THE ROLE OF CHURCH IN PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY: THE CASE OF
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF ZIMBABWE-WESTERN DIOCESE
NORTHERN DENARY

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ABSTRACT

The Zimbabwean society is characterized by gender disparities. Women face varied problems in the Zimbabwean context which have their roots in the patriarchal system. These problems are gender based and they range from gender based socialization to gender based discrimination in all spheres. These challenges are physical, economic, social, cultural, political, emotional and spiritual. The challenges have a different implication for women than for men although they impact the whole well being of the society. The period after 2002 witnessed a lot of clashes between policy makers and non-governmental organizations and women in general over a broad array of issues around gender equality and equity. This project will examine the church policies norms and practices that hinder or promote gender issues.
DEDICATION

To my family the MUTEMA’S who believed in me from the beginning
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I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Mr D Makwerere, my supervisor for his valuable guidance and assistance, for through his enduring support I have managed to achieve a task that was for me, extremely taxing. This work would have failed if it was not for his encouragement throughout the process. I recall at one supervision, when the academic pressure was beginning to take its toll on me he brought it to my attention that what I was experiencing was only “the beginning of a learning curve” and the whole academic journey was a real curve for me. I am also grateful to Mrs. S. Mwandiyambira for her much heeded and needed mentorship and support and also Mr. G.S. Manyangadze and Ms. F. Mutema for their support which was very helpful.

I am indebted to Mrs. S. Mananse who paved way and access to ELCZ Western Diocese-Northern Deanary, for giving me permission to carry out the study from their parish as well as using their archival documents. I am so grateful to all research assistance to all who participated through the questionnaire for they offered their precious time. My gratitude also goes to my family for their love and opportunity they granted me to study this program. Gratitude also goes to friends Tarie, Tanya, Varie and Malvern for the encouragement and constant support and not forgetting my sister and ‘hubby to be’ Nyasha who had to put up with pressure from school frustrations.
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1.0 Introduction

Chapter one introduces the background of the research the journey that Zimbabwe and gender issues have related and the prominence steps and policies it implemented to be able achieve it. The statement of problem, the aim and the objective of the research are also conversed in this chapter. This fragment also highlights the significance of the research which states the benefits that it carries and its importance to both the nation and the church sector. The limitations that the researcher faced and the delimitations will also be deliberated in this chapter

1.1 BACKGROUND

Zimbabwe is mainly a Christian country with an estimated 80% of the population being Christians (Civil Society Organisations 2002). The issues of gender inequality have perpetrated on most levels of society and they are often sanctioned under the cover of cultural and religious practices and norms. These are reinforced by male dominated structures, hence the need to work with Churches who are the religious gatekeepers. Gender equality is a social fabric which began to take shape in Zimbabwe in the 1980’s with the advent of independence from colonial rule. The post-colonial government’s policy of equal access to education provided women with opportunities to realize how they had played second fiddle to their male counterparts for a very long time. As they interacted with other women at various platforms, they acquired different gender and political perspectives and became more conscious of their unequal status to men. McFadden (2002) contends that they began to press for socio-political reforms in their favor. Another development that provided impetus for gender parity was that Zimbabwe became signatory to many conventions and protocols on gender issues, such as the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), The Equal Remuneration Convention, The SADC Declaration on Gender, and the Beijing Declaration and Platform of
Action (1995). At the UN Sponsored Millennium Summit in September 2000, 191 UN members agreed to a global contract known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDG’s).

In response to the fledgling gender equality imperatives, the Zimbabwean government set up the Ministry of Women’s Affairs, whose mandate was to deal with issues effecting women. Its inception was premised on the notion that women have been marginalized and deprived of their rightful human rights claim. The Ministry of Women’s Affairs was later mutated into the Ministry of Youth, Gender, and Employment Creation. This was an acknowledgement of a shift from the Women in Development (WID) to Gender and Development (GAD) paradigms. In line with that, a document known as National Gender Policy was crafted by the Zimbabwean government in 2002. One of the objectives of the National Gender Policy is promotion of equal advancement of women and men in all sectors of the Zimbabwean economy. The policy acknowledges that gender equality is a key development objective on its own and the area of education poses a formidable challenge to the eradication of gender disparities. Thus, the policy sets an agenda at the national level to address gender differences obtaining in the wider society.

**HISTORICAL MANDATE OF THE CHURCH**

The Church has a long history of dealing with social needs of the people of Zimbabwe and the world over. It has a proven record, which dates as far back as 2 000 years, of caring and supporting those that are in need. It has handled the challenges of refugees, war victims, poverty, education, health and other social issues. Informed by the Gospel and guided by the Holy Spirit, the Church has learnt to respond to the cry of the poor, the cry of the widow and the cry of the orphan. It has developed the tradition of becoming the true neighbour to those who fall among the robbers of this world. It does so by responding to emergencies and by working to transform social realities with
the power of the Gospel. It is therefore natural for the Church to engage in public debates and show concern over how the world is organized, ruled, and developed. It legitimately engages the way wealth is owned, controlled and distributed.

In Zimbabwe, in particular, the Church has always been engaged in nation-building through the schools, hospitals, relief and development programs established throughout the country. In many ways the Church was also heavily involved in securing the liberation of Zimbabwe from the yoke of colonialism.

Where the Gospel of Christ has become rooted in the lives and culture of the people it can only lead to social transformation. Consequently, the Church’s activities include a commitment to a social teaching ministry where it deals with general themes of public policy, the duties of citizenship and the relationship of personal and public virtue. At this level, however, the Church carries out its teaching ministry through a non-partisan and objective exposition of the biblical and ecclesiastical moral principles in a general way to enable its members to make informed choices on policies that directly affect their lives. There are times, however, when the Church needs to apply those principles in concrete policy debates or to take a clear position where there is clear violation of those moral principles, thus actively supporting specific policies and opposing others. A good example of this is the ZCBC pastoral letter on the 2005 Parliamentary elections and the joint pastoral letter of the ZCBC, ZCC, EFZ and HOCD of April 2005, A Call to Conscience, Zimbabwe Silver Jubilee 1980-2005. Such a prophetic-witness approach can mean actively advocating the dismantling of the structures that promote corruption and any other immoral behavior that negates the values of love, justice, peace and reconciliation that are central to the Gospel of Christ (the Zimbabwe we want)
ZIMBABWE COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Zimbabwe Council of Churches was founded in 1964, the mission being to enable the member churches to proclaim the good news of Christ. Thus to strive for a visible Christian unity in Zimbabwe, speak with one voice on issues of national concern and to carry out a holistic self-supporting, prophetic relevant and contextual Christian ministry in an ecumenical spirit particularly looking at preaching and teaching of the gospel in accordance with holy scriptures on ecumenical worship and spirituality on community service and renewal on justice and peace in church, in society and on sound theological reflection on education. It is a fellowship of Christian churches including Evangelical Lutheran Church and organizations that confess the lord Jesus Christ as God and savior according to the scriptures and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The mission inspire churches to engage in a sustained effort to bring total salvation to all and total elimination of poverty and move towards self-reliant and sustainable development.

Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) acknowledges that women and men are of equal value to God, both are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26). Therefore, ZCC stand by the principles of inclusiveness and interdependence between men and women. Like any other social challenge, communities are supposed to work in unison to solve the problem of gender inequality. Exclusion of women also comes in different forms including but not limited to structural settings, cultural and patriarchal orientation, economic factors, religious beliefs, and political systems that are undemocratic. The involvement of religious leaders, politicians, policy makers and implementers,
men, religious leaders, academics and others like that would go a long way in making concerted
efforts to alleviate the problem.

