

**THE REPRESENTATION OF FEMALE POLITICIANS IN ZIMBABWEAN PRINT
MEDIA: 2000-2008**

By

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DECLARATION

I, **MANDIEDZA PARICHI**, **Student Number: 5063-849-1**, declare that **The representation of female politicians in Zimbabwean print media, 2000-2008** is my work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



(Ms M. Parichi)

18/11/2016

DATE

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ABSTRACT

This study is motivated by the realisation that, in post-2000 Zimbabwe, while the contest pitting one political formation against another has been given prominence in the media, an important struggle that has attracted little attention during this period has been that of the genders, in particular the competition between men and women for the right and power to govern the country. Media organisations have participated in this struggle by developing and distributing images of the various interest groups in the political fray, including men and women. The media has, thus, played a key role in developing conceptual tools to apprehend the condition of female and male politicians in Zimbabwean society (Bhebhe, 2016), thereby implicitly distributing power to one or the other group. This study has, therefore, examined the representation of female politicians in three Zimbabwean newspapers, namely *Kwayedza*, *The Standard* and the *Financial Gazette*, during the four election held between 2000 and 2008. The study was guided by the following concerns: the way images of female politicians were projected in the print media in Zimbabwe during the period in question, how the political affiliation of the three newspapers influenced the coverage of female politicians, and how female politicians were represented in different languages (i.e. Shona and English). The study tested the following hypotheses: women were generally represented as unfit for public office; images developed by the different newspapers were determined by the newspapers' preference between the two major political parties, the Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) and the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC); the representation of female politicians was determined by the language (Shona or English) used by the newspaper; and newspaper owners determined the way female politicians were portrayed. The study made use of qualitative content analysis to examine the representation of female politicians in the above-named newspapers, coding selected stories in terms of these frames: female politicians as mothers and housewives, and female politicians as inadequate and unfit for political office, as well as double bind dilemmas. As expected, the privately-owned newspapers, the *Financial Gazette* and *The Standard*, negatively portrayed ZANU PF female politicians negatively, while the state-owned *Kwayedza* was hostile to MDC female politicians. The study, however found that, beyond this inevitable trait of a polarised media, all three newspapers shared many tendencies in their coverage of female politicians. For instance, across the three newspapers, female politicians were marginalized through

omission. They were also trivialised by being portrayed in terms of frames irrelevant to politics. Thus, of the three newspapers, only *The Standard* did not make use of the motherhood and wifehood frame in its representation of female politicians. More significantly, the double bind dilemma is a rhetoric device that permeates stories on female politicians in all three newspapers to the extent that, even in those stories where the two frames were used, the frames are constructed in terms of double binds. Zimbabwean female politicians are thus portrayed as hamstrung candidates, neither fit for public office nor eligible for marriage and motherhood. This double bind is particularly damaging for indigenous black Zimbabwean female politicians since a major finding of this study is that the stories examined construct motherhood as a powerful form of elevation of female politicians as it is consistently associated with a select few female politicians, the elite of Zimbabwean politics, those at very apex of the political pyramid. This makes the combination of the frames and the double bind dilemma much more harmful to the careers of Zimbabwean female politicians than it would be in a non-African context.

DEDICATION

To my parents Joseph and Joyce, I can't thank you enough. I am very happy this happened in your lifetime.

I love you always!!!

ACRONYMS

AIPPA	Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act
ANZ	Associated Newspapers of Zimbabwe
BAZ	Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe
BSA	Broadcasting Services Act
FAMWZ	Federation of Africa Media Women in Zimbabwe
LOMA	Law and Order Maintenance Act
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MDC-T	Movement for Democratic Change (Tsvangirai)
MISA	Media Institute of Southern Africa
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
SADC	Southern African Development Corporation
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front
ZBC	Zimbabwe Broadcasting Cooperation
ZBH	Zimbabwe Broadcasting Holdings
FTLRP	Fast track land reform programme
ZCTU	Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions
ESAP	Economic structural Adjustment Programme
ZANU PF	Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front
ZIMPAPERS	Zimbabwean Newspapers
MMPZ	Media Monitoring Project Zimbabwe

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Between 2000 and 2008, Zimbabwe went through political turbulence marked by increasing polarisation between the country's two major political formations, the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF (in power since Independence in 1980) and the newly formed Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) launched in 1999. This period was also characterised by sharp divisions among the various interest groups within each of these two parties, such as veterans of the 1970s liberation war, youth and women's groups, intellectuals, and unionists. This is also the period in which the ZANU PF-led Zimbabwean government embarked on its 'Third Chimurenga' (third liberation struggle) whose iconic feature was the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP). Officially, the FTLRP entailed the redistribution of white-owned farmland as a strategy to redress imbalances in land ownership patterns that grossly disadvantaged the majority black Africans. However, scholars such as Mamdani (2008) have pointed out that FTLRP was done for political expediency by the ZANU PF government, which was under unprecedented pressure from the vibrant opposition party, the MDC, and pro-ZANU PF war veterans angered by alleged marginalisation. Mamdani (2008:6) argues that:

It was largely for his [President Mugabe] own purposes, but also as a response to pressure from squatters, occupiers and their local leaders, as well as from sections of the new black elite, that in 1999 Mugabe decided to revise the constitution drafted at Lancaster House. Two major changes were envisaged: one would allow him to stay in power for two more terms and would ensure immunity from prosecution for political and military leaders accused of committing crimes while in office; the other would empower the government to seize land from white farmers without compensation, which was held to be the responsibility of Britain.

The FTLRP was, therefore, not simply a redress of colonial imbalance, but also a strategic move by the Mugabe regime to eliminate the new challenge to the government. The print media played a critical role in this politico-economic struggle, influencing both the course

and interpretation of events in the country as well as the fate of political formations and individual politicians. This study examined the representation of Zimbabwean female politicians in three Zimbabwean national weekly newspapers namely, *The Standard*, the *Financial Gazette* and *Kwayedza*. *The Standard* and the *Financial Gazette* are privately-owned newspapers that are ideologically aligned to the opposition parties in Zimbabwe, while *Kwayedza* is a publicly owned newspaper under the Zimpapers group of newspapers linked to the ruling party ZANU PF (Ncube 2010). The newspapers were selected in order to find out if a newspaper's political affiliation has any influence in the way it represents female politicians. The data used in this study were drawn from elections held between 2000 and 2008. These years were pivotal in the history of Zimbabwean politics as they were moments in which the populace's response to arguably the most radical policy changes in Zimbabwe was gauged. They were also the first years in which ZANU-PF's hold on power in the post-independence dispensation was ever truly threatened. This study analyses the situation of women in the context of the changes that marked this period. The year 2008 was the last election year before this present research was started in 2012. In a democracy, an election year is a crucial moment to a nation as the electorate sits in judgement over the fate of its politicians. Therefore, the study on female politicians during election years is a significant in determining the future of women in politics in Zimbabwe.

1.2 Background to the study

1.2.1 Zimbabwe and the 'Third Chimurenga'

This study examines newspaper representation of female politicians in Zimbabwe between 2000 and 2008. Since 1980 female politicians in Zimbabwe have have been marginalized in the press (Morna, 2002). Most of the print media focus on the Zimbabwean male politicians. Where female politicians appear as news subjects, they are often represented through biased images and stereotypes. Female politicians are important in society because they contribute to the empowerment of women through participation in the legislature and government. When female politicians are included in parliament they are more likely than their male counterparts to be able to represent and articulate women's needs.

The period under examination will enter the annals of history as the most difficult to forget of all the epochs of Zimbabwe's history (Dorman, 2001; Mamdani, 2008). It may be characterised in terms of the ideological framework developed by the ruling ZANU PF to account for the socio-economic agenda it set for Zimbabwe during that time: the third and final phase of the country's struggle for self-determination, namely economic emancipation of the majority black Africans, labelled the 'Third Chimurenga'. Two other Chimurengas had taken place before this final one. The first one was the 1890s revolt against the earlier colonial settler regime that ended with the military defeat of Africans. The second Chimurenga, which began in earnest in the 1950s, was the protracted liberation struggle that led to the country's independence in 1980. The most emblematic feature of Third Chimurenga is the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP), which, in one fell stroke, reversed nearly a century of a land ownership regime that allowed the minority whites to own the vast majority of Zimbabwe's fertile land while restricting the majority blacks to so-called communal lands that were mostly unsuitable for agricultural activity (Chari, 2013). The said reversal took the form of the spontaneous and often violent invasions of white-owned commercial farms and the redistribution of their farms to black Zimbabweans.

The implementation of the FTLRP preceded was characterized by socio-economic problems, in particular the highly unpopular Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP), which made ZANU PF unpopular and vulnerable to a vibrant opposition (Dorman, 2001). The 2000 referendum on a state-sponsored constitutional reform that was rejected by the electorate was the ruling ZANU PF's first ever electoral defeat since Independence. The fact that such a political embarrassment coincided with the launch in 1999 of a new opposition party, the MDC, which quickly proved to be highly popular, particularly with the urban population, made the referendum defeat even more significant as a political message to ZANU PF. The boldest strategy adopted by ZANU PF to regain the upper hand was the FTLRP. Thereafter, Zimbabwean society was divided into two (if not simplistically) defined and bitterly opposed political camps around the land issue, with ZANU PF labelling as traitors all those who opposed it, among them the MDC and the disgruntled white community while the Western powers that sympathized with them were called imperialists. The ensuing polarization permeated all sectors of the social, cultural and economic fabric of Zimbabwean society (Sutcliffe, 2013; Mamdani, 2008). However,

the single area most marked by this political polarization between the two major ideological formations incarnated by ZANU PF on one hand and the MDC on the other is the media¹.

1.2.2 The state of the Zimbabwean media during the Third Chimurenga

The state of the Zimbabwean media during the period 2000-2008 was highly reflective of the political and economic situation in the country. Table 1 below contains five (5) indicators – geographical coverage; frequency of publication; content; language; ownership – to describe Zimbabwe’s major newspapers during the period under study. *The Standard* is a privately owned weekly newspaper published by *The Standard Press* which is owned by Alpha Media Holdings. Other shareholders of the paper include Mike Curling, Beatrice Mtetwa, and Raphael Khumalo who is the Group Chief Executive Officer. The *Financial Gazette* is a weekly newspaper which was started in 1969. It is now owned by former Reserve Bank Governor of Zimbabwe, Gideon Gono’s Octadew Investor Company, which bought the newspaper in 2003 from Elias Rusike and expanded its content coverage from strictly business to general news. The ownership of the *Financial Gazette* during the period under study presented an interesting scenario in the media terrain of Zimbabwe. There were a number of paradoxes surrounding the *Financial Gazette*. At the helm of the *Financial Gazette* was owner and biggest share-holder, Gideon Gono, making it a privately-owned publication. Although the weekly was a privately-owned, its owner was a leading member of the ruling ZANU PF party, a favourite of President Robert Mugabe, and Governor of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe. However, in terms of politics, the newspaper’s official policy was to be politically neutral (Gandari, 2010). This was in stark contrast to *Kwayedza*, discussed in Chapter Four, which was openly pro-ZANU PF and pro-government. The question is, therefore, is how a privately owned publication with strong ties to the ruling ZANU PF party treated female politicians from across the political divide. *Kwayedza* is owned by Zimpapers which is a state controlled entity in terms of funding and control. It is a state funded publication that published in Shona (Chari 2009) and was established in 1986. The paper is different from *The Standard* and *Financial Gazette* as it is published in Shona and has a different style of

1

(Mlotshwa:

http://www.fesmediaafrica.org/uploads/media/Tense_Zimbabweanelections_threaten_media_freedom_Khanyile_Mlotshwa_02.pdf

journalism from the other two. The political economy of each newspaper greatly determines the content of the newspapers. The research thus seeks to find out if this was also consistent in the representation of women though it is not the major aim of the research. The state owned newspapers under the Zimpapers are funded by the government, which, therefore, controls them (Chari 2013). Zimbabwean privately-owned newspapers generally concern themselves with issues of democracy, monitoring government and exposing any perceived weaknesses and excesses.

1.2.3 Newspaper publications in Zimbabwe

Title/ Category	National	Regional	Local	Daily	Weekly	Business	English	Shona	Ndebele	State- owned	Privately- owned
Bulawayo Chronicle		x		x			x			Zimpapers	
Daily news	x			x			x				Associated Newspapers of Zimbabwe (ANZ)
Financial gazette	x				x	x	x				Gideon Gono
Herald	x			x			x			Zimpapers	
Kwayedza	x				x			x		Zimpapers	
Manica Post		x			x		x			Zimpapers	
Newsday	x			x			x				x
Standard	x				x		x				ANZ
Sunday Mail	x				x		x			Zimpapers	
Sunday News		x			x		x			Zimpapers	
Umthunya		x			x				x	Zimpapers	
Zimbabwe Independent	x				x	x	x				ANZ
Zimbabwean	x				x		x				x

Table 1 Zimbabwe Newspaper publications

Table 1 above shows that during the period under study, Zimbabwe had a total of thirteen (13) major print media publications. Of these seven (7) belonged to the state-owned Zimpapers stable, making government by far the biggest player in the print media sector. Out of the remaining six (6) newspapers, Zimbabwe Reserve Bank Governor and ZANU PF official, Gideon Gono, bought one, the *Financial Gazette*, in 2002. The ruling ZANU PF thus had the necessary resources to be the most influential player in the key information dissemination industry during the Third Chimurenga.

The largest private player in the print media section was the Associated Newspapers of Zimbabwe (ANZ) group, which had three (3) publications, including the popular *Daily news*. Zimbabwe had four (4) daily newspapers, all of which were broadsheets published in English. Of those four (4) publications, three were national newspapers. Only the *Bulawayo Chronicle* targeted a regional audience. Two (2) of those dailies were state-owned while the other two were controlled by private entities. There were nine (9) weeklies, of which six (6) targeted a national audience, seven (7) published in English while one published in Shona and another in Ndebele. All the weeklies were broadsheets and two (2) of them specialised in the coverage of business news. Five (5) of the nine (9) weeklies, including the Shona and Ndebele language newspapers, were state-owned and, therefore, openly supported ZANU PF ideology (Chari 2007; 2010; 2013). The proportion of dailies to weeklies was heavily skewed in favor of the latter. Massive government involvement in this category suggested awareness of its importance in shaping opinions in Zimbabwe as well as belief that government stood a better chance to outflank the private media in this category than in the dailies market (MMPZ 2002; Chari 2013). It is noteworthy that, despite government's heavy involvement in the weekly newspaper category, the two (2) business weeklies, the *Financial Gazette* and the *Zimbabwe Independent*, were both privately-owned. This could be indicative of government's desire to deflect as much attention as possible from an economy that was in a freefall during the period under examination. Conversely, this could also reflect the intention of pro-opposition MDC media houses to draw attention to Zimbabwe's failing economy as a way of discrediting the ZANU PF government (Chikowore 2000; Chari 2013; MMPZ 2002).

The formation of the *Daily news*, a national daily newspaper owned by a consortium of private investors, the Associated Newspapers of Zimbabwe (ANZ) led by Geoffrey Nyarota, in 1999, contributed and led to a bitter ideological and economic struggle which manifested through polarisation between pro-government and pro-ZANU PF media houses, on the one hand, and pro-MDC and/or anti-ZANU PF media organisations on the other. The fact that both the MDC and the *Daily news* were formed and launched in 1999 owes little to coincidence (Chikowore 2000). Both the *Daily news* and the MDC are the logical products of parallel but inseparable processes of contestation in the political and media domains. A key indicator of the parallel but related paths that led to the creation of both organisations is that their founders and leaders, Geoffrey Nyarota and Morgan Tsvangirai respectively, are both products of state-affiliated and, therefore, pro-ZANU PF institutions. While Geoff Nyarota is a former editor of the state-owned daily, the *Bulawayo Chronicle*, Morgan Tsvangirai was, until the formation of the MDC in 1999, the Secretary-General of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU), Zimbabwe's umbrella trade union organisation, itself originally a key political ally of ZANU PF. Both Nyarota and Tsvangirai owe their initial rise to fame to their stance against signs of decadence in the ZANU PF system. Nyarota revealed the corrupt exploitation of the state-affiliated Willowvale Mazda Motor Industries by senior government officials in the late 1980s, the Willowgate scandal, while Tsvangirai became an icon of the workers' struggle in the era of ESAP as he led them in successful mass actions against government labour and economic policies (Sutcliffe, 2013). The two have therefore emerged from the ranks of ZANU PF elites to forge for themselves successful careers as opponents of the ruling party and its related institutions.

The most important outcome of the formation in the same year of the *Daily News* and the MDC was the further hardening of government and ZANU PF attitude to divergent political thinking. Political scientist, Jonathan Moyo, became Minister of Information in 2000, beginning an era of extreme polarisation in the media and politics in Zimbabwe. Upon assuming his cabinet position, Moyo instituted a raft of legislative measures notorious for their intolerance of different political thinking. The first of these was the 2001 Broadcasting Services Act (BSA) whose provisions gave absolute control of the airwaves to the Minister of Information and the President. It also restricted the ownership of broadcasting organisations to citizens and permanent residents of Zimbabwe (Moyo 2004; Ranger

2003). This act saw the closure of privately-owned Capital Radio, which had been broadcasting from a hotel in Harare since 1996, thus restoring and guaranteeing the state-owned Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation's (ZBC) monopoly of the airwaves. One of Jonathan Moyo's legislative contributions to the Third Chimurenga is the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA), which severely curtailed media freedom through the following measures:

- the allocation of very substantial regulatory powers over media outlets and individual journalists to a Media and Information Commission (MIC), a body which is subject to extensive direct and indirect government control;
- a registration certificate from the MIC that all media outlets and any business disseminating media products must obtain prior to the commencement of activities on Zimbabwean soil;
- accreditation by the MIC for all journalists working in Zimbabwe (this is, effectively, a form of licensing);
- preclusion of foreigners and non-resident Zimbabweans from owning shares in Zimbabwean media outlets, although they may be minority shareholders in companies which own media shares; and
- the requirement that no media outlet, be it local or foreign, may employ non-Zimbabweans to work for them in Zimbabwe.

(MISA Zimbabwe report: the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act: five years on, 2005:6)

The stories examined in this study were thus produced in an environment characterised by political polarisation as well as a hardline tendency by government to curtail media freedom and media rights. Media construction of Zimbabwean female politicians during the period 2000 to 2008 were thus heavily influenced by reactions to draconian government policies by each of the two sides in a heavily polarised media, itself representative of the polarised political environment. One can therefore expect pro-government media to unquestioningly submit to the political agenda of the ruling ZANU PF's Minister of Information and Publicity in developing images of female politicians while pro-opposition newspapers seek ways to push the agenda of parties such as the MDC within the confines of unforgiving media laws and regulations. It is the intention of this study to find out how this has been achieved.

The most prominent casualty of media polarisation in Zimbabwe during the period from 2000-2008 was the highly popular privately-owned *Daily news*. Within a year of its launch, this publication had grown to outstrip its state-owned rival, *The Herald*, in sales (Chari, 2011). It had also established itself as a relentless and vocal critic of the government and ZANU PF. Its premises were bombed twice between 2000 and 2001 by suspected government sympathisers who were never prosecuted (Raftopoulos 2003). In 2001, Nyarota survived a highly publicised assassination attempt only to resign in December 2002 in a move calculated to pre-empt his dismissal by his chief executive. The *Daily news* was eventually shut down and banned by government in 2003 after protesting against AIPPA which it considered unconstitutional, by refusing to apply for an MIC registration certificate as stipulated under AIPPA.

During this period, other media players responded to AIPPA by seeking ways of avoiding government control altogether. An outcome of this strategy was the proliferation of clandestine media, such as so-called pirate radio stations and on-line newspapers. These created platforms for the circulation of alternative political discourses, such as *Zimbabwe Situation*, *Zimonline*, *Talkzimbabwe*, *Zimdaily*, *Newzimbabwe*, *ZW News* and *Zvakwana.org*. Many of these organisations are based in foreign countries. For instance, *ZW News* and *Zimonline* are produced in South Africa while *Zimbabwe Situation* is run by Zimbabweans in Australia who compile news items from different online sources and *New Zimbabwe.com* is published in Wales. In addition to these online publications and blogs, there are internet radio stations like *Afro Sounds FM*, *SW Africa* and *Zimnetradio* (Alexander, 2006). The Third Chimurenga therefore spawned a subsidiary hegemonic struggle in the media. The primary concern of this study is to reveal ways in which the media treated female politicians during this peculiar post-Independence era.

1.2.4 The condition of women in Zimbabwe during the Third Chimurenga

The condition of Zimbabwean women at the dawn of the Third Chimurenga can be attributed to a century of rapid socio-cultural transformation under various political regimes from the colonial era to the post-independence dispensation. After independence in 1980, the new nationalist government introduced a number of measures intended to improve the lot of women in the country. These included pro-women legislation, such as inheritance laws that protected the interests of widows, domestic violence law, affirmative action measures such as maternity protection under the Labour relations Act that gave preferential treatment to women and girls in educational institutions and the labour market, as well as gender mainstreaming in most sectors of the economy (Parpan 2011). The government was pressured to appoint women because of the changing political terrain in Zimbabwe. Female Zimbabweans were appointed to senior positions in government and the civil service, such as ministers, Senate President, police commissioners, and state vice-president. Other women also rose on their own in their various career paths. The more prominent ones include the Managing Director of Nicoz Diamond Insurance Company, Grace Muradzikwa, prominent business woman, Jane Mutasa, Judge President Rita Makarau, and University Vice Chancellors, Hope Sadza and Primrose Kurasha. In 1997, Zimbabwe ratified and signed the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Declaration on Gender and Development, thus committing itself to achieving a target of at least 30% in the promotion of women's access to resources and their empowerment through increased representation in political and decision-making structures by 2005.

The condition of Zimbabwean women has also been influenced by international policies that pressured governments to elevate women to maintain gender equality and equity. One such major event was the 1995 “Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace”, commonly known in Zimbabwe as the Beijing Conference. However, national gender equity targets set by the state and global ones set by international organizations, of which Zimbabwe is a member, such as the United Nations, were yet to be fully achieved by 2000. For instance, the majority of senior managerial positions in both the private and public sectors are still occupied by men, thus limiting the capacity of women to influence Zimbabwean society. Women only held 22% of the Zimbabwean cabinet posts by 2014 (*Herald* 29 January 2015). Despite the fact that a

substantial number of women were now educated, women remained excluded from positions of influence through the patriarchal systems of governance that are controlled by men (*Herald* 29 January 2015). In ZANU PF only a few women were in the top brass of the party. For instance, Dube (2013) reports that “Women were a significant minority in the Seventh Parliament 34/210 in the House of Assembly and 23/93 in the Senate”. Zimbabwe’s 7th Parliament ensued from the March 2008 elections that led to the country’s Government of National Unity (GNU) incorporating ZANU PF and the two MDC formations in place then. Over time women joined a number of non-governmental organizations and those within the ZANU PF party began to protest about the situation (Mashingaidze 2003). Protests to include women in political positions were much more pronounced in the 1990s, which culminated in the promotion of Joice Mujuru to the Vice Presidency of both ZANU PF and the state in 2005.

