cavill and Sohail (2007) is compromised. Apart from that, they should clearly evidence their expenditure in black and white so that their donors may perceive them to be effective in the eradication of gender disparities. Challenges faced by gender NGOs in Harare are then discussed below.

6.2.6 Challenges compromising the interventions made by NGOs in Harare

The interventions by gender NGOs have been found lacking in terms of adequately addressing gender inequalities in Zimbabwe, even though some of their efforts have been duly noted. The researcher moves on to identify factors that may be thwarting the efforts of these NGOs.

6.2.6.1 NGOs operating on "shoe-string" budgets

Findings from the responses captured from NGOs' representatives and key informants, pointed out that of all the challenges that NGOs in the gender mainstream were facing, paucity of financial resources was chief. Even though a few organizations indicated stability in the financial base, the majority of organizations lamented over the unreliable budgets they have to manage. The findings also revealed that a decline in donor-funding seemed to have hit on Zimbabwe more than other surrounding countries possibly due to the long-standing sanctions that have been imposed on Zimbabwe by the European Union (Reuters NEWS, 20 February 2015). These findings find confirmation from those of Kajiita (2015) and Kang'ethe (2010) who established that the role of NGOs was mainly thwarted by their dwindling resources. When asked what they thought was hindering the interventions being made by NGOs, 80% of the mini-survey respondents cited lack of governmental funding as a challenge, while 82% also pointed to the decline in international donors. These findings are in line with Rick (n.d) who explained that the scarcity of resources may lead to a dilemma in planning, and NGOs may find themselves asking themselves four questions:

1) Should they give little help to many people or more help to less people?

2) Should they be treating symptoms (in this case, gender disparities) or trying to get to the root cause?

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3) Should they intervene through provision of needed welfare or campaign for the needed change? (demanding the government to own up to their responsibility to support women and the girl citizens).

4) Should they specialize in their interventions or try to generalize and diversify?

Either way, as this dilemma portrays, the effectiveness of interventions by the NGOs will be compromised and this may lead to the general population questioning their relevance and capacity to deliver on their promises. Right now, Zimbabwe is in an economic crisis as the disposable income and government revenue decline (Mafa and Kang'ethe, 2016; Mafa, 2014; Alao, 2012; Coltart, 2008). The researcher believes that bodies such as the United Nations and the European Aid should put aside their misunderstandings with the sitting government and consider the plight of the women and the children. The situation is so dire that the Minister of Finance had to ask for assistance from Zimbabwe's former colonial country, Britain even though the visit was unfruitful as reported by the DailyNews (5 July, 2016).

Optimistically though, since the imposition of sanctions on Zimbabwe, for the first time, the European Union in 2015 assisted Zimbabwe with 234 million euros worth of aid (Reuters NEWS, 20 February 2015). Maybe, the grip in respect to the political and economic sanctions is starting to loosen in favour of Zimbabwe. This is with an understanding that these NGOs no matter how dedicated or zealous they are, their interventions stands to be of little help to the women in Zimbabwe, if they are not backed-up with financial resources that may be used for sustainable and developmental projects.

This is not unique because virtually all the NGOs in Botswana had to face a state of economic malaise after the government of the day narrowed its scope of support to them in a research done by Kang'ethe (2010). The same scenario manifested in South Africa in a current study when most NGOs were found to be economically unable to even meet their documented goals and objectives (Kajitta, 2015). It is sad that the state of financial incapacitation by the NGOs largely prompted other ramifications such as the NGOs failing to steer to their organizational goals and objectives, but rather divert to follow activities that attracted any source of funding. This identifies with Botswana where at the height of the HIV/AIDS campaign, during the reign of Festus Mogae, so many NGOs had to refocus their goals to address the

HIV/AIDS component in order to take advantage of immense funding in the domain (UNDP, 2004).

This is poor planning and lack of accountability that need to be picked up during the NGO auditing sessions, if at all they are efficient enough because it contradicts with the objective clause stated by the Private Voluntary Act (Human Rights Watch, 2004). Mitchell (2010) and Riddell et al. (1997) forward that it is important to make an appraisal of whether it is a reality that NGOs are lacking funding or perhaps it is just an excuse when finances are being misused or diverted for personal benefits. This leads the researcher to borrow from other studies on NGOs that indicated various malpractices such as nepotism and corruption, with the directors and some few cronies misusing money for their own personal gains and neglecting the goals and the objectives that the NGO stand for. In line with this, Adeh (2004) and Rich (1997) revealed the propensity of some NGOs to redirect projects funds for administrative purposes such as salaries and trips to conferences and "business meetings".

In another government-related case of abuse of public funds in Zimbabwe, the NEWS on ZBC broadcasted that the CEO of Harare hospital Mrs Peggy Zvavamwe put a halt to all procurements at the hospital, including essentials needed to operate pregnant women (even pain killers) in order to buy her US$ 88 359 Jeep Cherokee car (The Herald, 25 January 2016). Perhaps the issue of leaders misusing public funds has gained popularity in Zimbabwe so much such that it is no longer viewed with raised brows because the government officials are getting away with it. With Zimbabwe's corruption perception index at 150 over 168 or 89% (Global Corruption report, 2016), maybe accountability and transparency have lost their meaning in Zimbabwe as corruption has been normalised. This then calls for auditing of NGOs' books through ministerial lines as required by the PVO Act. In regard to this, the donors may be in a better position to call for the detailed break-down of their investment in order to ensure that funding is used transparently, a process called upward accountability by Cavill and Sohail (2007).

6.2.6.2 The skeletal nature of NGOs and their limited coverage

The findings on the coverage of NGO in pursuit of gender equality and women empowerment clearly reflected a limited coverage. Only a few NGOs indicated having more than one office in the whole country. These findings were corroborated

by key informants and the respondents from the general citizens and this suggested that their intervention capacities may be limited as well. To emphasize on this, during the quantitative data collection process, some of the people residing in Harare could not name even one NGO in the gender line; while others could not differentiate between women NGOs and the general NGOs. For these reasons, this may translate to a limited knowledge of the services and geographical locations of these NGOs. In fact, 79% of the respondents agreed that there was little coverage by NGOs, while 78% complained that there was limited information on the services and locations of these women NGOs. This skeletal nature of the NGOs may be a characteristic that spreads across many countries in developing countries as revealed by studies by Kajiita (2015) and Nelson (2007). Hence, a glaring unfortunate circumstance is the fact that many people who are supposed to be served by these NGOs do not have sufficient information about them. This could largely explain that although countries such as South Africa and Kenya have so many NGOs, yet what they do is insignificant and therefore contribute marginally to socio-economic development. However, the country of Zimbabwe is not exempted as Zungura (2012) points out on the limited coverage by NGOs.

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With the phenomenon of non-government funding and donor slump in the country, perhaps the effectiveness and efficiency of the gender-based NGOs may be a huge challenge. But on the contrary, this should encourage the NGOs to come up with locally-based methods of fundraising in line with the principle of indigenizing the economy which is an emphasized characteristic of the current sitting government (Kang'ethe and Serima, 2014; Bhatasara, 2011). The legal feminists through NGOs may propose for policies that bind the government to provide finances for NGOs, as it is the primary responsibility of the government to ensure equality among its citizens.

6.2.6.3 Unclear visions by some NGOs

The findings of the research unveiled issues of cloudy visions and a lack of proper strategic planning by some NGOs. Of course, NGOs claimed that they knew what they were doing, but key informants and the responses from the general population insisted that the visions or operational plans of NGOs were not so clear to a layman. Fifty one percent (51%) of the responses gathered from Harare citizens claimed that

they were not sure what NGOs were doing in advancing women empowerment and gender equality.

Such unclear visions raise questions of intentions if they are indeed for the benefit of the citizens or possibly that the founders of the NGOs were only interested in obtaining legitimacy so that they can use the "face" of the NGO to enrich themselves. This is closely related to Shivj's comment on intentions saying, "I do not doubt the noble motivation and good intentions of NGOs' leaders and activists. But we do not judge outcomes of the process by the intentions" (Shivji, 2007: 7). Possibly, that is the reason the approval process for some NGOs was taking too long, because the assessors were confused over the strategic vision of the NGO as required by the Private Voluntary Organization (PVO) Act (Chapter 17:05 of 1996) of Zimbabwe. Even though the government may intentionally delay registration processes to frustrate NGOs, careful scrutiny of NGOs' portfolios before initial registration is important to safeguard the welfare of the citizens.

Moore et al. (2013) in agreement argue that there are some NGOs, which strategically wield the trust they have from the recipients of their services for their own personal ends. Further, Borras (2008) in Moore et al. (2013) revealed that there is global evidence of civil societies diverting from their official routes to manipulate citizens, while brainwashing them to pursue political agendas. These findings again concur with a lack of accountability by NGOs which was reported by Adeh (2004), who revealed that NGOs in Zimbabwe lacked transparency and that this was a global trend because at some point in time, the Director general of the World Trade Organizations had to call for the placement of a code of conduct which requested from NGOs what they demanded from others – accountability, transparency and good governance. As a reflection of similarities, Burger and Owens (2011) in Uganda also found that 85 % of the NGOs that were interviewed claimed to have shown their reports to the public, but with many organizations failing to provide information of their activities such as balance sheets, or some providing inaccurate information. This questions the transparency of NGOs in their claim to be the champions of good governance, upholding the interests of the citizens. Even though this trend may not be generalizable to all NGOs, the studies above show the existence of this prevalence. Perhaps, the World Trade Organization should put a monitoring and evaluation system to address such discrepancies.

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Such cases may have influenced the enactment of the Zimbabwe's NGO Bill of 2004 and Zimbabwe's NGO Corporate Governance Manual, documents that oversee NGOs' operations. A lack of a clear plan of action may not however directly entail dubious interests on the part of the NGOs, because other explanations of ignorance are possible. For example, implementing the PESTELE plan analysis in the objective clause as required by the PVO Act may be a difficult thing in a country such as Zimbabwe where the political and economic environment is unpredictable. The analysis as the abbreviation spells is a prediction of the Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environment factors (Rick, n.d).

This may be applicable to more stable nations, but in Zimbabwe, the economy is unpredictable as it is controlled by a turbulent political environment. For example when diamonds were discovered, estimated to be worth billions of American dollars UNDP (2013), the nation anticipated an economic revival. The end, however, was doom; instead the country's economy is worse than before (Coltart, 2008; Mugove and Mbiba, 2014). In terms of political prediction, when the MDC won in the 2008 elections, there was hope for a stable country without sanctions and the NGOs possibly made a forecast of the increase in funding from their Western donors. But again, that was a premature celebration as the ruling government did not step down (Essof, 2013). This level of unpredictability may make it difficult for any organization to match up internal planning with the external political and economic environment, as this is crucial in anticipating revenue and expenditure, budgeting for the projects and programmes necessary for the attainment of gender equality and women empowerment in Zimbabwe. These are some of the factors that should be considered when the PESTELE analysis is being implemented.

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6.2.6.4 "Sweet-sour" relationships with the government

As far as the government and gender NGOs' relationship is concerned, the findings revealed mixed reactions from the NGOs, key informants and the general responses from citizens. Some NGOs commented positively on their relationship while others indicated that a complimentary positive relationship existed. The complimentary relationship between the government and NGOs is supported by Shivji (2007) who described NGOs as the 'foot soldiers", while Nelson (2007) says that they are the ones responsible for leaving the 'footprints" on the ground. Also, Win (2004) concurs

that there used to be a sweet relationship between NGOs and the government in Zimbabwe as they were perfect complements in women affairs for gender equality.

However, the findings moreover revealed a sour and conflicting relationship between the two, while still others were indifferent, seemingly not interested whatsoever with the government's interference. Observably, the greater group of NGOs lamented over the government's tightened grip and a military attitude through policies and pieces of laws that are unnecessary. Seventy nine percent (79%) of the respondents in Harare marked the conflict between the government and gender NGOs as a factor that was chocking efforts being made in women empowerment processes and the attainment of gender equality in Zimbabwe. In support, Chakawarika (2011: 27) in Zimbabwe plainly describes the affiliation as a "love-hate" and sometimes a "cat and mouse" relationship. The government seems to use its political power to frustrate women NGOs through policies and endless lists of requirements, for example the registration fee which was recently introduced (Human Rights Watch, 2004). In support, Moyo (2011) in Moore et al. (2013) disinterred that the ruling party has adopted a culture of deterring electors and activists from their preferred political parties.