ZCC aims to promote the egalitarian message of Jesus with the vision of a collaborative church
with gender justice. It envisages a world where both women and men can enjoy total freedom and
equality and grow in the likeness of God. The research also aims to bring about the required change
of mind set and attitude through a proper understanding of the specific roles of both men and
women in homes, workplaces, human interactions and social relationships in the church and
society at large.

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH in ZIMBABWE**

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe (ELCZ) hereafter known as the Church was
founded in 1903 through the activities of the Church of Sweden Mission (CSM). The Church was
originally administered from Zululand, South Africa. Bishop Sundgren who died and is buried in
Zimbabwe, was responsible for the Swedish Church in Zululand and in the then Rhodesia
(Zimbabwe). The Church became independent in 1962 with the election of the first Bishop
responsible for the Church in Zimbabwe (then called Rhodesia). The Church has since after Bishop
Sundgren, been led by locally responsible Bishops to date (www.elcz.co.zw)

The ELCZ became a member of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) in 1963 when it was then
mainly concentrated in the Mberengwa, Gwanda and Beitbridge Districts where its presence was
centered on mission stations. However, the Church has since spread throughout the country with
strong presence in urban centers.

The oldest mission is Mnene Mission in Mberengwa. It houses a Primary School, a High School, a Hospital that has been designated a District/referral Hospital, and a Nurses Training School. Mnene is located on a mission farm which concentrates mainly on cattle rearing and dairy farming to raise income for the Church. Other mission stations are Manama, which houses a High School, Hospital, Bible School and Home Based Care unit; Musume which houses a High School, Hospital, Bible School and Home Based Care unit; Masase which houses a High School and Hospital; Chegato which houses a High School; Zezani which houses a High School and Masvingo which houses a Bible School. The Church runs a total of 12 schools at Primary, Secondary and High School level. Thusanang Home Based Care and Betseranai Home Based Care cater for the needs of HIV and AIDS infected and affected people as well as educating others so as to have an HIV free generation (www.elcz.co.zw)

**LUTHERAN DEVELOPMENT SERVICES (LDS)**

The Lutheran Development Services is the development arm of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe and an associate programme of the Lutheran World Federation for World Service (LWF/ DWS). The LDS is also registered as a Non Governmental Organization under the Non Governmental Organizations Act of the Government of Zimbabwe.

The LDS seeks to empower marginalized communities in Zimbabwe through Christian based, participatory, gender sensitive relief and development interventions to enable people to take direct
control of their livelihoods. The LDS assists marginalized communities acquire their dignity through training people in environmental management, water and food security, economic sector, infrastructure, health, emergencies and disasters (www.elcz.co.zw)

1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Gender inequality has been a burning issue since independence in Zimbabwe. It affects not only the 52% of the population constituted by women, but all the Zimbabweans (UNDP 2000). Government and other stakeholders are taking note of gender inequality and the harm it has caused to women, men and society. Much interest has been generated on this issue. It facilitates women’s direct engagement in public decision-making and is a means of ensuring better accountability to women. Accountability to women begins with increasing the number of women in decision-making positions, but it cannot stop there. What are required are gender-sensitive governance reforms that will make all elected officials more effective at promoting gender equality in public policy and ensuring their implementation. All the above took place but the question and music of gender equality and equity is still a dream to achieve in Zimbabwe as it is in theory still to be practiced. As the church is the backbone of most societies hence the need to analyze the policies and practices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe. As far as the church business is concerned, minutes of Standing Committee show trace of discussions on gender issues initiated in the church and this indicates that women and their hopes and fears are on agenda. There does not appear to be any diocesan monitoring and evaluation to monitor the initiatives to address problems women have and the number of women representatives in high offices is still low.
1.3 **AIM**

The aim is to assess or examine the role of the church in promoting gender equality and church’s policies and practices which have constrained or promoted gender justice and gender mainstreaming in societies

1.4 **OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH**

The main objectives of the study are to:

- To examine the church policy that promotes gender equality
- To analyse the impact of the church policy on gender mainstreaming
- To assess the challenges and opportunities for effective gender mainstreaming

1.5 **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

- What are the factors perpetuating gender inequality in the church?
- What are the religious challenges on the promotion of gender mainstreaming?
- To what extend does the church policy hinder the promotion of gender equality?
- Is the church effectively playing a facilitative role in the promotion or hindrance of gender equality?
- Has church norms and practices affected the achievement of gender equality?
1.6 SIGNIFICANT OF THE STUDY

The gender study is a process that helps the church to see its preparedness to integrate gender issues in various levels of its duties; to evaluate how fast it is gearing up towards promoting gender equality; and in general to know the degree of its sensitivity to gender issues. The purpose of a church gender research is to assess the capacity and willingness of a church to create equal rights and opportunities for women and men in all its activities. The research will provide a platform for church policy formulation that would help in promoting gender equality and gender mainstreaming in Zimbabwe. It aims not only to promote gender equality, but to build societies, institutions, policies, and relationships that are better able to sustain peace and justice and above to fulfil the Millennium Development Goal 3. The description of gender equality rings true to the mission and call of the Church; “No longer will violence be heard in your land, or ruin or destruction within your borders, but you will call your walls Salvation and your gates Praise.” [Isaiah 60:18] (Mwaura PN 1997). It is a vision that the Church will vigorously pursue to bring back prosperity to the people of Zimbabwe. Gender inequality is not a women’s issue but should concern and engage men as well. Equality between women and men is seen as a human rights issue and pre-condition for and an indicator of sustainable people centred development hence the need for it to be find greater importance on issues of strategic peace building (Andaman JWH 1993). It is hoped that the church and the public will make a sincere commitment to build a nation where all human persons are equal and free to grow in the likeness of God. The research will also equip the student with the requisite knowledge and skills in preparation for field work after attaining the degree

1.7 DELIMITATION
Two theoretical frameworks will guide this research and these are the Gender and Development Approach and the Rights Based Approach. The research will cover a small sample, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe Western Diocese-Northern Deanary in Bulawayo.

1.8 LIMITATIONS

The major limitation of this research is the small sample size. Hence the findings of this research cannot be generalised. The research should have involved many churches from all provinces if the findings were to be generalised. Due to both financial and time constraints, it was restricted to one church only and the student liaised with Zimbabwe Council of Churches where she was attached to work with mainline churches. Inexperience is also going to be a cause of concern, as the researcher will be doing her first research. Assistance from the supervisors will help the researcher overcome this problem. Another limitation is that triangulation of data collection methods was compromised by the unavailability of documents for analysis from churches.

1.9 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Gender is the social differences or roles allotted to women and to men, roles that are learned as we are growing up, change over time, and depend on our culture, ethnic origin, religion, education, class and the geographical, economic and political environment we live in. These models of behaviour set the standard and influence who we are apart from our sex. So gender describes the set of qualities and behaviours expected from men and women by their societies and form their social identity (Unifem 2000).
Gender equality: that the different behaviour, aspirations and needs of women and men are equally valued and favoured and do not give rise to different consequences that reinforce inequalities.

Gender mainstreaming is to make gender equality part of this dominant (mainstream) trend in society so that women and men benefit equally. It means looking at every step of policy – design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation – with the aim of promoting equality between women and men (United Nations, ECOSOC, 1997)

Gender justice examines power relations between women and men as the basis of gender injustice. The difference between sex and gender is still a new concept for many Christians and churches. While sex roles are biologically determined, gender roles are socially, historically and culturally constructed (Unifem 2000)

SUMMARY
Religion has a tremendous impact on women’s emancipation through its teachings, beliefs and practices of the church. Churches have the potential to promote gender justice and change members’ attitudes and beliefs regarding gender inequalities and stereotypes. Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) acknowledges that women and men are of equal value to God, both are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26). Therefore, ZCC stand by the principles of inclusiveness and interdependence between men and women.