The turn of the millennium was therefore fraught with challenges and expectations as far as the empowerment of women was concerned. This is the overarching context within which Zimbabwean women, particularly those in ZANU PF, embarked on the Third Chimurenga in 2000. Elsewhere, women from the the civil organizations were also putting pressure on government to change oppressive legislation and include women in decision making positions (Essof 2013). Besides women politicians, these different revolutions particularly affected ordinary black women through clean-up acts that targeted particularly women that stayed in cities who were assumed to be prostitutes (Essof 2010). However, men were not affected. Literature shows that a Chimurenga revolution is likely to reverse any gains by feminist movements and women in general as the violence inherent in it favours male dominance (Nhongo-Simbanegavi 2000; Gaidzanwa 1985). During this period, Zimbabwean women were further marginalized as the period was characterised by the violent land seizure associated with the FTLRP as well as the unprecedented power contestation between ZANU PF and the MDC. Media focus, therefore, was not necessarily concerned with women’s issues and concentrated on the power dynamics between the ZANU PF and MDC parties. On the contrary, it is conceivable that the media will generally omit narratives about women or trivialize issues considered ‘feminine’ (dependent, passive and dumb) in the pursuit of the more ‘male’ which require (aggression and taking charge) issues of governance, political power and ideology and the economy (Wood, 1994). The years under study are therefore likely to be characterized by a paternalistic hegemony in

Zimbabwean society as a whole and the media in particular.

The so-called Third Chimurenga can be viewed as an era of unprecedented polarisation of ideas and identities amidst unbridled contestation of power and material wealth. Zimbabweans, constituted as they were in various competing groups, have particularly jostled for the moral authority and opportunity to govern. While the contest pitting one political formation against another has been given the most prominence in the various public fora and platforms, including the media, an important struggle that has gained little attention during this period has been that of the genders, in particular the competition between men and women for the right and power to govern the country. Media organisations have participated in this struggle by developing and distributing images of the various participant interest groups in the political fray, including men and women. These images could be either favourable or detrimental to the various interests of either camp. The media has thus played a key role in developing conceptual tools to apprehend the condition of women and men in Zimbabwean society (Bhebhe, 2016).

1.2 Justification of the Research

Although there are several NGO-commissioned reports on female politicians and the Zimbabwean media (Byerly, 2011; Matekaire 2003, MMPZ 2013;) these are not scholarly studies. Further, whereas scholarly studies of the Zimbabwean media, such as Chari (2007 Chari, 2011) and Mabweazara (2011) have been conducted, they have focussed on media practice in broader terms than the concern of this present study. Indeed, to the best of this researcher's knowledge no previous scholarly studies on the representation of female politicians by the Zimbabwean media have been exist. Whereas reports such as those cited above tend to mix the various categories of media (radio and TV; national/regional/local newspapers; daily/weekly/monthly newspapers; business/general news/tabloid/sports newspapers), the present study is the first scholarly research at this level to focus on the representation of female politicians by only one category of the Zimbabwean print media: general news weeklies, a section of the media that specialises in in-depth features on topical issues. This is also the first study at this level to examine the representation of female politicians by both the state-owned and privately-owned

Zimbabwean publications². This is an important dichotomy in a polarised political environment such as Zimbabwe where state-owned media are unreservedly pro-ZANU-PF and pro-government but anti-MDC while the privately-owned media is unreservedly pro opposition MDC and critical of the government and ZANU-PF. This study was crucial in unravelling the way women were represented through media language use in the selected newspapers. It was also important to understand the perception of the media as a pointer to their treatment in the Zimbabwean society. This is also the first study to focus on media portrayal of female politicians during the entire length of Zimbabwe's 'Third Chimurenga', which fundamentally transformed Zimbabwe's economy, culture and society. Finally, this study is the first to take into account Zimbabwe's complex linguistic complexion by examining both English and Shona publications. This study is also important considering that it assesses the representation of women in an electoral context. This is crucial as the media may determine the expectations, successes and failure of the female politicians under analysis. The media play a critical role in building (or destroying political careers). It is, therefore, important that it deliberately chooses to promote the involvement of women in politics. A study of media representation of female politicians would draw attention to media strengths and weaknesses in this area and, hopefully, influence society to draw a pro-female politician media agenda to underpin and propel gender mainstreaming in politics.

1.3 Research Aim

The aim of this study is to examine representation strategies used by three Zimbabwean weekly newspapers namely *The Standard*, *Financial Gazette* and *Kwayedza*, to develop constructs of female politicians during each election year from 2000 to 2008.

1.4 Research Questions

This research seeks to address the following questions:

- What are the major representation strategies that were employed by *Kwayedza*, *Financial Gazette* and *The Standard* to develop constructs of Zimbabwean female

²see table below

politicians in the election years within the period 2000 to 2008?

- What images of female politicians were projected by the various sections (business news, sport news, and environmental news, for instance) of the selected newspapers?
- How were female politicians represented by each of the three newspapers because of their political party affiliation? Was there a correlation between the treatment of female politicians by a given newspaper and its political bias?
- How were female politicians represented in each of the two languages (Shona for *Kwayedza*, English for the *Financial Gazette* and *The Standard*)? What were the differences in representation that could be attributed to the language used by the newspaper under examination? How are these differences linked to the language used by each newspaper? What is the possible influence of language on representation?

1.5 Research Objectives

To attain the aim stipulated above, the study

- examines representation strategies that were used by *Kwayedza*, *Financial Gazette* and *The Standard* to develop constructs of Zimbabwean female politicians in the election years within the period 2000 to 2008;
- examines images of female politicians that were projected by each of the three weekly newspapers named above;
- seeks to determine the extent of the influence of the language used by each of the publications examined in this study (Shona for *Kwayedza* and English for the *Financial Gazette* and *The Standard*) on its representation of female politicians in Zimbabwe; and
- seeks to reveal the correlation, if any, between the representation of female politicians by a given newspaper and its political bias.

1.6 Hypotheses

In order to understand more fully the nature of Zimbabwean media coverage of female politicians, this study tests the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis1: Women are generally represented as unfit for public political office.

Hypothesis 2: Images of Zimbabwean female politicians developed by a given newspaper are determined by the political ideology favoured by that newspaper. Thus, pro-ZANU PF state-sponsored newspapers are hostile to female politicians from the opposition MDC and supportive of ZANU-PF female politicians while the reverse is true for privately-owned pro-MDC publications.

Hypothesis 3: Images of Zimbabwean female politicians developed by a given newspaper are determined by the language (Shona or English) that it chooses to use. Use of Shona favours patriarchal images of female politicians while use of English favours more liberal and therefore more empowering images of female politicians.

1.7 Relevance of the topic to the discipline of communication

This study has an interdisciplinary character in that it is concerned with gender and media communication. The study is relevant to the discipline of communication in that it explores how newspapers as communication media influence the way female politicians are viewed by society. It builds on the understanding that the media is a public opinion formation space which can influence, inform or sway the public opinion. This research is also relevant to the field of gender studies in that it unpacks the way media communication about female politicians can influence gender dynamics in Zimbabwean politics and society at large.

1.8 Scope of the Study

This study is concerned with the representation of Zimbabwean female politicians in three Zimbabwean weekly newspapers, namely *The Standard*, *Financial Gazette* and *Kwayedza*. Whereas the study covers the period 2000-2008, it only focuses on the election years within that period, that is, 2000, 2002, 2005 and 2008. It is a textual study in that it examines selected newspaper articles to reveal patterns in the representation of women by the selected newspapers. Whereas the study is cognisant of the influence of political economy on editorial policy, it uses textual analysis to reveal discursive tendencies that may be reflective of different ownership patterns and media policies (Guyot 2009).

1.9 Limitations and constraints of the Study

A major challenge faced by the researcher emanates from the manner in which newspapers are preserved in publishing house and library archives. Issues of a weekly spanning several months are bound together in chronological sequence such that a single newspaper cannot be separated from the others with which it is bound together to facilitate ease of access. As a result, it is virtually impossible to photocopy or scan articles using standard office photocopiers and scanners. The researcher was therefore often compelled to use a hand held camera to 'scan' relevant articles. Further, the binding often impeded scanning of portions of columns hidden by it. Consequently, the researcher felt the need to transcribe articles retained for analysis.

1.10 Chapter Organisation

The first chapter concerns itself with the introduction of the thesis which outlines the objectives, research questions literature review and theoretical framework of the research in the period 2000-2008. The chapter also includes a review of relevant literature, a discussion of the theories that inform the study, as well as methodological considerations. The second chapter situates the study within the context of other scholarly voices on the issues being investigated. In this regard, this chapter identifies and explores literature sources and theories on gender and the media. Chapter three outlines the methodology of the research which preoccupies itself with how the data were gathered and analysed. Chapter four, five and six are concerned with the analysis of the newspapers of *Kwayedza*, *The Standard* and *the Financial Gazette* as case studies using the generated frames within the thesis in the stipulated period of study. Chapter 7 is the summary conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

The theories underpinning this study provided a framework for accessing meaning constructed within and conveyed through selected news stories drawn from a corpus of selected Zimbabwean newspapers. A theory can be regarded as a set of guidelines or law-like rules that help to understand and approach a phenomenon, which in research terms can be constructed as a concept, a subject or a problem (Kwaramba, 2004; Swanson, 2013). According to Sorensen (2004: 14), "Concepts and theories are important because they constitute an essential part of the lenses through which we look at our subject". A theoretical framework thus provides the conceptual boundaries, guidelines and tools that enable a scholarly study to, firstly, stand distinct from other studies as a discreet research event and yet relate to them as the context within which it is located and, secondly, conform to the norms that apply to rigorous scientific investigations and arguments. This study examines the representation of female politicians by three Zimbabwean weekly newspapers through the lens of frame and double bind theories located within representation theory, which is now outlined and theorised.

2.2 Representation Theory

Representation is concerned with the way subjects, such as societies, races and ethnic groups, social groups, and individuals, are portrayed in the media. Representation is the generation of images, ideas and concepts of objective reality, which are then packaged, disseminated and consumed as the real thing of which they really are but mental substitutes. While all human communication can be considered as various instances of representation, a prominent tool and purveyor of representation in modern society is the media, such that much academic discussion of representation revolves around media representation. Representation theory is inevitably concerned with how media representation works. According to Hall (2007), representation is the process, channel or medium through which meanings are both created and reified or transformed into material reality. Closely associated with media use of reification through representation is

objectification. According to Moscovici (2000: 51),

Objectification makes the unknown known by transforming it into something concrete we may perceive and experience with our senses. It is a kind of materialisation of abstract ideas, which sometimes occur not least in the media, by representing the ideas as concrete phenomena existing in the physical world. What is perceived replaces what is conceived.

For instance, the image of women as wives and mothers may be reified by the media through frequent association of women with their husbands, pictures of women wearing wedding rings or carrying or otherwise nursing babies, leading to the perception of female human beings as nothing more than potential or actualised mothers and wives. Reification and objectification are thus powerful means of naturalisation of constructed ideas. Another linguistic device used in the construction of representations is naming, which is a powerful tool of stereotyping, which in turn helps naturalise and normalise representations, thus reifying and objectifying them. According to Lippman (1922:119),

Classifying and naming sometimes may ... be strongly connected to processes of stereotyping. Naming someone as a foreigner, a deviant or a fundamentalist, or naming a behaviour an act of madness or a terror attack are not neutral classifications. Such namings rather are loaded with preferences, suffused with affection or dislike. Stereotyping is specifically related to the naming of social groups and to questions of inclusion and exclusion, discrimination, power and domination. Stereotyping creates the illusion of precision in defining and evaluating other people, and they are then fixed into marginal positions or subordinate status and judged accordingly.

For that reason opinions can easily become facts on television. That is the reason why not all historians agree on issues raised. In media the viewer becomes an eyewitness. Höijer (2011:8) argues that:

Stereotypical naming is doubly fraudulent. Firstly, the "Other" is attributed taken for granted negative characteristics, which we conceive as naturalized. The naming therefore gives an illusion of being realistic, that is, we do not see them as social constructions. It is so. Secondly, stereotypical namings confirm themselves when, as they are, used over and over again. It *really is* so.

A stereotype is an oversimplified, clichéd image, repeated so many times that it seems to have established a pattern (Bhabha 1983). In most instances, media personnel use stereotypes to build the worldview that is related to their own culture into news stories so as to make them easily accessible and acceptable to audiences sharing the same culture. They also make use of characters that their audiences can easily identify with, such as teachers, the old and the rich, as well as events, ideas and processes that the audience are familiar with. Stereotypes are a highly judgemental type of representation. The media uses a number of stereotypes concerning women such as dull blondes, dull housewives and poor leaders. These stereotypes often attract a judgement which is based on prejudice. These are often constructed through a selection process. Individuals and groups in societies are often constructed through stereotypes with which the audience can quickly and easily identify. Stereotypical images are often distorted and biased and often encouraged in spaces where there are clear disparities in relationships which encourage their development. For instance, women are often far fewer than men in many newsrooms, making media houses potentially fertile ground for the development of patriarchal frames used to marginalise women (Irvin 2013). The implication of this gender imbalance is that the personnel employed to construct media representations of reality are carefully selected to 'naturally' push certain ideologies.

Moscovici (2000: 163) argues that stereotypes are a social necessity as they “have been created by society and remained preserved by society”. The end result is that, through representation, the media does not convey reality but creates and conveys a new reality. The media thus selects a reality it prefers to represent to the audience. All the specialised media personnel are responsible for making changes and selections suitable for their media houses. In most instances what the audience consumes is assembled or created information and ideas which are totally different from the reality on the ground. These ideas are normally determined by the culture and values of the people that are responsible for the production. Thus, what is commonly referred to as reality can be seen as constructed representations of objective reality repeated and emphasised over time until they seem natural and even material. Thus, in modern societies, most ideas that people have about their world and about themselves are based on media creations segmented by social constructs of race and gender as media has become the major source of ideas

about social realities in such societies (Brooks and Herbert, 2006; Wallis 2012).

Hall (2007) posits that the two most important aspects within representation are process and product. Process is concerned with the framework in which texts are created, which is often linked to the ideology and perspective of the text's producer while the product is the final text consisting of images of reality constructed and built into the text through the 'process'. Representation works by reconstructing reality in order to naturalise and normalise new conceptualisations of it. According to Höijer (2011:3), representation

...specifies a number of communicative mechanisms explaining how ideas are communicated and transformed into what is perceived as common sense. This touches the very heart of mediated communication – how the media naturalizes social thinking and generates collective cognition.

This points to the fluidity of the concept of representation, which makes it a dynamic tool to apprehend equally dynamic socio-cultural realities for the benefit of powerful social interests. According to Hall (1997), there are three ways of approaching representation: reflective, intentional and constructivist approaches. Reflective representation approach sees meaning as constructed by portraying ideas as mirrored within events objects or individuals. This is witnessed when language reflects what is embedded within culture. This level suggests that representations imitate life or reality. The intentional representation approach holds that power of definition lies with the individual constructing the meaning. It explores whether the writer or researcher's personal meaning is portrayed. The definer imposes ideology and assumptions to the meaning. This is often captured in documentaries and historical accounts where it can be difficult to decide what is factual and what is not. The third approach or level is the constructivist view of representation which contends that meaning is constructed by individuals but normalised in societies. People, thus understand themselves and existence from the way they are portrayed. Representation produces images that situate us subjects. From the meanings people can make sense of the world and experiences and take decisions pertaining to how to act upon the world. Representations are cultural processes which identify an individual within a society determined by the culture of the person. The implication is that in representation theory production of meaning goes beyond mirroring and imitation as people actually

construct meanings through these systems. According to Preziosi (1998:357),

We have no unmediated access to the real. It is through representations that we know the world. At the same time we cannot say, in a simple sense, that a representation or an image 'reflects' a reality, 'distorts' a reality, 'stands in place' of an absent reality, or bears no relation to any reality 'whatsoever.'... Reality is a matter of representation ... and representation is, in turn, a matter of discourse.

Individuals construct themselves, their surroundings, experiences and circumstances in accordance with representations of these phenomena constructed by the powerful voices that reach them. One such powerful voice is the media. Other powerful voices include peers, parents, teacher, religious leaders, and literature, which are all means through which objective reality is mediated for our consumption. We thus see reality through the various 'lenses' available to us in our societies. For instance, in the case of gender, we can only perceive aspects of femininity and masculinity from the way they are represented by the said powerful voices. According to Kappeler (1986:483),

Forms of representation have their own histories, yet we have become so accustomed to representations in many media that the media and their conventions have become naturalized, 'transparent', apparently giving a key-hole view on make-believe reality, reflections of reality. Literature and the visual arts are the expert domains of representation, and they embody the history of the naturalization of the medium.

Representation thus entails the process, the end product and the reception of the particular product. Representation as a meaning-making process primarily works through language and is mostly informed by gender, ideology and background (Sturken and Cartwright, 2009; Wallis. 2012). Language can be used to create bias or distort issues in representation (Hall 2007). Moscovici (2000:182) thus argues that, the analysis of talk, interviews, or media products often must move beyond the specific language and visuals used in order to get a clearer unbiased picture. Tickner (1998) adds to this understanding by arguing that representation is about the discourses that are used to portray something in order to influence some reaction. Embedded within language and discourse is ideology, which suggests power relations within representation. Discussing the link between politics and representation and its effects, Hall (2007) argues that meanings of people and objects are not static as they are generated through culture and by people who have power to have things mean something. However, whereas everybody has the potential to create

images representative of objective reality, the conceptual elements that individuals use to build up those images are constructed and imposed upon them by powerful individuals, groups and organised entities, such as the media, which is also used by these powerful elements in society to spread and naturalise those fundamental ideas. As a result, representation is also about certain interests being protected against others. Within power are the dynamics of domination and subordination. Fiske (1993) argues that the weaker are always defined by the powerful. Thus, the powerful dominate construction of minority groups, such as marginalised ethnic groups, women, the poor, new religious movements, and homosexual people, who are defined in terms of their perception by more powerful groups. The interests of the dominant groups in any society can therefore not be overlooked when discussing the concept of representation.

A major aspect of media use of representation is selectivity. The media uses the closely related processes of agenda setting and framing (discussed below) to connect the representations it constructs and naturalises with ideology, thus appropriating and deploying its power over society. A combination of these three processes – agenda setting, framing, and representation - establishes the selectivity of issues in the media, which in turn establishes prioritisations and trivialisations of the events, situations and individuals that potentially constitute news stories (Wallis, 2012). Selectivity thus reduces media objectivity as some stories are chosen while others are ignored and images are formulated from a particular view of reality held by those in positions of power in that media. Selectivity is often justified by such objective reasons as the limitation of resources, such as available space in a newspaper, which means that not every news item can realistically be covered. Other practical conditions such as time, positioning, pictures and language are also considered. Other selection criteria used by media personnel in the prioritisation of news items emanate from such media imperatives as commercialisation and audience preferences. For instance, television news clips should preferably be easy to conceptualise. Issues that are sensational or conflictual are more appreciated by the audience as they have long-term impact on them. Media decisions in terms of prioritisation in terms of media organisations are guided by that.

This present study is concerned with media representation of a particular social category of women, female politicians. The study is based on the understanding that most images and behaviour traits of men and women are culturally and socially manufactured and naturalised through such social entities as the media and not biologically or otherwise naturally determined to any gender. People that control the means of production in societies determine relations of domination and subordination as they manifest between ethnicities, races and sexes. This understanding underpins decisions of what is included or excluded in news stories, with what effects as well as how included subjects are portrayed in terms of their nature, social function and behaviour. These considerations reproduce themselves even in class structures and relations between continents and their cultures. Thus, for instance, stereotypical ethnic and racial discourses are created through the way those groups are represented in Western literature and media, such that the “African mask becomes primitive” while “a Greek statue becomes Classical” (Fiske, 1993:149). This demonstrates the importance of ideology, which removes the illusion of innocence and neutrality in media productions.

In contemporary societies, the only obstacle standing in the way of the absolute domination of all other world cultures by the most powerful ones through media representation is the democratisation of technology which prevents the big and powerful western media organisations from monopolising the news. As a result, constructs of objective reality are now more easily contestable as various media organisations in diverse countries often produce competing representations of the same events, groups and individuals. However, powerful and better resourced media organisations still dominate this all-important image-producing industry as smaller media organisations often depend on news organisations such as Reuters, Agence France Press (AFP), CNN, and BBC for news items. Indeed, post-modernist media activists advocate the need for multiple voices to be heard through the media. This is based on their assumptions that traditions produce a variety of interpretations that may be unique and peculiar to a certain people with different struggles and opportunities unique to their history. In relation to gender, post-modernists suggest rethinking and rejecting the treatment of people as subjects within dominant constructions of society. This stems from evidence that sometimes the way subjects are represented in dominant mediums and narratives is not consistent with reality. For instance, images of women as inherently inferior to men, particularly in leadership

positions, are not consistent with objective reality. However, continual consumption of certain images, albeit unfounded, may disadvantage the groups represented in that manner as those images get entrenched through normalisation and naturalisation. Ultimately, people generally often act on or conform to gender-prescribed and media-created roles which often disadvantage women and further perpetuate their domination by men.

Representation theory has its weaknesses and short-comings. Whereas the purpose of representation is to persuade audiences to adopt the dominant reading of the text, different audiences interpret texts in different ways according to their culture and background. Though power relations are suggested, they are not clearly defined in representation theory (Vorlklein and Howarth, 2005). It is imperative in analysis to show how representation is inspired by power and ideology to maintain the status quo and preserve the disparities in a given society. Moscovici (2000) gets closest to explaining the effect of an idea also having the power to change our positions or feelings towards something. Another criticism of the theory is the argument that objective reality does actually exist and is available to all. Indeed, the fact that ordinary citizens have a notion of the misrepresentation of reality or 'the truth', for which they often criticise the media, implies that they believe that there is a true or fixed meaning. Of course, the various media organizations prey on this widely-held but erroneous notion to portray themselves as the only news outlet that is completely loyal to the truth. Such is the case in Zimbabwe of a daily newspaper called *The Daily News* whose mantra is "Telling it like it is".

2.3 Agenda Setting Theory

The agenda setting has been characterised as the media's ability to determine the salience of issues on the public agenda (McCombs and Reynolds, 2002). Agenda setting is one of the most influential and important communication tools available to the media. Davie and Maher (2006) argue that before agenda setting, scholarly wisdom was that the media "exerted little influence" on the public agenda, and that the public agenda was formed by social processes other than media messages. However, it has since emerged that, in communication the most important process is agenda setting. The theory was first suggested by Lippman (1922) who, in his study of public opinion, argued that the mass

media create the 'pictures' (perceptions and conceptualisations) we have of the world. However, he understood that the pictures provided by the media were often incomplete and unclear. He argued that we can see only reflections of reality (not reality itself) in the news media and yet, those (flawed) reflections provide the basis for our pictures (Riaz 2008).

Agenda setting theory has attracted the attention of media and communication specialists for much of the 20th Century. After a study spanning four decades, Cohen (1962:232-233) concluded that agenda setting could be regarded as orienting society's attention towards certain subjects and not others, the notion that "press may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling readers what to think about". McCombs and Shaw (1993:62) concur: "Agenda setting is considerably more than the classical assertion that the news tells us *what to think about*. The news also tells us *how to think about it*".

Freeland (2012) further argues that people will always view issues differently in different setups in terms of their importance and value because of the way they are portrayed by the various news media within given societies. In Zimbabwe, as indicated earlier, political polarisation in the period under study means the state media and the private media have different standpoints concerning what should be news. This is further illuminated in chapters 5 and 6 below. The agenda setting theory was significantly enhanced by the contribution of McCombs and Shaw (1972) who studied the 1968 US presidential election. McCombs and Shaw (1972) developed their theory of agenda setting concurrently with Funkhouser (1973), who, however, did not then dwell as much on it as the former who are now regarded as the major reference on the theory.