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The political state in Zimbabwe in relation to activists cannot be over-emphasized especially when Minister Professor Jonathan Moyo in an interview recently admitted that Itai Dzamara an activists was abducted (Newsday, 2 June 2016). Whether this is a case of government officials turning guns on each other cannot be said with absolute certainty. What is known is that the political ground in Zimbabwe is a sensitive arena for human rights activists where lives may be lost. Recently, Pastor Evan Mawarire the leader of the #ThisFlag campaign who was organising the shutdown of Zimbabwe was also arrested (DailyNews, 12 July 2016) even though the constitution of Zimbabwe permits citizens to peacefully protest. These are the circumstances that gender NGOs and individual activists face when they try to voice out concerns about the subjugation of women. There is need of a board that is higher than the government to oversee issues concerning the rights of people in Zimbabwe.

In reinforcing this assertion, Essof (2013) and Makamure (2012) narrate that the government-NGO friction in Zimbabwe rose in the late 1980s when the government's

vision and that of women organizations started growing apart and that this intensified with the emergence of the MDC-opposition party as women organizations were accused of partisan transactions, contrary to the PVO Act. It is worthy indicating that in most of the studies pertaining to NGOs, as exemplified with those carried by Kang'ethe in Botswana and Kajiita in South Africa, many of them indicated that the government is suspicious that the NGOs are sympathizers of the opposition political fraternity, and this has brewed either a sour relationship or a lukewarm one (Kajiita 2015; Kang'ethe, 2010).

These findings are also similar to those by Ryan et al. (2006) who reckoned that in Australia, conflicts between NGOs and the government occur when the NGOs sought to validate their right to advocate in politics while the government used its power to limit NGOs' operations through regulatory measures. Rich (1997) therefore suggested the tendency of NGOs to display loyalty to the government in order to evade friction. If this is the case with women organization in Zimbabwe (avoiding confronting the government), then the attainment of gender equality may be compromised because some of the radical steps needed to empower women require direct confrontation with the government. Such issues may include governance, land issues and the apportioning of the national budget.

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6.2.6.5 Cultural impediments to women empowerment

Continuing with the factors antagonistic to gender equality in Zimbabwe, the NGOs representatives, the key informants and the citizens' responses indicated cultural resistance. There was unanimous agreement that these strongholds were weakening with time as NGOs were penetrating into the domains of the custodians of cultural leaders. These findings find a foundation from the findings by McLean (2015) and Kaplan (1991) who reinforced the subjugation of women through cultural practices that have been handed from generation to generation. Mapuranga (2010) further identified and condemned some cultural aspects such as the erotic dance in Shona and Ndebele arguing that they were violating women, as they continue to inherit the suppression of their great grandmothers. The author also pointed out that sometime women follow through with these practices due to lack of legal funds to pursue their legal rights and also fear to break societal values and relations with kinsmen. Kang'ethe and Mafa (2014) however identified that the effects of

modernization, civilization, industrialization as well as globalization are pertinent in diluting these power dynamics.

If indeed culture is a way of life according to Maluluke and Nadar (2002), it may be constructive to adopt a way of life which is developmental and where men and women are equal beneficiaries of the opportunities and resources of their nation as advocated for by feminists. If Jenkins' (2009) assertion that in Africa life is unpredictable and at the mercy of life's forces, contrary to the West where they have power to change their destiny, probably this is the power that citizens in Zimbabwe need to possess in order to effect the desired liberty and equality.

Against the backdrop of this revelation, the researcher calls on the custodians of the cultures to consider a radical mental paradigm shift as proposed by the radical feminists (Breines, 2002) so that they can weaken or abandon cultural elements that are detrimental to the educational, social, legal and reproductive health of the girl child and women in Zimbabwe. Maybe the assertion by Tevera (2015) and Coltart (2008) that ZANU PF manipulates and uses cultural heritage in order to retain power, even though the nation is squirming to be free from its grips is the same strategy adopted by cultural leaders to enjoy supremacy over women. Radical advocacy is needed to uproot this "culture" of manipulation because change is not bad if it is for the development of the nation.

The NGOs and the key informants agreed that culture was a huge embargo to women empowerment because it is anchored on a patriarchal stand, which believes in men's superiority over women – the facilitator of women subjugation in Zimbabwe. This is similar to the argument made by radical feminists who insists that the existing cultural structures have been tainted by patriarchy so much that they are beyond repair and hence must be completely dismantled and be re-established on gender-sensitive foundations (Smith, 2010; Malaba, 2006). Women need to be emancipated, by removing them from the cultural traps that have enslaved them since time immemorial as emphasized by cultural feminists (Baehr, 2013; Mapuranga, 2010; Beckett, 2005).

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6.2.6.6 Misinterpretation of gender concepts

Upon evaluating the understanding of Harare citizens' understanding of gender equality and women empowerment, the NGOs and key informants did concur that the theoretical meaning of the terms were widely understood. However, the findings revealed that the contextual meaning was either confusing or exaggerated by many, and further blown out of proportion by some. Contrary to the above assertion, the responses from the mini-survey respondents showed that 76% and 72% said they understood the meaning of gender equality and women empowerment respectively. Surprisingly though, 66% of the same respondents indicated that a lack of clarity on gender concepts was suffocating its attainment, probably leading to resistance.

The definition of the terms by some respondents sadly matched the revelations by NGOs' representatives who confirmed that a cloud of confusion hanged over the conceptualization and practical applicability of the terms. Possibly, the theoretical definition is understood because the findings from the current research showed that 96% of the respondents were literate. This perhaps mirrors the fact that Zimbabwe is a highly literate nation with a flashy literacy rate that is above 90% (UNDP, 2013). However, the scenario seems to match nicely with the assertion by Chauraya (2012) that most Africans cannot differentiate between sex and gender. Possibly, this authenticates Oyewumi's argument that gender is a foreign concept that has been imposed on Africa through modernization (Oyewumi, 2002).

Even though this argument was supported by a handful of respondents from the general population, almost all the NGOs' participants rejected it and therefore were to an extent emotional about it. This may be attributed to a matter of one's belief system and the attitudes they have towards women in power, than it is about women's capabilities. Or maybe it is just a question of ignorance and indifference. NGOs in gender advocacy therefore need to continue challenging these ideological and attitudinal traits which are resisting women empowerment and gender equality in Zimbabwe through what Mafa and Kang'ethe (2016) called a cost benefit analysis of social benefits and their consequences.

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6.2.6.7 Zimbabwe's ailing political-economy stifling NGOs efforts

On the issue of the current economy of Zimbabwe, all the representatives of the NGOs in all three FGDs lamented over the impact of the economy on their intervention strategies. Firstly, the NGOs in legal representation pointed out that they are now overwhelmed with numbers of women who need legal assistance. With the revelation from this study that 28%, 33% and 13% of the respondents were unemployed, self-employed and civil servants respectively, the financial status of residents in Harare, as a reflection of Zimbabwe's economic base needs intervention. Furthermore, 83% of these respondents also blamed the bad economy of Zimbabwe as a creator and reinforcement factor of gender inequalities. These findings find support from Mafa (2014), Alao (2012), Mawere (2012) and Chakawarika (2011), whose findings unveiled the economy of Zimbabwe as detrimental to the empowerment of women and the operations by NGOs for gender equality.

On that note, the effects of the economy have been felt even by the gigantic cooperatives in Zimbabwe. The Herald (2 June 2016) reported the closure of one of the biggest hotels in Zimbabwe, the Rainbow Tourism Group (RTG) due to economic hardships which landed the company into a US$2 million of accumulated losses since its opening in January 2014. Apart from that the Newsday (26 May 2016) again confirmed the closing of one of the popular girl high mission schools, Mukaro High School due to a strife strike by students over food shortages and living conditions. Moreover, DailyNews (14 April 2014) and Egbedi (2015) disclosed the closure of numerous companies, citing economic conditions and financial constraints as the challenges. Egbedi (2015) further indicated that over 18 000 people had lost jobs in Zimbabwe within 3 months due to economic challenges precipitated by political instability. When the media turned to the then Minister of Information and Publicity for possible words of hope, his reply was both appalling and disappointing as he explained that the government could not focus on the economy because *Mbuya* Nehanda and *Sekuru* Kaguvi's (the spirit mediums in the First Uprising against the British regime) skulls were still displayed in Britain's museum. Indeed, a case of misplaced priorities.

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All these cases display the unfavourable state of the political and economic conditions women NGOs are exposed to as depicted by the political-economy theory. If such companies could close, there is a high possibility of the same fate befalling these gender NGOs. For those that may not close, they may be merely surviving. This calls for radical measures not just by women NGOs but every citizen to demand a solution that can bring about sustainable developments as championed by Pastor Mawarire in his #ThisFlag and #ShutDown campaigns (BBC NEWS, 13 July 2016), without which the lives of women and the girl child will continue to be compromised as NGOs' efforts are frustrated. Perhaps the reason why those who try to speak out of the need for an economic revival are detained in Zimbabwe is their insignificant numbers. If the whole country peacefully but emphatically speak out, maybe a desired change can be sort.

6.2.6.8 Excellent yet poorly supported policies

In addition to the challenges that have already been cited, the majority of the participants from the NGOs showed concern over the applicability of gender policies that have been crafted by the government. Findings revealed that 54% of the respondents complained that government policies restricted NGOs from functioning effectively. NGOs' participants further explained that the enactment of policies such as the National Gender Policy, the Women Empowerment Programme and the ZIMASSET were creditable for having shaped gender issues. The participants and the respondents commented on the degree of articulation and perfection of the theoretical part of these policies. However, the translation of some of these policies in the practical ground seemed to be lacking. These findings are in line with the findings of Bhatasara (2011) who argued that the government was offering only lip-service to the citizens through administering policies that can easily be overlooked and promises that are never pursued or fulfilled.

In addressing the land issue for example, Mbaya (2005) indicated that the Fast Track Land Reform Programme, a policy that was meant to benefit all Zimbabweans was never practically translated in order to benefit the people whom it was intended, as it overlooked gender differences. The issue of overlooking some of the instruments that the government would have placed was observed by the Human Rights Watch (2004) which commented that the Zimbabwe's NGO Bill that was gazetted by the

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government is in direct conflict with Constitution of Zimbabwe on freedom of association as stated in the PVO Act (Constitution of Zimbabwe, 2013). This indeed raises questions about the commitment of the government of Zimbabwe as far as the attainment of gender equality through NGOs is concerned. The quote from the president of Zimbabwe at the beginning of the chapter clearly depicts a lack of faith and support to the existence of NGOs, including gender NGOs as the president himself says -*...we might have to reconsider the advisability of having NGOs." (Robert Mugabe speech in 2008).*

In explaining the sensitivity of gender issues, Bhatasara (2011) talks of gender-biased people occupying influential positions in the government while the Report from the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development (n.d) in Bhatasara (2011) revealed that there are people occupying senior positions yet they are not sufficiently sensitized with gender issues as they have not received proper training. If this is the case, how then can the government be committed to what it does not understand? Another lack of support and contradictory statements can be seen on the Education Act of 1996. The first objective forwards that no child in Zimbabwe shall be denied access to any school while Section 6 of the same section highlights the need for payment of school fees. Yet again, section 13.4 of the same Act gives heads of schools permission to deny access to children who have not paid their school fees (Runhare and Gordon, 2004). Such contradictions may be difficult to implement and subsequently failing to address the challenges at hand. This may suggest that the policies are just crafted without follow-up efforts to check their translation and applicability.

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With three authors citing the negligence of the government in being committed to the conversion of policies into solutions, maybe the government just put in place policies as a formality when they are not fully committed to the cause. Possibly, this is one of the cases where development gets lost in translation as policies lose validity and relevance.