In chapter two, the study will introduce the conceptual framework and general literature. This chapter will bring identification, interpretations and evaluation of relevant literature and activities

2.0 INTRODUCTION
Chapter two of the research focuses on the literature review and in this segment the paper discusses the protocols and the views that guide this research. The rights based approach provides an effective framework for a holistic analysis of gender development and it also gives an insight to rights which are included in this gender analysis research which are in the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa. Southern African Development Community (SADC) has come up with many instruments to support gender equality within the regional which includes the Protocol on Gender and development.

2.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Drawing from Blacledge and Hunt’s 2005 assertion that every theoretical effort is like a building block that is added to other blocks to build a house, the literature review in this study is as follows:

2.2 Women in Development Approach

Before considering the Zimbabwean case, it is important to clarify the theories used to discuss the issue at hand. The literature on women’s status and the revolution of gender equality, equity and justice in Southern Africa has been dominated by the Women in Development Approach (WID). Afshar 1991; Boserup 1970; Parpart 1993; Rathgeber 1990 argued that in order to arrive at legal equality between men and women all legal discrimination between men and women has to be eliminated. Legal education on such reforms is therefore required to make people aware that there is legal equality. The proponents of this approach argue that there should be legal reforms which abolish all discriminatory laws and policies and believe that, with this done, the playing ground
will be leveled in respect to equal access to education, employment, politics etc. This approach is valuable in that it enables a comparative analysis of the legal and social position of women to men and also enables identification of inequalities in the content of laws and policies. In reality this does not happen, so legal equality does not lead to social equality and the WID approach does not look at the differences in women and does not look at women’s lived experiences and realities in their different cultural backgrounds. The approach merely looks at the inclusion of women and not real involvement. The WID approach looks at women as the custodians of sustainable development. Historically however it is within this approach that affirmative action is recommended to raise the platform for women so that the playing field levels out, as it were. The issue of women’s spaces is tackled under this approach. So over and above leveling the legal playing field, the argument is that there is a need to create spaces where women are allowed through positive discrimination in order to become equal players. The WID approach was used in the study project to analyze the gaps existing in the law that may hinder women’s participation in the church. The approach was also used to identify how the law, although gender neutral, gives equal opportunity to men and women but has limitations in facilitating the full and equal participation of women in the church. The approach was also used to uncover the opportunities that exist within the law and human rights paradigm to leverage women’s involvement and entry into decision making positions at national level. The WID approach was also used in the study to examine how women’s developmental strengths can best be utilized in recognizing and boosting women’s participation in decision making bodies.

2.3 GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT APPROACH
This study adopts a feminist theoretical framework the gender and development, which located their roots in the universal concept of human rights. Feminism, according to Lewin, cited in Kolmar and Bartkowski (2005), is “a theory that calls for women’s attainment of social, political, and economic rights and opportunities equal to those possessed by men.” Therefore, feminist theories are defined by women as their object of concern. The ideology of feminism basically unpacks and challenges the hegemony of patriarchy, which poses as the major impediment to the advancement of women. It is important to note that feminist theories have many variants; among them is Marxist, radical, and liberal. Each one of them provides its own toolbox of ideas in explaining the most critical issues in gender discourses. Different as they are, their point of convergence is the quest to examine and explain all structures of domination in the aspects of gender, race, class, age, sexuality, or nationality. However, it is not within the scope of this study to venture into the specifics of each of the inclinations of feminist theories. Suffice it to say that this study adopts liberal orientation. Liberal feminism emerged out of capitalism and is based on individual rights. It is important to note that, to date, gender studies have emerged as a discipline in the social science faculty of many universities. It is also important to define the term, gender, as there is a tendency in some cases to use it synonymously with the word sex. Talbot (1998) clearly explains that gender is a social category and not a grammatical one. It identifies social differences in terms of behavior, roles, and activities between men and women. Sex refers to the biological differences between men and women. Therefore, the two terms cannot be conflated. Khan and Sharma (1993) traced the origins of equality to ancient Greece and said that in modern times, it has emerged as a basic principle of democracy. It signifies the possession of legal, social, and political rights by every member of the body politic. History records that inequalities, in
present day Africa, began during the Early Iron Age, around the second century when domestication of crops and animal led to a more settled way of life. Proctor and Phimister (1995) asserted that it was then that: The division of labour between men and women that had begun in gatherer societies developed into a relationship of inequality in settled farming communities. The association of women with domestic work had become a firmly established tradition…Women and children grew most of the crops and cooked the food, but they did not have many rights. Therefore, gender roles had become clearly defined in the early stages of human history. The advent of colonialism saw the further entrenchment of gender roles as men left their traditional homes to work on settler farms and mines to earn money for the paying of taxes and purchasing foreign goods. Most women were left behind to take care of children and the home. Men were preferred for their physical power in muscular jobs, such as construction of roads and railways in the early years of colonialism. It also has to be mentioned that in the backdrop of unequal gender relations, there was a semblance of equality in the patriarchal kingdoms of the Late Iron Age states in Africa. A case in point is the Congo kingdom where Queen Nsinga took over the control of the kingdom after her father’s death and ruled from 1623-1663 (Sibanda,M.,Moyana,H. ,and Gumbo,S 1994). Her diplomatic skills, military genius, and conquests were legendary in African history. As a great military heroine, she is ranked alongside great African statesmen as Changamire Dumbo, Dingiswayo, and Tshaka (Sibanda,M ,Moyana,H. and Gumbo,S 1994). It has to be qualified that such instances of equality are featured in the political sphere only. Socially gender equality was thwarted by cultural norms and values, which ensured superiority of men over women. It may be questioned how the knowledge of gender issues infiltrated into the patriarchal regions of the developing world. Indeed the phenomenon of globalization has been held responsible for the transnational movement of this information. It, thus, becomes imperative to define the term
globalization. Golden and Reinert (2006) acknowledged that it is an often discussed, but seldom defined phenomenon. Actually, it is fraught with definitional problems. They however define it as, an increase in the impact on human activities of forces that span national boundaries. These activities can be cultural, political and technological or even biological as in the case of disease. Therefore, globalization is a multi-faceted phenomenon. The process of globalization is central to an understanding of the contemporary world, where such aspects as gender and development, conflict, peace, and security, among others, are debated. Gender equality stands as one of the most celebrated developments of this era and it is validated by our basic sameness as human beings. As a way of responding to the global dictates of gender equality, the Zimbabwean government adopted gender mainstreaming as a mode of provisions of the gender knowledge in various aspects of society, including the church system. Gender mainstreaming has several meanings, depending on the focus. One of the meanings proffered by the National Gender Policy (2002) of the Zimbabwean government is, integrating gender dimensions (women’s and men’s concerns) into development programming and planning, development models.

2.4 The Rights Based Approach

The African Union Africa has taken initiatives to eliminate discrimination against women and promote gender equality. One of such initiatives is The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa. The Audit of Gender Related Policies in Southern African Churches (2010) noted that the rights based approach provides an effective framework for a holistic analysis of development. This current gender audit of practices in Zimbabwean churches also adopts this instrument. It includes social, cultural, religious, political and economic dimensions. This approach integrates the human rights concepts in the development
process, and the teachings and practices of churches. The following is a summary of the rights in the protocol included in this Gender research.