McCombs and Shaw (1972) pursued media influence at the cognitive level, paying less attention to the behavioral and affective aspects of it. They sought to find out if the voting patterns of the media audiences in the election of 1972 in the US and American public opinion in general had been influenced by the media. This was in response to earlier research (Lazarsfeld, Berelson and Gaudet, 1948; Berelson, Lazarsfeld and McPhee, 1954) that had found that mass media had little influence on American voting patterns (Riaz, 2008). For instance, Klapper (1960:8) argues that "mass communication ordinarily

does not serve as a necessary and sufficient cause of audience effects, but rather functions among and through a nexus of mediating functions and influences". McCombs and Shaw (1972) examined the transmission of issue or object prominence from the media to the audience and the media's role in representing issues for audience consumption. Their major contention was that, after prolonged audience exposure to the media, the audience ended up prioritizing issues prioritized in the media. Such prioritization is primarily cued by media headlines, placement of stories, as well as length and recurrence of the story. Follow-up studies were subsequently done by the same researchers to particularly examine how salience could be measured. Various other scholars (Erbring, Goldenberg and Miller, 1980; Iyengar, 1979; Neuman, 1990; Smith, 1987; Eldelstein, 1974) also undertook studies on issues of salience. Iyengar and Kinder (1987) also did research on agenda setting and demonstrated that agenda setting produced tangible results. Shaw (2008:96) contends that

The media are persuasive in focusing public attention on specific events, issues, and persons and in determining the importance people attach to public matters. The agenda setting theory says that because of newspapers, television and other news media people are aware or not aware, pay attention to or neglect, play up or downgrade specific features of the public scene. People tend to include or exclude from their cognitions what the media include or exclude from their content. People also tend to assign an importance to what they include that closely resembles the emphasis given to events issues and persons by the mass media.

McCombs and Shaw's theory of agenda setting has been seen as having developed in four phases. The first phase (1972) focused on identifying the effects of the media on the public while the second phase (1977) investigated conditions that facilitated or limited media agenda setting. The third phase, which began in 1976, focused on two concerns: first, characteristics of election candidates as reported by the media and adopted by the voters as their own agenda and, second, the broader agenda of persona voter concerns, such as issues and candidates. Finally, in the 1980s, McCombs and Shaw's research progressed to media sources and media commercialization. These phases were summarized by Berger and Freeman (2011: 10) as follows: (a) original hypothesis, transfer of issue salience from the media to the public; (b) contingent conditions; (c) agenda of attributes, such as candidate images; and (d) investigations of who sets the media agenda.

An important function of media agenda setting is that of 'gate keeping', which is reflected through selection of news items to be published. The concept of agenda setting is premised on the assumption that it influences the salience of items in the news and then transfers it to the public agenda. This is often through a process in which the journalist decides which news to cover and which to ignore (Riaz 2008). McCombs (2002:4) claims that in a typical daily newspaper, over "75% of the potential news of the day is rejected and never transmitted to the audience". The selection function of agenda setting thus entails prioritizing certain news stories while trivializing others. Selection is justified by the fact that the media cannot accommodate all news that are available. Gate keeping is therefore one of the first concerns and functions of agenda setting. The frequency of coverage of female politicians by the Zimbabwean media is therefore attributable to gate keeping. However, the absolute power attributed to media personnel in this regard appears misleading as, in reality, choices about which stories are to be published are also determined by the newspaper's perception of its audience's nature and expectations, such that in fact and to some extent it could be argued that a given audience gets the media stories it deserves. Thus, whereas the media certainly makes the final decision concerning stories to publish, that decision is the culmination of a much broader cycle of power, which is the society in which the media is an element. All the same, the fact that gate keeping is the very basis and essence of media agenda setting (McCombs, 2002), which is a major concern of media representation of news subjects removes the assurance of accurate representation of potential news subjects by the media.

The major factors of gate-keeping are imposed on the media personnel, particularly the editors, by the media owners. Major factors include media ideology, media economy and commercialization of news. For instance, as business entities, media organizations must think in terms of profitability in a highly competitive environment. Thus, such factors play a vital role in deciding which stories to select, follow up, emphasize, interpret and manipulate in particular ways (Riaz, 2008; Iyengar & Kinder, 1987)).

Once stories to be published have been chosen through gate keeping, the agenda setting process turns to the treatment accorded the various stories carried by a publication. A key concern in the treatment of a story is the prominence or salience it is accorded in relation

to other stories in the same publication. This is succinctly expressed by Freeland (2012:3) who argues that, “The two most basic assumptions of agenda setting are: (1) the press and the media do not reflect reality; they filter and shape it; (2) media concentration on a few issues and subjects leads the public to perceive those issues as more important than other issues”. Various strategies are used to determine prominence, including publishing a story more times than others, making a story longer or shorter than others, according or denying headline status, and the placement of story in a newspaper in relation to other stories. These strategies determine the salience accorded by a publication to a story and, by extension, cue the audience to accord it similar status. Prominence or salience is therefore one of the most important concerns of agenda setting theory. It is so effective that, in the context of this present study, if a story about a female politician is tucked away at the bottom of an inner page of a newspaper, many readers may not even notice it. In fact, busy readers with only a few minutes for the news may only concentrate on headline news, so that if stories about female politicians are not accorded that status, such readers may never even know they exist. Prominence (or salience or prioritisation and its antithesis, silence) is both crucial and much more discernible during election times (Chari, 2008). In this regard, Berger and Freeman (2011: 9) discuss agenda setting as a subjective process, identifying three processes indicative of that subjectivity, which are forming an opinion, priming opinions about public figures through an emphasis on particular issues and shaping an opinion through an emphasis on particular attributes. Gitlin (1980) argues that if something is over emphasised in the news it can directly influence the public opinion. Weaver, McCombs, and Spellman (1975:471) underscore this notion:

For orientation about politics, mass communication does more than merely reinforce pre-existing beliefs. In fact, the media may teach these members of the audience the issues and topics to use in evaluating certain candidates and parties, not just during political campaigns, but also in the longer periods between campaigns.

Thus, the expectation is that when a matter is given prominence in the media this also tends to promote its prominence in the opinions and assumptions of the audience. This notion, however, fails to take into cognisance the wide choices of media that are availed to the people through the new media technologies. The different platforms of information have the potential to influence public opinion in diverse and conflicting ways, leading to the

development of several competing public opinions, thus negating if not neutralising the intention of agenda setting to gain absolute power and control of the public agenda. This means that agenda setting theory explained the modern media in its primitive stages when one media house could monopolise the mass information industry in a given society. Nowadays, choice entails several competing agendas leading to the development of various competing public opinions on any given issue. Consequently, this study examines not one, but three Zimbabwean weeklies in competition with each other.

In their book *Emergence of American Political Issues*, McCombs and Shaw (1972) discuss the importance of media personnel, such as the broadcasters and editors, in the construction of news. They argue that media personnel are the ones who select, consider and decide what news are important for the audience to consume and not the other way round. This theory echoes the effects theories school of thought that gives power to the sender in comparison to their audience though it shifted and went further to consider the importance of the cognitive level in the audiences. According to Spring (2002),

The common assumption of agenda-setting is that the ability of the media to influence the visibility of events in the public mind has been a part of our culture for almost half a century. Therefore the concept of agenda-setting in our society is for the press to selectively choose what we see or hear in the media.

Agenda-setting entails what McCombs³ terms structural biases, which are primarily concerned with news placement stereotyping and biases.

Another major contribution to agenda setting theory is that of Noelle-Neumann (1974) who identifies three components of agenda setting. The first of these is ubiquity, which refers to the pervasive presence of the mass media, which are indiscriminately make available to all citizens for information, entertainment and gratifications. The second is cumulation, which entails the sustained coverage of a topic, trend or theme by a given publication in several of its issues. Such repetition results in emphasis that influences the audience, making it a favourable tool of propaganda. The third is consonance, which refers to media readiness and willingness to cover an event or an issue so that stories that resonate well with the expectations of a particular publication are more likely to receive coverage than those that

³ <http://www.infoamerica.org/documentospdf/mccombs.01.pdf>

conflict with those expectations. Cumulation and consonance are associated with communist countries where they are favourite tools of 'mind managers'. The predilection of a given publication for particular candidates and issues that it covers repeatedly and distributes far and wide is therefore calculated to ensure that the said publication outdoes its rivals in influencing the public agenda during election time.

The agenda setting theory refines the media effects theory of the 1920s and 1930s, which contended that audiences passively accepted media messages to which they reacted in predictable ways. Agenda setting does not concern itself with the direct impact of the media on the audience. It stresses that the impact is not necessarily on the people's attitudes, but on cognitions by the media playing a gate-keeping role on the news (Shaw, 2008). The agenda setting theory does not necessarily perceive the media as prescriptive or playing an advocacy role in society as no media effects are readily visible as a result of the media setting an agenda. In agenda setting the media gives information and presents people with what to discuss or think about. In this respect, agenda setting is reminiscent of the diffusion of innovation (Rogers, 1962) or multiple flow theory (Lazarsfeld, 1984), both of which are concerned with how the media influences human behavior (Shaw, 2008). Scholars from this school of thought view information as potentially capable of generating multiple readings. They also argue that it does not move in a linear pattern. Between the media and the audiences are opinion leaders who interpret messages to the audiences. The role of opinion leaders, however, changed significantly with the introduction and popularisation of television, which enables messages to pass directly from the media to the audiences without the need for further mediation.

The agenda setting theory had a number of weaknesses, one being that scholars do not describe the cognitive processes involved in the reception and processing of media information by the audience culminating in its being influenced by media stories. A theory that sought to address this and related weakness is the uses and gratification theory. The advent of the uses and gratification theory, which debunked the notion of a passive audience playing an active role in making choices, posed a serious challenge to agenda setting theory. According to the uses and gratification theory, the audience uses the media for various personal purposes. The uses and gratification theory therefore ascribes power to the audience, which chooses how to consume and exploit the media and the purpose of

that consumption. Shaw (2008) also acknowledges the psychological and sociological attributes of voters as major contributors of their voting patterns. The major weakness of the uses and gratification theory is that in politics people are not the same since they are affected and moved by different things in voting. For instance, it has been found that some audiences actually use the media to escape the media and its intended political effects by choosing to watch soap operas and sport instead. However, proponents of the agenda setting theory argue that the media has great influence on people's lives. In election times people tend to follow the lead of the media because of in terms of the importance it attaches to a certain candidate, for instance.

Agenda setting occurs at three interdependent levels, namely media agenda setting, public agenda setting and policy agenda setting (Rogers and Dearing, 1988; McCombs and Shaw, 1972). Out of the three, agenda setting theory ascribes agency to media agenda setting, seeing that policy agenda flows from public agenda, which in turn is determined by media agenda setting. Both public and policy agendas are therefore deemed to originate from media agenda, thus suggesting a linear one-way system in which media agenda setting has direct control of the public opinion, which is also referred to as the public agenda and influences policy agenda. A direct beneficiary of such a view of media and communication is hegemony, which is power through ideological influence and control (Femia, 1981:31). According to Gamson et al (1992:374),

We walk around with media-generated images of the world, using them to construct meaning about political and social issues. The lens through which we receive these images is not neutral but evinces the power and point of view of the political and economic elites who operate and focus it. And the special genius of this system is to make the whole process seem so normal and natural that the very art of social construction is invisible.

It is therefore this link of the media agenda setting to hegemony that provides evidence that the relation between the three agenda types mentioned above cannot be linear but rather cyclic as hegemony implies a process through which dominant culture maintains its position by enlisting the support of the media, such that the media agenda is in effect the agenda of the dominant culture and social group in a given society. Therefore, as power is constantly contested among the various interest groups in a given community, so are the media agenda and public agenda also contested, culminating in a dynamic and fluid

environment. This is what explains the competition for control of hegemonic space in the media by media practitioners, media organisations, and the elite of the given society, such as political parties and business organisations. Gauntlett (2012) posits that the very idea of media agenda setting is the result of conservative ideology and paranoia such that conservative news sources constantly complain about and attack the “liberal media” (Freeland 2012:4).

Indeed, a problem posed by simplistic models of agenda setting is that of the ambiguity of the public agenda setting. The public agenda setting is concerned with the audience’s agenda, the media agenda focuses on the impact of mass media on the audience while policy agenda setting is more concerned with how the public and media agendas influence the decisions of elite policy makers. According to Berger and Freeman (2012:11),

This deals with both the level at which to measure the public’s agenda (e.g macro versus micro), as well as the scale at which to measure the public’s agenda (e.g direct measurement versus conditional measurement). The latter of these asserts that different pre-existing factors in individuals might condition them to absorb the agenda differently. Also behavioural and attitudinal measurements are discussed, as well as alteration measurement versus stabilisation. Essentially the latter of these deals with the issue of the fluctuation of the media’s agenda contrasted to the constancy of its influence. An additional primary problem discussed is that of long term versus short term measurement. Discussion of time lags gives no real answer as to how one is really determined.

McQuail (1987) has argued that the media has used agenda setting to successfully influence public opinion by the way they cover news stories, thus determining the outcome in elections. In this study, agenda setting theory helps underscore the link between media organisations and particular social classes (national or international) or political parties, all of them competing to control public opinion. According to Mabweazara (2011:106),

While editorial policies are a more formalised way of ensuring newsrooms’ compliance with the proprietors’ preferred editorial slants, direct proprietary interferences with editorial processes equally have an impact on news production in the newsrooms.

Perhaps the most important tool of agenda setting lies in ability to naturalise selected representations of reality, which is often responsible for the magnification of conflicts

between competing parties in most elections. In Zimbabwean elections, both the private and state media have written biased stories in the media to sway the electorate. Conflicts that are represented in the two polarised media camps are often reflected in their respective audience, thus lending credence to the notion that the audience's ways of viewing life are determined by the newsroom personnel which in turn gives 'more power' to media organisations and the newsmakers than to the public. Many election conflicts are therefore likely to be originated or manufactured in the media. This confirms the findings of McCombs and Shaw (1972) who explored the perceptions that were made prominent by the media during the presidential election to determine whether the audience viewed these issues that way. The research was meant to assess the application of the agenda setting theory in structuring of issues and demonstrate the way the audiences receive the messages. Their findings demonstrated the media's power to structure but more fundamentally to influence public opinion. In relation to the Zimbabwean media of the period under study, it would seem that the power of the media appears to increase significantly in acutely polarised political settings. However, what really increases is the intensity of the efforts of either of the political camps to use the media to influence public opinion, which in turn influences the thinking of the said political camps. In a similar vein, Bagdikian (1990) argues that, in the US, the media is controlled and run by only 23 organisations controlled by a few powerful people, which implies control of ideas and stifling of the diversity of opinion and multiplicity of voices reflective of the democratic ideal.

In this study, the agenda setting theory will enable the unravelling of underlying factors that contribute to media constructs of female politicians in the newspapers examined here. An assumption of this study is that most Zimbabwean news audiences were subjected to a media agenda to disadvantage female politicians.

While the agenda setting theory is still relevant today, it has a number of weaknesses some of which will be explored within this study. One of the notable challenges of this theory is that it was largely relevant in previous generations where states and big organisations controlled the media. It is now challenged by new developments such as the new media. It is also premised in the effects theory which assumes that people receive messages uniformly. People nowadays also make choices on media content they want to have access to at any given time. Another assumption of the agenda setting theory is that

the audience is massified and receive messages uniformly. This has been challenged by the Birmingham University cultural studies group which argue that the audience receives messages differently (Morley 1980; Neumann 1991). According to Gamson (1992:375),

Some writers on media content ignore the decoding process, assuming an undifferentiated audience in which the dominant meaning will be passively accepted by everybody. Those who examine how people actually use the media in constructing meaning invariably challenge such assumptions and find various kinds of oppositional and negotiated readings of cultural texts

It is therefore evident that media no longer influences the audience in the manner assumed by the original proponents of agenda setting. The advent of media technology that enables feedback complicates media communication as it enables the incorporation into the news generation process of audience responses, which tilts the balance of power in favour of the public whereas there was only minimal audience feedback before the onset of new media technology. According to Berger and Freeman (2011:3),

With the emergence of online media, however, the relevance of Agenda-Setting is being challenged. As the media becomes personalized, the agenda is diluted or not uniform and is therefore claimed to be no longer transferrable. However, there are other aspects of Agenda-Setting that are also called into question by the realm of new media. Components that one would deem necessary for issue salience to occur may or may not exist in the online realm.

Audiences are thus now fragmented and it has become very challenging to affect them all in the same way. They now can also access information concerning candidates through alternative media that mainstream media may be trying to conceal which may assist them in making decisions. Today's audiences can therefore be more active in the reception and production of news as new media technology blurs the role of media consumers and gatekeepers, which is the basis of the agenda setting theory. Consequently, Freeland (2012) argues that the agenda setting theory is extremely difficult to measure since the consumer can easily become the agenda setter within the new media which affects and alters the cause and effect order of media agenda which translates to public agenda (Berger and Freeman 2011). The audience is thus neither passive nor massified; it can choose which media to consume – indeed which media to interact with – when, where, why and how. Indeed, mere diversity of backgrounds, culture and demographic factors

would make the audience view media messages differently anyway, such that the audience can accept the dominant reading of the media or negotiate, challenge and even reject it (Morley, 1980; Williams, 2003). As noted by Freeland (2012:5),

According to the audience effects model, the media's coverage of events and issues interacts with the audience's pre-existing sensitivities to produce changes in issues concerns. This means that an audience that is already highly sensitive to an issue will be most affected by an issue that is given increased news exposure while the same issue may have a limited effect on other groups. Another issue that causes variations in the audience effect is the correlation between the public agenda and the media agenda and whether the issue is obtrusive or unobtrusive. Obtrusive issues are those that affect nearly everyone, such as high gas prices or an increased cost of food at the grocery store. Unobtrusive issues are those that are more distant to the public, like a political scandal or the genocide in Darfur. Research suggests that the obtrusiveness of an issue is based on the audience's personal experience with the topic.

In McCombs and Shaw's (1972) original work the most important and distinguished connection between people and the elite or government is the media. Its relevance was evident during the period of their research in the 1970s. Finally, in elections it is often difficult for the media to influence people that have already made up their minds concerning issues, parties and candidates. This is particularly so in the case of polarized political environments such as the one under study, where many members of the public would not even look at the newspaper aligned with a rival political party. The theory however remains relevant to the extent that it explains why people with the same media exposure may see issues in the same manner and consider the same issues as important. According to Spring (2001),

Actions surrounding the O.J. case and the Clinton Scandal are both excellent examples of Agenda-Setting in action. During these historic events, the media was ever-present. The placement of full page, color articles and top stories on news programming made it clear that Americans should place these events as important issues. Some people believed O.J. was guilty, and others believed he was innocent. Some believed Clinton should have been impeached, and others thought otherwise. Therefore, the media wasn't extremely successful in telling us what to think on these issues, but most Americans did believe these were both important issues for a long period of time.

2.4 Frame Theory

While framing theory can be applied to various disciplines such as cognitive psychology (Bartlett, 1932, Bateson, 1955), sociology (Goffman, 1974), and economics (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979), among others, this research will specifically focus on the use of framing within media and communication. It is important to note that no single scholar can be credited with formulating the framing theory judging by its existence in other disciplines before it was used in communication studies. The concept of frames was first brought to the field of communication from psychology and sociological fields of study by Tuchman (1975) and Gitlin (1980). According to McCombs and Shaw (1993:1992),

Todd Gitlin (1980) introduced the concept of framing to mass communication research in his classic examination of how CBS trivialized a major student movement during the turbulent 1960s. News coverage of a social movement can select from a number of alternative framing strategies.

Framing is a tool of representation that is closely related to agenda setting and accounts for how a subject is packaged and presented to the audience, thus more firmly reinserting the agenda setting debate within representation. Framing is less concerned with identifying the issues or topics covered by the media – which is the central preoccupation of agenda setting – than with how those subjects are covered. Thus, framing helps researchers recast theorisation of media agenda setting in terms of the invariable vocation of the media, which is mediation and representation. It reminds us that, whereas topics covered may change, the purpose of the media is not only to include or exclude but also to represent, as in mediate the meaning of covered subjects. The basis of framing theory is therefore the notion that the media makes news of selected events by locating them within a field of meaning of their choice. Consequently, as the media pursues given agenda, its innocence and sincerity are sacrificed as much in the how as in the what. Essentially, this means that there is ample room for both quantitative and qualitative research in the field of media communication studies. Thus, whereas this present study does quantitatively assess the frequency with which female politicians are covered by selected weekly newspapers in the period under study, it is much more concerned with how they are covered as that is where images of female politicians in particular and women in general are constructed and disseminated.

One of the most influential proponents of framing theory is ethnographer, Erving Goffman, whose research primarily sought to explain society from a perspective of interaction. Of particular interest for framing theory is his (1974) essay *Frame analysis: an essay on the organisation of experience*. Goffman (1974) develops the frame theory on the basis of Bateson's article, *A theory of play and phantasy*, which sees a frame as a definition of the situation, a perspective that makes it possible to understand a given episode of conduct. Goffman (1974) contends that, in order to comprehend frames, the audience has to be acquainted with the society that produces them. The frame is thus seen as a collective creation enabling meaningful experience, produced through interaction and consumed through interaction. A frame in this sense is only a particularly tangible metaphor for what other scholars have tried to evoke by words such as background, setting, context or a phrase like in terms of (Verhoeven, 1985). For Goffman (1974), phenomena are thus named and defined in relation to forces that control events through our subjective interaction with them. For instance, he (1974) argues that, in politics, the individual discovers an already altered environment in which he makes meaning of life through a conceptual lens (itself a frame, therefore) produced by the contact of his own pre-established view of life and the pre-existent frames he finds in the political environment.

Goffman (1974) sees framing as based on the subjectivity of reality, which, in his view, is heavily dependent on the context. Thus, reality as it is known is constructed from a particular perspective and is often naturalised through ritualisation and recurrence, which makes it dynamic and not static. Goffman (1974) in his frame analyses particularly focuses on questions of what and how and not the why, to unpack the world in his set out objectives (Verhoeven, 1985). He discusses issues of fabrication and keying, which suggest biases and subjectivity. He argues that, through the framing, some aspects of the communication process are concealed from the audience though this may not always succeed as the audience have a way of finding out the truth eventually. He also then suggests that humans can alter what has been naturalised by societies as they do not always accept what is given within frames. He thus acknowledges the effects of the constructivist and natural world in framing (Verhoeven, 1985).

Much of the criticism levelled against Goffman's theorisation and use of the frame theory has focussed on his preferred ethnographic methodical approach. He has thus been criticised for a predominantly subjective approach to research that privileges qualitative participant observation over more 'scientific' quantitative options, which, it was felt, would have offered more reliable justification for the generalisation of findings (Verhoeven, 1985). Other critics of his use of the frame theory have pointed at his decision to restrict himself to 'the what' and the 'how' questions at the expense of the 'why' question, which would have shed light on the reasons underpinning, for instance, choices of images to use as frames. Goffman's (1961a, 1963b, 1971 and 1974) research was also generally concerned with routinised occurrences and was restricted to Western middle classes, thus overlooking other societies, cultures and classes, thereby reducing the possibility of universalising its findings. However, given that framing is itself essentially a subjective phenomenon, methodologies that allow for in-depth critical probing of data are the best placed to account for it. Such approaches also have the academic strength and moral merit of not claiming to produce universally applicable findings as they acknowledge ethnic, cultural and other relevant cultural differences from one community and society to another, such that each society and community needs to be studied separately. This present study, therefore fills an obvious gap in literature where previous scholars have not focussed on its object study and its context.