6.2.6.9 Message distortion by the media outlets

The findings on the role of the media in assisting NGOs for the attainment of gender equality and woman empowerment showed a divided reaction. While a greater part of the focus group discussion participants applauded it for aiding their efforts, there

was also information that indicated that the media was sometimes a platform to ridicule, disgrace and ultimately thwart the efforts being made by the NGOs. This was supported by the respondents from the mini-survey. Even though the majority (62%) cited its positive contributions, 15 % cited it as contradicting the NGOs interventions. The argument by the participants basically was that the manner in which tabloids and Newspaper people sometimes report their stories portray an inclination towards gender biases. As such, messages and pictures that circulate on social media platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp showing naked pictures of women may be reinforcing patriarchal beliefs.

These findings coincides with those of Nicolaides (2012) who forwards that the media in a way chisels and shapes the behaviour of people such that gender-skewed information may promote inequalities. Reinforcing the same idea, Morna (2002) is of the assertion that stories that "sell" greatly display gender-stereotypes. As an example, Morna (2002) claims that the media is used as a weapon to break politicians and women politicians are affected the most. Undeniably, the media will be trying to sell papers, their insalubrious quest for controversy just to sell papers is negatively contributing to the efforts by NGOs because it is compromising the fruition of their interventions. The author further explains that the media portrays women in politics as objects for domesticity in that interviews on them are usually associated with their ability to juggle between politics, careers and family commitments, while interviews on political men focus on their achievements and goals (Morna, 2002).

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Findings from the NGOs also showed the insensitivity of the media fraternity, referring to an article in the DailyNews Newspaper which had a headline "School girls fuel New HIV Infections". This title appears to be shifting the blame from the perpetrators onto the children who are minors and incapable of sexual consent according to the law of Zimbabwe (Constitution of Republic of Zimbabwe, 2013). Instead, perpetrators who by law should be called "rapists" are exonerated and viewed as victims of these underage girls. These findings are in line with the thoughts of Morna (2002) who revealed that stories on sexual matters for example rape cases are sometimes reported with an implication that women asked for it, with such phrases as 'revealing clothes…', '…walking alone at night…' and '…went to his house alone…' used in the stories. Mafa (2014) in her master's dissertation on the survival strategies implemented by matrifocal families found out that in many

times, the media and the society obsess with what sex workers do wrong, for example spreading HIV/AIDS and breaking homes. Yet, they rarely report on the struggles of these women for example being raped, their impoverishment and the sacrifices they make while raising children alone.

This then calls for media companies to prepare their editors and reporters in order to be gender-sensitive while wording their titles and writing the content of their stories. The researcher is not in any way asking the media not to report issues on sex work or women, but to strike a balance and champion for *'a better world for all'* as the NGOs motto says.

6.2.7 Efforts by NGOs to improve their interventions

With the challenges outlined, the researcher discusses strategies that are adopted by NGOs to surmount the above-cited challenges in order to augment on the effectiveness of their interventions.

6.2.7.1 NGOs boosting own finances through fundraising projects

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With the paucity of financial resources cited as the most daunting challenge faced by women NGOs in Harare, the study participants pointed out that they were employing innovative financial mechanisms in order to secure their financial base. The dependability of NGOs on donor-funding is supported by Mitchell (2010) and Riddell et al. (1997) who highlighted that it is mainly for this reason that the impact by NGOs is hardly traceable. In concurrence, Layton (2006) revealed that about 95% of NGOs in Zimbabwe rely mostly or entirely on donors to finance their operations. This finding has been found to be applicable in South Africa through the study by Hendrickse (2008) and in Africa through the study of Aldaba (2002). This may be an indication that financial challenges can be the major challenge of NGOs not only in Zimbabwe, but in Africa and possibly the world. Visions and goals by women NGOs may not yield much until there are enough resources to finance the projects for sustainability.

There appears to be a dependency syndrome in Africa that is rebuked by Hendrickse (2008) who challenges NGOs to employ various mechanism in order to increase their disposable income as funding from donors is now inconsistent and inadequate. The researcher asserts that perhaps NGOs are shying from venturing in business because according to the Private Voluntary Organization Act (PVO) of Zimbabwe,

NGOs are not-for-profit organizations. So probably there is a need to clarify that aspect. Clearly, there is need to demystify this to enable gender-organizations to be financially equipped for the grueling task of eradicating gender disparities.

6.2.7.2 Promoting the culture of a tight budget

NGOs representatives also revealed that they were cutting on their expenditure in order to save. They indicated that those who had unnecessarily spacious buildings had to share the building, while others had to move to smaller and affordable places. Sad but perhaps necessary, still others said that they had to retrench many staff members and cut on salaries for the remaining ones to ensure organizational survival. The issue of cutting costs is not a new one when organizations are not able to sustain themselves financially.

This phenomenon mirrors the 1980 directives from both the World Bank and the IMF to the developing countries to consider reducing the size of their public servants in an endeavour to cut the public expenditure (Osrim, 2001). This was under the structural adjustment programme (Kang'ethe, 2015; Mulinge and Mufune, 2003). Apart from that, the NGO representatives revealed that they had to rely on voluntary workers and students on attachment. This however creates suspicion as to the nature of workforce the NGOs have to rely on. Mitchell (2010) emphatically mentions the staff composition as an indicator of the effectiveness of an organization and its intervention strategies. Questions as to whether these workers will have the right experience and qualifications to ensure accountability, budgeting and transparency through bookkeeping, as required by the Private Voluntary Act cannot be evaded. Possibly, the cutting down of the staff in a way may be contributing to the inefficiency and impact of NGOs organization. Internship in Zimbabwe ranges from 6 months to a year. Hence, if NGOs have to continually absorb student interns who may take half their internship period just familiarizing themselves with an organization, this strategy to cut on costs may actually pose as a drawback. Nonetheless, sometimes these NGOs have to make drastic decisions in order to survive.

6.2.7.3 Implementation of research-based interventions

In order to widen their understanding of gender issues, almost all NGOs reflected that they believed in empirically-based interventions as they tackled gender

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disparities in Zimbabwe. As such, they reported that they attended workshops, trainings, international and national conferences. This researcher believes that it is pertinent that NGOs share their knowledge with one another and also learn from other advocates of gender equality in order to improve on their interventional skills and methodologies. Davies et al. (2009) concurs with these findings stressing that gender dynamics and the inequality of power can best be addressed through literature reviews and carrying out research. Such meetings enable the interaction between all stakeholders (donors, governments, gender advocates and citizens) to probe on matters that are crucial. In assessing the impact of NGOs in effecting change in the lives of people, participation is said to be of utmost importance and Balster et al. (2014) argue that conducting research is a way of making sure that the general public participates.

This may explain why Mitchell (2010) presented stakeholder's satisfaction, association and achieving targets as important factors in appraising organizations. A conference, such as the African Feminist Forum that was held in Harare from the 10th to 12th of April 2016 allows NGOs to reflect on their performances as they discuss with other gender practitioners. Potential donors may also be sourced on such occasions as well.

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6.2.7.4 Collaboration of gender-based NGOs

Another survival strategy that was reported by NGOs was what they referred to as the "sistahood spirit". Women NGOs in Harare pointed out that when they have an urgent mandate that requires immediate intervention, they put aside their differences with an understanding that the dignity, welfare and development of women and the girl child are in their hands. They stated that they use the power of numbers in their demonstrations to attract the attention of resisting stakeholders for example the government and potential perpetrators. When Pastor Evans, the human rights activist behind the #ThisFlag was arrested, about 100 human rights lawyers teamed-up to represent him pro-bono and he was released (BBC NEWS, 13 July 2016). This is an evident case of solidarity for a cause. The key informant from the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development supported this claim indicating that NGOs were good at making noise and penetrating the walls of resistance even if it means mobilizing the general population. Mele et al. (2010) in support, talk of the

interdependence and interrelatedness which is essential for organizations to avoid entropy.

Further, Lots (2003) in support argues that a single form or branch of feminism has never existed nor has it managed to ensure gender parity. Hence, this is a call for gender NGOs in Harare to join forces against the infringement of the rights of women and the girl child as well as against all pediments that may hinder attainment of women empowerment. Human Development Report (2015) also reckons that fighting an agenda globally is more fruitful than individual governments or countries. Evidently, this is why the systems theory argues that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts (Mele et al., 2010). Such a spirit shows the commitment of the gender practitioners for the eradication of gender gaps. Perhaps it was for this reason that the child marriage ruling and the Gumbura's court case made national news, because the NGOs reported that they all supported the women and survivors of these heinous cases. The NGOs indicated that they had teamed-up to write a document laying out their concerns to the government over the status of women in Zimbabwe (CSW 60) and submitted it in unison.

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These findings confirm the reports made by Breines (2002) and Springer (2002) who claim that the feminists in the first, second and third waves did not give up, instead they put their economic class and racial differences aside and rallied for their political, educational and economic rights. Contrary to the findings of the research however, Van eeedewijk and Mugadza (2015) reveal that just after the 2000 elections, the relationship of feminists in Zimbabwe experienced fragmentation as other NGOs had become politically involved against the requirements of the PVO Act.

However this was before the formation of Women's Coalition Organization, the name by which all women organizations in Zimbabwe affiliate to (NANGO, 2006). So, perhaps the 'sistas' reconciled for the realization of gender equality and equity. On that note, gender inequalities and women suffrage are not reducible to politics and economics as the political economy suggests. Instead, they continue to prevail and scar all facets of the society including the nuclear family set-up (Breines, 2002). Therefore, women and the girl child should refuse to be divided by their social, economic or political differences, but continue squirming for liberty to be heard from

the legal point of view. It is for this reason that the researcher has included the liberal, cultural, radical and socialist feminists as they are all 'sistas' of women empowerment and equality. This marks the discussion of findings and the researcher moves on to make conclusions basing on the aims and the research questions.

6.3 Conclusions of the research

The conclusions section of the research project ascertains the degree to which research questions have been answered, clarifying on whether the assumptions that were made have been proved or disapproved. Through the analysis and a methodical discussion of research findings, the researcher has shed significant light on the women NGOs as platforms for tackling gender disparities in Zimbabwe, and mostly assessing the conduciveness of the political and economic environment under which they operate. Issues on the influence of cultural and religious factors for the attainment of women empowerment and gender equality have also been extrapolated against women NGOs' interventions.

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6.3.1 Aim of the study and research questions: Core arguments

The aim of the study was to appraise gender–focused NGOs as agents of gender equality and women empowerment in Zimbabwe with the study of Harare city as the research domain. Four research objectives led to four (4) research questions. As such, conclusions were drawn from an abridged conclusion of each of the research objectives as discussed below.

- *To explore the gender-related issues prevalent in Harare City, which gender-focused NGOs in Harare focus on*

This study validated that women and girl children in Harare experienced a constellation of gender-based exclusions that gave birth to a host of gender disparities including but not limited to gender-based violence, domestic violence, social injustices, violence against women in public places and an environment that favours the boy child to achieve more in education than the girl child. The research moreover identified that cultural and religious oppression, as well as the alienation of women in the political space were the major forms of gender inequalities that NGOs in Harare focused on.

Apart from that, denial of land rights and susceptibility to HIV/AIDS and poverty widened women's economic exclusion, and this reinforced the concepts of feminization of HIV and feminization of poverty. 'Pornographic revenge' has been identified as being on the increase in Zimbabwe due to the popularity of social media and the advancement of technology. The exploitation of the girl child and the denial of women's sexual reproductive rights also proved to be among the glaring gender inequalities that were revealed by the current study. The scenario above, therefore validates the authenticity of the objective and the question in helping to make the study domain a valid and a reliable one.

- *To find out how gender-focused NGOs fight gender disparities for the attainment of gender equality and women empowerment in Harare City*

Depending on the nature and the form of inequalities that are being targeted by gender-based NGOs, the research found out that NGOs employed an assortment of mechanisms that are aimed at tackling gender disparities in Zimbabwe. It appeared as if the traditional methods of randomly distributing fliers with information on gender issues are no longer popular among gender NGOs in Zimbabwe. Instead, the NGOs have adopted innovative and modern ways to spread the urgency of women empowerment and gender equality to every corner of the country. However, there were some traditional methods that were still being used as interventions against women subjugation by NGOs. The current study revealed the utility of street protests and conducting of grassroots outreaches as vital machineries utilized towards empowering women and girl children in Zimbabwe. Among the modernized methodologies, the study identified road shows that feature celebrities, the utility of Facebook, YouTube and other social media outlets.