• Article 2 Elimination of Discrimination against Women

• Article 5 Elimination of Harmful Practices

• Article 6 Marriage

• Article 7 Separations, Divorce and Annulment of Marriage

• Article 9 Right to Participation in the political and Decision –Making Process

• Article 12 Right to Education and Training

• Article 14 Health and reproductive Rights

2.5 Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Gender and Development

Southern African Development Community (SADC) has come up with many instruments to support gender equality within the region. The Protocols on Gender and Development has been adopted by member state countries within the region, Zimbabwe included

Articles 1-3: Principles and Objectives

These cover definitions; general principles and objectives. The SADC Gender Protocol aims to bring together existing commitments; enhance these through specific timeframes, create effective mechanisms for implementation; sharing of best practise and deepening regional integration

Articles 4 – 11: constitutional and legal rights
This provides for all Constitutions in the region to enshrine gender equality and to give such provisions primacy over customary law. All laws that are discriminatory to women are to be repealed. It also provides for equality in accessing justice, marriage and family rights and the rights of widows, elderly women, the girl child, women with disabilities and other socially excluded groups.

**Articles 12-13 : governance (representation and participation)**

This Article provides for the equal representation of women in all areas of decision-making, both public and private and suggests that this target be achieved through Constitutional and other legislative provisions, including affirmative action. It further stipulates that Member States should adopt specific legislative measures and other strategies, policies and programmes to ensure that women participate effectively in electoral processes and decision-making by, amongst others, building capacity, providing support and establishing and strengthening structures to enhance gender mainstreaming.

**Article 14: education and training**

This article provides for equal access to quality education and training for women and men, as well as their retention at all levels of education. It further provides for challenging stereotypes in education and eradicating gender based violence in educational institute
2.6 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.6 GENDER JUSTICE

The initiative of the research is in line with the expectation for the church to fight all sorts of injustices including gender injustice. This research focuses on one specific aspect, which is a key to many of the unbalanced relationships throughout society. The bible says Christians in Ecclesiastics 5:8 should challenge injustices and this includes gender injustice. Churches should promote equality as that vision is part of the message of Jesus: baptism does not distinguish between men and women. Literature from work of feminist theology and the bible itself justifies gender justice.

Gender justice advances the discussion on how women are seen, how their role in church and society is understood and how to confront injustices against women. It examines power relations between women and men as the basis of gender injustice. The difference between sex and gender is still a new concept for many Christians and churches. While sex roles are biologically determined, gender roles are socially, historically and culturally constructed. The construction of gender roles determines a person’s quality of life, the space she/he occupies in the home, church and society. Gender roles are not a fact of nature. They can be changed, and often need to be where they are unjust. The creation story affirms that women and men alike are created in God’s image (Gen 1.27). However, we live in broken relationships where women are undervalued and treated as inferior to men. Gender injustice is, like racism, a structural sin that must be acknowledged and eliminated (Douglas J D 2003)
The shift from “women” to “gender” signals that the struggle for justice in male-female relationships cannot remain a women’s struggle. Gender justice speaks to the need for men to work in partnership with women in this struggle. Gender justice is recognizing that women and men are created by God, redeemed by Christ and gifted by the Spirit without distinction or partiality. Churches have often been silent about gender injustice and women’s vulnerability, and have not seriously considered the consequences of this silence. When women are disempowered, the whole society suffers. This is because there is no women contribution to the development of the society. Women’s experiences of Jesus in the gospels are ground-breaking. Jesus draws near to them, befriends them and shares their lives, offering them warmth, tenderness, compassion and understanding, and restoring them to dignity as children of God. The women who go to pay their last respects to Jesus after his crucifixion are the first to receive the good news of his victory over death. The Bible calls us to see both women and men as full persons and to go beyond traditional stereotypes for God. “In the baptismal formula preserved in Gal 3.28, we see that all the traditional human barriers fall in the community of those baptized into Jesus Christ, ‘There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.’ Women who see this vision of God’s reign, the new creation, are drawn by God’s future, not confined by a patriarchal past.” Feminist theologians, Sharon James (2012) have made a significant contribution to theology by introducing new approaches to biblical interpretation. They have looked to the Bible for liberation perspectives not only for women, but also for all others who are marginalized, for example, because of race, ethnicity, class, caste or age. They have also shed new light on the place of women in the Bible and in church history. Texts about men and women show the intersection of the stories of ancient and modern women living in patriarchal cultures. Feminist theologians have been concerned about the traditional and at times pejorative
perception of women in Christianity. There has been a tendency to link women with sin and men with spiritual matters. In some cases women have been associated with earthly desires which distract them away from spiritual matters. This has led to unequal treatment, denying women the same opportunities as men (Sheerattan-Bisauth 2008)

The re-examination of gender roles within the church has opened up discussion on the structure of the church and the value placed on different ministries and forms of service. Liberation theology has challenged the church on its relevance to the poor. The search for a Christian church which is really representative of the poor and shares in their struggles and expectations, their sorrows and hopes, must inevitably include the issue of church order and church structures. The poor feel that church structures are foreign to them. Similarly, it is argued, women are not properly reflected in the structures of the church. Leadership in all our churches is still primarily the prerogative of men. In many churches women are still excluded from the ministry of word and sacrament and from other ministries such as elders. Their role in our congregations is often perceived as an extension of their home life: cleaning and decorating church buildings, teaching Sunday school, preparing and serving meals and snacks, fundraising and charitable work. Throughout history, women have enriched the church. However, our churches have often failed to embrace the gift of community that is ours in Christ. They have used the institutional power to control worship, the interpretation of scripture and access to leadership roles that subordinate women. Today women still struggle to bring fresh impetus and insight to enrich our churches and to ensure greater participation in church life, especially in decision-making. If our churches need to confess and repent of their role in sustaining patriarchal structures that suppress women and keep them from fully sharing their God-given gifts, they need also to examine their relationships with society. How can our churches offer
life in fullness if they are blind to gender injustices within the communities they serve? Our churches must demonstrate that the Spirit of God is alive and dynamic, sustaining those who struggle for justice and enabling transformation to occur. Life in fullness for all! To include women in this “all” is to affirm the vision of restoring and enriching life by breaking down the walls that separate women from men and subordinate one to the other. It is to affirm the church as the people of God, women and men in partnership, called to work together for dignity and genuine community based on love, understanding and right relationships (Douglas J D 2003)

2.7 Why is it important that women Participate In Decision Making

Women make up 52% of the world’s population and yet they are least represented in political constituencies. Women are only represented in local governance by % worldwide. Statistics the world over where they are available have shown that women are the least represented in local councils and local governance structures. According to Graff I, (2003:10), it is evident that if women are to enjoy justice, freedom, equal rights with men, they themselves have to do the necessary work and obtain these goals. No one, no matter how powerful, will be able to give women de facto equal rights and control of their own lives; these are rights every woman has to strive for. Political participation is one of the ways through which these goals can be achieved. There are other factors why women should participate in political decision making, these being that women’s participation will benefit larger groups of people including children. Women constitute a vast unused resource that is lying idle and yet this resource can be tapped into, for the benefit of the larger society. Women also view and value political issues differently from men. However in the research project there was evidence to show that women are inclined to “soft” issues such as welfare, equality, environment, education and health. While men show interest in
“hard” issues such as policy, economy and transportation among others. Some assert that an increase of women in decision making positions will reduce the extremely high level of corruption we find in many countries. Women are simply believed to be more honest than men. However, it has proved difficult to find scientific evidence of this presumption. Graff I., (2003:11)

2.7.2 The church and law

According to Synod (2000) the church is an institution which is derived from the Western tradition and arose in the culture of Europe and developed its practices and structures there. In being brought into Africa, it carried with it its past history. P. Bourdieu (1990) argues that culture ensures the active presence of past experiences, which, though deposited in each organism in the form of schemes of perception, thought and action tend to guarantee the correctness of the practices and their constancy over time, more reliably than all formal rules and explicit norms. The patriarchal and hierarchal system of the European has easily been integrated into Africa into the already existing systems of male supremacy. In a similar way the culture of customary law has also been imported and integrated easily into traditional patriarchal patterns. Just as courts are presided over by a hierarchy of judges, the church is presided over by bishops. According to his research he argues that the church exists in a relationship with the laws of the country and especially how it relates with customary laws. It tends not to challenge areas which it may work against the liberation of women but upholds whatever is decided in the community but however it has teachings which are in conflict with traditional culture.