Frame or framing theory

In order to understand framing, one must first define a frame, which is the tool used by the media in the process of reconstructing or reconceptualising ('framing') phenomena to be covered as news. A frame can be regarded as a conceptual substitute for a real phenomenon, natural or artificial. Goffman (1974) argues that frames are not deliberately or just intentionally existing; on the contrary, they exist unintentionally through already existing forms of communication in societies. This is often done through cueing and emphasising what the audience have to see within a given communication. To that extent, framing can be viewed as another word for representation, argument or genre (Entman, 2004), meaning the way a communication source defines and constructs any piece of communicated information. It is how the media persuades audiences to conceptualise covered subjects in a particular manner and from a particular perspective. Text, thus, contains frames contained in keywords, certain phrases, stereotypes, media sources and

sentences that contain facts and judgements (Entman, 2004). Kahneman and Tversky (1979), cited in Van Gorp (2007) describe frames as rather subtle changes in phrasing. More specifically, some level of alteration of words or phrases is done in framing sometimes to make them more forceful and more direct and alter meaning. It is for this reason that the frame theory could be applied with similar effects to the study of public opinion or examines voting behaviour in political science, to cognitive studies in social psychology or to class, gender, and race research in cultural studies and sociology, among others (Entman, 1993). This is because the theory is basically premised within the interactionist theories that deal with audiences and the text within communication. Framing is, therefore, an unavoidable and ubiquitous aspect of human communication as we all bring our own frames to our communications⁴. Within media news, a frame can be a latent message from a journalist oriented towards a receiver as a suggestion or stimulus to understand the news message according to the idea expressed through the frame. It is primarily meant to give the audience instructions or assistance in making them understand the message as intended by the media (Bateson, 1972:188).

For framing to be effective, the entire process must be rooted in the culture of the society of the media and its audience since frames must be easily accessible to the publication's target audience for the audience to get the media's intended message. Various newspapers can thus use diverse frames to represent the same issue while the same frame can be employed to cover diverse issues. Van Gorp (2007:70) contends that,

In framing research, attention can be paid to alternative hypotheses, such as the prediction that the media can take up an issue from the political agenda but use an opposite frame to cover it, or the particular ways a frame can become dominant and how it subsequently is applied to cover a diversity of topics. These aspects slip the notice of agenda-setting research.

In this study, frame theory is much more useful than agenda setting theory because it explicitly and directly targets the images deployed by the media in representing its subjects, such as the female politicians whose representation is examined in this study. What particularly limits the application of the agenda setting theory is its tendency to view subjects, such as politicians, as ready-made frames that the media plucks from society

⁴ <http://masscommtheory.com/theory-overviews/framing-theory/>.

and offers to the electorate, thus overlooking the critical role of the media (and indeed society at large) in the dynamic process of constructing those frames as it mediates the politician to the public. The new understanding that framing theory ushers in underscores the importance of interaction, a concept located within cultural and constructionist theoretical frameworks, as frames are negotiated through the interaction of various levels of society, inclusive of the media. As a result, the meaning of media stories is generated by relating them with certain frames taken from within a particular society or culture. This subjective negotiation accounts for the multiple meanings various audiences can potentially obtain from the same newspaper story. Culturally drawn up frames quickly persuade the audience to attach an expected meaning to media represented subjects. Consequently, in most instances, the frame appears invisible, unnoticed and natural because it is derived from culture within which it is normalised or naturalised. Prominence of the frames are given by the audiences in connection with the way they connect with their interests, beliefs, experiences desires and attitudes of an individual (Van Gorp, 2007). Thus, a key element of framing theory is the interaction process, which culminates into socially-negotiated constructs of reality (Goffman, 1974; Bartlett, 1932), which together constitute what is known as worldview.

By pointing to power relations within a text, framing enables the exploration of communication as a tool of hegemony (Kahneman and Tversky, 1984). Framing entails the essence of the power of the text to communicate:

Whatever its specific use, the concept of framing consistently offers a way to describe the power of a communicating text. Analysis of frames illuminates the precise way in which influence over a human consciousness is exerted by the transfer (or communication) of information from one location-such as a speech, utterance, news report, or novel-to that consciousness (Entman, 1993:51).

A major concern of frame analysis is the way in which influence over a human consciousness takes place from one location, such as an utterance, a news report or a novel, to that consciousness. Issues of selection and salience are also for communication within the frame. Thus the whole process involves selection in which some aspects of a story aspects are highlighted and made more prominent than others in order to naturalise a certain reality. Frames have the power to define problems, determine causes through diagnosis of the forces that create them, evaluate and offer solutions with justifications and

prediction of their likely effects. Important to note is that a single frame may perform one or more of the four functions of a frame or have none of the four functions (Entman, 1993). For instance, the state media in Zimbabwe have consistently framed Zimbabwe's economic crisis as a consequence of sanctions imposed through a conspiracy of Western countries and international financial institutions on the country to punish it for 2000 Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) which dispossessed mostly white commercial farmers. The purpose of this frame and its use by the media has been to divert blame from government and the ruling ZANU PF party to foreign enemies of the country, real and/or imaginary, thus justifying the party's anti-regime change stance.

Functions of frames predominantly include selecting, highlighting, structuring, and deploying selected subjects and rhetorical devices in order to construct arguments concerning (or representations of) the said subjects, evaluate them and solve any perceived problems surrounding them (Entman, 1993). Frames make use of salience, which is basically illuminating a given subject or piece of information in a context in which others are downplayed in order to increase its chances of not only being remembered more by the audience but also altering its thinking about that subject (Entman, 1993:53).

Scholars however challenge the universalisation and massification of audiences in the media (Van Gorp, 2007; Hall, 1997). There is no guarantee that the audience will read the dominant reading (Morley, 1980; Hall, 1997). The implication is that framing is not static or predictable as it is premised within people's culture and thus related to societies. The audience sometimes accept the dominant reading, negotiate or outrightly reject it. Audiences and journalists may view news stories differently depending on the frame employed. In this respect frame analysis can be employed to identify and analyse frames that are prominent in social, political, or historical contexts (Van Gorp, 2007).

Frames can be reconstructed as they are embedded in media texts during the framing process. Van Gorp (2007) argues that a frame which the journalist has applied in a text can be represented as a frame package. A frame package comprises three parts; namely, the manifest framing devices, the manifest or latent reasoning devices and an implicit cultural phenomenon that displays a package as a whole (Van Gorp, 2007).

Therefore, reasoning devices, explicit and implicit statements that deal with justifications, causes and consequences in a temporal order which complete the frame package are all essential to a frame (Gamson & Lasch, 1983; Gamson & Modigliani, 1989). According to Entman (1993), these reasoning devices are related to the four framing functions, which are the promotion of a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation. Examples of frames include the human-interest frame, the conflict frame, and the thematic frame, which can also be regarded as scripts (Entman, 2004) or news formats (Iyengar, 1991:13). According to Van Gorp (2007:65), "The very heart of the framing mechanism is that, at a cognitive level, the framing devices that are incorporated in the news message activate a schema that hypothetically corresponds with the frame preferred by the journalist". Thus, the message exists within a specific context along with a frame that demonstrates how it should be interpreted, which produces specific meaning through contact with an audience's context and experience such that the audience can read messages differently from the intended meaning of the media (Gurevitch and Levy, 1986).

The frame package recalls a schema on the basis of which the audience or reader fills in the other reasoning devices that are not explicitly included in the message (Van Gorp, 2007). Media content, however seeks to persuade audiences to see issues in line with the media's frame, thus suppressing alternative thinking. Furthermore, issue specific frames are often linked to other bigger frames. As a result of the selection some aspects are added, excluded or trivialised. Van Gorp (2007:66), however, argues that the frame can invoke unintended effects in the audiences, especially in circumstances in which the journalist does not capture the interest of the audience.

One of the dominant ideas on framing is that it makes use of particular slants that promote some way of seeing issues while suppressing others. These slants are usually developed by the elite and ruling classes through their ideology. The selected slants promote a way of thinking that eventually shapes the public opinion. According to Entman (2010:393),

Slant occurs when a news report emphasizes one side's preferred frame in a political conflict while ignoring or derogating another side's. One-sided framing emphasizes some elements and suppresses others in ways that encourage recipients to give attention and weight to the evaluative attributes (vi and wi) that privilege the favored side's interpretation.

The hegemony and ideology of the rich and ruling governments is thus protected through the media. A related concept within the frame theory is that of bias, which comprises two categories: content bias and decision-making bias. Content bias is concerned with the media house policies and the ideology of the media company that is often aligned with that of the elite. It is rooted in the political economy of the organisation where the elite and the media use media frames to influence the public to adopt their ideology by embracing the dominant reading. This is often done without the audience's consent and in most instances without even their knowledge. Decision-making bias focuses on the inter-relationships between the media personnel and the audience. Specifically, the concept pre-supposes that journalists are capable of influencing the audience through the texts they produce (Entman, 2010). Critics suggest that reporters and editors at major media organisations allow their personal ideologies to guide their news decisions. Through decision-making bias reporters and editors allow their personal beliefs and ideologies to guide and filter information to the audiences through the production processes. This is done through interpretation and analysis of news stories which makes the news naturally subjective. This interpretive stage involves construction of facts and what the audience may think is reality is in actual fact manufactured reality. As mentioned earlier frames that are formulated by the media organisations and journalists are situated in the cultural beliefs of the audiences that are being targeted to minimise rejection. To maintain loyalty on the audiences and ensure dominance they analyse the audiences' consumer traits. To maintain dominance the media also makes use of political advertising and treat audiences as consumers in the media market place. Therefore media messages through frames are strategically packaged in ways that endears them to the audience through familiarity. Thus the media may deliberately produce sensationalised and simplified news stories to attract audiences in stereotypical ways in which the audiences are often familiar with. The nature of this kind of reporting attracts the audiences because of the familiarity of the stories and situations that they identify with.

Tuchman (1972) contends that frames are premised within the process theory, which is concerned with the process through which news are produced and directed. She argues that through this process certain ideas and situations are illuminated and made prominent while others are trivialised or completely ignored. The important idea in the process

concept of framing is that it acknowledges the journalist's input. This theory of framing also states that, in political news, the dominant political systems are legitimised through the use of selected sources, speeches, negotiations and conversations to generate a particular slant. This is termed the concept of heresthetics by Riker (1986). Simply put, Riker (1986)⁵ heresthetics means structuring the process so one may win by building stronger coalitions Riker (1986) describes this as generally the way in which experienced politicians and other parties involved in frame communications highlight and weave together dimensions of a situation most likely to sway potential allies to become actual supporters (Entman, 2010:392).

This is echoed by Butler (2009) who describes a frame as a construct which sometimes can be far from reality. She argues that the frame is volatile as it largely depends on or is determined by the person who is constructing it. This emphasises the subjectivity of the frame. In her study, Butler (2009) analyses the way wars are justified or condemned by the media through frames according to the side of war behind the framing. For her, the "image becomes a dense sight of political ambivalence about the war itself" (Butler, 2009: xi). She further suggests that the power of the frame within a war situation resides in the ways it renders some lives "grievable" while others are considered "ungrievable" in a war conflict (Butler, 2009:xxii). In many media organisations the assumption is that sensational news sell faster and easily and, most importantly, emotionally affects the audiences. In war conflict situations, pro-war media organisations frame the war as inevitable in the context of perceived actions of the enemy who is represented as a threat. In this respect the war is often sold to the audience before it plays out on the battleground. Thus in many instances in areas of war conflicts the war often takes the shape of the way it was projected and framed by the media. The role of framing therefore entails psychologically preparing the public for the inevitable war. In the same manner, the media, through framing plays a complicating role between competing political parties. A conflict is thus legitimized by the way it is framed by the media. The way the war is framed by the media is far more important than the ground battle as the war often follows how it was represented in the media.

⁵ <http://rhetorica.net/heresthetics.htm>.

Frame theory was introduced into media studies to complement media agenda setting theory. Both theories seek to account for the way the media draws the public's attention to certain issues, individuals and situations and, as a result, set an agenda. Like agenda setting, framing can and is meant to influence policy making and public opinion. The creation and use of frames is often a deliberate and conscious choice by the media personnel as they cover issues in the media. The involvement of media personnel in the process of framing is underscored by Elderman (1964) who contends that frames must be viewed as "persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, and as selection, emphasis, and exclusion, by which symbol handlers routinely organize discourse, whether verbal or visual". The combination of all the above factors mentioned by Elderman (1964) point to the active participation of the media personnel in the manufacturing of news stories. The essence of framing is its power to influence and impact the audience through the way news stories are structured. Entman (1993: 53) argues that, "the power of framing ... operates by selecting and highlighting some features of reality while omitting others.

However, frames within constructionism, are not exclusively formulated in terms of the effects of media content on the public (Neuman et al., 1992:17–19). From a constructionist perspective, media content constitutes both a dependent and an independent variable. Media is affected by journalists and other external influences that are consumed by the audience. This however gives the frame the potential for the media to affect and influence the audience and also limit its effects (McQuail, 2005). The frames point to the different and various ways employed by the media to cover issues persuasively. The framing process on the other hand acknowledges the role played by the media personnel and the consumer patterns of the audience. Within this discipline frames are perceived as interlinked to the culture of the audience within a given society. Framing in this discipline thus involves various factors than priming and agenda setting which are primarily cognitive (Price & Tewksbury, 1997). Agenda setting and priming particularly focus on issues within the media while framing, makes an explicit distinction between issues and frames. In framing an issue can be covered from various and different angles or frames which can be used on diverse issues (Van Gorp, 2007)

Tuchman (1978) described framing as a process theory. She adds that general and

routine procedures that are followed in the production of news direct news frames in particular ways. She points out that this process theory makes certain ideas more prominent while shutting out others. This is done through the selection of news issues where some ideas are illuminated and made prominent while others are downplayed or blocked completely. This is often captured in keywords, metaphors, concepts, symbols and visual images that are projected in the media (Entman, 1991). Besides that, framing works through repetition and emphasis on particular ideas while deliberately excluding others. Through the process theory the audience are expected to react uniformly to a message. In many instances therefore framing has the ability to make audiences adopt the dominant reading by the media house through ideological indoctrination. This is facilitated by the media personnel through the way they select and produce news pieces. As noted earlier, this has been questioned and disputed through a number of studies where the audience does not necessarily adopt the dominant reading in a news story (Entman, 2010). For that reason the frame theories scholars have classified frames under the process and effects school of thought. Under the effects school of thought scholars specifically focus on the effects of the selected news stories on the audience. The process school of thought critically analyses how news are produced to show a particular slant by the media organisation (Zhang, 2003). In his audience positioning Hall (1980) argues that a text is polysemous which means that it has the potential of having multiple meanings to the audience. The first reading that Hall (1980) discusses is the dominant reading where the reader embraces the thinking of the media organisation. The audience reads the intended message by the author. The second is the negotiated reading in which the reader partly agrees with the text but rejects some of the codes within that message. This kind of reading is often influenced by the culture and interests of the person. The third reading is the oppositional one in which the reader totally rejects the reading because of their positioning which may be influenced by demographic factors and culture of the recipient.

Framing is perceived crucial in perspective and public opinion shaping (Zaller, 1992; Entman, 1993). Politicians in every dispensation strive to control the media in-order to influence the perceptions of the audience. In this respect the democratic principles are sometimes violated as there seems to be no freedom of choice or expression in the media. The media economy has an implication on especially the audience's voting behaviours. The vulnerability of the audience is displayed through the way frames are created to influence the public. According to Entman (1993:57):

Journalists may follow the rules for “objective” reporting and yet convey a dominant framing of the news text that prevents most audience members from making a balanced assessment of a situation. Now, because they lack a common understanding of framing, journalists frequently allow the most skilful media manipulators to impose their dominant frames on the news (Entman, 1989; Entman & Page, in press; Entman & Rojecki, 1993).

A number of scholars have contributed to the way public opinion is shaped. If receivers define and interpret an issue in correspondence with the dominant and preferences of the media organisation or text they interpret the preferred meaning (Hall, 1980). This may result in the audience responding in accordance to the frame of the text. However the process is not linear because the framing process is interactive and can invite counter frames from the audience. Consequently frames are not as easily predictable and may not necessarily be determined by the media organisation and its personnel. The frames and political language that may be employed may sometimes invoke negotiated meanings in which the audience agrees, partly agrees or rejects some of the messages that are brought forward by the media (Hall, 1980). In some instances the frames may also invite oppositional readings from the audience because the schema fails to respond to a particular frame (Van Gorp, 2007: 69).

Framing has been proven to be one of the most important concepts in political reporting and persuasion. This is because of the two most important components already flagged out in this research of silence and salience. The fact that certain messages are illuminated while others are downplayed in the media often works to the politicians’ advantage as they are often in spaces of control. Politicians competing with each other also compete to control the frames in the media. The inclusion and exclusion concept of framing implies that some meanings are preferred over others. This also points to legitimising of certain meanings over others (Peng, 2008). In political news framing co-opts content bias. Entman (2010:393) posits that “Content bias refers to consistently slanted framing of mediated communication that promotes the success of a specific interest, party or ideology in competitions to control government power”.

This bias within the frame promotes the interest and consequently domination of one party over the other. It is sometimes subtle and the audience may not understand the process. This is one of the major reasons political parties strive for control of media and flow of information in many countries. The manipulation of the media by powerful political parties is especially important in election times. This emphasises more the subjectivity of the frame theory as it can be operated on partisan and ideological lines. Legitimation of the frames thus, in most instances persuades the audiences to read the dominant frames. Zhang (2003) argues that information is hardly value free. There is a preference of certain ideologies of the dominant classes to the disadvantage of the subordinated ones. As a result, ideas that are dominant in media are those of the elite and more often times the media become their mouth-piece. This poses one of the problems which can be defined as strength in some respects. Entman (1993:55) observes that,

...a frame can exert great social power when encoded in a term like affirmative action. Once a term is widely accepted, to use another is to risk that target audiences will perceive the communicator as lacking credibility-or will even fail to understand what the communicator is talking about. Thus the power of a frame can be as great as that of language itself.

In Zimbabwe, because of political polarisation, the media is labelled as either state or private media (Ncube, 2010). Private media is perceived as the mouthpiece of a group called civil society while state media is accused of favourably representing the ruling ZANU PF government. This is as a result of the way they frame their news stories. Related to the above point, the ideas and frames that are given priority by the two media groups are generally the elite of the Zimbabwean society. The democratic purposes of the media are in this respect violated as ideas in the media are only of the upper social classes of society. Because framing is persuasive by its nature the media therefore sometimes influences the media to view issues in a particular way, which in this case may be the dominant reading which is preferred by the elite. This dominant reading is often embedded in the culture of a certain society. According to Entman (2008:392),

Elites monitor public attitudes because they want people to behave in ways that favor or passively acquiesce in elite choices. Inducing people to think (and behave) as desired

requires elites to select some things to tell them about and others not to tell them, and embedding cues on how this little narrative coheres with their prior attitudes and values. Since power is the ability to get others to act as one wants (Nagel, 1975) and assuming coercion isn't an option, exerting power to affect behaviour in a democracy requires framing – 'telling people what to think about' in order to influence the attitudes that shape their behaviour.

Media are monitored by the elite of the society to strategically and conveniently shape their public opinion through communication. The implication is that the generated themes through framing may be very powerful and influential to the audience but situated in their everyday experiences. The audience sometimes readily accept the dominant frames which makes it difficult to accept other competing frames within the news. Trying to bring a different set of frames may only alienate the media from the audience because of issues of trust and credibility (Entman, 1993:55).

Powerful elites therefore strive to control the media in order to shape public perspectives. In Zimbabwe, the state media have become a direct instrument of government control, constantly attacking members of the opposition and accusing them of being stooges of the British government, while the private and the international media accuse the ruling ZANU PF government of being violent and abusive of human rights. This theory is thus not only relevant, but also critical in the analysis of the way in which stories on female politicians are represented by both the state and private media in Zimbabwe.

Framing in political communication does not always exist through what is communicated in the media. Non-existence of issues in the media is also a kind of framing on its own. This is termed omission. It is evident that while some conflicts have attracted global attention through their framing and exposure in the media, others fail to receive significant attention through neglect. This is hardly coincidental in political communication. Media moves certain ideologies while trivializing others through the powerful elite behind these media organizations. Entman (1993:54) argues that,

Kahneman and Tversky's experiments demonstrate that frames select and call attention to particular aspects of the reality described, which logically means that frames simultaneously direct attention away from other aspects. Most frames are defined by what they omit as well as include, and the omissions of potential problem

definitions, explanations, evaluations, and recommendations may be as critical as the inclusions in guiding the audience.

This is particularly noticeable in international conflicts where certain issues are deliberately blacked out by the media while others are well publicised. Thus, in conflicts, it is usually after some sort of trigger event, like an exodus of refugees, killing of children or women or a massacre that is also sufficiently photogenic and dramatic, that the international media takes notice. In areas where rebels or soldiers use a lot of violence on the civilians the media marginalize them through omission. This has been the case with the Islamic extremists of Algeria who have constantly attacked the ordinary people. The Boko Haram of Nigeria have also been a case in point. The group started operating in 2002 yet their prominence was only registered in 2015 after their kidnapping of girl children from a girls' high school which resulted in the deaths of many of the girls. According to the (IMS report, 2006),

For example, from the point of view of international media, groups whose goals are more reformist than revolutionary, and whose actions fall into what the news media regard as reasonable dissent, will find it much easier to promote their frames to the media than those who violate these norms. Though normally, violation of norms is often what makes behaviour spectacular.

The fundamental issue in the above statement to note is the contribution of the media personnel in the production news. The intervention or involvement of the journalist in the construction of facts sways the audience in a certain manner that in most circumstances are favourable to the media organisation. However scholars such as Hurd (1999) argue that, sometimes not having access to credible information on important societal and political issues can be an important catalyst to the creation of a legitimacy gap. This explains why certain governments, despite heavily censored media and autocratic character continue to make efforts to legitimate their power in public media discourses. The bigger the legitimacy gap difference between citizen expectations and the behaviour of the state, the weaker the state, and the easier it is to mobilize against a regime. This is the reason why the international media organisations have constantly been accused of complicating conflicts especially in the 'Third World' countries. Media hegemonic contestations between the 'Third World' and the developed world have always played out in the international world through framing. These media organizations make use of sensationalized language and images to frame Africa with devastating effects. Africa is

perennially represented as a continent of plague and catastrophe. These frames have had a devastating effect because sensationalized pictures are much more effective because they imprint a mental picture not real or present (Gamson et al, 1992).

The perceptions and expectations that an audience has in relation to a political actor is what gives them legitimacy and credibility. According to Fairhurst and Sarr (1996):

The media draws the public attention to certain topics; it decides what people think about. The journalists select the topics. This is the original agenda setting 'thought'... the way in which the news is brought, the frame in which the news is presented, is also a choice made by journalists. Thus, a frame refers to the way media and media gatekeepers organize and present the events and issues they cover, and the way audiences interpret what they are provided.

While influence on the audience by the dominant frame may occur it may not always be successful to both the journalist and audience who may oppose or ignore the proposed frame (Benford, 1993; Callaghan and Schnell, 2001; Gamson and Modigliani, 1989; Van Gorp, 2007). Van Gorp (2007: 68) brings an important element and distinction when he points out that there is framing by the media and framing through the media. He argues that in framing by the media the journalists arrive at a particular frame in their representation of an event, while in the latter, framing is concerned with frames that have been processed in communication speeches by frame sponsors and powerful actors within systems such as politicians in their responses to journalists over time. One of the most important components within framing is that which is mediated through journalistic practices. Their success is often assured through the familiarity of these frames from various and different media which encourages their easier adoption.