Additionally, gender NGOs maximized the efficacy of various platforms of both print, airwaves and electronic media, such as the TV programmes and talk shows as channels to promote gender sensitization in the country, relaying information on women rights and gender policies. Innovatively, mind-capturing avenues such as films, music and poetry have also gained popularity with some directors of NGOs leading in these arty adventures. For poverty alleviation, women are empowered with entrepreneurial and vocational skills such as poultry, potato-growing, tobacco growing and bread making abilities for developmental sustainability. The diversity of

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the methodological interventions has been widened as a way of broadening the audience and recipients of relayed gender-information and developmental projects.

However, the above interventional methodologies have been weakened due to the ever-dwindling donor funding, as NGOs fall victim of the country's poor international relations with the global community, especially the western world countries. Also, the NGOs' apparently sour relationship with the government has made it difficult to influence desired change. Overall, the above objective and its corresponding research question have proved to be an adequate one in making the research findings valid.

- *To discuss the perceptions on the effectiveness of the interventions employed by gender-focused NGOs in fighting gender inequality in Harare City*

From the findings of the current study, it can be concluded that the attainment of gender equality and women empowerment through NGOs in Zimbabwe was basically moving gradually. Even though noticeable achievements have been made in promoting the education of the girl child, a lot still needs to be done as far as representation of women in political and decision-making positions, maternal health and economic empowerment is concerned, as these are the main indicators of women empowerment, according to Zimbabwe's National Gender Policy.

Evidently, the targets and frameworks have been put in place as guidelines to the operations of NGOs. These are in a form of NGOs' internal visions and goals as they are mainly informed by the MDGs, SDGs and the National Gender Policy of Zimbabwe. However, it is crucial to highlight that policy frameworks on their own do not equate to the attainment of stated goals. Instead, there is need for an enabling political and economic environment and collaborative partnerships among all stakeholders involved, in order to translate policies into programmes and projects that will adequately impact the lives of women and the girl child to ensure the eradication of gender gaps. This explains why the MDGs and SDG targets may seem far-fetched or unattainable in Zimbabwe because the current political and economic environment is aggressive to the developmental strategies by gender NGOs. Perceptions on the progress being made by gender NGOs in attaining gender equality was verified by respondents, who to a larger extent had lost faith in

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the capacity of NGOs to effectively eradicate gender disparities. The researcher, therefore, makes a bold assertion that with the current pace at which progress is being made by NGOs, gender equality will remain a fantasy and a pipe-dream that is difficult to realize, due to an antagonistic political-economy environment and the paucity of financial resources.

From an analysis of the biographical information of NGO directors, it can be said that the qualifications of the management were not in question even though to a lesser extent, the supporting staff is being affected by internal retrenchments. Apart from that, the research has noticed the immeasurability of some achievements that may have been advanced by gender NGOs. As such, achievements were simply descriptions of activities that were based on the perceptions of NGOs' directors, key informants and the general public, without accurate figures and financial commitments on projects which clearly show the impact and effect on the beneficiaries. Analysing the impacts of such interventions for effectiveness, for example how advocacy workshops challenged patriarchal attitudes was therefore difficult to ascertain due to the immeasurability of the achievements.

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The perceptions on the gaps in achievements were notably attributed to internal and external challenges which are concluded below. The scenario evolving from this objective proves the validity of the objective, and important contributions to the investigation of the topic: An Appraisal of Gender-Focused Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) as Agents of gender equality and women empowerment in Zimbabwe: The Study of Harare City.

- *To discuss the challenges which gender NGOs in Harare City face in promoting gender equality in Zimbabwe*

The findings of the current study concluded that NGOs pursuing gender issues in Zimbabwe encountered an accumulation of hurdles and administrative hiccups that were affecting their interventions' effectiveness, as far as their impact on the attainment of gender equality and advancing women empowerment is concerned. Top on the list of the challenges is the paucity of financial resources that was forcing some NGOs to abandon their area of specialization especially those in economic empowerment and moving to the domains with opportunities that attract funding. Poignantly, the ever-present antagonistic relationship between the government and

women NGOs that was prompting the government to implement controlling pieces of law, also poses serious hindrances to the attainment of gender equality in Zimbabwe.

To this end, the research makes conclusions that the lack of support from the government in form of resources greatly compromised women empowerment as policies are practically unsupported. Moreover, the current political and economic state of Zimbabwe is counter-productive to the efforts being made by NGOs as the environment forms a fertile ground for widening the horizon of gender disparities in the country, while simultaneously thwarting developmental projects. This has had the impact of geometrically increasing the number of women and girls in need of assistance. Such overwhelming numbers on the already strained budgets of NGOs can only make them appear ineffective in narrowing gender gaps, considering the limited coverage of NGOs. Cultural and religious aspects have also been found frustrating the efforts aimed at attaining gender equality as they form a resistance wall against women empowerment.

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The findings also revealed that misinterpretation of gender concepts is emitting resistance especially from cultural custodians because this is associated with some cultural practices and religious beliefs, thereby creating an apt environment for the encroachment of women's sexual, economic and educational rights. Apart from that, in order to make headlines that sell, some media channels have been found promoting women suppression through reporting stories in gender-insensitive ways. This is compromising the dignity of women while instantaneously protecting the ego of the perpetrators. However, in counter-attacking these challenges, the research can conclude that NGOs are trying to venture into self-generating projects that can improve their disposable income. NGOs are again renting out parts of their buildings, offering Bed and Breakfast services, doing wedding planning for a fee, offering conference areas, pre-school services and other indigenous ways of raising funds. They are again increasing collaboration and teamwork among sister-organizations, in order to barrow through governmental and societal resistance. All in all, the researcher found the objective a very useful one in ensuring that the study achieves its aim.

6.3.2 A Discussion of the study's Assumptions

The discussions below critically analyses the extent to which the study has validated or rejected its assumptions. Each of the assumption was pitted against the study findings.

- *The political-economic environment in Zimbabwe is thwarting efforts by gender NGOs to attain gender equality and women empowerment in Harare*

The research findings confirmed the researcher's assumption that the current economic and political environment in Zimbabwe poses a huge threat to the attainment of women empowerment and gender equality. This has been reinforced by the findings that the economic position of the country has immensely affected the money disposable to NGOs, while concurrently increasing the number of people in need of services. The political state besides creating a suspicious and unproductive partnership with gender-NGOs has also been working as a deterrent to the international donors, due to the economic sanctions attached on Zimbabwe, restricting the flourishing of any developmental project. However, the research has disinterred that the political and economic conditions are not the only factors choking the efforts by gender-NGOs but a host of them, such as religion, patriarchal attitudes, ignorance of gender issues and media distortions have also been identified as accomplices in this matter.

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- *Gender-NGOs in Harare suffer paucity of requisite resources to realise gender equality and women empowerment*

The findings have verified the supposition forwarded by the researcher that gender-NGOs in Zimbabwe are bereft of the resources that are crucial for the effectuation of their interventions, if the processes of women empowerment are to be accelerated. It can then be concluded that due to the insufficiency of capital, NGOs are forced to operate on a shoe-string budget, either satisfactorily serving a few people, or insufficiently serving many people. Either way, this explains why gender issues in Harare, and possibly in the whole country are inadequately attended to. Any organization including those set up not-for-profit need capital for administrative and operational costs, but the dire lack of it in Zimbabwe has led to some gender-NGOs downsizing their operations, while others are closing down altogether. The consequence however, has been both lamentable and daunting.

- *Inadequate gender sensitization in Zimbabwe is creating resistance to the promotion of women empowerment and gender equality*

Despite the issue of gender equality and women empowerment having been discussed on many social, national and international forums for so long, the findings of the current research concluded that misunderstanding and misconception of gender issues to an extent contribute to the resistance among Zimbabweans. Intellectually, many people understand the terms but however, an analysis of the data alluded to the fact that many people do not realize the societal, educational, economic and cultural paradigm shifts that are essential for women empowerment to be realized. Simply put, the theoretical explanation of the concepts are widely known and largely embraced yet, the applicability from the home to the external areas such as the government bodies, there is a manifestation of evidence contrary to what the phenomena really entail. This explains why the economic policies of Zimbabwe have been criticized for being gender-biased and failing to close the gender gaps. This lack of knowledge is descending heavily on the development of women and girl children as gender-insensitive errors of commission and omission are done even by the government. These arguments therefore lead to the recommendations as stated below.

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6.4 Recommendations

Due to the challenges and gaps that have emerged, the researcher makes recommendations to the NGOs, the general public and the government with the hope that this may influence the formulation of policies and interventions that can catalyse and accelerate the achievement of women empowerment and gender equality in Zimbabwe.

6.4.1 To various stakeholders:

- *Incorporation of gender issues in educational curriculums*

It is often said that it is difficult to teach an old dog new tricks. As such, the researcher proposes that from an elementary education stage, children should be socialized in a manner that portrays gender equality between boys and girls because many residents in Harare showed a lack of practical understanding of the concepts.

The school is a vital agent of socialization and the government should maximize it as a platform for tackling gender disparities.

- *Gender sensitization of the cultural custodians, religious and organizational leaders*

Culture, though destructive sometimes is a panacea forming a vital underpinning of people's identity, passed on from generation to generation. Religious doctrines also trace back to the founders of the churches. As such, challenging them without any explanation may yield nothing but resistance as it may appear as though gender issues are a personal attack on them. Therefore, the researcher forwards that there is need for a thorough sensitization and educational engagement with these leaders in order to sensitise them of gender issues, if the 2nd target of the SGD 5 which seeks to eliminate all harmful practices (cultural and religious) is to be achieved. Once leaders adequately embrace the developmental need for women empowerment, then they can direct their followers in the way to women empowerment.

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- *Dilution of a "son preference" or 'man superiority" patriarchal mentality*

Beginning from the homes, there is need to equate both the boy and the girl child because regarding the boy as superior breeds their ego and a conscience that justifies practices which oppress women, while planting feelings of timidity and dependency on the girl child. This may help the society to tilt its biased lenses towards the capacity of the girl child, since the findings have revealed that Zimbabwe upholds a patriarchal system.

- *Productive collaboration of men organizations and women organizations*

In Zimbabwe, it seems as if the distribution of men organizations and women organizations is not proportional. This necessitates a stronger relationship with men organizations such as Men of Zimbabwe Arise and Padare that can educate men about cultural practices and attitudes that are detrimental to the wellbeing of women and the girl child. With that same argument, while teaching women about their rights is emancipatory, empowerment may not be ascertained until men are taught about the women's rights too, and how their actions infringe on women's rights. This way, the domestication of women's sexual and reproductive rights can be made possible.

- *Erection of more economic developmental gender NGOs*

Literature and the socialist feminist theory assert that economic dependence of women above all is the root cause for women subjugation. This therefore requires the empowerment of women with sustainable skills and projects that can liberate them from the marital violence that is sustained by economic dependency. Once women-friendly, economic policies that support women are put in place, some forms of subjugation, such as susceptibility to poverty and HIV may lose their hold on women.

- *Maximising the popularity of the social media*

The NGOs have been shifting from the conventional forms of advocacy to modern ones as advocated for by the Implementation Sustainable Development Goal 5b, which encourages the utility of technologies such as ICT in ensuring the attainment of gender equality and women empowerment. The researcher proposes that there should be innovative methodologies that are irresistible to the general public, but still serving the purpose. Such may include

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- Initiating a talk show where gender issues are discussed weekly on TV or radio, with a question and answer session and perhaps the general public as the participating audience and a panel of experts.
- A 24/7 hotline can also be opened for reporting gender issues such as rape and abuse, and providing call-in activities.
- For girls and boys in primary and secondary school, movie nights can be screened or maybe enlist actors who may move around schools from time to time.

Consistency in doing this may yield more fruits as the traditional methods appear not to yield much dividends.

- *Fruitful collaboration between the government and the gender NGOs*

The need for a productive partnership between these bodies can never be over-emphasized as they are the lead agents of gender equality. The research has revealed an antagonistic relationship between NGOs and the government. As such, the government's representatives need to acknowledge the role that the NGOs are

playing to fill the public sector gaps. Equally, the NGOs need the government to promulgate policies that will make their working environment responsive.