WLSA research relating to the effects of the church on women status points out that while the formal justice system (the system presided over by the judiciary and governed by constitutional law) shows a greater regard for women’s rights is contrary to the biblical teachings for example a woman is expected to submit to her husband and suing him may regard to failure to submit. Betty
Ekeyo (1994) in her research contextualizes this by showing how teachings on Ephesians 5:22 and Colossians 3:1 lead women to accept an inferior status and put up with the difficult marriage when she said ” in a very subtle way the church encourages women to endure the hardships of marriage relationship as a necessary martyrdom”. In this instance it can be argued that the church is in support with customary law using its own legal code the bible to maintain the discriminatory system.

**METHODOLOGY**

**3.0 INTRODUCTION**
This chapter will outline the research designs and the research instruments highlighting their advantages, target population, sampling, limitations and the ethical considerations which guided the process of research and the feasibility of the study. A clear elaboration of how data was gathered is also given in this chapter.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used for this analysis. Qualitative research tends to provide in depth information and intimate details about the particular case being studied. This is an excellent way to determine how church policies have an effect on society at the micro and macro level. According to Bromley (1990), it is a “systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events which aims to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest” (p. 302). The unit of analysis can vary from an individual to a corporation. While there is utility in applying this method retrospectively, it is most often used prospectively. Data come largely from documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant observation and physical artifacts (Yin, 1994). Quantitative research is based on the measurement of quantity or amount. It is applicable to phenomena that can be expressed in terms of allowing for the gathering and analysis of quantifiable data such number of female pastors and bishops.

3.2 SAMPLE FRAME

The research made make use of snowballing as a sampling technique. This technique according to Salganik M.J and Heckathorn D.D (2004) is a method used to obtain research and knowledge from
extended associations through previous acquaintances. It uses recommendations to find people with the specific range of skills that has been determined as useful. It is basically, respondent driven. This technique makes use of the major actors which will to the other major individuals who are of importance to the research.

3.3 TARGET POPULATION

Babbie (1995) defines target population as the aggregation of elements from which a sample is selected. The population for this research is centered on one of the member churches of Zimbabwe Council Of Churches (ZCC) Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe (Western Diocese) in Bulawayo. The population is estimated 300 full members.

3.4 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

3.4.1 QUESTIONNAIRE

Self-administered questionnaires containing both closed and open-ended questions were utilized, where possible, to gather some of the data. Inclusion of open-ended questions provide for the expression of respondents’ views and understanding of issues as well as explanation for answers given to closed questions. A questionnaires was used to gather information from the pastors and administrators.

3.4.2 INTERVIEWS
Researcher will also make use of interviews and in this case it will be pastors and administrators. Bryman (2001) explains structured interview entails the administration of an interview schedule by an interviewer. The aim is for all interviewees to be given exactly the same context of questioning. This means that each respondent receives exactly the same interview stimulus as any other. The goal of this style of interview is to ensure that interviewees’ replies can be aggregated.

Advantages of interviews are they are useful to obtain detailed information about personal feelings, perceptions and opinions, they allow more detailed questions to be asked, they usually achieve a high response rate respondents’ own words are recorded and ambiguities can be clarified and incomplete answers followed up.

3.4.3 Focus Group Discussions

Focus group discussions were used extensively during this review to gather data on the experiences, perceptions, attitudes and views of key groups of informants: women, youths and men. Information gathered by this means was critical to an understanding of gender issues in the preaching’s, teachings and church programs. Its advantages includes its relatively quick and inexpensive, the researcher obtains background information, it is an investigative approach, client can participate in the discussions if appropriate and it’s easy to accommodate contingencies by changing scenarios in mid-stream if necessary. At the same time focus group discussions certify for the expression of particular concerns and experiences of group members. Such discussions have utility in collecting data from informants who may be unable to complete questionnaires and where there are time limitations which do not allow for numerous in depth interviews Cohen, L. Manion, L. & Morrison K. (2000).
3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

This gender analysis research made use of triangulation. Yin, R. K. (1984) defined triangulation as a powerful technique that facilitates validation of data through cross verification from more than two sources. In particular, it refers to the application and combination of several research methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon. By combining multiple methods, and empirical materials, researchers can hope to overcome the weakness or intrinsic biases and increase reliability and validity. Quantitative Data were analyzed and are presented through both tables and narrative descriptions. Qualitative data were analyzed using a thematic approach. The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, and the rights based approach provided basis for the identification of themes.

3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Adherence to the ethical guidelines reduced the exploitation of subjects by the researcher thus the right to knowledge must be balanced by the rights to personal and community integrity and privacy (Peiletal 1982). Throughout the data collection process, great care was taken to ensure that confidentiality and individual privacy of the participants were upheld. Informed consent requires informing participants about the overall purpose of the research and its main features, as well as of the risks and benefits of participation and this was carried through a letter wrote to the bishop and follow up meetings with the head of denomination. In this case consent was given in written format. In ensuring confidentiality the researcher will not report private data that identifies participants. One of the safest ways to ensure anonymity is will to record the names of the participants at all and to provide an information sheet that asks for verbal rather than signed consent.
3.7 **LIMITATIONS**

The major limitation of this gender analysis research is the small sample size. Hence the findings of this research cannot be generalized. The research should have involved many churches from all provinces if the findings were to be generalized. Due to both financial and time constraints, it was restricted to one church. Another limitation is that triangulation of data collection methods was compromised by the unavailability of documents for analysis from churches and some pastors were busy.

3.8 **FEASIBILITY OF THE STUDY**

The success of the study is given due accreditation to Mrs. E. Mananse of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (Western Dioceses- Northern Deanary for linking the researcher with the pastors in her church as she is the National Executive of the church and ZCC.

**SUMMARY**

This chapter has overall looked at the research design exploited, target population, sampling and revealed the data collection instruments used in the study and highlighting the advantages and disadvantages of each instrument. This chapter highlighted the journey the researcher took to come up with the following findings.

4.0 **FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS**
**INTRODUCTION**

Chapter four of the research presents the actual findings that were derived from information and data collected in this research. The aim of this chapter is to provide information on what transpired during the structured interviews, focus group discussions and questionnaires. Data analysis was both quantitative and qualitative and triangulation was used to increase reliability of the study.

**4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC ATTRIBUTES AND RESPONDENTS**

A total of thirty people responded to the structured interviews, focus group discussions and questionnaires from Bulawayo, Matabeleland North and South. Table 1 below is a summary of the participants 14 were women, 9 men, 6 youths and 1 bishop

**Fig 1** Summary of participants
Fig 2 Graph of sex of bishops, pastors and administrators

The graph above indicates how the clergy remains male dominated. There is only one bishop interviewed and a male. Of all the pastors who participated, 75% were males whilst 25% were female. This shows that there are gender inequalities in terms of women’s participation in decision making and clergy work in Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe (Western Diocese).