Despite journalists' efforts to present balanced news stories it is evident that media reconstructs facts which they present as reality. The political economy of the media has a huge impact on the way news are framed. More specifically, the media owners determine what comes out in the news through their imposition of frames. As mentioned earlier, this is achieved through selection and prioritisation of issues. Journalists are thus instrumental participants in the illumination and downplaying of issues that come out the media. Through illumination certain communication and information is meant to look more significant than others. This is often achieved by the use of ideologically elite aligned

sources. Through the application of frames both the journalist and the public are manipulated by the sought after sources and media owners who generally constitute the elite in a society. Journalists are often employed to develop frames that are already predetermined by the political economy of the media. The public's opinions are often predetermined by a number of factors which largely have to do with the representation of news. The fact that there is selection that takes place implies there is often a chosen frame inserted within a message which is not necessarily depended only on the situation or the story being covered. If there was, it would have implied that there is a correct frame for a particular event (Gorp, 2007). Through the construction of frames it is evident that journalists do not only use frames in their stories, but they also are influenced by the frames. These frames are often influenced by their culture and belief systems and the external environment. In this respect through choice some journalistic routines make some frames selected more than others (Gitlin, 1980; Gorp, 2007). The conclusion of this study therefore is that media production processes are ideologically defined and therefore highly subjective. This is often achieved through framing which gives the basic image of the other actors, and interpretation of their behaviour. This theory is crucial for this subject because framing influences an audience's expectations, which will ultimately determine who or what actions are considered credible and legitimate for female politicians. What is also significant for frames is that it has the potential to enforce and communicate norms to the audience. The media often uses ways that the audience usually responds to which may be coercive such as the placement, time and frequency within the media. This points to the way the media values the piece of information which also cues the reader to perceive the story that way. According to Entman (1993:53),

Texts can make bits of information more salient by placement or repetition, or by associating them with culturally familiar symbols. However, even a single unillustrated appearance of a notion in an obscure part of the text can be highly salient, if it comports with the existing schemata in a receiver's belief systems.

In framing the influence of journalists is understood through their potential to convince the audience to adopt their frames. In a news story the journalists can successfully suggest to the audience the significance of a story by the way it is framed. However while the above assumption is correct the audience reception theory argues that sometimes the receivers or audiences may not view issues according to the dictates of the organisation or uniformly

because of its (Entman, 1993). To elaborate on this assumption issues of bias may alter or distort news that are consumed by the audience. Professional independence for media practitioners is impossible to maintain because of a number of factors already mentioned such as ideological stance and organisational interests. It is because of such factors that objectivity in news are compromised through reconstruction of facts. The fact that media makes use of different reporting styles, headline sizes, photographs, direct quotations and attribution leaves that potential for bias and the increase or decrease of salience (Obijiofor, 2010:1). Thus, the extent to which the media assigns priority to covering certain issues rather than others in turn shapes the response of the audience. The fact that the media through framing directs the audience to some events naturally means that it draws that attention from others in issues of inclusion and exclusion (Entman, 1993:54).

Media operations are inextricably linked to the political economy of their organizations. External powerful forces have been proven to be a great influence on the journalistic operations of any media organization. This is much more noticeable and ensured in press conferences, government statements, sponsors, spin doctors, advertisers among others. These forces in turn conveniently and strategically convince the media to represent news through a particular frames that are favourable to their organizations and ideologies. The influence is demonstrated by the way the media directs a particular frame to create a certain perception or opinion in the audience. These are called advocate frames. (Tewksbury et al., 2000:806; Van Gorp, 2007:68). The powerful bourgeoisie naturalise certain situations through framing in the media. The elite and powerful who in most instances are the funders of media organizations use coercive forces to make the audience adopt their preferred frames. Equally important in framing are the news sources that are used by the media organization. Media also carefully selects sources that are aligned to their ideological slant in order to legitimize their perceptions in a particular subject.

This approach is also noticeable in voting patterns where formulated frames are designed to create and formulate a certain reality which violates principles of democracy (Kahneman and Tversky, 1984; Entman, 1993; Zaller, 1992). Through construction of reality media owners and professionals decide and emphasise on what they think the public or some target audiences should consume as they set the agenda. Manipulation of the media

through frames is therefore evident in these operations. Many scholars have already pointed out that in a conflict the media prefers to cover sensationalized news stories as they have a predictable impact on the audience. According to Bratic and Schirch (2007:8):

A common journalist principle is this: "If it bleeds, it leads." That means violent conflict will be headline news, not news of cross-cultural dialogue and understanding. The media mostly covers conflict, not peace-building. This tendency to cover conflict and violence distorts reality and leads many people to think that conflict is pervasive and peace is abnormal.

The political economy of the media is interlinked to the concept of ideology. Ideology influences and shapes the media house policies that in turn shape the operational system of any media organization. The powerful and dominating views are the ones that carry the day in many societies and this is particularly through framing. As a result, ideology has an implication on the exclusion and inclusion of certain frames depending on the interests or beliefs of the journalists and media organization owners. The media is therefore not only a public sphere for the articulation of issues but also plays a crucial and part in framing of issues. Frames of media organizations are thus embedded in the ideology of a given media organization which is also inter-linked with the elite classes. The information that is consumed through the media is not decided by everybody, which violates issues of democracy and objectivity.

While framing theory seems to be powerful in terms of its influence it is not without its weaknesses as a theory. Entman (1993:51) contends that,

The idea of "framing" offers a case study of just the kind of scattered conceptualization I have identified. Despite its omnipresence across the social sciences and humanities, nowhere is there a general statement of framing theory that shows exactly how frames become embedded within and make themselves manifest in a text, or how framing influences thinking.

This is a weakening factor as the theory is more generalised which makes its applicability a challenge. Its meaning can be independent of the communication discipline. It is often loosely defined by scholars and most of the meanings denote assumptions of what a frame can be. According to König (2001):

While it is hard to improve theoretically on this definition, the trouble starts, when it comes to the identification and measurement of frames. Precisely because frames consist of tacit rather than overt conjectures, notorious difficulties to empirically identify frames arise.

The consensual assumption by scholars is that frames are constructed and generated by scholars (Entman, 1993; Van Gorp, 2007). Highlighting the same weaknesses, Van Gorp (2005:488) states that:

The aim to reliably explore frames, i.e. in such a way that other researchers come up with the same frames, is an argument to restrict a frame analysis to easily measurable framing devices, e.g. counting catchwords. Although this approach generates results, it does not guarantee valid data. The data do not necessarily represent the frame.

For the reason cited above the frame theory's reliability and validity is difficult to ascertain. This in turn poses challenges in detecting frames in a text. The second sub-problem is that suggesting a name for a frame package on its own is a kind of framing which becomes a hard task (Tankard, 2001). For that reason coming up with a frame is difficult because it has to be the same or applicable in similar circumstances to be valid, which is a challenge. The usage of frames, thus suggests the generalisability of the concept which is a weakness on its own. This has probably contributed to the difficulty by scholars to clearly define the term uniformly. Researchers and readers define the term according to their conceptualisation (Entman, 1993). One of the major challenges with the concept of framing is that it lacks clear conceptual definitions and a comprehensive statement to guide research (Entman, 1993). Entman adds that framing scholars have failed to clearly demonstrate how frames are found within a subject, or how they manifest themselves, and lastly how they influence the audience. The uses of frames are fragmented and varying, which makes them subjective. According to König (2001):

While the approach to consider frames delimiting might also have its merits, e.g., for use in agenda-setting approaches, frames will here be considered as both consciously adopted, but more frequently unconsciously used conceptual scaffolds. That still leaves open the question, which and how frames can be empirically detected, a question that is notoriously to answer. The measurement section overviews some answer attempts.

This relativist conceptualisation and understanding of the frames still poses challenges in their application by researchers, audiences and media organisations. This is particularly related to the non-existence of a clear-cut structure of a form while the formulation of frames raises more questions than answers. According to Van Gorp (2005:486), “The conceptual vagueness of what is meant by framing and frames is partly due to the applicability of these notions to refer to the general idea of representation and the modelling of all kinds of issues in the media”. The differences and multiplicity of definitions and explanations of the frame theory poses more difficulties in the theory as an approach or concept. Its basis is therefore probably just legitimised by its application in the period and studies in which it was popularised. The application and use of frames is an arduous task which sometimes does not guarantee expected or uniform results. The fact that the task requires a lot of input from the researcher also poses the challenge of subjectivity in the findings.

Frame theory is situated in the effects theory of media which views the audience as homogeneous masses. The assumption is that the masses receive messages uniformly. The audiences are treated as the same entity with the same mind-set and same way of conceptualisation by the media. The theory suggests that the audience read the dominant reading of the text which is the idea of the owners and funders of the media organisation. Framing suggests that the way issues are represented to the audience influences people’s choices and lies in the second level of the agenda setting theory which not only tells the audience but also influences them on how to view issues in the media. This naturally leads to the emergence of sub-problems within the study for the frame theory. The diversity of culture and its influence on the audience makes reading of messages in a universal way difficult as frames are culturally situated and influenced. Cultural theorists argue that the audience’s conceptualisation of issues in the media depends on the cultural background of the people. Audiences are different and read media stories differently. Scholars such as (Morley, 1980; Hall 1980) have done empirical research which indicates that audiences either, accept the dominant messages from the media as they are represented, negotiate by accepting part of the messages, but rejecting others, sometimes they reject the messages outright or respond in a totally surprising manner to a piece of news. According to Entman (1993:53), because salience is a product of the interaction of texts and receivers, the presence of frames in the text, as detected by researchers, does not

guarantee their influence in audience thinking (Entman, 1989; Graber, 1988). Frames therefore cannot affect or uniformly shape the audience's public opinion. Entman (2008:392) also further argues that there is no guarantee of control of public opinion through framing as some resist the frames based on their backgrounds.

This is illustrated more in electoral processes. Scholars such as Dahl (1990) have pointed how limited the framing theory is in determining the voting patterns and the priorities of the general public. The polls have often indicated varying results and sometimes conflicting results, which suggests that public opinion shaping is not as straight forward and predictable. According to Entman (1993:54), "The notion of framing thus implies that the frame has a common effect on large portions of the receiving audience, though it is not likely to have a universal effect on all".

2.5 Double Bind Theory

The double bind theory was first used in Bateson et al's (1956) *Toward a Theory of Schizophrenia* which concerned schizophrenic patients. Bateson et al (1956) defined double bind theory is "a situation in which no matter what a person does, he [sic] 'can't win'". According to Cook (2009:19), "A double bind assumes that only two choices exist and each is incomplete in some way". This constitutes the kind of dilemma that is colloquially referred to as the 'catch 22' situation. A person within a double bind is doomed to fail no matter what choice they make from given options. Thus, Catalyst (2007) describes the situation of women in relationship to leadership positions as 'damned if you do, doomed if you don't'. Jamieson (cited in Cook 2009:19) describes a double bind as a "rhetorical construct that posits two and only two alternatives, one or both penalizing the person being offered them". Social scientists also refer to double-bind as ambivalent sexism (Glick and Fiske 2001). Double bind is defined by Johnstone and Swanson (2003:244) as follows: "When expectations and condemnations are tied in such a way that to achieve the expectation is to invite the condemnation, a double bind is present". For the purposes of this study, Bateson's double-bind theory (1956) is used as the basis to apprehend gender non-conforming identities. For instance, a double-bind occurs when women ... have to choose between being liked but not respected, or being respected but not liked. In such situations, women in leadership positions face complex political

dynamics that do not necessarily affect men⁶. This assumption is shared by Johnstone and Swanson (2003:244) who argue that, “When expectations and condemnations are tied in such a way that to achieve the expectation is to invite the condemnation, a double bind is present”.

The result in most instances is that the subject struggles to find solutions to the double-bind and may become paranoid. Sometimes affected women are forced to conform with all gender expectations, which discourages independent thinking (Tracy, 2004). As Eagly et al (2000) argue, the influence of gender roles is not entirely a result of organizational behaviour and gendered expectancies, but also because most people have internalized their gender roles in society. This often confuses the subject who in most instances does not know how to react. The conflicting position often frustrates the women concerned. This is aptly explained by Tracy (2004:123) who contends that, “Employee behaviours associated with emotional ambivalence include fanatical commitment, frustration and derogatory humour, and escapist behaviours including denial and evasion”. Even after some period of time it is evident that some gender stereotypes do not fall off easily and may continue to pose challenges for women. Systems of the double bind produce conflicting situations which bring challenging dispositions. This situation is often related to power. In most instances the more powerful individual is the one that victimises the less powerful person using communication that binds the victim in a web that leaves the victim with no option.

It is also evident that double-binds work well with stereotypes. One assumption and stereotype is that women are naturally less able leaders than their male counterparts and yet, in reality what may differ is leadership style. The basis of leadership and management roles and activities is primarily to execute, monitor, subordinate, gather and disseminate information. Men and women therefore can be different in their execution of these duties without meaning that one gender is inferior to the other. Managers may be friendly or more remote, exhibit much or little excitement about future goals, consult few or many colleagues about decisions, provide extensive or limited mentoring of subordinates, and so forth (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000). Media representations of both

⁶ <http://www.genderbiasbingo.com/double-bind/#.V2AZ6qK91tc>.

men and women in leadership positions are thus much more simplified than the reality represented. In this study empirical evidence has shown that there are hardly many differences between male and female leadership styles (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, and Van Engen, 2003). According to Catalyst (2007), an organising working with various organisations and businesses to build inclusive environments favourable to women. Catalyst (2007:4) states that:

Through the extensive research on gender differences and similarities, we learn that women and men are actually more similar than different and that there is more variation among women and among men than there is between women and men. By creating false perceptions that women and men are “planets apart,” however, stereotyping results in women being overlooked for the top jobs—no matter how strong their actual credentials. As a result women are pushed to do more than their male counterparts to be acknowledged. Success however makes a woman less likeable (Sools, Van Engen & Baerveldt, 2007). Being weak at workplaces is also treated as incompetence. This is referred to as ambivalent sexism.

Cook (2009) outlines five prominent areas of double bind, such as womb/brain and femininity/competence that are often used to construct women in general. Catalyst (2007:7) presents three common double bind dilemmas, which are: “extreme perceptions: too soft, too tough, and never just right; the high competence threshold: women leaders face higher standards and lower rewards than men leaders; competent but disliked: women leaders are perceived as competent or likable, but rarely both”.

In feminist discourses, the double bind theory is rooted in patriarchal thinking. Double bind situation leads to an inevitable failure by the subject as it provides two attractive but often mutually exclusive positions which ensure the women can never succeed. According to Tracy (2004:122),

Double binds are connected with several debilitating response patterns. It comes as no surprise that one unifying consequence of all types of paradoxical messages is that the recipient responds with some combination of confusion, displeasure, and anxiety.

The dominant idea in the double bind theory is that women can never be adequate or good enough in whatever position they find themselves. This relates to women’s positioning in

both the domestic and public spaces. For instance, society questions successful women who choose not to have children and condemns them as selfish and too ambitious. A woman who chooses to be a housewife is not spared either and criticised for lack of ambition. These negative perceptions are worse in the work environment. Where women are powerful and innovative, they are regarded as aggressive whereas a man with the same traits is viewed as assertive. When a woman attempts to market herself for promotion she is viewed as shameless self promoters while men who fight to be promoted are perceived as people who know their worth. In workplace and professional environments women are often categorised as pets, mothers and princesses. This illustrates how stereotyping sets up women for failure and marginalisation. This treatment is much more consistent with women than their male counterparts in similar leadership positions.

Bhabha (1994) terms this same phenomenon of double bind 'ambivalence'. Ambivalence is the mental disharmony or disconnect one may feel when they have both positive and negative feelings regarding the same individual, situation or object. This study uses the term double bind as it aptly captures the deliberate manipulation of images of female politicians by sections of the media with the intention of setting up some women to fail in the leadership and political environment.

Malcom, Hall and Brown (1976) as well as Johnstone and Swanson (2003) have explored the double bind dilemma and discriminatory way of treating women. They argue that this is one of the most marginalising challenges women face in their pursuit of political empowerment. The popular patriarchal, assumption is that women are naturally born to take care of the home, or any private spaces while men control the public domain (Lovenduski 2002). According to Catalyst (2007:6),

Stereotypes create additional misleading perceptions when it comes to leadership. Inherent in gender stereotypes is the assumption that masculine and feminine characteristics (including "taking-care" and "taking-charge" behaviors) are mutually exclusive. While these perceptions target the "outsiders" – women leaders – to a larger extent than they do men leaders, they in fact affect all leaders. By creating a false dichotomy between women's and men's characteristics, stereotypes place both women and men leaders in relatively narrow categories of style and behaviors while limiting the range of effective behaviors within the workplace overall.

Against this background, men are considered the typical leaders of society while women are considered atypical leaders. The assumption is based on aspects of femininity and masculinity traits exhibited by the two groups. Women are generally perceived to be soft, a trait not consistent with leadership positions traditionally. Tough women are also viewed as offensive as they act out of their gender stereotypes. These views strengthen the position that only male leadership characteristics are in sync with leadership positions (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt and Van Engen 2003).

This unequal treatment of men and women is further complicated by age. Whereas men in politics are often constructed by the media as veterans and thus wiser as they gravitate towards old age, older women are often trivialised and abused in relation to their withering looks. This media attitude forces female politicians to avoid the media in their advanced ages. Their intellectual capacity, experience, contribution and wisdom are often dismissed or overlooked. In terms of advisory and mentoring roles, men's experience is appreciated, acknowledged and normalised by both the media and society in comparison to that of women. Society pressurises and expects the female politician to remain looking young and pretty to be relevant. Society thus places more importance on women's physical appearance than on their intellectual attributes. The focus for women is therefore directed towards something that is temporary and difficult to maintain. These traps and restrictions impede the progress of existing female politicians and inhibit those considering seeking leadership positions. The existing gender stereotypes within the double bind theory are thus retrogressive for women in general.

These pressures by society and media have detrimental consequences for women. Carter (2011:24) points out that the "stereotypical depictions of women in the rigid sex roles of wife and mother" manifest as the most prominent and best known double bind dilemma faced by women. Durkin (1985a) has written extensively on the stereotyped roles of men and women in Disney roles. He argued that, from a tender age the media socializes women to be feminine, relationship-oriented and more or less home-bound and men to be masculine, macho and oriented towards results and controlling public institutions, which includes embracing politics. According to Markstedt (2007:4), "Today, female politicians remain restricted not by their sex, but by their gender, which is constructed through the representation of women in public discourse".

In terms of the general definition of social roles as socially shared expectations that apply to persons who occupy a certain social position or are members of a particular social category, gender roles are consensual beliefs about the attributes of women and men. To the extent that gender roles exert some influence on leaders, female and male occupants of the same leadership role would behave somewhat differently.

From the above argument it is evident that gender becomes a determinant of roles assigned to either men or women within a given organisation. Thus, society is conditioned to assume that men and women have different genetic compositions that naturally make men and not women leaders. This media discursive strategy is summarized by Brooks (2010:2), who says that,

The conventional wisdom is that female politicians are greatly constrained by a toughness-related double bind: if a woman fails to demonstrate toughness, she confirms a stereotype that women are not strong enough to lead; yet if she demonstrates toughness, she will be disliked for violating gendered expectations.

Double bind therefore seems to be a terrible conceptual trap used by the media in relation to subjects it means to oppose and frustrate at all costs. It is the proverbial 'catch 22' syndrome, a 'lose-lose' scenario for the female politician. Women in leadership only have two permanent positions of either being too soft or tough. Society does not judge women by their actual performance, but by how society thinks and assumes women should behave. In that respect they are either unable or popular, but never both (McGregor 2013). These marginalising images of female politicians have also affected and influenced the way they are viewed by the electorate. Being too tough or too soft is not endearing to the electorate as it points to extreme excesses which alienates voters, as they confine women between the proverbial rock and hard place (Tucker, 2011). This alienates aspiring female political leaders from the electorate, leading to their underrepresentation in politics as their competence is questioned (Eagly, 2009).

Success for women is thus considered and measured in relation to its relevance to the areas traditionally prescribed for women. Eagley (2009) cites the example of the treatment of Hillary Clinton during the (2008) presidential election in the USA. She argues that whereas Clinton was often criticized for being too cold, when her emotion was eventually

revealed on camera, it was perceived as either a sign of feminine weakness or an intentional media stunt to fraudulently soften her image (Eagly, 2009)⁷.

Another common double-bind applied to women is that of femininity/competence through which women in leadership positions are either represented as either beautiful and stupid or ugly and intelligent (Cook, 2009). Evidently, if a woman behaves femininely she may get popular but then she may also lose respect as a leader of substance. To speak with a 'feminine' voice as a manager is regarded as weak and such women are treated as 'pets' and not leaders. On the other hand, if she is tough and acts in a masculine way, she may be unpopular and a target of hatred. Because of this manipulation, women are forced to choose between being liked or respected. In past generations, women that have taken jobs that are traditionally known to be male have had to adopt tough male characteristics and mannerisms in order to be accepted into the fields. This was because not deviating from the female gender characteristics was likely to jeopardise their chances and success in those areas (Brooks, 2015). Wood and Conrad (1983:306) also contend that, "Professional women who adopt accepting responses act in a way that conforms to the contradictory injunctions: behave as non-professional women or as professional non-women". For them, non-professional women conform to sex-role stereotypes by becoming more concerned with interpersonal relationships than organizational performance. They also define the 'professional non-woman' as a female who rejects herself as woman in order to construct a viable professional identity. In contrast, men are able to fit in leadership positions without challenges because their potential is hardly challenged. This poses another challenge as women have to fight to prove they can be good leaders before they are given the chance to lead. As a result, energy and time are spent trying to prove capability with regards to the positions for which they wish to be considered. This establishes an assumption that women have to work harder than the average man to be half acknowledged for leadership positions. This is despite demonstrated evidence that men and women can have different leadership styles but be equally effective and that

⁷[https:// www.hks. harvard.edu/index. php/centers/wappp/news-events/news-e-newsletter/spring-2009-%7C-issue-no.-2/gender-stereotypes-and-the-double-binds-for-women-in-leadership2009](https://www.hks.harvard.edu/index.php/centers/wappp/news-events/news-e-newsletter/spring-2009-%7C-issue-no.-2/gender-stereotypes-and-the-double-binds-for-women-in-leadership2009).

there are very limited differences in management styles for both men and women (Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt 2003). The double bind plight is therefore often subtle but still oppressive and marginalising in our societies. Discussing the paradox of the professional woman, Cook (2009:19) posits that,

“In a range of professional situations, messages at one level of abstraction – social myths about women – interact with messages at a lower level of abstraction – assumptions about professional conduct – to form mystifying and potentially binding situations.” These “potentially binding situations” evolve into “full-blown double-binds” when the affected person succumbs to outside pressures and responds in a way that perpetuates the paradox and completes the bind.