- *The government and the NGOs must give budgetary preference to issues of women and the girl child*

It is recommendable that the government considers increasing its budgetary allocation to address issues pertaining to women and the girl child in an endeavour to increase pace and momentum towards gender equality, equity and expediting the process towards the country's gender actualization point. This is recommended because the NGOs appear to be facing financial challenges.

- *Learning the culture of independence*

Due to the issue of a dependency syndrome that has been raised by the study, it is high time when Africa, Zimbabwe and gender-NGOs should learn to depend on themselves in order to evade the financial disappointment when the international donors fail to give them the 'fish". There should be local-fundraising projects and the promotion of indigenous donors. For example maybe it is time for Africa to increase its pharmaceutical production in order to kill dependency and improve on the health system which ultimately improves the maternal health.

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- *Heavier penalties on gender-based crimes*

In order to discourage the perpetrators from wittingly violating women and girls, heavier penalties should be attached to gender-based crimes such as rape and battering. The law has been failing many victims, so maybe stricter penalties may protect women and girls. For example, child sex abuse in Indonesia is now punishable by chemical castration. This has been recommended because the law seems to let down victims with some police officers participating in the subjugation of children as revealed by the study.

- *Absorbing more social workers in gender NGOs*

Social work is a profession that is guided by principles and values that improve the interpersonal and interventional relations. Hence, the researcher advices NGOs to consider employing more of social workers as the profession is specifically fit to deal with individuals, groups and communities. Also the profession puts necessary

emphasis on the holistic nature of a person, aspects that will empower women in all areas.

- *Putting in place tracking systems*

It has been revealed by the findings that policies are sometimes violated. The researcher is recommending a tracking panel of experts that should include representatives from the government, NGOs, general population and other related stakeholders to ensure that the formulation and implementation of policies is inclusive and transparent. This may include government budgets. In as much as it has been gender-sensitized, tracking systems and procedures should be put in place to ensure that what is on paper materializes.

- *Proper monitoring and evaluation procedures*

There is need for proper monitoring and evaluation procedures that are detailed in terms of the impact, budget management and meeting of set goals. With monitoring and evaluation, the effectiveness of the interventions of women NGOs can clearly be assessed.

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6.4.2 Recommendations for future Research

- *A longitudinal study*

The current research was cross-sectional in nature. As such, it failed to adequately trace the achievements of gender NGOs within a certain period of time. The researcher therefore recommends a longitudinal research of this nature stretching for example for 5 years.

- *A more specialized research*

The present study sought to appraise gender NGOs in general. The researcher recommends that a research that targets one specialty may be necessary in order to scrupulously appraise the effectiveness of their interventions and drawbacks categorically. For example a study of gender-NGOs in advocacy, a study on gender-NGOs in economic empowerment etc.

- *An analysis of men organizations*

The aim of the research was to appraise women NGOs as agents of gender equality and women empowerment in Zimbabwe. It is recommendable for a study to be carried out that appraises the complimentary efforts by men organizations as they challenge patriarchal attitudes and unruly behaviours that reinforce women's subjugation.

- *An exclusive analysis on the administration of NGOs in the gender field*

Even though the current research lightly touched on the administration of NGOs in order to give a fair appraisal, that was not central to the undertaking of this research. This then paves a way for a thorough investigation of this aspect in order to adequately examine issues of accountability, staffing, budgeting and daily operations. Possibly, that might reveal hindrances to the attainment of gender parity in Zimbabwe.

6.5 Conclusion

The research has established the irrefutable prevalence of gender inequality in Zimbabwe, with Harare as a focal area. Furthermore, NGOs have been acknowledged as relevant agents for the attainment of gender equality and women empowerment in Zimbabwe, as they have brought in noticeable changes in the lives of women and girls. Despite their tireless efforts however, they have been found to be financially crippled to adequately advance gender issues in Zimbabwe and that the current political-economic environment in Zimbabwe is counter-attacking the efforts being made by these women NGOs. Besides the skeletal nature and scarcity in number of gender NGOs, other factors such as cultural and religious attitudes have been identified as hindrances to the attainment of gender equality through interventions by women NGOs. Conclusively then, with the pace at which women NGOs are advancing, and the resources at their disposal, the researcher posits that women empowerment and gender equality according to the SDGs dictates is more likely to be unattainable in Zimbabwe in the foreseeable future.

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Appendix A: Bearer Cheque

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Appendix B: Ethical Clearance

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

Certificate Reference Number: KAN051SMAF01

Project title: **An Appraisal of gender-focused Non-Government Organizations as Agents Equality in Zimbabwe: The study of Harare City.**

Nature of Project: PhD

Principal Researcher: Ilal Mafa

Supervisor: Prof S Kange'the

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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

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The Ethics Committee wished you well in your research.

Yours sincerely

Professor Gideon de Wet
Dean of Research

25 February 2016

Appendix C: Informed Consent Form

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FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES

ETHICS ANNEXURE 1

ETHICS RESEARCH CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Please note:

This form is to be completed by the researcher(s) and signed 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 organization / sample / group to answer some questions, which we hope will benefit your community and possibly other communities in the future.

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The University of Fort Hare / Department/ organization is conducting research regarding an appraisal of NGOs as agents of gender equality in Zimbabwe. We are interested in finding out more the responsiveness of the environment available to NGO in their pursuit for gender equality in Zimbabwe. We are carrying out this research to help the policy makers, government and the department of social development to adjust, reformulate or restructure policies so as to achieve gender equality in Zimbabwe.

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 on the interview schedule or audio recorder 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 to 45) minutes *(this has been tested through a pilot).* I will be asking you a 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 organization 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 by Participant

I hereby agree to participate in research regarding ..... 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.

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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:**.....

Appendix D: Seeking Permission

The letter used to seek permission from the authorities for data collection.

Faculty of Social Sciences & Humanities

Department of Social Work & Development

Private BagX1314

King Williams Town Rd

26th February 2016

To Whom It May Concern

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Data Collection for Itai Mafa (Student Number: 200909691- Passport Number: BN552441).

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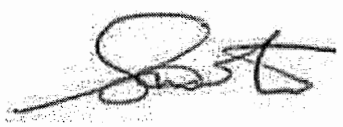
This is a support letter to confirm that Itai Mafa is a 2nd year PhD student at the University of Fort Hare. Her proposal has been accepted and approved by the Faculty Higher Degree Committee. She has also obtained Ethical Clearance for her to collect data. Her project is entitled **"An Appraisal of gender-focused NGOs as agents of Gender Equality in Zimbabwe: A study of Harare City".**

Feel free to contact me if you have any grey areas concerning her data collection process as I am her supervisor.

Any assistance accorded to her will highly be appreciated.

Thank You.

Yours Sincerely,



Prof Simon M Kang'ethe

National Rated Social Work Researcher. (0027787751095; skangethe@ufh.ac.za)

Appendix E: NGOs Instruments

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Introductory information (My name is Itai Mafa, I am studying PhD in Social Work at the University of Fort Hare. My topic is an Appraisal of gender NGOs promoting women empowerment and gender equality. As we discussed hen we made this appointment, I will only need 45 to 60 minutes of your time to give me your professional views on the contributions, challenges and other issues associated with women NGO.)

(Ice breaking by the researcher)

Section 1: Information on the gender-related services provided

1. Biographical information (Age, Qualifications and experience period as a director)
2. Name of the organizations and when it was established
3. A summary of the NGO's mission or vision
4. In your view what are the most prevalent forms of gender disparities faced by women in Zimbabwe?
5. Which gender issues does your organizations focus on?

Section 2: How NGOs intervene to tackle gender inequality for attainment of equality in Harare

6. How well do people in your coverage understand "women empowerment" and "gender equality"?
7. How well do they understand your role as NGOs in eradicating gender disparities in Zimbabwe?
8. Can you comment on how you think the following concepts affect your efforts to achieving gender equality in Zimbabwe? (whether they cause resistance or enhances gender equality)
    a. African

b. Religion (Christianity, Islam)

c. Globalization (cultural fusion and the melting away of physical boundaries)

d. Media (any other)

9. How does your organization fight gender disparities for gender equality and women empowerment in Zimbabwe?
10. How do you handle gender issues that are brought at your organizations but are outside your specialization? Can you comment on how you monitor and evaluate the progress of your interventions for sustainability?
11. Can you comment on how you ensure transparency and accountability of the funds to your sponsors and beneficiaries?

Section 3: Effectiveness of the intervention strategies

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12. What achievements can you point out that you have achieved in terms of meeting MDG 3 or SDGs, or the National Gender Policy?
13. Can you comment on how you get funded, donations and how you budget?
    a. 14. Do you have financial self-generating projects as an organization and what are they (In terms of staffing, leadership and resource availability, how well equipped is your organization?
14. How does the country's current state of affairs affect your intervention efforts?
    a. Economy of Zimbabwe
    b. The Political current environment
    c. Sanctions (how sanctions affect your funding)
15. What are some of the challenges that you are facing as NGOs (internal & external)?
16. How have you managed to overcome such challenges or how are you planning to overcome them?
17. One author said gender equality is a Western concept being imposed on Africa and that equal rights is strange to Africans because it conflicts with the African Traditional Religion and Christianity, can you comment on this- are you facing resistance from potential beneficiaries of your services?

18. In your view is gender equality possible in Zimbabwe and are NGOs equipped to achieve it?
19. Can you comment on your relationship with the government, given that gender equality is primarily the responsibility of the government to its citizens?
20. Can you comment on your relationship with other NGOs that are in women coalition?
21. Would you comment on the National Gender Policy and the translation of it into programs and projects that can ensure gender equality?
22. Can you comment on programs you are undertaking to increase your knowledge on gender issues (empirical research, conferences, and exchange programs etc?

Section 4: Recommendations

23. What do you think should be done by the government in terms of funding, policing and provision of other resources to lubricate your involvement?
24. Is there anything that you wish the general citizens or potential beneficiaries of your services should do to increase the impact of your interventions?
25. Are there any other internal or external factors that you think affect either negatively or positively your efforts?
26. Any additional comments that you feel may add value to this research?

The End....Thank you for your participation

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Appendix F: Ministry of Gender Instrument

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Interview Guide for the Key informant (Ministry of Gender, Women Affairs)

Introductory information (My name is Itai Mafa, I am studying PhD in Social Work at the University of Fort Hare. My topic is an Appraisal of gender NGOs promoting women empowerment and gender equality. As we discussed over the phone, I will only need 20 to 30 minutes of your time to give me your professional views on the contributions, challenges and other issues associated with women NGO.)

Section 1: Professional views on the services provided by gender NGOs.

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1. What is your position in this ministry and how long have you held the position?
2. How is your organization/ministry linked to NGOs in the gender sector?
3. What do you think are the most prevalent forms of gender disparities being tackled by NGOs?
4. Which organizations can u point out for being in the forefront of the eradication of gender disparities in Zimbabwe, Harare?
5. How well is your relationship with gender NGOs?

Section 2: Views on the forms of intervention employed by NGOs in Harare

6. Do you think people in Zimbabwe understand what Women empowerment and Gender equality is about?
7. In your view, how are NGOs intervening in the health, economic, political and education sector to attain gender equality? (do you think it is a foreign concept)
8. How well do you think people in Zimbabwe are embracing gender issues in terms of participating in the interventions by NGOs.

Section 3: Effectiveness of the interventions that they employ

9. Can you comment on the NGOs in Harare's current capacity and pace if it is enough to ensure gender equality in Zimbabwe?
10. Can you comment on the internal structures of NGOs if they are well equipped for the attainment of gender equality?- (financial resources, budgeting, auditing, staff)
11. Would say these NGOs really care about the welfare of Zimbabwean citizens or that they are pursuing their own hidden agendas?
12. Can you comment on the impact of the interventions of gender NGOs in changing the status of women in Zimbabwe?
13. How well do you think NGOs are able to translate the national Gender Policy into programs and projects that can scrap-off inequalities?
14. What are some of the highlights that have been done by these NGOs in their promotion of gender equality in Zimbabwe?
15. In your view, what are the external challenges that NGOs are facing? (funding, sanctions, the political environment, the economy?
16. What have you done so far as a ministry to support them in their fight against gender disparities especially with the demands on the MDGs 2015 peg?
17. As a department/ministry do you have any plans in the pipeline that you have put in place to increase your support to the NGOs as they fight gender inequality in Harare?
18. Do you think Christianity, culture, African Traditional Religion, and the way Zimbabweans are socialized affects gender issues in any way?