4.2 Objective 1 to examine the church policy that promotes gender equality

4.2.1 Gender

7 out of 8 which is 87.5% of the pastors returned the questionnaire and most pastors indicated that they are clear about what gender is but the definitions of gender were not so clear as some referred to gender as the difference between a male and a female which is sex only three mentioned about the socially constructed roles of males and females. In the focal group discussion interview carried
out with youths, 33.3% of them indicated that gender was about women and is mostly used when referring to women. Most women and men in focus groups were not very clear with the meaning of gender to the extent that some indicated that “not sure” as their response. These finding indicates that there are misconceptions surrounding the term gender itself as many indicated that the term gender refers to the biological differences and some even referred it to a women’s struggle. This entails that the term gender and the initiatives in place will be a bizarre as the foundation already lacks clarity on the definition.

4.2.2 Gender equality, equity and gender justice

Most pastors indicated that gender justice has been partly achieved in the church but there are some remaining concerns such as having female bishops and more female pastors. Pastors illustrated that they are clear about what gender equality means for their own attitudes and behavior and also on how gender knowledge and skills apply to their areas of work.

In terms of leadership pastors noted that the hierarchy which includes the bishop and executive is not clear about what is required of them in terms of gender equality and gender justice. This highlights how gender equality and equity are issues still roaming around in this sector as the leadership is not aware of their own requirements and role they can play to fulfill this MDG goal. Pastors cannot implement any change without the Bishop’s concern and if the Bishop is not aware on what is required of him on this issue then there is a problem. Furthermore the Pastors articulated the sureness that their bishop is taking a gender equality approach which can be achieved and action is in place to fully achieve it.
In addition the leadership is clear about the expectations of supervise regarding gender equality as this has been fully achieved on the contrary on a minimum level gender equality has been partly achieved although they remain concerns about some aspects.

The findings on the question of the church having a constitution that supports gender equality and equity, two out of the three administrators indicated that they had a policy in place. This was contrary to the majority of pastors, and the Bishop who admitted that their church supported gender equality and equity although some of these policies are not written down. As a follow up to the question the administrators were asked to submit gender policies for document analysis and all of them failed to do so which only confirms that such policies are not in place.

All the administrators indicated that they had individuals monitoring the implementation of policies and they all maintained that gender is taken into consideration when strategically planning activities. Despite all the above claims, in the absence of documents to affirm this it becomes difficult to confirm their claims.

4.2.3 Leadership and power

On the question of leadership structure why is it structured like that, the findings from Bishop, pastors, women and men indicated that leadership is structured from top to bottom which is like a tree; the top structure consists of the Bishop who is the head of the tree followed by the Deans, pastors’ deacons and then lays leaders. It was also noted that it is because they are Episcopal churches and that is the reason why the Bishop is the head of the church. Some women and men purported that the leadership is structured in such a way so that men and women are involved in the decision making so as to value gender equality. Findings also noted that the Bishop is the
chairperson of the council and the assembly is chaired by female lay person to strike the balance between men and women.

Responding to who sets the agendas and determines priorities and why, the Bishop, Pastors, Men, Women and the youths noted that the executive committee being the church council or assembly usually sets the agendas.

4.2.4 Marriages

Pertaining to marriages, findings from all groups indicated the church recognize marriage when one had the church wedding which can only take place after the Bride price negotiations known as Lobola payments are done. Interviews with women and men proved that a couple can get married by simply inviting the pastor to join them even at their home. It was noted however that a few knew of this benefit for most waited until they could afford a wedding ceremony.

When asked about the church’s position on Polygamy. Findings from all the groups indicated that the church do not support polygamy, it is prohibited. The participants also noted that the constitution of the church state the principle of monogamy and it believes that marriage is by divine institution. However tolerance is given to those who got born again or joined the church already on polygamy but wedding is only preferred to the first wife only the rest will not be allowed to wedding. The women also mentioned a striking point this issue is been partly achieved as some of the men in the church have underground affairs known as “small houses”

Responding to church’s position on divorce, all groups noted that divorce is not allowed. If a couple have problems they are encouraged to go for counseling and they have a marriage counseling desk which is tasked for that only with the help of their pastors. When asked about the church’s position on Teenage pregnancy, responses from Bishop, Pastors, Mother’s Union
President, Women, Men and the Youth avow that churches do not allow it, the church encourage abstinence, “thus no to sex before marriage”. If a teenage gets pregnant they are put under the church discipline usually they are suspended from certain church activities for some time such as losing their posts but they are not expelled from the church. The groups also highlighted that the church has a youth advisory board which advises the youths on such issues before they are put under the church disciplinary board where one is exempted from the church duties. The youth accused the parents of playing in vital roles in promoting abortions and driving pregnant youth out of the church. The youth said older women are very harsh towards those with pregnancies causing them to opt out of the church. The African tradition of inheriting the widow of brother is not allowed by the church.

4.2.5 Domestic Violence

Most pastors, bishop, women, men and the youth asserted that the church does not allow domestic violence and perpetrators are put under the church discipline where one cannot participate in church activities. Findings also highlighted that the church has have a disciplinary board which involves the legal practitioners. Spiritual and legal counseling is provided as well and they emphasized that counseling is at times partaken in order to reach a compromise and map out the cause of the violence and help the victim and the perpetrator build up the restrained relationship. Pastors also play a part in this field through their teachings and preaching’s on the effects of domestic violence. Finding also indicated the church follow their church constitutions when resolving internal conflicts. In addition there is also a program for ecumenical church leaders
Forum which is called Conflict Management, Resolution and alleviation Program that specifically looks at peace building and conflict resolution in churches which involves this issue.

4.2.6 HIV and AIDS

When asked if they have any programs that relates to HIV and AIDS in the church the bishop, pastors, women, men and youths affirmed they do have programs that relate to HIV and AIDS. These programs include home based care and feeding the orphans which is done on the third week of every month by the youth.

4.2.7 Health issues

When asked about health and reproductive choices of church members, Finding from the Bishop, Pastors, Women, Men and the youth indicated that the church support reproductive health. The findings indicated that the church even have a healthy department to look into reproductive issues which invites doctors and nurses occasionally to advice on issues of concern. However findings also illustrated that the church does not speak openly on reproductive issues.

Responding to the church’s position on abortion, the findings indicated that the church discourage/condemn abortion as Abortion is said to be a sin. Some asserted that “abortion is a murder in its pure form, we respect the sanctity of human even the unborn”. The church’s emphasized that children are a gift from God. If someone takes part in abortion they are put under the church disciplinary committee where they are suspended of any church duties. However the majority of the youths noted that most abortions are a result of pressure from parents. Thus parents force their children to abort because of humiliation they cannot face the rest of the church members especially if they occupy a position of power in the church.
On the use of contraceptives, findings from the Bishop, Pastors, Mother’s Union President, Women and Men indicated that the church encourage the use of contraceptives among the married. They noted that contraceptives encourages child spacing to reduce poverty. However they all stipulate that contraceptives can only be used by the married couples only. The debate was however drawn of the use of condoms as some were saying are not encouraged as they can encourage infidelity and on their own they draw tension between a couple as issues of trust are of concern. The findings indicate that churches promote faithfulness and the saying “stick to one partner”. Furthermore condoms were only encouraged to be used in special cases where one partner HIV/AIDS infected.

On the church’s position on care giving, findings from most pastors aver that they are helpful divine hand which assist the under privileged. In the church caregivers are women and they help out in taking care of the sick and the elderly.

4.2.8 Capacity building

Responding to the main strength of their parishes with regards to issues of gender justice most administrators posit that their church has a gender justice programme. Peace and reconciliation programme, an elite membership which is prepared to learn and adjust, a formal structure which is hierarchical and in some churches a gender project in place which is spearheading gender issues at national level.