Double binds have been difficult to control because their prescriptive nature as societal norms and expectations. Both women and men in these situations strive to satisfy these expectations because of the possible societal consequences for going against them. As a result, leadership opportunities for women appear naturally and justifiably limited, such that when considering leadership, women feel they are ‘damned if they do and doomed if they don’t’ meet gender-stereotypic expectations (Catalyst, 2007). Indeed, research has shown that because of double-binds women have suffered a lot of discrimination that continues to marginalise them and retard their progress (Robbins-McNeish, 2007; Brooks 2015). The traditional stereotypes prescribed by males within these patriarchal societies are thus used to determine who is fit or unfit for leadership positions, which naturally disadvantages women. Female politicians are, consequently, unfairly assessed using masculine leadership yardsticks which make society view them as ‘atypical’ even when they express behaviours that would be considered ‘normal’ if exhibited by a man in a similar leadership position (Catalyst, 2007). Again, this is contrary to empirical evidence which has proved that women are equally good leaders. Carter (2011) points out that the “stereotypical depictions of women in the rigid sex roles of wife and mother” manifests the greatest instances of double bind dilemma that women face. This media discourse strategy is summarized by Brooks (2010:2), who says that,

The conventional wisdom is that female politicians are greatly constrained by a toughness-related double bind: if a woman fails to demonstrate toughness, she confirms a stereotype that women are not strong enough to lead; yet if she demonstrates toughness, she will be disliked for violating gendered expectations.

According to Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt (2003:572), in emphasizing gender roles as well as leadership roles, social role theorists argue that leaders occupy roles defined by their specific position in a hierarchy and simultaneously function under the constraints of their gender roles. These double binds exist in many situations and areas, particularly those of media and politics (Eitzen & Baca-Zinn, 2000). In these structures, male characteristics are seen to be consistent with leadership positions. In some spaces, these stereotypes have improved but are still in existence. According to Cook (2009:27),

... updated versions of the womb/brain and femininity/competence double binds do not question women's ability to have a successful career and to be a woman, but they rather illustrate the problem with having a successful career and maintaining a monogamous heterosexual relationship.

The above assumption still suggests and promotes the idea that it is a challenge for a woman to be successful on both the domestic and professional front. This questioning of female leaders is often from men who feel threatened by the encroachment of female politicians in traditional male perceived roles. Men expect women to be cooperative and relationship-focused because these traits are in sync with the feminine gender stereotype. For instance, being ambitious and assertive is perceived to be masculine and consistent with the male gender stereotype and outside the societal expectations for women by society. The limitations that are tabled concerning women such as rigidity, failure to think outside the box are meant to expose women as incapacitated as leaders. In comparison, men are hardly subjected to these judgements and evaluations by the same society. The media thus tend to project these images and judge women using standards or criteria of competence that are hardly universal. This somehow forces women to succumb to prescribed leadership styles which are more collaborative and less hierarchical than those of their male counterparts. These behaviours are consistent with the essential female gender roles (Hall & Friedman, 1999; Moskowitz et al., 1994;). According to Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt (2003:572):

Perceived incongruity between the female gender role and typical leader roles tends to create prejudice toward female leaders and potential leaders that takes two forms: (a) less favorable evaluation of women's (than of men's) potential for

leadership because leadership ability is more stereotypic of men than women and (b) less favorable evaluation of women's (than of men's) actual leadership behavior because agentic behavior is perceived as less desirable in women than men. Consistent with the first form of prejudice and the concept of the glass ceiling ...women may often face more stringent requirements to attain and retain leadership roles – that is, a double standard that favors men.

What is illuminated by the above quote is that the double binds and stereotypes that women are subjected to, though sometimes invisible, are harmful and pose challenges to their progress and empowerment. Women aspiring for leadership positions are disadvantaged and subjected to subjective evaluative measures (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Eagly et al., 1992). What is critical to note is that, because double binds are often subtle, their damage is often underestimated. For this reason it is evident that sometimes it is not the leadership styles of women that have to change but attitudes of the society and structures in workplaces (Catalyst, 2007). These changes are crucial because norms associated with gender roles and gender identities sometimes influence organisational behaviours. Sometimes, because of this unfair and unpleasant treatment of women at the workplace or in politics, they end up losing the respect of subordinates who view them as inadequate leaders.

Women who are seen as competent leaders are often not liked as much as those judged to be less competent but who act in gender-appropriate ways. This may sound as not so important but scholars have found out that followers and subordinates are more likely to follow orders of someone they like. Those that may not be popular may spend a lot of time trying to manage conflicting tumultuous relationships (Catalyst, 2007). This therefore puts women in a double bind of being able and less liked or being liked and less competent and yet both characteristics are required of a good leader. In many instances, people faced with double binds are forced to think that they are overlooking vital clues important for them to succeed (Watzlawick et al. 1967:217). The “competent-but-not-liked” dilemma is exemplified by comments that criticize women leaders' interpersonal style. For instance, one study found that women who do not act in gender-appropriate ways were not trusted (Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt 2003). This is contrary to new evidence that women are actually good leaders. According to Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt (2003:570) “As leaders, women rule: new studies find that female managers outshine their male

counterparts in almost every measure” and “the future of business depends on women”. One other reason why women may ascend slower than men is that they prefer to manage effectively and are not interested in politicking (Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt 2003:585). Therefore, the only challenge that appears to complicate women leaders is that men are reluctant or not ready to accept women as leaders.

Society and cultures have also been responsible for placing women in spaces where they are viewed as new to management levels, which disadvantages them. Many scholars have shown that women and men do not lead differently (Dobbins and Platz, 1986; Klenke, 1993). Their differences in leadership styles, however, stem from gender differences in status and power among others (Van Engen, and Willemsen 2001:583). Differences that may exist are that women tend to adopt a more transformational kind of leadership which differs from men who prefer transactional leadership. Transformational leadership refers to the ability of leaders to inspire, stimulate and motivate subordinates and nourish their abilities to contribute to organizational goals. On the other hand, transactional leadership is a more conventional style that includes rewarding subordinates for meeting objectives, monitoring and correcting of, and intervening in, follower performance (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001). There is, therefore, no evidence that women are not in leadership positions because they are less able leaders in comparison to men (Van Engen, and Willemsen 2001). This study uses the theory double bind as it more aptly captures the deliberate manipulation of images of female politicians by sections of the media with the intention of setting up some women to fail in the political arena. According to Markstedt (2007:4), “Today, female politicians remain restricted not by their sex but by their gender, which is constructed through the representation of women in public discourse”. Double bind therefore seems to be a terrible conceptual trap used by the media in relation to subjects; it means to oppose and frustrate at all costs. It is the proverbial ‘catch 22’ syndrome, a ‘lose-lose’ scenario for the female politician.

2.7 Conclusion

This section has spelt out and discussed theories and analytical tools that underpin this study. It has shown that the overarching theoretical concern of the study is encapsulated in the two closely related concepts of framing and representation as well as that of double bind. This present study particularly used the frame and representation theory to examine how female politicians are portrayed by the three selected newspapers. Representation theory accounts for the construction of meanings through mediation, such that the information received by the audience is not the original phenomenon itself (object, event, individual, etc.) but a repackaged conceptual substitute of it. Media representation thus entails the media positioning itself as a mediator between objective reality and consumers of that reality, the media's audience, to construct or reconstruct that reality for onward transmission to the audience. Representation is sometimes and, in some cases, very often not factual. Representation cannot also be universal as it is context-bound. Thus, in actual fact, some of the ways in which gender and women are represented, which we see as normal, are mere societal constructions conveyed and naturalised through media representation of women and of utterances about women. An important concept in understanding how media organisations appropriate and wield mediation power is agenda setting, in response to which frame theory was later developed. The prominent idea about agenda setting is that the various media organisations seek to use it to impart an agenda to the public who are an important factor in policy making. The obvious challenge is that even when that is the case the audience may not accept the concepts and messages as intended by the media. This weakens the media's intention to set an agenda for a given society. With the advent of new media technology, members of the public can witness newsworthy events and be producers of news in their own right. It is therefore, now evident that the audience no longer just consumes what comes from the media, but can also actively contribute media content, thus more directly influencing media agenda. A theory that has been developed in response to agenda setting and more aptly accounts for the objective of this present study is that of framing, which is now outlined and discussed. The frame analysis in this chapter clearly demonstrates its potential persuasive power. The implication is that it can encourage the audience to see situations in a particular way which is expected by the producers of the message. Frames are in that respect embedded in the culture of the targeted audiences. They are thus legitimised by audiences that often share the same societal beliefs. They are a component of what is referred to as

“shared collective memory” (Van Gorp, 2007:73). However the frame theory has also generated a number of problems in the manner in which it is employed by the audience, journalists and media organisations owners. The major one being the assumption that the media through framing can universally influence its audiences. From the analysis above it is evident that women in all walks of life, particularly in professional spaces are restricted through gender. This is despite the fact scholars have proved that women are equally competent in leadership positions. The double bind situation that women are subjected to sets them up for failure. As a result, most women that aspire to occupy decision making positions are often discouraged. The section on Methodology below shows how this framework is operationalised.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW OF EXISTING SCHOLARLY RESEARCH ON MEDIA REPRESENTATION OF FEMALE POLITICIANS

3.1 Introduction

Literature review is basically concerned with providing background and context of a researcher's work. The major pre-occupation of literature review is particularly to examine scholarly research that already exists within an area of study and it is the researcher's role to identify existing gaps. In this section this study examined literature that concerned the representation of women in the media. Thus Chapter 2 presents a critical review of existing literature pertaining to the representation of female politicians in newspapers. This study specifically assesses the way female politicians are represented in the newspapers in the Third Chimurenga period in Zimbabwe. The chapter is made up of three distinct sections: media representation of female politicians in general; media representation of female politicians in Africa and media representation of female politicians in Zimbabwe. This study sought to verify the hypothesis that the various newspapers active in Zimbabwe between 2000 and 2008 projected gendered images of female politicians that discouraged women from entering the world of politics while influencing society to treat existing female politicians as inherently alien to that social domain. This period was marked by the so-called Third Chimurenga (Third Liberation Struggle). Zimbabwean women and their interests and movements were likely to be marginalized by the media during that period as it was characterised by violent land seizures associated with the FTLRP as well as the unprecedented power contestation between ZANU PF and the MDC. The media generally omitted narratives about women or trivialized issues considered 'feminine' in the pursuit of the more 'male' issues of governance, political power and ideology and the economy. The period under study was generally characterized by a paternalistic hegemony in Zimbabwean society and particularly the media.

The number of female politicians did not necessarily increase because the attitude of the society and the media had changed. On the contrary, the advent of the MDC brought with it a number of female politicians within its ranks. Secondly, the introduction of new legislative offices, such as the senatorial positions, that did not exist before ensured an

increase in the number of female politicians though they were still out-numbered by their male counterparts in more or less equal proportion to the 1990s. Proportionally, therefore, the percentage of women had hardly grown in comparison to that of men. The ZANU PF ideological framework of the Chimurenga, which sets the Zimbabwean revolution apart from all others in the region and the world at large, re-called discourses of the war of liberation, which was, by and large, a male preserve (Nhongo-Simbanegavi, 2000; Chung, 2006; Chogugudza, 2010).

Studies of representations of women politicians in other parts of the world is the beginning of the review as it provides a general context for more specific review of representations in Zimbabwe. Studies of female politicians in other societies inspired the present study's concern with Zimbabwean media images of Zimbabwean female politicians, a setting that had received scant academic scrutiny prior to this present study. The frames examined in this study as well as its general theoretical framework and methodology also derive from existing literature on media coverage of female politicians.

3.2 Representation of female politicians in general

Scholars have generated significant amounts of literature on media representation of female politicians. Several studies are reviewed in this section in order to locate the present study within the broader context of global research on the coverage of female politicians in the media.

The title of Maria Braden's (1996) book, *Women politicians and the media*, perfectly echoes the topic of this present study, which is "female politicians and the media" in Zimbabwe. The most obvious difference between the two is the site of the research: 1980s-1990s America for Braden and early 21st century Zimbabwe for this present study. Beginning with biting irony – the title of the first chapter of the book reads "going forward, walking backward" – Braden (1996) makes the point that American women politicians are yet to come to terms with the fact the press has always and perhaps will always treat them differently from their male counterparts. Arguing that women politicians need to accept that they need press coverage, whether good or bad, to progress in the careers, she writes:

More than a century later, women politicians are still discovering what (Susan B.) Anthony had learnt – that journalists often ask women politicians questions they don't ask men. The reporters describe women politicians in ways and with words that emphasise women's traditional roles and focus on their appearance and behaviour. That they perpetuate stereotypes of women politicians as weak, indecisive and emotional. That they hold women politicians accountable for the actions of their children and husbands, though they rarely hold men to the same standards (Braden 1996:1).

This contention summarises Braden's thesis about media coverage of women politicians. In her opinion, the media is generally sexist in its coverage of female politicians, with the difference among the various publications being less in the attitude than in the form of the sexist discourse developed by each publication. These forms range from blatant sexism, such as drawing the attention of a female parliamentarian to the fact that her new neighbour is an 'eligible bachelor', to more subtle discourse strategies whose net effect is to diminish the stature of women politicians or imply that "women are anomalies in high public office" (Braden 1996:1).

Braden (1996) argues that a publication's stance on gender – to be biased or to practice balanced objective reporting – depends less on the society within which that publication exists but on that publication's chosen worldview and value system as well as the worldview and value system of the individual reporter concerned. Thus, media houses do not necessarily seek to 'mirror' society but to influence it to adopt their own worldview and value system. Society is thus at stake in the dogfight between the various media houses that operate within it. This is what explains the fact that, despite the many victories and milestones in the fight for the emancipation and empowerment of women in broader American society, the media still continued to be biased against women politicians in that society. Braden (1996) thus believes that media houses set agendas on women politicians more or less independently of established social norms and values. This research interrogates the representation of female politicians in an African, particularly Zimbabwean context. The cultural norms within this set up in which women value their role as mothers and wives may not necessarily result in the same outcomes as those in Braden's book. This is generally because culture normally has an implication on outcomes in the treatment of women. Braden's notion is problematic as it ignores the obvious fact that media practitioners are not independent entities perfectly insulated from society which they

manipulate like rival puppet masters but that they are products of that society with the privilege to select values and worldviews from within that society to propagate. The difficulty of characterising media houses as detached from society is almost immediately confirmed by the contradictory assertion that women politicians have been portrayed in accordance with societal expectations. She argues that, at a time when American society expected a woman's place to be in the home, "newspapers of the day reflected that cultural expectation" (Braden 1996:4). She notes that this expectation was even mirrored in media house practice where women journalists were generally confined to societal news – "hearth and home" columns" written for women—while "the rest of the paper was male turf, written by men for men" (Braden 1996:4). This, in essence is the media mirroring dominant tendencies in society.

A historical overview of the relationship between the American media and women politicians further illustrates the close link between general societal expectations about women in general and media attitudes towards women politicians. Throughout the 20th century, therefore, the American media reminded audiences that women were essentially meant to occupy the domestic space, so that even successful women career politicians were covered first and foremost in terms of their roles as wives and mothers. While this finding may reflect dominant contemporary thinking about women in the US, it may not be representative of other cultures, such as the expectations of African women. For instance, whereas many African feminists do not see motherhood and occupation of public decision making positions as mutually exclusive, Western feminists have separated and differentiated these two spaces. As a result, the findings of the present study may not be identical to Braden's (1996) as the worldviews that determine perceptions of women's empowerment vary from culture to culture, country to country and continent to continent (Cheater, 1986).

Chapter Two of Braden's book reports that, in 1916, pioneering Congress woman Jeannette Rankin virtually received no press coverage because society deemed her chances of success next to nil in this male preserve: "In so doing, the newspapers reflected the views of many people, who refused to believe that a woman could be capable of serving in Washington" (Braden 1996:19). The dynamics of context may create differences between Braden's findings and those of this present study. The status of

patriarchy as a single hindrance to the careers of female politicians may not be as representative of other cultures particularly Africa and Zimbabwe. Trust in women as leaders cannot be primarily the stumbling block for female politicians in Africa. This is primarily because, in rural settings where the vast majority of Africans live, pre-Christian traditional worldviews that regard the mother and motherhood as the foundation and central pillar of the home still prevail. For instance, in Shona traditional culture, women have the final say and even have veto power in such important private and public matters as marriage and the choice and coronation of a chief or king. One of the most powerful institutions in Shona (and Bantu) traditional culture is that of *tete* (husband's sister or father's sister) who has the final say in the choice of a chief or a king as well as in the marriage of a son or daughter of the family. The power and authority of *tete*, *vamwene* (mother-in-law), or *amai* (mother) are redoubtable as they derive from the ancestors and are therefore spiritual and uncontested (Manyawu, 2012). For this reason Braden's findings cannot be universalised.

Braden (1996), however, shows that women can also influence the media to cover them more positively. One way of achieving this is for women to enter the political fray and actually win elections. For instance, after Jeannette Rankin won her congressional seat despite the media blackout on her campaign, there was a dramatic change in the way newspapers dealt with [her]"; suddenly, "the press couldn't get enough of her" (Braden, 1996:20). Another way is by assuming influential positions in media houses, such as what happened in America during the two world wars when men went off to fight, leaving women to run newspapers as editors and journalists. This contention has to be regarded as reflective of specific contexts such as the one that Braden (1996) discusses. The African situation is different in that, in the continent's poor economies, many aspiring female politicians do not have the financial wherewithal to fund meaningful electoral campaigns against male rivals who are generally better funded because of the legacy of a patriarchal socio-economic system inherited from European colonialists. African female politicians are therefore more likely than their counterparts in western countries to find it difficult to mount successful electoral campaigns in the face of hostile media.

Another factor that worked in favour of women was technological advancement. Braden (1996) posits that the advent of radio in the 1920s brought the world of news to spaces traditionally occupied by women, such as the home, enabling women to finally take an interest and participate in politics. Women could also take part in radio programmes, as did many women's groups that saw the opportunity to reach out to women through the medium of the radio, away from the male-dominated print media. The print media could also not ignore the effect of radio on popular thinking about gender in general and the participation of women in politics in particular and so changes gradually took place in print media coverage of women politicians in keeping with shifting value systems social attitudes and expectations.

The present study retains from Braden (1996) the notion that media images of women politicians are products of worldviews existing in society. All that media practitioners do is choose the worldview that best suits their individual and organisational interests and agenda. However, women are not entirely passive, but can actively help shape the way the media represent them. It is, however, important to note that political ideology in itself has little bearing on media attitudes towards women politicians and that these attitudes derive from deeper lying and more durable value systems than political persuasion, such as patriarchy (Braden, 1996). However, a concern of this present study is to establish the effect, if any, of political orientation on media coverage of female politicians in the polarised political environment that was early 21st century Zimbabwe.

In the article, *The media's war on women: gendered coverage of female candidates*, Ryan (2013) identifies media representation as one of the major factors in the marginalization of female politicians in the US. In her research Ryan (2013) assessed *The Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, *The New York Times*, *the Los Angeles Times*, *Daily News of New York*, *New York Post*, *Washington Post*, *Chicago Sun-Times*, *the Denver Post*, and the *Dallas Morning News*. She constructed a corpus consisting of 400 and analysed a 50 story sample. She focused on women in their roles as Senators, cabinet members, wives of presidential candidates, and as presidential candidates. While Ryan's study focuses on ten newspapers and analysed 50 stories published within a six month period in the US, the present study uses content analysis to examine the representation of female politicians in

three (3) Zimbabwean newspapers over four electoral years. Ryan's (2013:20) methodology was structured thus:

Each article will be coded according to six major aspects of gendered news coverage: mention of dress or appearance, discussion of male versus female personality traits, mention of husband or marital status, discussion of female versus male issues, talk of "running as a woman" or use of novelty labels, and mention of political background.

She contends that, "The gendered coverage inevitably affects the outcome of the campaign because it is one of the most influential sources of information for the public" (Ryan 2013:13). Women continue to be trivialised through structural, societal and institutional spaces. This poses challenges for women that aspire to be in politics and more so those involved in election campaign. Women are frequently subjected to gendered coverage which undermines their capabilities and potential as politicians. Consequently, gendered coverage by the media remains one of the major barriers of female politicians' success in politics.

Gendered coverage involves the use of traditional stereotypes to confine, discredit and disadvantage women as able politicians. This mode of representation makes use of trivialisation of female politicians through focus on marital status, appearance, education and health care issues. These discourses are carefully crafted to undermine women's contribution in public spaces, especially those that deal with important issues such as foreign affairs, the military and finance. Women are generally regarded as unable to occupy these positions that are traditionally considered as masculine.

Ryan (2013), however, contends that women are not universally affected by these stereotypes. There is evidence that media is less gendered as women move from legislative to executive offices. This is contrary to what was the case in previous decades due to changing culture of the media. She (2013) however contends that derogatory language has remained consistent principally for women running for presidency, a position that is perceived to be traditionally male. She argues that, although there is evidence of a marked difference in the way female candidates were covered in the 1920s and the 1990s, women are still represented less favourably than men.

According to Fowler and Lawless (2009), “the media exerts a powerful influence over the type of political information that reaches voters”. Ryan (2013:14) further adds that,

The media reflects what the public has established as its norms and when a story breaks those norms, the subject will most likely receive negative or less coverage. When women run for office, they break the gender stereotypes we have both for women and for politicians. In turn, the media perpetuates this novelty frame in negative media attention or by giving female candidates less coverage than their male counterparts.

Therefore, society, is more often than not influenced by the way media expresses issues that concern women. While the categorization in the treatment of female politicians is already noticeable in the US, Africa still generally stereotypes female politicians in the same manner. This means that there is no distinction in terms of treatment between seasoned and upcoming female politicians.

Ryan (2013:15) also discusses frames and argues that there are two major types of frames in the media. These are frames in communication and frames in thought. Her argument is that frames in communication make use of “words, images, phrases and presentation styles” by a speaker. Frames in thought refer to an individual’s understanding of a situation. From the way they are structured and constructed frames in communication tend to shape frames in thought, known as framing effect (Druckman, 2001). Ryan (2013:15) argues that,

Frames point to what people experience in their everyday lives. On another level, framing entails selectivity of what should be included or excluded concerning the involved subjects. The implication is that the electorate gets filtered information from media, especially concerning politics and candidates. In the constructions, if the media leaves gaps in their stories the voters use their lived experiences to fill in the missing links. As a result, the people resort to traditional stereotypes that are often used by society which in most instances disadvantages women. Though there disadvantages, Kahn (1992) cited in Ryan (2013:15) contends that this sometimes works to the advantage of women as voters view women as more transparent and honest than their male counterparts.

Many feministic scholars often stress the argument that the more women are represented in good light the more aspiring female politicians are encouraged to stick to their chosen career paths. With time, women will prove they are equally good politicians if they are given a chance. Ryan (2013:15), argues that,

...it is not enough to just have “like” candidates in a race, but to have ones that are also viable. There can be a hundred women running for different offices and women will not be inspired to seek office themselves unless those candidates also have a shot at winning their races.

Therefore, for scholars such as Ryan (2013) and Atkenson (2003) the major challenge for women lies in the way they are viewed by the media. Female politicians are represented in less charitable compared to their male counterparts. In recent times media scholars have discovered that in terms of the frequency of coverage, women and men are represented almost equally (Sanbonmatsu 2012)⁸. The disparity lies in the quality of representation of men and women by the media.

The relative success that has been registered by women is attributed to a number of positive changes by the media. The media has fairly improved its portrayal of female politicians. There has been a reduction in the biases and distortions that work to the disadvantage of women. Other scholars attribute it to changes in societal views. Scholars argue that the remaining challenges may be a result of the residual sexist stereotypical images that persist in the media, otherwise in the Western world the playing field is almost even (Mills, 2011). Society has changed its perceptions about female politicians and this has in turn influenced the media. Nevertheless, while scholars continue to debate whether the representation of women is gendered or not, the negative influence by the media is still evident at the level of aspiring politicians’ campaigns. Ryan (2013) notes that the way media represents political candidates ultimately determines the perception of the audiences. She argues that:

⁸ <https://www.politicalparity.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/inventory-media.pdf>

For each political office there are certain character traits that we, as voters, see as appropriate for a candidate to hold. These qualities, in general, are traditionally seen as fairly “masculine” and include things like decisiveness, leadership and confidence. If the media does not portray a candidate as possessing these qualities, their success is much less likely.