Section 4: Recommendations

19. Is there anything that you think the NGOs, government, FBOs and other stakeholders can do to lubricate the process of women empowerment for gender equality in Zimbabwe?
20. Any comments that you think may help in the current research?

Thank You...

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Appendix G: Political expert Instrument

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Interview Guide for the Key informant (Political Analyst)

Introductory information (My name is Itai Mafa, I am studying PhD in Social Work at the University of Fort Hare. My topic is an Appraisal of gender NGOs promoting women empowerment and gender equality. As we discussed over the phone, I will only need 20 to 30 minutes of your time to give me your professional views on the political state of the country and what it means for women in Zimbabwe and the NGOs in gender mainstream.)

Section 1: Professional views on the services provided by gender NGOs.

1. What is your occupation and how long have you been practicing?
2. What do you think are the most prevalent forms of gender disparities being tackled by NGOs?
3. Can you comment on the political position of women in Zimbabwe?
4. Which gender organizations can u point out for being in the forefront of advocating for increased women representation in politics?
5. How well is your relationship with gender NGOs?

Section 2: Views on the forms of intervention employed by NGOs in Harare

6. Do you think people in Zimbabwe understand what Women empowerment and Gender equality is about in relation to politics?
7. In your view, how are NGOs intervening in the political arena (do you think it is a foreign concept)
8. How well do you think people in Zimbabwe are embracing gender issues in terms of creating space for women leadership in politics?

Section 3: Effectiveness of the interventions that they employ

9. Can you comment on the impact of the interventions of gender NGOs in changing the status of women in Zimbabwe?
10. How well do you think NGOs are able to translate the national Gender Policy into programs and projects that can scrap-off inequalities in politics?
11. What are some of the highlights that have been done by these NGOs in their promotion of gender equality in politics (the 50-50 representation proposed by SADC?
12. Can you comment on the impact of these NGOs as far as bringing awareness to the need for increased women representation in politics is concerned?
13. In your view, how does the political situation in Zimbabwe affect the operations of NGOs in gender? (issue of sanctions)
14. How willing do you think MDC and ZANU PF are willing to bend in order to create space for women in their respective parties?
15. In your view, why do you think the government is hostile towards gender NGOs and that the government harasses them especially towards elections?
16. Do you think the NGOs are observing the non-partisan clause that is incorporated in the Private Voluntary Act (PVO)?

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Section 4: Recommendations

17. Is there anything that you think the NGOs, government, FBOs and other stakeholders can do to lubricate the process of women empowerment for gender equality in Zimbabwe?
18. Any comments that you think may help in the current research?

Thank You...

Appendix H: Tradition and Religious Expert

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Interview Guide for the Key informant (Religious and Cultural Expert)

Introductory information (My name is Itai Mafa, I am studying PhD in Social Work at the University of Fort Hare. My topic is an Appraisal of gender NGOs promoting women empowerment and gender equality. as we discussed over the phone, I will only need 20 to 30 minutes of your time to give me your professional views on the effects of cultural and religious aspects as far as the attainment of gender equality through NGOs is concerned.)

Section 1: Professional views on the services provided by gender NGOs.

1. What is your profession and for how long have you been practising?
2. What do you think are the most prevalent forms of gender disparities being tackled by NGOs?
3. Which organizations can u point out for being in the forefront of the eradication of gender disparities in Zimbabwe, as far as cultural and religious issues are concerned?

Section 2: Views on the forms of intervention employed by NGOs in Harare

4. Do you think people in Zimbabwe understand what Women empowerment and Gender equality is about?
5. One author said that gender equality is a foreign concept and it contradicts with Africa's tradition. To what extend do you think this statement is applicable to Zimbabwe?
6. In your view, how are NGOs penetrating the cultural and religious domains as they challenge forms of inequalities?
7. How well do you think people in Zimbabwe are embracing gender issues in terms of participating in the interventions by NGOs to dilute oppressive cultural and religious practices?

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Section 3: Effectiveness of the interventions that they employ

8. Can you comment on the NGOs in Harare's current capacity and pace if it is enough to ensure women empowerment in the cultural and religious arena in Zimbabwe?
9. Can you comment on the capacity of NGOs if they are well equipped for the attainment of gender equality and women empowerment in cultural and religious issues?
10. Can you comment on the impact of the interventions of gender NGOs in changing the social, cultural and religious status of women in Zimbabwe?
11. How well do you think NGOs are able to translate the national Gender Policy into programs and projects that can scrap-off social inequalities?
12. What are some of the highlights that have been done by these NGOs in their promotion of gender equality in Zimbabwe? (in the social, cultural and religious sects)
13. In your view, what other external challenges that NGOs are facing? (funding, sanctions, the political environment, the economy?

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Section 4: Recommendations

14. Is there anything that you think the NGOs, government, FBOs and other stakeholders can do to lubricate the process of women empowerment for gender equality in cultural and religious aspects in Zimbabwe?
15. Any comments that you think may help in the current research?

Thank You...

Appendix I: Ministry of Finance Instrument

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Interview Guide for the Key informant (Ministry of Finance)

Introductory information (My name is Itai Mafa, I am studying PhD in Social Work at the University of Fort Hare. My topic is an Appraisal of gender NGOs promoting women empowerment and gender equality. As we discussed over the phone, I will only need 20 to 30 minutes of your time to give me your professional views on the current economy situation and how it may affect the interventions of organizations such as NGOs in gender issues.)

Section 1: Professional views on the services provided by gender NGOs.

1. What is your position in this ministry and how long have you held the position?
2. How is your organization/ministry linked to NGOs in the gender sector?
3. What do you think are the most prevalent forms of gender disparities being tackled by NGOs?

Section 2: Views on the forms of intervention employed by NGOs in Harare

4. To what extent do you think people in Zimbabwe understand what Women empowerment and Gender equality is about?
5. In your view, how are NGOs intervening in the health, economic, political and education sector to attain gender equality? (do you think it is a foreign concept)
6. To what extent do you think people in Zimbabwe are embracing gender issues in terms of participating in the interventions by NGO?

Section 3: Effectiveness of the interventions that they employ

7. Can you comment on the NGOs in Harare's current capacity and pace if it is enough to ensure gender equality in Zimbabwe?

8. Can you comment on the financial base of NGOs if they are well equipped for the attainment of gender equality? (financial resources, budgeting, auditing, staff).
9. Can you comment how your ministry incorporate gender budgeting to accommodate the financial needs of women NGOs? (what policies have you put in place to facilitate women empowerment and gender equality as advocated for by gender NGOs)
10. What have you done so far as a ministry to support them in their fight against gender disparities especially with the demands on the MDGs and SDGs?
11. Can you comment on the effects of the current economic state of the country on how it is affecting the finances of gender NGOs, (donor funding and sustainability of projects)
12. Can you comment on the effects of the sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe and how they affect the international funding of NGOs?
13. As a department/ministry do you have any plans in the pipeline that you have put in place to increase your support to the NGOs as they fight gender inequality in Harare?

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Section 4: Recommendations

14. Is there anything that you think the NGOs, government, FBOs and other stakeholders can do to lubricate the process of women empowerment for gender equality in Zimbabwe?
15. Any comments that you think may help in the current research?

Thank You...

Appendix J: Human Rights Activist Instrument

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Introductory information (My name is Itai Mafa, I am studying PhD in Social Work at the University of Fort Hare. My topic is an Appraisal of gender NGOs promoting women empowerment and gender equality. As we discussed over the phone, I will only need 20 to 30 minutes of your time to give me your professional views on the rights of women, how they are being violated and the contributions, challenges and other issues associated with women NGO as restorative agents of the right to equality.)

Section 1: Professional views on the services provided by gender NGOs.

1. What is your profession and for how long have you been practicing?
2. What do you think are the most prevalent forms of gender disparities being tackled by NGOs?
3. Which organizations can u point out for being in the forefront of the eradication of gender disparities in Zimbabwe, Harare?

Section 2: Views on the forms of intervention employed by NGOs in Harare

4. Do you think people in Zimbabwe understand what Women empowerment and Gender equality is about?
5. To what extent is it important for women in Zimbabwe to understand their rights?
6. In your view, how are NGOs intervening in the health, economic, political and education sector to attain and reclaim the right to gender equality? (do you think it is a foreign concept).
7. Can you comment on the position of human rights in Zimbabwe especially in reference to women's status?
8. How well do you think people in Zimbabwe are embracing gender issues in terms of participating in the interventions by NGOs in order to enjoy their right?

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Section 3: Effectiveness of the interventions that they employ

9. Can you comment on the NGOs in Harare's current capacity and pace if it is enough to ensure gender equality in Zimbabwe?
10. Can you comment on the internal structures of NGOs if they are well equipped for the attainment of gender equality?- (financial resources, budgeting, auditing, staff)
11. Would say these gender NGOs really care about the rights of Zimbabwean citizens or that they are pursuing their own hidden agendas?
12. Can you comment on the impact of the interventions of gender NGOs in changing the status of women in Zimbabwe as far as their rights are concerned?
13. How well do you think NGOs are able to translate the national Gender Policy into programs and projects that can scrap-off inequalities?
14. What are some of the highlights that have been done by these NGOs in their promotion of the right to gender equality in Zimbabwe?
15. In your view, what are the external challenges that NGOs are facing? (funding, sanctions, the political environment, the economy?
16. In your view, what is the cause of the friction between the government and human rights activists including women NGOs?
17. What have you done so far as human rights activists to collaborate the efforts of gender NGOs a ministry to support them in their fight against gender disparities especially with the demands on the MDGs 2015 and SDGs?
18. Do you think Christianity, culture, African Traditional Religion, and the way Zimbabweans are socialized affects gender equality right in any way?

Section 4: Recommendations

19. Is there anything that you think the NGOs, government, FBOs and other stakeholders can do to lubricate the process of women empowerment for gender equality in Zimbabwe?
20. Any comments that you think may help in the current research?

Thank You...

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Appendix K: Questionnaire

Dear respondent,

You have been selected to participate in the PhD, Social Work Research project by ItaiMafa (200909691) under the supervision of Prof. Simon Kang'ethe from the Department of Social Work and Development, University of Fort Hare,South Africa. The research topic reads **An Appraisal of gender-focused NGOs in their advocacy for gender equality and women empowerment in Zimbabwe, Harare.**

In this survey, you are kindly requested to answer the questions as accurately and honestly as possible to the best of your ability. The questions are about the services offered by NGOs in this area, their successes and challenges, the nature of relationships between NGOs and the government in delivering services and what can be done by NGOs to improve in their service delivery.

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw from it any time when you feel you don't want to continue. Your responses are purely for academic purposes and no names will be mentioned or any comment that would reveal your identity.

Your participation in this research project is highly appreciated in advance and it will assist the NGOs and relevant bodies in our country in improving the services and policies in our community. There is no monetary or any other material benefit is associated with completing this questionnaire.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE SEMI-SURVEY

1. **Biographical Information (Mark appropriate box)**

Age:.....years **Sex:** Female( ) Male( )

Title: Ms ( ) Mrs ( ) Mr ( ) Dr ( ) Prof ( ) Other ( )

Level of Education: Illiterate ( ) Primary ( ) O'Level ( ) A'Level ( )
College ( ) Graduate ( ) Post Graduate ( )

Occupation: Unemployed ( ) Self Employed ( ) Civil servant ( ) Employed in Private Sector ( ) Other( )

Marital Status: Married ( ) Single ( ) Divorced ( )

2. Do you understand what gender equality mean? **Y ( )** **N ( )**

Please give a brief definition of your understanding of the term .....

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

3. Do you understand what women empowerment mean? **Y( ) N ( )**

Please give a brief definition of your understanding of the term
.....
.....
.....
.....