4.3 Objective 2 to analyze the impact of the church policy on gender mainstreaming

4.3.1 Gender roles in church
Most of the responses pertaining gender mainstreaming articulated that the majority of the pastors do take note of the issue seriously. Most women noted that anyone can take any position if they qualify and the qualifications are usually five O levels. The youths asserted that as youth they have an education desk which takes note of the qualified persons and help them attain the positions which require their knowledge. The challenge is on the youths who have the qualifications. One of the pastors indicated that they have employed a permanent female youth in their parish. On contrary one pastor admitted they do not take into account gender mainstreaming in the church it’s only on paper in his parish.

The findings also indicated that there are various roles and tasks ascribed to women and men in church such as being a member of the general assembly which is responsible for policy making. Findings from the church administrators indicated that there has been an increase in the representation of women in senior management positions in the in the past two years. The church administrators also alluded that there are proactive strategies implemented to promote women into senior management positions and they also outlined that they a female reverend who is an officer in the national executive of the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC).

4.4 Objective 3 to assess the challenges and opportunities for effective gender mainstreaming

4.4.1 Representation and participation of women in decision making

Variations in terms of women’s participation in decision making within the church were noted from both interviews and questionnaires. The Bishop and pastors affirmed that women participate fully in decision making within the churches. Quoting the bishop he said “through the various ministries and groups in the parishes there are always women representatives”. Pastors also delineated that there is a deliberate effort to use affirmative action to have women representations
in highest decision making boards within the churches. Findings from women themselves indicated that only a minority is involved in decision making the majority of women are not in leadership positions, but rather they clean the church, organize chairs in an orderly manner and also partaking care giving. Most men in the Deanary noted that churches were responding to global, regional and national changes regarding women’s position in society. They however acknowledged that there is still a wide gap in terms of parity between men and women in decision making and they also highlighted that the gender issue is a revolution and change does not take place over night

The Bishop also noted that women are involved in decision making and he also credits his church for having the only woman representative in the executive board. He also noted that in some cases there is affirmative action whereby women have reserved seats. In addition most men noted that women have women representatives in the standing committee which is decision making board in Deanary. Most women noted that women are involved in the decision making board through being elected as the parish hold elections, however as much as they are elected most women indicated that they tend to vote for men. This is because they do not trust each other, they have low self-esteem and some admitted they believe men are better than women.

On gender sensitive leadership development (programs), the majority of Pastors noted they do not have gender sensitive leadership development programs. However a few articulated they do have gender sensitive leadership programs. The programs are reported to be successful because the church articulated they have started walking the talk, currently some of the Diocese have female pastors, assemblies ‘chairpersons at Diocesan and other committees and a moderate number of female pastors still at college who will be finishing soon

4.4.2 Status of Women in Church
When questioned about the current status of women, all groups despite being men, women, pastors and the bishop all noted that women are considered as equal human beings created in the image of God. They are recognized as leaders and the constitutions are currently taking into account gender sensitive issues. However it was also noted that women can have equal opportunities in any post in the church as long as they qualify and are willing. When asked if there are any policies that are enshrined in gender, the majority of the pastors alluded they do not have any policies currently in place that are enshrined in Gender and all concluded that the church is still in the process of formulating the policies.

4.4.3 Coordination and collaboration among women’s and men’s ministries

When asked why it is appropriate to have different ministries for men and women, most administrators noted that separation increase ease of communication. They noted that “women express themselves better when they are on their own and men also deal with their issues easier when they are on their own as well”.

On the question of issues the church addresses concerning men and women the administrators’ highlighted that distribution of resources, conflict resolution, family welfare, HIV and AIDS are addressed. They further enunciated that these issues are integrated into the church’s policies and programs through the bible study, church gatherings and testimonies.

According to the administrators, pastors are regarded as the key players in their churches. The administrators indicated pastors because they are responsible for implementing church projects alongside church members.

When asked about opportunities in the church that can promote gender justice most administrators articulated that workshop for all pastors can be organized to enable them to have skills of
incorporating gender justice in the bible study. There should be facilitation on gender justice at all gatherings. Most administrators avow that their major constrain is financial resources. Most women and the youth articulated Traditional beliefs, cultural traits and also the use of technological advancement. The bishop also agreed that they do have a challenge in accepting new ways of doing things. More so when it comes to election of delegates into the assembly women should participate as well.

4.5 ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

4.5.1.2 Marriage

From the findings one can note that Lobola is seen as an offering of thanks to the bride’s parent for bringing her up and this assertion promotes equality and credits the church’s policy to be playing a vital role in the promotion of women ‘s rights as in the home there will be equality. This church wedding will regard your operation in the church office in any post. The church promotes union between men and women and this dismisses same sex marriage and they recognize a marriage that is church commissioned. The church has always had a strong stand against polygamy and they always emphasized on monogamy. The churches believe in “till death do us part” once you are in you are in and subtly encourages women to stay in destructive marriage relationships for two reasons; one is the teaching on divorce and the other the teaching on submissiveness.
Furthermore the church’s policy on marriage states that marriage is a sign of the covenant of salvation. This implication of the ruling on divorce discourages women from seeking help in abusive marriages hence oppression and violation of their rights will still be an issue.

On the question of marriage one can note that the church the tradition of inheriting a widow is condemned because it gives way to the transmission of HIV and AIDS as well as oppresses women. This is supported by the SADC protocol on gender and development article 10 which states that a widow and widower shall have the right to remarry any person of her choice and shall also have protection against all forms of violence and discrimination based on her status.

**4.5.1.3 HIV AND AIDS**

The church have a desk that deal with these issues and also have a Centre called Njube training which cares for both the infected and affected by offering support in material and education. Workshops are held to train people and offer support to members.

More so the church have established HIV and AIDS desk where information pertaining to the virus is disseminated to church members and the community at large. This desk comprises of professional such as nurses and any people in the medical field and who is knowledgeable in this field. The elderly are also assisted with food and household chores such as washing and cleaning and this is mainly done by the youths, however only those who are open about their status receive help.

**4.5.2.1 leadership and power**

The history of ELCZ church structures men play a dominant role. In 2004 – 2006 showed an increase of females in the standing committees responsible for running of the Deanary. In 2011
the national headquarters had four females which is an increase but one can argue that the women held positions of less influence as one was the accounts clerk, another a book keeper, a secretary and a malaria coordinator against men who were the presiding bishop, health coordinator, general secretary and evangelism coordinator. At parish level many women are elected to be diocesan councils and as well as managers and church wardens but one can argue that while women run the diocesan the real power is invested into the hands of men as the diocesan councils have no power in dictating daily church policies as a whole

4.5.2.2 Capacity building

From the finding from the administrators the church is playing a role in the ensuring of gender mainstreaming through plenty programs. One should note that there are also shortcomings in parishes with regard to gender justice such as the patriarchal system which perpetuates male dominance, the conservative nature of the churches and also issues of traditional culture that looks down upon women. These are some of the issues that are perpetuating gender issues in the church.

4.5.3.1 Representation and participation of women in decision making

Such a finding demonstrates that churches are responding to national and regional calls to include women in decision making. However the role of women and their representation credits Sharon assertion which postulates that woman’s roles in congregations is often perceived as an extension of their home life: cleaning and decorating church buildings, teaching Sunday school, preparing and serving meals and snacks, fundraising and charitable work. She further asserted that most women in leadership positions are responsible for formulation and implementation of church policies. This participating of women in the church should be addressed for observing the SADC protocol on gender and development, article 13 which articulates that state parties shall ensure the
equal participation of women and men in decision making by putting in place policies, strategies and programs for changing discriminatory attitudes and norms of decision making structures and procedures. Thus the church is playing its part in ensuring that Zimbabwe achieves its goals in line with commitments it made to SADC protocol on gender.