Female candidates are still described as a novelty. Emphasis is placed on their gender when they are discussed. They are often represented as “Woman Candidate”, which is not consistent with the description of their male counterparts. Even in the 2008 American presidential race where both candidates came from minorities and were novelties, it was Hillary Clinton, the female candidate, who was more portrayed as a novelty than Barack Obama who was a black candidate. Ryan (2013:17) also argues the competition is equated to horserace kind of coverage. She argues that,

Horserace coverage reports on a political race as if it were a horserace, talking about who is ahead, who is falling behind and using opinion polls to prove this. Focusing on the polling numbers will reinforces voters’ beliefs about a woman’s ability to hold a particular office.

Ryan (2013) argues that in 2008 both Palin and Clinton failed to make headway in the US presidential elections because of these confining stereotypes and gendered representation. Ryan (2013) suggests that this may be one of the reasons the number of female candidates competing has remained very low. Kittilson and Fridkin (2007:388) argue that, “gender differences in press treatment appear to be more dramatic for presidential candidates”, implying that the higher the office the more gendered the media coverage. Ryan (2013) adds that these stereotypes sometimes are perpetrated by the candidates themselves in many instances with similar consequences as they try to be masculine:

Being portrayed as cold plays in to Kanter’s “Iron Maiden” stereotype of the professional female and continues to harm campaigns more than help them in the case of female candidates, even when running for a more masculine office like that of President of the United States. Here we see the beginnings of a double standard for female politicians who have to maintain their femininity while being just masculine enough for the public.

Ryan (2013) highlights mentions the way Dole was subjected to negative coverage which culminated in her eventual defeat in the presidential race of 2000. Clinton in her first appearance in politics in 2001 was not spared either. She was dismissed for not being the stereotypical housewife to her husband Bill Clinton who was president. This stereotype has lingered around Hillary Clinton who, as a professional woman, was discredited for taking advantage of her husband Bill Clinton's position when she ran for a senatorial position. Scharrer (2002) argues that these damaging images continue to be more negative the more she attempts to compete for a higher level position. Ryan (2013:19) argues that,

Women like Elizabeth Dole and Hillary Clinton, who have advanced on the political ladder have proven that the glass ceiling still exists. The heightened masculinity of offices on the national level do not allow much room for interpretation of feminine qualities, consequently forcing female politicians to be subjected to a double standard of maintaining their femininity while giving off just enough masculinity to seem viable for the office.

Ryan concluded that gendered coverage increased as the women moved to higher offices. What also seemed to increase was the novelty mentioning and reference to feminine and masculinity issues concerning the candidates. Discussion concerning the politicians' backgrounds and the difference of male and female traits was steady. The mention of marital status and familial relations was also discussed as they moved to more executive positions. Ryan acknowledges the contribution and influence of contextuality. She argued that female politicians in the US are more fairly represented with experiences than when they enter into politics. The study investigates if the trend is the same for the representation of Zimbabwean female politicians.

Ryan (2013) argues that media gender biases lessened as the women aspired for higher of offices. This suggests that the women were taken more seriously as politicians at those levels. She also argues that backgrounds and relevance of these women as they moved to higher office did not increase in this case because these women had already been mentioned when they were running for previous political offices. These results may differ if a woman is running for the same offices out of the blue. Ryan (2013:22) argues that:

This is not to say that all writers were really changing their opinions on Clinton and Dole, but they were not expressing blatant gender bias in their writing. It also certainly does not mean that gender bias completely disappeared from coverage of Clinton and Dole, it just means that the bias was possibly more subtle than it had been or that writers found other ways to convey these same sexist opinions.

From the reviewed literature by Ryan (2013) it is evident that some of the major challenges that women face in the quest for political office has had to do with misrepresentations by the media. There is also evidence of overuse of damaging stereotypes that continue to discourage aspiring female politicians. While there has been a marked improvement in the frequency of the coverage of female politicians, the quality of coverage is still skewed in favour of men. Though Ryan (2013)'s study has elements that are universal as far as women's treatment by the media is concerned this study is specifically concerned with the representation of female politicians in Zimbabwe in the period of 2000 to 2008.

Atkeson and Krebs (2008) sought to verify the conclusion of previous research that the American media covered male and female politicians differently. Having noted that such previous research focussed on national and state-wide gubernatorial elections involving political parties, Atkeson and Krebs (2008) chose to focus on the coverage of male and female politicians in non-partisan, open-seat, and competitive mayoral elections. Just like this present study, they chose to use content analysis of news reports. They report their research in an article titled "Press coverage of mayoral candidates: the role of gender in news reporting and campaign issue speech". Thus, whereas Atkeson and Krebs (2008) is a comparative study of the coverage of male and female politicians in the world's largest economy and leading superpower, the US, the present study focuses exclusively on media representation of female politicians in a much smaller African economy. Also, the period under study is also relatively longer for the present study than that of Atkeson and Krebs (2008). The present study thus allows for more in-depth exploration of media representation of one gender over a much longer period of time than that of Atkeson and Krebs (2008).

The article begins by reviewing previous literature that established a number of important points about media coverage of elections and gender. First they note the importance of the media as a *sine qua non* in exposing candidates and their programmes and campaign

strategies to the voting public. They then enumerate key differences noted by earlier research between the coverage of women candidates and their male counterparts. These differences include the portrayal of female candidates as having more typically feminine traits than male ones, being more liberal, feminist and democratic than male candidates, and being naturally suited to handle 'compassion issues', such as health care, education, and women's rights. By focussing on mayoral elections, Atkeson and Krebs (2008) avoid the factor of political bias in the coverage of candidates so as to effectively isolate gender as the sole variable under investigation. This is rendered possible by the fact that most American cities use nonpartisan ballots in local elections. They also contend that the fact that most urban dwellers vote for the Democratic Party means that local elections are often intraparty contests. While the possibility of isolating the gender variable by focussing on local elections certainly helps, research to establish media attitudes towards female politicians by controlling "the potentially confounding effects of party" (Atkeson and Krebs 2008: 240), such an opportunity does not arise in the Zimbabwean context examined by the present study.

In Zimbabwe, all elections, be they local or national, involve candidates sponsored by political parties with the various parties using local elections as a barometer to predict their performance in the more important national legislative and presidential elections. Atkeson and Krebs (2008) further narrow their focus on the gender variable by eliminating the variable of incumbency. They note that previous research had established that, since women are still fighting to be accepted in the political arena, they tend to enter political contests as challengers of male incumbents. While both studies use stereotypes the feminine stereotypical traits are not as emphasised in the Zimbabwean context. Most women that are analysed are former war veterans whose masculinities are much more emphasised than the female traits. The suggestion for this society may point to the effect that if a woman has to be successful they have to have male traits. In the United States situation, the media tends to focus more on the incumbent than the challenger, such that it may be difficult to identify with certainty the reason for the marginalisation of a female challenger. They therefore decided to focus on open-seat races, where none of the contestants is seen as the incumbent. Having also noted that the more keenly contested a contest, the more the media interest in it, Atkeson and Krebs (2008) decided to focus on highly competitive campaign environments.

Atkeson and Krebs (2008) set themselves two objectives: to determine whether the media covers male candidates differently from female candidates and whether that difference implies gender bias; and to determine whether the participation of a female candidate in the election influences the scope of issues discussed in media coverage of mayoral campaigns. Atkeson and Krebs (2008: 241) set out to test five hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Male candidates receive more news coverage than female candidates. Hypothesis 2: Male candidates receive more favourable news coverage on electability than female candidates. Hypothesis 3: Male candidates receive more favourable issue and trait coverage than female candidates. Hypothesis 4: Male candidates receive less personal (e.g., family and appearance) coverage than female candidates. Hypothesis 5: The presence of a female candidate expands the issue discussion of the campaign in ways favourable to perceived female issue strengths (i.e., it increases discussion of compassion issues).

They chose to focus on the print media rather than TV or radio primarily because prior research had suggested that American voters were likely to get most of their information about local election campaigns from local newspapers. They also believed that newspapers are generally archived and easily accessible, thus providing the most practical research venue for the investigation of potential difference or gender bias in media reporting of local elections involving male and female candidates. They examined six stories covering both intergender (between a male and a female candidate) and intragender (between candidates of the same sex) contexts as they believed that by covering intragender situations, they could examine if and how a female candidate might change the scope and coverage of a given election campaign.

Their study examined articles on mayoral electoral campaigns, including any article making mention of either candidate, arguing that, "This is important because all news coverage of candidates represents information about their background, record, and activity that could influence voters' attitudes toward them" (Atkeson and Krebs 2008:243). Taking the paragraph as their unit of analysis, they used a data coding system that entailed identifying five areas of potential difference between male and female candidates. These areas are "overall candidate coverage, electability, traits, personal issues, and policy issues" (idem). They noted when a candidate was a target of discussion as well as the

nature of that discussion. They recognised that news report paragraphs could have multiple hits per category and mention both candidates as well as several issues. They also recognised that paragraphs could also say nothing about either candidate. The present study made use of eighteen stories that span the period of 2000 to 2008 in the three selected newspapers. Atkeson and Krebs (2008) only focus on mayoral elections. This can be a weakness because ascertaining how female politicians are treated in politics can be difficult because mayoral elections are just part of political categories within politics and can be valued differently by the public and the media.

Atkeson and Krebs (2008) find that there is no or little evidence of gender biased coverage of mayoral elections in the American cities they sampled. Concerning general news coverage, attention given to each candidate, Atkeson and Krebs (2008) find no bias towards either gender, neither did male-male races receive more coverage than intergender contests. There were, however, subtle differences on finer indicators. For instance, in relation to candidate experience, Atkeson and Krebs (2008) found that, whereas there was no difference in the coverage of candidate CVs in intergender contests, the credentials of the winning candidates in all-male contests got much more coverage than those of the loser. They also find that there was gender balanced coverage of the issue of candidate electability. Atkeson and Krebs (2008) next hypothesis is that the media associates female candidates with female issues also known as compassion issues (related to education and quality of life), while male candidate are generally linked to so-called male issues, such as the economy and crime. They find no evidence of the existence of issue-related biases in the coverage of the mayoral elections they examined. They also find that male candidates do not receive more male trait coverage than their female counterparts and female candidates do not receive more female trait coverage than their male counterparts. While their study may be valid and has used content analysis to good effect, the issue of context is crucial as different cultures can invoke different results. The present study takes place in Zimbabwe, a 'Third World' country which is also a relatively young democracy in comparison to the United States. Women's participation in politics is not an old practice in Zimbabwe and this can influence different reactions from those observed in the USA through this article.

One reason given for the contradiction of the findings of previous other research is that those earlier studies tended to ignore the fact that “reporters follow the news story [...]. When competitive candidates campaign on specific issues, the media are likely to be responsive to the campaign message and are not simply responding to sex stereotypes” (Atkeson and Krebs 2008:248). This contention suggests that, in American mayoral elections, the politicians themselves by and large set the agenda for the media through their choice of issues to cover. This notion in itself suggests that American society has attained a certain level of thinking about gender that allows it to more easily separate campaign issues and candidate quality from the candidate’s gender and minimise the extent to which the latter influences its perception of candidates. This is evidenced by the fact that female and male contestants receive more or less equal attention and issue coverage is not determined by the candidate’s gender. While the present study focuses on the coverage of female politicians during election years, it does not specifically focus on election campaign coverage. It also covers the whole range of political offices, from local government through to the presidency which can prevent generalisations that are in Atkeson and Krebs (2008)’s article.

Biscomb and Griggs (2012) explore the representation of the performance of the England women’s team in the 2009 cricket world cup tournament. They explore and analyse the central themes that were featured in selected British newspapers during the period in question. They made use of content analysis through inductive coding of the selected newspapers. The analysis was based on 29 newspaper stories that included ‘context including match reports, quote of the day, listings, wider debate on women’s cricket and team profiles’. They explored the *The Daily Mail*, *The Daily Mirror*, *The Telegraph*, *The Independent*, *The Times*, *The Guardian* and *The Observer*. The article focused on the representation of the World Cup Cricket Tournament of (2009). What is consistent from their argument is that cricket has always been viewed as a masculine game because it celebrated “competitiveness, toughness, and physical dominance” Biscomb and Griggs (2012:2). Even in changing times the media continues to view it as a man’s game.

Biscomb and Griggs (2012) establish that the language used in the newspapers is aimed at convincing women they belong to the domestic sphere. This is often done through the use of derogatory language used in the biases and negative representation of women in Cricket. To further their argument (Biscomb and Griggs 2012) mention that the state of Britain in this period viewed women as fragile or physically unfit and thus encouraged them to play sports such as netball and hockey which were traditionally considered feminine. Hockey and netball have also been persistently trivialised through minimum coverage by the media in Europe. This difference in treatment of gendered sports is also one of the manifestations of patriarchally induced ideologies. The two scholars trace the historical development of women's cricket as a sport from the 1890s to argue their case. They noted that early female cricketers often played to just entertainment men.

Biscomb and Griggs (2012) argue that misrepresentations of female cricketers are usually embedded in the language that is employed by the media to construct images of the cricketers. These stereotypical discourses are consistent in the media for women try to enter spaces that are traditionally considered male. Biscomb and Griggs (2012), argue that, despite obvious successes recorded in women's cricket in recent years, the British media still inadequately or negatively represent women in cricket. According to these two scholars, it is only recently that the coverage of women improved though you can still trace the stereotypes and find negative comments in the newspapers concerning women cricketers. Some of the worst comments that were recorded according to Biscomb and Griggs (2012) included, "The one thing clearly lacking was pace on the ball – the very element which thrills". (*Independent*, 24/3/09). The present study also makes use of content analysis but specifically assesses the representation of female politicians in Zimbabwe. The study also examines the representation of female politicians in Zimbabwean newspapers period 200-2008.

Emphasis on the women's shortcomings was epitomized by an *Independent* newspaper commentator who said, "I woke up and assumed England's women cricketers had lost" (*Independent*, 23/3/09). The statement conveys a preconceived idea that female cricketers are not good and potentially cannot match the standard of men in this game.

Such devaluing of women cricketers in the British media was often achieved through consistently unfavorable comparisons between male and female cricketers, with women negatively represented. According to Biscomb and Griggs (2012:6),

During the last decade it has been disappointing to see that there have still been instances in which patriarchal hegemony is perpetuated by the British print media in relation to their coverage of female athletes. These data indicate that the position of women's cricket is still framed in terms of men's cricket in terms of the quantity of reporting and occasionally in style of reporting.

The recurrent images of women as inferior to men in sports have thus affected them even in developed states such as Britain. This has resulted in the persistence of these images even after the particular team has improved in the cricket sport.

Finally, Biscomb and Griggs (2012) argue that the media's pre-judgements of female cricketers as inherently unable have over time shaped the British public opinion to the women's disadvantage. This means that harmful stereotypical constructs of women in sports in Britain have now been 'naturalised' or 'normalised'. Thus, the media has contributed to the marginalization of women in sport in the UK.

In the article, "Media coverage of women candidates", Sanbonmatsu (2012)⁹, discusses the representation of female politicians by the media in the United States of America from the 1980s to the present. She argues that there has been positive evolution in American media coverage of women in politics over the past decades, from men receiving much more coverage than women to the current situation where, even though coverage is still skewed in favour of men, there has been considerable improvement in the representation of female politicians by the media. Sanbonmatsu (2012)¹⁰ particularly points to the 1980s as a period in which the political playing field for men and women was not even. She however contends that coverage of female politicians in current times now equals that of male candidates. She argues that,

⁹ <https://www.politicalparity.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Parity-Research-Women-Media.pdf>

¹⁰ <https://www.politicalparity.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Parity-Research-Women-Media.pdf>

For example, James Devitt found that male and female candidates for governor in four states in 1998 received the same amount of coverage. Dianne Bystrom and her co-authors also find similarity in amount of coverage in mixed-gender U.S. Senate and gubernatorial races between 1998 and 2002. In a more recent study, Linda Fowler and Jennifer Lawless, examining women gubernatorial candidates in the 1990s, do not find many direct gender effects on coverage once other factors are controlled (Sanbonmatsu: 2012)

She concludes that while there is a great improvement in terms of the frequency of women representation in the media, female politicians still encounter a number of challenges in their pursuit of political seats. Female candidates were particularly marginalised and by the use of derogatory language by the media in the United States of America. They continued to be represented in gendered language through the use of traditional stereotypes. Subjectification and objectification were noted in the way in which the media particularly focuses more on women's physical appearance than that of their male counterparts. Some of the leftover and traditional stereotypes that disadvantage women derive from media concern with their marital status, appearances and their personalities. In her analysis Sanbonmatsu (2012, cites the sexist manner in which Moseley-Braun was represented:

For example, Carol Moseley-Braun, the only African American woman to ever serve in the U.S. Senate, who sought the 2004 Democratic presidential nomination, was once described by The Chicago Tribune as a “den mother with a cheerleader's smile” (Sanbonmatsu 2012: <https://www.politicalparity.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/inventory-media.pdf>).

Sanbonmatsu (2012)¹¹ contends that sexist representation is not restricted to female politicians but is used to construct all professional women such that women in management and politics are consistently referred to by their gender. These biases are institutionalised and the images of women by the media are often distorted. Sanbonmatsu (2012)¹², however also notes that research has found that, in the United States of America, female politicians “are more likely than men to be credited for positive policy initiatives and to be described with positive traits”. This implies a difference in media attitude towards female electoral candidates and female politicians in office. Whereas this confirms the

¹¹ <https://www.politicalparity.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Parity-Research-Women-Media.pdf>

¹²

obvious fact that there is no difference in performance in political office inherent in gender or sex differences, it also suggests that the media is aware that any bias against female candidates for political office is unfounded and can only be based on ideological influences and political agenda requiring the perpetuation of male dominance in politics.

Sanbonmatsu (2012)¹³ points out that for women to progress the media has to be fair to both genders as this has immense influence on the electorate in times of political campaigns. Fundamentally, the media has a way of shaping and influencing the public opinion. The media analyses and publicises the politicians' personalities and, as a result, the public's preferences are modeled around those of the media. In most instances, women that venture into the political realm are first and foremost castigated for acting out of their gender traditional roles by a media that is often slow to transform. This is because politics is traditionally seen as a male profession in many countries. Women that aspire or end up in politics are regarded as deviants in many societies. Women are generally expected to restrict themselves to domestic spheres while men occupy the public positions. Sanbonmatsu (2012)¹⁴ contends that this has been particularly evident when women campaign and compete for the presidential seat in US. As a result, this position has been very elusive for female candidates in the history of the US. The presidential position in the US has been represented as male.

Sanbonmatsu (2012)¹⁵ contends that one of the ways in which female candidates are trivialised is through stereotypes by the media. Stereotypes are hardly static as they shift and transform but still disadvantage the victim. Sanbonmatsu (2012)¹⁶ argues that "the press portrays women as losers and novelties and not serious candidates", which pressurises them to perform under the spotlight of both that media and society. These distortions classifications and biases more often than not discourage the running and aspiring female politicians. Female candidates' confidence is greatly dampened as the media often 'others' them through stereotypical terms such as novelty, ground breakers

¹³ <https://www.politicalparity.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Parity-Research-Women-Media.pdf>

¹⁴ <https://www.politicalparity.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Parity-Research-Women-Media.pdf>

¹⁵ <https://www.politicalparity.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Parity-Research-Women-Media.pdf>

¹⁶ <https://www.politicalparity.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Parity-Research-Women-Media.pdf>
<https://www.politicalparity.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Parity-Research-Women-Media.pdf>

and mostly as people that are moving to a new turf. It is worth noting that the media focuses more on the female candidates' weaknesses and limitations than those of men. Qualities that they may possess that may be favourable for them to make it in the election are never publicised or given prominence. The media uses filters in their gendered representation of women to disadvantage and frustrate female politicians. The media often influences the public to concentrate on trivial issues such as appearance and personality which trivialises them in the eyes of the electorate. Lawrence and Melody (2011) argues that in 2008 Clinton received the same amount of coverage as Obama, only that Clinton's coverage was highly negative and frustrating. The media's main concern was on whether she was going to endure the presidential race or not. What she stood for as a political candidate in the race was not adequately or accurately represented. Derogatory remarks about Hillary Clinton were commonplace in the media and it seemed acceptable even to the society.

Most notably, media coverage of Hillary Clinton in 2008 and especially cable news coverage was filled with sexist remarks, from Glenn Beck describing Clinton as a "stereotypical bitch" to Tucker Carlson stating, "When she [Hillary Clinton] comes on television, I involuntarily cross my legs." There were also instances of sexism faced by Clinton on the campaign trail that the media did not regard as newsworthy (Sanbonmatsu, 2012 <https://www.politicalparity.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/inventory-media.pdf>).

As a result of the media onslaught, even women with the potential to occupy political seats shy away from politics. Sanbonmatsu (2012)¹⁷ establishes that even the few women in management and leadership positions have been helpless as far as ensuring the increase in numbers of women in leadership positions in the face of the media resistance. Patriarchal forces have ensured the exclusion of female actors from important leadership and decision making levels. ,

With so few women in decision-making positions, there still is often no one to raise a red flag when egregious sexism appears in news stories. Women are only about one-quarter of television news directors. In an analysis of major TV networks, wire, on-line news sources, and print, the Women's Media Center found that over 60% of all by-lines and on-camera appearances were by men. A new study of Sunday

¹⁷ <https://www.politicalparity.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Parity-Research-Women-Media.pdf>

morning political talk shows reveals that the vast majority of guests (67%) are white men; women of color are especially underrepresented (Sanbonmatsu 2012 <https://www.politicalparity.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/inventory-media.pdf>).

Her hypothesis is that the increase of women in political positions would translate in a number of women also aspiring to be political candidates. This is often after discovering the possibility of women and change within politics. Besides an increase in numbers of female political candidates, Sanbonmatsu (2012)¹⁸ suggests that women have to find solutions to stop or counter the stereotypical biases embedded in societies and the media. She adds that, to ensure the success of female politicians, there is need to first acknowledge the existence of stereotypes and be prepared to fight them. She concludes that while coverage has fairly improved for female politicians, it is their male counterparts that are often preferred political candidates. Statistically, in terms of frequency, male politicians are still covered more than female politicians. There are also distinct differences in the quality of coverage between men and women. Thus, while men are fairly represented and preferred women candidates are still underrepresented and portrayed in gendered discourses.

In their article, “Conventional coverage/unconventional politicians: gender and media coverage of Canadian leaders’ debates, 1993, 1997, 2000”, Everitt and Gidengil (2003) focus on the role played by television in the representation of female politicians in election campaign years. The article examines the coverage of English language debates (Canada is a bilingual country whose other official language is French) by evening news bulletins. Everitt and Gidengil (2003) compared the representation of female politicians on television with the normal every day behaviour of the same female politicians away from television. They focused on the media as it is virtually the only means through which politicians may be discovered by the electorate thus determining voting patterns in a society. Earlier scholars that were reviewed by Everitt and Gidengil (2003) also assessed media representations of female politicians and discovered a range of findings, some which are confirmed by Everitt and Gidengil (2003) while others are not. A consistent finding of the literature they reviewed is the media’s use of negative stereotypes in the representation of female politicians. These stereotypes are in some instances overt and in others, subtle.