4. Are you aware of any NGOs focusing on gender issues in Harare? **Y ( ) N ( )**

If Yes please mention the ones you know
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

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5. Have you received any assistance from any of the gender focused NGOs? **Y ( ) N ( )**

6. Do you know anyone who has benefited from the NGO services? **Y ( ) N ( )**

7. How do NGOs that you know fight gender inequality in Harare? Mark the appropriate box.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know
	1	2	3	4	5	6
NGOs pay school fees for girl child						
NGOs dispatch gender informational pamphlets						
NGOs hold educational workshops						
NGOs give food vouchers						
NGOs provide legal representation						

NGOs challenges women subjugation practices in society						
NGOs challenges govt for political women representation						
NGOs erect developmental projects						
NGOs fight for women's health and reproduction issues						
NGOs offer child welfare assistance						

8. Which forms of gender inequality are most prevalent in Zimbabwe, where NGOs should focus on?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't Know
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Political alienation						
Domestic and social injustice						
Economic deprivation						
Vulnerable to health issues & HIV						
Educational deprivation						
Food insecurity & hunger						

9. Can gender equality and women empowerment be achieved through NGOs advocacy in Zimbabwe. Mark appropriate box

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know

10. Is gender equality a foreign concept (it conflicts with our values) in Africa and Zimbabwe. Mark the appropriate box below with **X**.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know

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11. Are NGOs doing enough to eradicate gender inequality in Zimbabwe. Mark the appropriate box below with **X**

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know

12. How do you rate the effectiveness of the following gender focused NGOs? Please mark the appropriate box below with **X**.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No effect	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't Know
	1	2	3	4	5	6
NGOs empowering women in Education are effective						
NGOs empowering women in health sector are effective						
NGOs empowering women in politics are effective						
NGOs empowering women in social status are effective						
NGOs empowering women economically are effective						
NGOs in food security are effective						

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13. How do think the following aspects affect the achievement of gender equality in Zimbabwe?

Aspect	Highly positively	Positively	No effect	Negatively	Highly negatively	Don't know
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Culture						
Socialization						
Patriarchy						
Modernization						
Christianity						
African Tradition						
Industrialization						
Media						

14. What do you think is hindering the efforts being made by NGOs in achieving gender equality?

Aspect	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Highly Disagree	Don't know
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Unclear vision by NGOs						
Misinterpretation of 'gender empowerment' concept						
Lack of trained personnel						
Zimbabwe's bad economy						
Conflicting partnership with government						
Unclear line between NGOs and govt responsibilities						
Corruption in NGOs						
Lack of government funding						
Decline in international sponsorship						
Restrictive gender policies						
Lack of monitoring and evaluation of projects						
Limited information about services provided by NGOs						
Resistance from potential beneficiaries						
Small coverage by NGOs						

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15. What do you think should be done to help NGOs attain gender equality in Zimbabwe? Mark appropriate boxes with an **X.**

Aspect	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't Know
	1	2	3	4	5	6
NGOs invest in self-financing projects						
Clarify govt and NGO responsibilities						
Increased coverage by NGOs						
Clarity on 'gender equality' and 'women						

empowerment'						
Independent audit for NGOs						
Productive partnership between NGOs and govt						
Targeting people at grassroot level						
Injection of more finances						
Hiring of qualified staff						
Improved government relations with the West						
Better relationships among NGOs						
More empirical research on current gender issues						
Initiating Research-Based solutions to gender issues						
Specialization for more efficiency						

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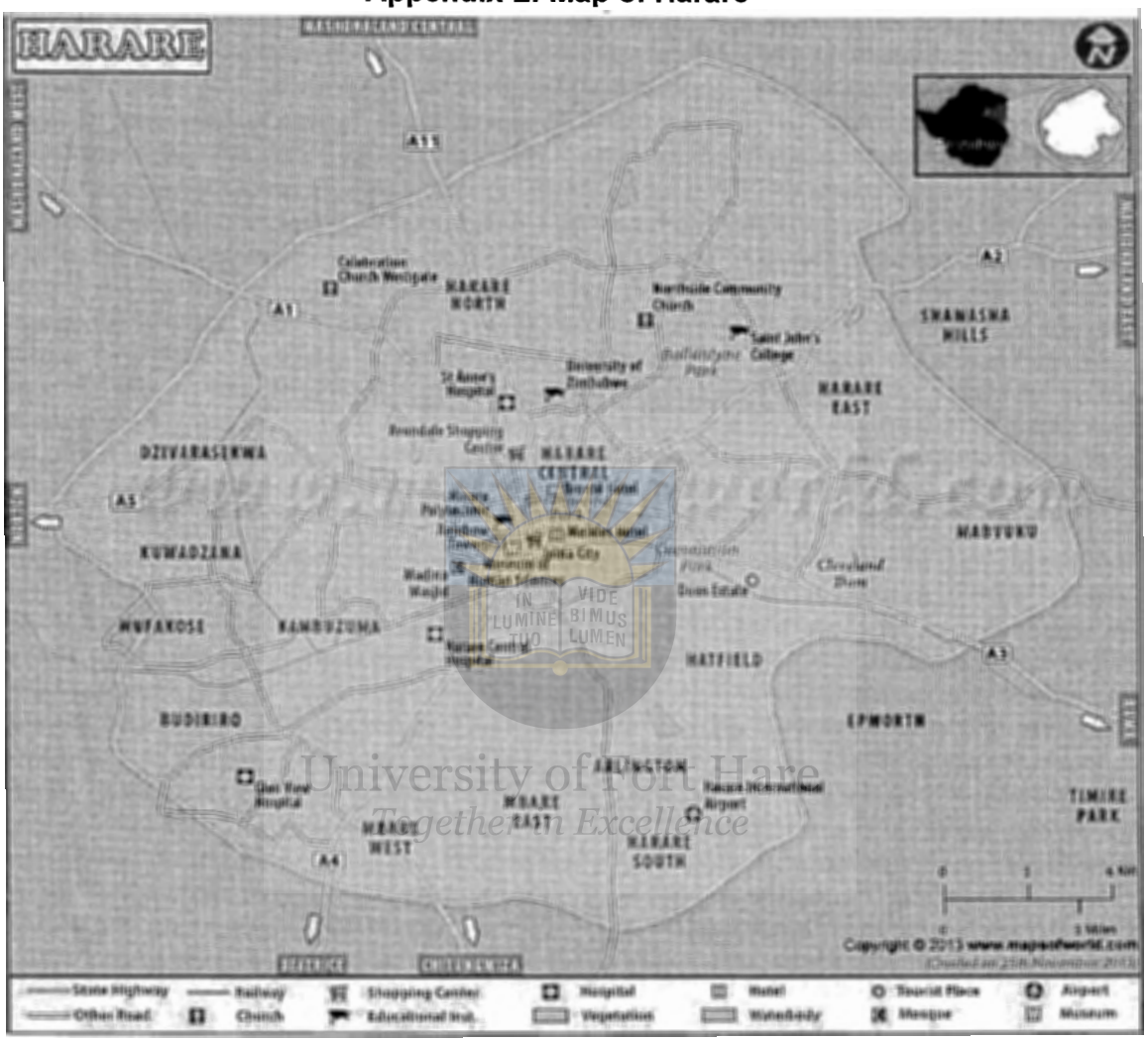
16 Please add any other comment on the recommendations to NGO, government and citizens on what could be done to achieve gender equality

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

The End: Thank You for your support and effort, honesty

Appendix L: Map of Harare



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Appendix M: WCoZ

WOMEN"S COALITION OF ZIMBABWE ORGANISATIONAL MEMBERS

No.	Name of Organisation/Acronym	Contact Person	E-mail	Tel. No.
1.	Association of Women's Clubs 3 Cranleigh Road, Hatfield	Shumirai Chakarisa	awc@mango.zw	571903 0772 252 518
2.	Adult Rape Clinic Ward C9, Parerenyatwa Hospital, Mazoe Street, Harare	Dr M. Borok Sr Kurangwa Dr Mubako	mborok@icon.co.zw adrapeclinic@yahoo.com Adelaide 0772 920 012/Sister Kuraramba 0712 728 737/Mrs Ndoro 0772 303 286/Memory 0772 899 882	707445 0712 400 716 0712 728 737 0772 751 445
3.	Connect – Zimbabwe Institute of Systematic Therapy Stand 18149, Ganges Road, Belvedere, Harare	Ennet Matanda Admin Officer Clara Makosa 0772 329 529 0773 236 095 – Evelyn	admin@connect.org.zw	741726 741719
4.	DEISAT 31 Hilside Road, Hillside	Rona Mugadza	rcmugadza@yah oo.com	0773 420 588
5.	Development Oasis Trust 318 Dublin Greene, Hillside	Ms Masango	nyashabm@yahoo.com manyerukecharity@yahoo.co.uk	852195 0773 288 255
6.	Disabled Women's Support Organisation 23 Clayton Road, Milton Park,	*Rejoyce Timire*	dwso.hre@healthnet.org.zw *dwso.hre@gmail.*	0772 408 455 *0712 886 860/0773 287*

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	Harare		*com*	*703*
7.	Disabled Women in Africa (DIWA) Box 2247, **Bulawayo**	Monica Scheffler	diwa@diwa.ws	09-69356 0772 105 462
8.	E-Knowledge for Women in Southern Africa (EKOWISA) Old Mutual Centre, 13th Floor, Cnr J. Moyo/3rd Street, Harare	Margaret Zunguze	margaret@ekowisa.org.zw info@ekowisa.org.zw	492789 0772 363 429
9.	Envision Zimbabwe Women's Trust No. 9 Belfast Road, Emerald Hill, Harare	Fay King Chung 0772415057	faykingchung@ya hoo.com nehanda69@yahoo.com smachanja@gmail.com ntariro@yahoo.co.uk	0773 583 748
10.	Farm Orphan's Support Trust 1 Addylin Road, Marlborough	Moira Ngaru 0712 869 126 0778 193 725 Shyne 0772 324 492	moira@fost.co.zw lucy@fost.co.zw abisher@fost.co.zw	309811-9
11	Federation of Africa Media Women in Zimbabwe 57 Central Avenue, Harare	Angela Makamure	asmakams@yaho o.com famwz@mweb.co.zw	0772 915 223 705548
12.	Fertility Network Zimbabwe 3890 Sanfoucci Road, **Ruwa**	Evelyn Madziba/Sarudzai Mandigo	evelynmadziba@gmail.com sarumandingo@gmail.com	0774 002 954
13.	Gays and Lesbians Association of Zimbabwe 35 Colenbrander Road, Milton Park	Patience	gender@galz.co.zw Publicatons@galz.co.zw	741736 0772 210 813 0772 444 584
14	Gender and Peace and Security Network Forum 364 Engineering, Highfield, Harare	Tabeth Ndoro 0772 491 873 Rosina Mabika	gender.peacenetworkforum@gmail.com rosinamabika@g	708366 797042

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		0772 527 292	mail.com rosinamabika@ya hoo.com	
15.	Gender Links 30 Samora Machel Avenue, 6th Floor Harare	Priscilla Maposa Country Manager	zimlocalgvt@genderlinks.org.za	0772 735 722 798600/799068
16.	Girl Child Network 16352 Bazooka Crescent P. O. Box CZA 239 Chitungwiza	Edna 0773 409 855	girlchildnetworkzim@gmail.com gcnmarketcomms@gmail.com	0772 288 251 0772 607 384
17.	Institute for Young Women Development Office No. 9, Matuka Building, 846 Chenjerai Hunzvi Street, Bindura	Glanis Changachirere 0772 481 273 Dorcas – 0776 467 935	glanisc@gmail.com youngwomeninstitute@gmail.com	0772 568 154 Nyasha
18.	Jekesa Pfungwa 44 Logan Road, Hatfield	Grace Kuvengurwa 0712 422 665/0774822950 Ms Betha Jambaya 0712 403 250/0779806931 Mary (Field Officer 0712 739 532) Mary (Accounts) 0712 711 562	jekesa@africaonline.co.zw jekesa@jpv.co.zw	570846
20	Justice for Children 66 Blackway Drive, Belvedere	Petronella Nejerama Nyamapfene 0772 686185	0772560163/4	778474 741781
21.	Kunzwana Women's Association 1 Chiremba Road, Hillside	Emmie Wade 0712 208 510	kwa@africaonline.co.zw ewade@kunzwana.co.zw emmiewade@gm	747190