The issue of raised from the findings of a kind of quota system and women are also included in the decision making by the virtue of being women shows that ELCZ is playing a role in observing the legal entities and protocols that the nation is taking and thus fulfilling the WAD and GAD approach.

4.12 Summary

This chapter was outlining the findings from the research and it highlighting the church’s position on gender issues and how some issues in line with gender justice equity and equality are taken for granted. It also answers to the questions and objectives of the researcher in chapter one.
5. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The research findings provided valuable information on recommendations to enhance the institutional capacity to enable the role the church plays to enable it to effectively facilitate development in all sectors empowering women at the grass root level and enable them to walk to their full potential enjoying their rights. The following are recommendations from the research findings on how the present set up in ELCZ Western Diocese- Northern Deanary can improve and facilitate a change in attitudes and social development

5.2 CONCLUSION

It is certain that change in every society does not take place with the blink of an eye it requires time. The study concludes that ELCZ is playing a role in the promotion of gender related issues
but its role is in slow motion as the practically of a gender sensitive approach that promote gender mainstreaming, gender equality and equity and justice is still in shadow as there lacks a clear road map on how the issue can be fulfilled. The understanding of gender issues is going to be a long drawn issue in the shona culture which requires cooperation of both the church and the community of which the church is a member to. Because the reality is that women are the majority hence the need to incorporate them in high decision making bodies and enhance their participation on an equal ground. In respect to these issues  ELCZ Western Dioceses-Northern Deanary must get real and get used to the gender sensitive environment because this is real contemporary challenge that cannot remain in the social and political doors. It should take bold steps to fulfill what is already in an imaginary realm and address the socio theological ills.

It can also be noted that the church is a place of empowerment spiritually and emotionally and this is process is gained through the preaching’s, teachings and sharing of lived experiences by members in it. This already credits the role that the ELCZ can play in gender related issues as it is of influential position within Bulawayo community

5.3 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.3.1 **gender policy**

On the issue of the existence of a gender policy and from the findings the absence of the gender policy calls for a quick action to ELCZ to strategically plan and come up with a written document for reference. The Deanary is encouraged to design a training programme with inbuilt monitoring and evaluation mechanism to offer technical support to churches and guide them in designing such programmes for their parishes in order to enable them to attain gender justice.
Health issues

The findings highlighted the need for the church to openly talk about reproduction issues openly. The parishes are urged to provide resource materials that unpack the concepts of family planning, and relationship to gender issues in accessible language that can be used by churches to sensitize members on gender issues.

5.3.2

capacity building

Most of the responses from the bishop, pastor’s administrators, and the women, men and youth groups all pointed to the lack of visibility and education relating to gender issues and ELCZ Western Dioceses-Northern Deanary is recommended to provide capacity building training for its parishes in Gender Policy Analysis, gender and development analysis tools and skills for programme and project cycles and mainstreaming gender in organization’s mission, strategy, procedures and processes; and organizational culture.

The role of women in the church

ELCZ Deanaries are advised to coordinate sharing of good practices and experiences in gender mainstreaming by parishes and congregations churches and synergize with other ecumenical groups such as ZCC, EFZ, ZBCC and NGO’s in line with gender issues. Parishes are urged to document good practices on gender mainstreaming initiatives and share these with other ZCC members. This can work as a motivation and inspiring approach to change of practices and norms in some parishes.
5.3.4

**Representation and participation of women in decision making**

Parishes are recommended to put leadership policies that promote gender policies in place with action plans for implementation, monitoring and evaluation of such actives. The parishes in the Deanary are advised to identify and use of gender experts available in their congregations to assist in gender training and policy analysis, monitoring and evaluation and women empowerment training program. The use of gender focal persons will help drive the parishes on the increase of the number of women in the decision making bodies or even adopt the new phenomenon of zebra listing.

**Coordination and collaboration among women’s and men’s ministries**

Parishes are encouraged to collaborate more in gender mainstreaming issues to strengthen their capacities in such endeavors through the formation of a gender desk. There is need to have an active gender desk with men and women in charge of all critical components affecting women for example health, governance and marriages. The gender desk should be exposed to critical components of analytical and practical gender related skills. Trainings on laws international instruments on women’s rights, gender mainstreaming issues and other gender related programs.
REFERENCE


GENDER ANALYSIS RESEARCH

Questionnaire for Administrators

Preamble

My name is Reginah Bhobho a student by Bindura University of Science Education doing a honours degree in Peace and Governance. Like any other social challenge issues of gender equality and equity are the talk of every sector and communities are supposed to work in unison to solve the problem of gender inequality and promote gender justice. To achieve, the researcher is carrying out a gender research analysis so as to better understand gender-related knowledge, attitudes and practices of the church in the church. Responses to this questionnaire enhance the church’s ability
to provide appropriate support, training and mentoring that will promote gender justice. You have been selected to participate in this gender analysis. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. Please can you answer all the following questions?

1. AGE

2. Sex

   F  M

3. Other selected members

   a) how many members do you have.....

   b) Give percentage of men and women

4. Gender Policy

   a) Does your Church have a written gender policy that affirms a commitment to gender equity?

   b) Are specific people assigned responsibility for implementing and monitoring the implementation of the gender policy?
Technical Expertise

5. Why have you found it appropriate to have different ministries for men and women?

6. Are there issues that concern women and men that the church is addressing

7. If yes how are these needs integrated into church, policies programmes and projects

8. Who do you regard as key player in your church and why

Capacity Building

9. What are the main strengths of your church with regards to issues of gender Justice? Please list them
10. What does the church say about polygamy.

Thank you

GENDER RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire for Church Pastors

Preamble

My name is Reginah Bhobho a final year student by Bindura University of Science Education doing a honours degree in Peace and Governance. Like any other social challenge issues of
gender equality and equity are the talk of every sector and communities are supposed to work in unison to solve the problem of gender inequality and promote gender justice. To achieve, the student is carrying out a gender research analysis so as to better understand gender-related knowledge, attitudes and practices in the church. Responses to this questionnaire enhance the church’s ability to provide appropriate support, training and mentoring that will promote gender justice. You have been selected to participate in this gender analysis. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. Please can you answer all the following questions?

1. Name of church

2. Sex of Pastor: Male…… Female……

3. What do you understand by the term gender

4. Do you have any women in leadership Yes□ No □. If yes, what positions do they occupy

5. Are women involved in decision making in the church explain
Constitution and legal rights.

6. Do you have any constitution that supports gender equality and equity? Yes □ No □

7. Are there any doctrinal frameworks current in place, Yes □ No □. If yes, are they engendered? Yes □ No □

8. Do you have any policies in place that are enshrined in gender? Yes □ No □. If yes list them
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9. How is Leadership structured and why is it structured like that?
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...........................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................

10. Who sets the agendas and determines priorities and why?
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...........................................................................................................................

Productive issues

11. Does the church do gender mainstreaming in the distribution of jobs. Yes □ No □. If yes, what are the roles and tasks ascribed to women and men in this church?
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...........................................................................................................................

12. Do you have gender sensitive leadership development (programmes)? Yes □ No □ If yes, how successful are they explain
Gender Based Violence

13. Do you have a doctrine on marriage in this church, Yes □ No □. If yes, what does it say about marriage as an institution?

14. What does it say about gender based violence

Health issues

15. What does the church say pertaining health and reproductive choices of its members

............................................ if yes what does your church say about

a) Abortion .................................................................

b) Contraceptives ..........................................................
c) Caregivers

THANK YOU