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			ail.com tmatope@kunzwana.co.zw	
22.	Law & Counselling Trust in Zimbabwe 2nd Floor, St Barbra House, N. Mandela/L. Takawira St.	Blessing Nyamusamba 0772 730 970	lctz2009@gmail.com	759393 753647
23.	Musasa Project 64 Selous Avenue	Netty Musanhu 0772 100 050	director@musasa.co.zw nettymusanhu@yahoo.com	794983 / 734381/ 706284
24.	Musoromuchena Skills for Life 79 Montrose Avenue, **Chinhoyi**	Hluphekile Mujuruki	hluphe@mweb.co.zw projectskills4life@yahoo.com	067-22684 0773 291 783
25.	Nyakasikana Empowerment Trust 11 College Road, Alexandra Park	Barbara Rwodzi	rrwodzi1@gmail.com	862901 0712 770 401
26.	Pamuhacha HIV/AIDS Prevention Project **(CHINHOYI)**	Precious Nyamukondiwa	muhachaz@mweb.co.zw	067-28427 067-26285 0772 932 748
27.	PROWEB 18 Fletcher Road Mt Pleasant, Harare	Stabile Mangwengwende 0712 404 597 Florence Ziumbe 0772 215 391	proweb.forum@gmail.com Florence.ziumbe@gmail.com	2916240 0712 431 175 Reception 0712 431188 0712 431 189
28.	Regional Export Promotion Agency 11 Lincoln Road, off Natal Road Avondale, Harare		repa@zol.co.zw regionalexports@gmail.com	302497 0773 283 877
29.	Research and Advocacy Unity 2 Ernie's Lane, Monavale,	Kuda Chitsike 0772236218	admin@rau.co.zw	741511 0772 273 839

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	Harare		zw mshonge@rau.co.zw	0712 207 754 0772 236 218 0772 322 043
30.	Rozaria Memorial Trust **Murehwa**		rozariamemorialtrust@hotmail.com kudadizha@live.com 0775 336 291 – Kuda Colleta 0774 107 800	41223400220 0772 365 289
31.	Side by Side Zimbabwe 158B Samora Machel Avenue	Jessie Nyakatawa 0772 229 113	wpc@mweb.co.zw	794435/6
32.	Self Employed Women's Association of Zimbabwe 6th Floor, Anlaby House	Ms Musedekwa 0773 228 030	sewaz@mweb.co.zw	771998
33.	Self Help Development Trust 17 Nirvana Road, Hatfield	Wadzanayi Vere 0772 410 328 Zandile 0772 361 563	shdftas@africaonline.co.zw	
34.	Southern Africa Women Capacity Building Forum No. 5, Forty Second St., Malbereign	Hazel Nyamunda	hazelku200@yah oo.com sawcf@zol.co.zw	733503 0772 286 672
35.	Tag a Life International Trust (TALI) No. 30 Hamilton Heights Cnr Mazowe & Fife Avenue, Harare	Nyaradzo Mashayamombe	tag.alife@gmail.com nyarimash8@gmail.com	0773 194 271 0777 549 090
36.	Tusanani Cover Trust 27 Langiley Road, Avondale West, Harare	Thembi Mpofu	tusanani@gmail.com asbandazw@yahoo.com	307477 0772 282 893
37.	The Centre 24 Van Praagh, Milton Park, Harare	Freddy Kachote	thecentre@thecentre.org.zw	251429/790096

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38.	Vapro Trust in Zimbabwe	M Hativagone	vapro@zol.co.zw	0772 428 027
39.	Women's Action Group 11 Lincoln Road, Avondale, Harare	Ednah Masiyiwa 0772 272 422 Gamu 0773 015 267 Olga – 0778 589 565 Maria 0772 245 550/0778 455 200	wag@wag.org.zw edinamasiyiwa@hotmail.com	339756 339161 308738
40.	Women and AIDS Support Network 13 Walter Hill Avenue, Eastlea	Mary Sandasi 0733 411 851 0712 342 065 0772 376 383 AC – 0772382858 Evince 0773852979	wasn@mweb.co.zw director@mweb.co.zw	791401/4
41.	Women Farmers, Land and Agriculture Trust	Chiware Phidelis - 0773422917	wflatrust@gmail.com fbchiware@yahoo.com	0772 636 636 331044
42.	Women and Gender Research Trust 27 Langley Road, Avondale West	Sithembile Mpofu 0772 282 893	yes.sittingpretty@gmail.com	0775 376 761 302477
43.	Women Intercessors of Zimbabwe	Rumbidzai Machona		
44.	Women and Land in Zimbabwe	Thandiwe Chidavarume 0773 370 202/0773 289 764 Tendai 0773 369 111 Norman 0779 429 637 Sharon on 0772996682 or Angiline on 0772 294732	wlz@mweb.co.zw	778934/5/ 2927223 08644096267 303370
45.	Women Land and Water Rights in Southern Africads	Grace Gurira	info@wlwrsa.org frontoffice@wlwrs	783333

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	5 Raleigh Street, 4th Floor, Fidelity Towers.		a.org director@wlwrsa.org	0712 861 555
46.	Women and Law in Southern Africa Research and Education Trust 16 Lawson Avenue, Milton Park	Slyvia Chirau 0772 314 904	wlsazimbabwe@africaonline.co.zw sly@wlsazim.co.zw schirawu@yahoo.com	2928337 253001-3
47.	Women in Politics Support 96 McChlery Road, Eastlea	Sakhile Sifelani (Director) -0772 141 784 Patricia Muwandi 0775 202 296 Tsitsi 0772 942 395 Kim 0772 309 309 Mandy Nyamangara 0773 372 572	wipsuadmin@gmail.com wispudirector@gmail.com patriciawipsu@gmail.com tsitsimhlanga@g mail.com	0772 141 747 782124 0773580492 (Thando Mazvita – 0772 935871 Pauline
48.	Women Peacemaker's Programme	Margie Mavhudzi	mavudzi@yahoo.com	0772 746 804
49.	The Women's Trust 7 Walterhill Road, Eastlea	Barbra 0773 278 672 Luta Shaba 0772 418 643	director@thewomenstrust.org.zw programmes	708724 797978
50.	Women Filmmakers of Zimbabwe 9 Windermere Close, Helensvile	Yvonne Jira 0774 469 329	wfoz@mango.zw tsitsi@earth.co.zw wfoz@icapaprust.org	862355
51.	Women to Watch Network No. 9 Perth Road 4 Villa Real Flats	Gamuchirai Musanhu 0772 898 197	womentowatchzw@gmail.com ywasummit@gma	

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52	YET 12 Cass Avenue Hillside		yetprogramme@gmail.com	747986/747469
53	YOWLI/KATSWE	Talent Jumo	katswesisterhood@gmail.com katswesisterhood@yahoo.com	0772 689 001 (Winnet) 0772 978 880
54.	Young Women's Christian Association 37 Coronation Avenue, Greendale 186 Westwood Drive, Kambuzuma	Siyachitema Maruza 0773 063 287 Ms Masango 0773 220 805 Ms Sango 0772 327 030 Rejoice – 0772 470 740	rmatanga@ywca.co.zw ywcass@ywca.co.zw ywcazim@yahoo.com	486142 486703 486755 0773 220 805 0772 236 886 - Westwood
55.	Zimbabwe Amputees Association National Parks Stand, Showground	Veronica Chinyere	zaamputees@yahoo.com	0772 739 815 0733 333 566
56.	Zimbabwe Christian Movement International Trust	Meddy Nhira	zcm2009@gmail.com	797529/32 0772 260 372
57.	Zimbabwe Young Women's Network for Peace , 13 Walterhill Avenue, Eastlea, Harare	Grace Chirenje 0772 719 650	graceruvimbo@yahoo.co.uk zywnptoday@gmail.com	
58.	Zimbabwe Watch			
59.	Zimbabwe Women's Bureau 43 Hilside Road, Hillside Ms Rosina Mubire 0712 882	Linda 0773 661 524 Enia 0772 694 075	zwbtc2@gmail.com ronikamumbire@gmail.com	747433 747905

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	823;0773 327 349;0772 551 293	Tatenda 0772 940 164		
60.	Zimbabwe Women Lawyer's Association 17 Fife Avenue, Harare	Penny Zwla 077291499 5 Abigail Matsvai	zwla@zol.co.zw fiesaw@zwla.co.zw	703771 706676 708491
61.	Zimbabwe Parents of Handicapped Children's Association 2279 Patrenda Way, Glen View, Harare C/o Isheanesu Centre	Theresa Makwara	theresamakwara@yahoo.com	0772 357 936 690640
62.	Zimbabwe Women Resource Centre Network 288c H. Chitepo	Pamela Mhlanga 0772814752 Buhle Information and membership officer	zwrcn@zwrcn.org.zw memorys@zwrcn.org.zw	792450(Director) 707483 252388
63.	Zimbabwe Women Writers No. 2, Havybrown Avenue	Tainie Mundondo 0773 446 453/0713 768 632 0712 501 737 – 07777 897 62, Mai Chateuka	mtainie@yahoo.com zimwowriters@gmail.com	796374 304526
64	Africa Community Publishing & Development Trust 3rd Floor, Exploration House 145 Robert Mugabe Road Harare	Kathy Bond Stewart Community Publishing Co-ordinator	admin@booktea m.co.zw zimbookteam@gmail.com	253608/9
65	Zimbabwe Community Development Association Chinhoyi	Kay Ncube	kncube@gmail.com	0775 863 642
66	MN Solutions Suite 109, Margolis Plaza, 2 Speke Avenue, Harare	Maria Mbudzi	zimconsult@gmail.com	0712 419 881 0774 173 662

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67	ZINASU 10 Hillary Road Emerald Hill	Mr Hoyi Kurai	263 73 5 274 601/+263 77 7 518 818	0775 526 776
68	Child Resource Institute Zimbabwe 5 Clarendon Circle, Belvedere, Harare	Rufaro Kangai Sibanda Program Director 0774 202 899 Stella Satiya Program Coordinator 0773 146 940	Rufaro@icrichild.org Patience@icrichild.org	
69	Humanitarian Information Facilitation Centre 48 Harvey Brown Avenue Milton Park Harare	Virginia Muwanigwa 0772 327 955 Kathy 0779455525	info@hifc.info	250638 707959
70	Zimbabwe Chamber of Informal Economy Ass, 10th Floor, Chester House	Charity Mandishona	charitymandi@gmail.com, zcieazim@gmail.com wisbornm@yahoo.com	0775 015 748
71	Forum for African Women Educationalists Zimbabwe Chapter Curriculum Development Unit Complex (CDU) Behind ZIMSEC Cnr Brighton & Upper East First Floor, 254 Mt Pleasant		leemadyira@yahoo.com	0772 244 940
72	Centre for the Development of Women and Children 134 Harare Drive Harare	Emilia Hatendi	emiliahatendi@gmail.com Women.child@gmail.com	0773 095 162 0734 822 281

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73	Ruweso St Marks Mission, Box 812 Chegutu, Mhondoro			0773 543 590 (Lizzy Ndlovu) 0773 533 587 (Imelda Mhuriro
74	ROOTS	Beatrice Savadye	beatrice@rootsafrica.net director@rootsafrica.net fungai@rootsafric a.net	0782123563 0773560811 Fungai 0771 570 018
75	HER Zimbabwe	Natasha Msonza Operations Manager Fungai Machirori 0772 980 293	info@herzimbabwe.co.zw natasha@herzimbabwe.co.zw msonza7@gmailc .om fungairufaro@g m ail.com	08644123159 0773 067 204 0772 980 293
76	Women Politicians Incubator Zimbabwe 3rd floor Mass Media House, 19 Selous Ave, Harare	Cynthia Hakutangwi	chakutangwi@g m ail.com	0772 438 068
77	Doors of Hope Development Trust No. 2 Wetmore Highlands	Rutendo Munengami Programme Manager Magret Mazvarisa 0773812 841	doorsofhopetrust @yahoo.com rutendomunenga mi@gmail.com	0772 883 187
78	Zimbabwe Women Informal Traders Trust 6 Blankenberg Road, Belvedere	Girly Taodzera	fungie42@gmail.c om	0773 019 378
79	Legal Outreach for Women Trust (LOW)	Sophie Matimba Executive Director	sophmu14@gmai l.com	0772 904 854

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