¹⁸ <https://www.politicalparity.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Parity-Research-Women-Media.pdf>

Reviewed literature further showed that the media focused on the physical appearance and sexuality of female politicians. Everitt and Gidengil (2003) argue that biases and stereotypes are much more prevalent and pronounced in electronic media because there is no luxury of space in a single bulletin compared to print media.

Everitt and Gidengil (2003) argue that stereotypes that are used by the media are usually present in the commonly used political language which is largely determined by males and the patriarchal status quo. They also note that, female politicians were covered much less than their male counterparts. The study made use of masculine stereotype metaphors of sport and warfare such as “fighting” “feuding” “guns” “beaten” to describe the debates between opponent politicians involved in the debates. Everitt and Gidengil (2003) also found that, the media in their representation of female politicians “tended to be rather narrowly focused, dwelling on their viability and framing their issue competencies and/or personality traits in stereotypically feminine terms” (Everitt and Gidengil 2003:560). In the present study the researcher also focuses on content analysis, particularly how language is used to describe female politicians. The differences between the present study and that of Everitt and Gidengil (2003) is Everitt and Gidengil make a comparison of the representation of men. This study is situated in Zimbabwe and covers a longer period than that of of Everitt and Gidengil. In many instances, the media focused on how well organized their campaigns were or how educated the female candidates were instead of what these female politicians intended to do or change in their communities.

Everitt and Gidengil (2003) argue that female politicians were more harshly evaluated using tougher criteria than their male counterparts. Consequently, failure by female politicians to conform to pre-established norms, in a male dominated society results in their marginalization in politics. They also found that the media’s use of language shapes public opinion as discourses used are not innocent or accidental. This is coupled with the fact that news is always represented from a given point of view. For instance, the media tended to use gendered discourses in relation to female politicians and their campaigns. In this respect the election and campaign periods were laced with war discourses that portrayed ‘conquerors’ of ‘conquered’ female candidates, who were also labelled ‘victims’ of ‘fights’ won by their male counterparts. Thus, Everitt and Gidengil (2003) showed that the patriarchal notion of the domination of members of the ‘weaker sex’ by males was

perpetuated in televised debates. They discovered that 30% of the metaphors used in English reports used warfare language in 1993, while 22% were recorded in 1997 and 16 % in 2000. While the warfare metaphors have relatively decreased with time, they were still in existence and continued to be employed where female politicians were represented. However, aggressive behaviour by female candidates was met with media disapproval:

When Campbell [female Conservative Party leader] and McLaughlin [leader of the New Democratic party] behaved combatively, they were portrayed as aggressors waging war on the other participants, but similar behaviour on the part of their male counterparts was presented as if it were just part of the game. The women “launched attacks” while the men “took shots on net (Everitt and Gidengil 2003:574),

The media also employed sports metaphors to characterise political debates between candidates. Everitt and Gidengil (2003:568) argue that,

The most common metaphors drew on stereotypically masculine sports like boxing, baseball, football and the traditional Canadian sport of hockey. Some leaders “sparring,” while others “duked it out.” There were “no knockout punches” but there were “a lot of shots on net” as the leaders “faced off”.

Everitt and Gidengil (2003) also found that television debates often used masculine metaphors in their descriptions of female politicians. The highest recorded of the years analysed was 2000 where 68% of masculine metaphors were recorded while 54% were recorded in 1997. Everitt and Gidengil (2003) found that even new media personnel were systematically acculturated into the masculine and patriarchal cultures that continued to perpetuate gender stereotypes. Thus the language that is used is meant to convince the audience that politics is inherently a man’s game to deter more qualified aspiring female politicians from contesting in elections.

Everitt and Gidengil (2003) note that besides competition with rival media organizations, the aspect of the nature of audience is crucial. They argue that news audiences are largely male and males prefer the competitive and conflict stories largely found in news productions more than women. Male audiences that associate competitiveness and aggression with masculinity view female politicians who appear to be competitive and

aggressive as abnormal and unattractive candidates for public office. Biases and stereotypes concerning female politicians persisted because the media profession and ownership were still predominantly male. Patriarchal values and ideologies also continue to exist in the media because of that reason.

Everitt and Gidengil (2003) sought to find out whether the way female politicians were portrayed in television news coverage of campaign debates was consistent with their behaviour in the actual debates. They discovered that in many instances female politicians were portrayed differently in the news from how they actually behaved in the debates. They contend that,

In contrast to their male counterparts, both the Conservative party leader, Kim Campbell, and Audrey McLaughlin, the leader of the New Democratic party, were portrayed in much more confrontational terms than their actual behaviour in the debates themselves would seem to warrant. Everitt and Gidengil (2003:563).

However, female politicians that fail to compete in these situations are often ignored and marginalized through omission by the media. This is a clear double bind since female politicians that abandon the lady-like conduct that is expected of them and become aggressive and combative are negatively represented.

In the article titled, "Is she man enough? Women candidates, executive political offices, and news coverage", Meeks (2012) analyses the representation of four female political candidates in United States of America. The study focused on "novelty labelling" which according to Meeks (2012:178) are "...descriptions often take the form of specific labels that call attention to a candidate's deviant characteristics, for example, their gender or their status as norm breaker, "feminine" and "masculine", and political attributes to find if there had been noticeable differences in coverage between male and female politicians. The study specifically sought to examine whether female candidates for political office received different representation from their male counterparts and whether the differences were much more pronounced for higher political offices. Meeks (2012) analysed the coverage of Elizabeth Dole, Claire McCaskill, Hillary Clinton and Sarah Palin. The study also focused on the U.S coverage of mixed races preferences in elections and campaigns in the U.S

politics. It did a comparative analysis of various news outlets of women and men running for political office.

Meeks (2012) focused on the latest news bulletins produced towards election time. In the case of Dole, she focused on the period from the announcement of her intention to run for president in March 1999 to her withdrawal against George W. Bush and Al Gore in October 1999. Her coverage also included the 2002 general election in the senatorial contest of North Carolina against Erskine Bowles. In the case of McCaskill the focus was on the 2004 Missouri gubernatorial election against Matt Blunt and her senatorial position against Jim Talent. For Clinton, she concentrated on the 2000 senatorial general election against Rick Lazio. For the presidential election, the focus was from her announcement to contest up to her withdrawal against Barack Obama and John McCain in June 2008. In Palin's case, the period under consideration was the general election for the governorship of Alaska against Tony Knowles in 2006, and the 2008 general election for Vice President against Barack Obama and Joe Biden. Meeks (2012) examined the highest circulative newspapers' coverage in the state of origin of each of the selected female politicians. For Dole she analysed the *Charlotte observer* and the *News and Observer*, for McCaskill the *St Louis Post Dispatch* and *Kansas City Star*, the *New York Daily News* and *Buffalo News* for Clinton, and the *Anchorage Daily News* and *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner* for Palin. The research was a content analysis which focused on the direct gender labels such as 'woman', 'man', 'mother', 'husband', among others and unique labels such as, 'first' and 'lone' etc. She also assessed categorized feminine and masculine issues. Feminine issues included issues on 'education'; 'health' while masculine had to do with the 'security' and the 'economy' of the state. She examined news reports from 2000 to 2010 and analysed the coverage of the selected female politicians as each ran for various political offices during that period. The female politicians had to have run first for a lower office and then a higher one during that period to be selected for the study. This was in order to observe if there were any changes in coverage between the various levels of office. She focused on the media and its importance in giving information to the electorate that can shape its perception of the political candidates. The research is also a qualitative content analysis research. Meeks (2012) focuses on a fairly longer research period which can minimise subjectivity through generalisations. She also generated themes of analysis from the collected data.

Meeks (2012) divided her findings into three sections, which are novelty labels, political issues and character traits. She found that although women had previously contested presidential elections in the United States, the only female politician ever seen as a serious contender by the media was Hillary Clinton in 2008. She however argues that despite her success and influence, she had suffered hostile media onslaught early on in her campaigns both for the senatorial and presidential elections. The media had concentrated on her physical appearance, sexuality and gender rather than her political acumen. Meeks (2012:175) quotes *Washington Post* columnist Joel Achenbach who says about Hillary Clinton, "She is running. You can tell by the hair, which has finally stopped changing styles, every strand frozen in place, as though she is ready to be on a coin". For Sarah Palin, she mentions a sexist statement by the *New York Times* columnist, Maureen Dowd who said that, "Sarah has single-handedly ushered out the 'Sex and the City' era and made the sexy new model for America the retro one– the glamorous Pioneer Woman, packing a gun, a baby and a bible". She argues that both women, though covered in different times, were subjected to a double bind dilemma by the newspapers. Sarah Palin was often referred to as too feminine while Clinton had too masculine traits for a woman. She also notes that sometimes showing male traits does not in any way help the female political candidate to succeed in a predominantly male domain. Female politicians are therefore often criticized for displaying masculine tendencies by the media. This treatment of female politicians by the media is evident in how Joyce Mujuru and Thenjiwe Lesabe who will be analysed later in this research were represented in the media. Her theory is relevant for her study but could have been stronger if applied along with other theories such as framing theory which best highlight issues that manifest through issues of language.

Meeks (2012) notes that, just like her predecessors, these two female politicians were marginalized through little coverage, stereotypes, biased and negative images. Meeks (2012) found that both media and politics are masculinised spheres. This is evident in the gendered language used by the media. She made use of the social theory which expects men and women to fulfil gender roles stereotypes. Her argument is that in cases where the character traits do not fit with the gender stereotype, media often ostracize and criticize the female politician concerned. For that reason, if a woman decides to run for presidency,

they are expected by the media and the public to have masculine characteristics as the presidential role is considered a male job. Meeks (2012) points out that female politicians in the public sphere have a choice to either be feminine or masculine and yet criticized for either characteristic. In her analysis and findings she, however, notes that women are slowly being accommodated in the public sphere.

Meeks (2012) found that elections generally sparked extraordinary media interest. Under the novelty category, she discovered that mixed race election campaigns were even more newsworthy. Female politicians also fitted well in the novelty category as they were seen as behaving outside the norm by entering the political arena. Contests involving only Caucasian males attract significantly less media attention as it is considered normal for this social category man to be in politics. Meeks (2012) found that some of the novelty label implied gender, such as 'female' or 'woman', and uniqueness, such as 'first female' or 'lone woman'. She noted that the labels could either be positive or negative or flag some kind of uniqueness. On the contrary, males were hardly subjected to novelty labels because politics was considered inherently male. In comparison to the other three women examined in the article, Clinton received the least number of novelty labels. Meeks' (2012) assumption on that point was that it might be because she contested against another novel candidate, Barack Obama, who was a black male. Another notable result is that novelty labels increased as women moved from legislative to executive offices. Related to that, Meeks (2012) found that gendered novelty labels were more prevalent in the coverage of female politicians than in males. She discovered that women were represented more in gendered terms than their male counterparts. For candidates running for presidency, masculine and feminine traits were not as pronounced as other traits. Meeks (2012) also found that emotional traits such as stability were discussed more in relation to female politicians than males. Some of the more common traits included "warmth, compassion, emotionality, honesty altruism, and congeniality" (Meeks 2012:180). On the other hand, masculine traits included strength, aggressiveness, independence and confidence (Meeks 2012:180).

The media concentrated more on feminine issues in the representation of Dole and McCaskill than Palin and Clinton. She speculated that this might be indicative of a shift in media perceptions of female politicians towards the end of the decade that they examined. Of the four women examined by Meeks (2012), Clinton was represented as exhibiting the least number of feminine traits while Palin received the most feminine traits coverage. The women received more masculine coverage as they competed for executive offices than when they vied for legislative offices.

Meeks (2012) focus was on the coverage of four female politicians in U.S print media. Their focus was on the representation of the four female politicians as they ran first for legislative office and later for higher executive office such as the presidency. The present study examines the way Zimbabwean female politicians were represented in three Zimbabwean weekly newspapers from 2000 to 2008. It uses qualitative content analysis to examine the use of two frames and the double bind dilemma, (female politicians as wives and mothers; female politicians as unfit and inadequate for public office; and double bind dilemma), in the Zimbabwean media.

Tamar Mayer's (1999) article "Gender ironies of nationalism: setting the stage", in the book, *Sexing the nation: gender ironies of nationalism*, which she edited, discusses representation, including by the media, of female politicians from various countries under nationalist rule. Its interest in nationalism as a context is significant for this present study as Zimbabwe has been under African nationalist rule since independence in 1980, including the period under study, 2000-2008. The present study is concerned with the representation of female politicians by the Zimbabwean print media. While it assumes that Zimbabwean media representation of female politicians is heavily influenced by patriarchy inherited from a combination of its colonial and indigenous African traditional legacies, the context of the present study also includes the factor of nationalism as the overarching political ideology of the nation.

Mayer (1999) contends that, in nationalist countries, women's roles are largely defined in terms of confinement to the domestic space. This is similar to the Western representation discussed above. Mayer (1999) specifically identifies print media as one of the biggest impediments to the success of female politicians in such situations. Concerning the

concept of nation, Mayer (1999:2) points out that, “despite its rhetoric of equality for all who partake in the ‘national project’, nation remains, like other feminized entities – emphatically, historically and globally –the property of men”. To suggest that a nation is a ‘project’ implies that a nation is not natural, it is a social construct and the processes of identity formation project and legitimise certain views while suppressing and undermining others. The use of the media by the male architects of the nation to feminize the nation extends the notion of inherent male ownership of women to the political realm. This gender irony in which power in the feminised nation is linked to men is further elaborated by Mayer (1999). She argues that nationalism sometimes contradicts many democratic discourses as it excludes women. This points to the pressures to which nationalist regimes are subjected in order to sign certain international protocols. For these societies, meaningful empowerment of women is never their idea.

Mayer (1999) notes that the domestic role, familiar stereotypes and biases are still used in the construction of images of women regardless of level of influence or education, thus making it difficult for female politicians to thrive under nationalist rule. In her study, she also points to the link between societal projections and the media as some of the major factors underlying the marginalisation of women the world over. Consequently, Mayer argues that ideologies projected in the media have an immense contribution on how women are viewed in many societies. Women’s exclusion in nationhood programmes is organically linked to the way issues concerning women are treated because of the way they are presented and projected. To illustrate his point, Mayer (1999) claims that this is not peculiar to any one nation. On the contrary, she cites the way women are viewed in various countries and various patriarchal societies. Even the developed world still projects negative and biased images of women.

According to Mayer(1999:11),

The ideal nation and its model members are represented in arts, literature and the media, in public speeches and in the writings of the nation’s leaders – in every medium through which the nation is mobilised. Other media through which the relationships among them gender, sexuality and nation are presented and which are discussed in the volume include newspaper cartoons in Liberia, calligraphy in China, the rhetoric of remembrance in Israel and the political debates surrounding the participation of women and gays in the US military.

Mayer (1999) discusses the deliberate role of the media in nation-building and the obvious shortcomings that are noticeable in that space. Her argument is that the media as an ideological space shapes public opinion and consequently contributes to the way the society views women and their different roles in the society. The media is also, however, a mirror of society, which is itself a product of that society. Mayer (1999) deserves to be quoted at length because she brings out the contradictions of representation of women in print media, which is the main focus of the present study. She says,

[...] because newspapers are one important medium through which African social life is constructed, given meaning and revised, and where the nation constitutes itself as civilised, women's representation in Liberian newspaper cartoons exemplifies national tensions between becoming modern, 'civilised' and remaining native. Although these cartoons offer different versions of civilised womanhood and female citizenship, their frequent portrayal of modern women as 'predators' and aggressors –as enemies of national development has...contributed to the negative representation of women in contemporary Liberian nationalism (Mayer, 1999:11).

The Liberian media thus uses humour to build up and naturalise the notion that women are generally primitive, uncivilised, thus suggesting that they are not fit to run public political offices. Terms such as predators, enemies and aggressors used to label female politicians are meant to suppress in women the propensity to display so-called male character traits, which, ironically, could give them the advantage in political contexts. Thus, Mayer (1999) argues that women experience a different kind of exclusion where the nation's symbolic reproduction is concerned. This is particularly manifest in former colonies where forms of indigenous traditional worldview, now confined to lower levels of social organisation, such as the home and village, co-exist with the Western worldview and culture of the former colonial masters associated with modern political power, such as the legislative, economic and security sectors. The media thus confines women to the traditional spheres while preserving the modern spheres for male domination. Indeed, Mayer (1999) notes that, in Liberia, peasant women are not considered as important stakeholders in the nation. On the contrary, they can become leaders within their small communities as household heads while remaining marginalised from the modern economy. The roles women end up assuming are those that are prescribed by the top political elites who are largely males through the discourse they use on women in their society, discourses that are echoed and

spread by the media. In the assignment of the roles to different groups within a society, women are unfairly relegated to subordinate roles as ruling males strengthen their dominance and control over them through control of material resources, and forms of communication such as the print media.

While Mayer (1999) raises important and pertinent points in her article, she overlooks the need to assess different regions separately, because the empowerment roles that are noticeable and are of authority in the first world sometimes exist in a number of third world countries. Furthering the concept, it is evident that 'Third World' glosses over class difference. What is largely noticeable is that for countries such as Zimbabwe, roles of chieftdomship are largely assigned for males. The levels of political empowerment and feminist struggles are never equal or uniform even in a country as Zimbabwe.

It is also important to note that while Mayer (1999) discusses the portrayal of women in the media as a pointer to the marginalisation of women the main thrust of the present study is to examine ways in which the Zimbabwean print media constructs and projects images of female politicians. Further, while Mayer's research is appropriate and can be relied on as a point of departure for the analysis of gender inequality, it seems to argue that women have accepted their fate. This present research notes that women have not accepted their subordination and seemingly ill-fated positions. Feminist writers portrayed women as also capable of taking on powerful initiatives to better their lot and that of humanity.

In the article, "The discursive construction of women politicians in the European press", Iñaki Garcia-Blanco & Karin Wahl-Jorgensen (2012) discuss the representation of female politicians in the European press. They focus on the representation of female politicians from Spain in the widely read newspapers from, Italy, UK, Spain and France. The article employs both the qualitative and quantitative methods in the analysis of the selected newspaper articles. Garcia-Blanco and Wahl-Jorgensen (2012) specifically compare how Spanish female politicians were framed in main newspapers of the four selected European countries mentioned above in order to assess the different traditions and attitudes towards female politicians. They examined articles in three newspapers with a reference to "female quotas, parity and female presence in the highest government offices" (Garcia-Blanco & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2012). They made use of content analysis to come up with their results.

The countries were chosen because of their geographical and cultural proximity to Spain and the perceived difference in the treatment of female politicians to Spain. In their literature review they cite a number of scholars who have contributed significantly to media coverage of female politicians. In summation, they point out some of the most prominent results pertaining the representation of female politicians. One of their most significant finding is that that female politicians are covered much less than their male counterparts. They also discovered that the media uses gendered stereotypes in their representation of female politicians. Ross (2002) argues that female politicians are viewed first as women and then as politicians.

Garcia-Blanco and Wahl-Jorgensen (2012:424) found that media plays a critical role in power relations "... contributing to disseminating, constructing, normalizing, and legitimating accepted definition of desirable attributes, roles and behavior". They also discuss evidence that point to the editorial processes of media through their construction of reality. One of their prominent findings is that the representation of gender is a result of circulating discourses in society and the media input.

Garcia-Blanco and Wahl-Jorgensen (2012) found that of all the four countries that were analysed Spain had the largest number of articles concerning female politicians (131). France had 8, Italy 13 and the UK 12. 65% of the articles analysed focused more on women's gender than their political experience. Of the four countries' analysed the Italian newspapers were the worst in the use of gendered discourses. They dwelt on the pregnancy of the Spanish Defense Minister as if to suggest that being a woman and worse still pregnant she could not properly execute her duties successfully. France newspapers welcomed and applauded the presence of the majority female politicians in the Spanish cabinet. The British and Spanish ministers had a range of views and perceptions that ranged from applauding the Spanish government's achievement for gender equality in their cabinet which was a first in Europe. Some of the newspapers however, focused on the physical appearances of the female politicians. One of the major and important factors Garcia-Blanco and Wahl-Jorgensen (2012) discuss is the power of the media to structure issues and shape public perceptions. They contend that, "In doing so, they contribute to the definition of issues of public interest within certain(preferred) terms, while rejecting primary definitions or other possible alternative framings". In many of the newspapers

analysed, female politicians were represented as a novel achievement. This label was particularly thrust on the defense minister who was the first female defense minister for a ministry that is traditionally considered crucial and masculine. Bibiana Aído (Minister for Equality) was unique for being the youngest minister in the Spanish cabinet.

Garcia-Blanco and Wahl-Jorgensen's (2012) other fundamental finding was the noticeable improvement in the representation of female politicians. Previous scholarly research on female politicians pointed to the media dwelling more on the physical appearances of female politicians. For their research only one newspaper in Spain made reference to physical appearances of female politicians. However this is not to say this aspect was entirely absent in all the analysed newspapers. In comparison to the newspapers from other countries the coverage of the female politicians' physical appearances was much more pronounced in the UK selected newspapers.

Through their analysis, they examined the double bind representation of motherhood vs motherhood in defense theme for Spanish politicians. Garcia-Blanco and Wahl-Jorgensen (2012) discovered that 75 out of 112 articles mentioned Chacon's pregnancy. Most of the articles analysed still assigned motherhood as the primary role of any woman regardless of her status. The Spanish minister of defense is the one that is largely exposed to a double bind by the selected newspapers. Her motherhood and professional credentials are consistently questioned in the newspapers. Some newspapers questioned how as a woman she was going to be successful in a previously masculine ministry. Her priorities as a mother also come under scrutiny in the media when it is perceived she endangered herself and the unborn child by visiting Spanish soldiers in Afghanistan in such a state.

Garcia-Blanco and Wahl-Jorgensen (2012) discovered that although there was evidence of improvement on gendered discourses in the media, there were residual tendencies to frame female politicians as inferior to their male counterparts. The increase in female politicians in the Spanish cabinet was generally framed by the majority of the selected newspapers as a media gimmick by Spain to attract positive media coverage internationally. These appointments of female politicians were dismissed as having been based gender rather than skill and capacity on the part of female politicians. The exercise was popularly referred to as "parity over capacity" (Garcia-Blanco and Wahl-Jorgensen,

2012:434). To substantiate their argument they argue that 27.2% of the representations framed the female politicians as Zapatero's "extensions" or appendages. Thus the female politicians were acknowledged as Zapatero's achievement even though they worked hard in campaigns to achieve their political goals. Other newspapers fed into the traditional trap by representing the female politicians' experiences and qualifications as justification of their existence in the media. Garcia-Blanco and Wahl-Jorgensen (2012:435) argue that for the society to acknowledge and respect female politicians they had to be "whiter- than-white". Female politicians were given an unnatural pressure to outperform their male counterparts to be viewed as successful. In their research, Garcia-Blanco and Wahl-Jorgensen, (2012 discovered that, "...national differences were more significant than the political leaning of newspapers in structuring the coverage of the issue, providing evidence of the culturally constructed nature of gender differences" (Garcia-Blanco & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2012:437). Their most significant finding concerning media improvement was the clear limited concern of the coverage of female politicians' physical appearances.

3.3 Representation of female politicians in Africa

A survey of scholarly literature on African media coverage of African female politicians revealed that not only has this area received little, if any attention but that the broader area of women and the media in Africa has hardly received any academic attention. Not much literature has been found on the media and female politicians and only one scholarly article on women and the media has been found. There is, however, a significant amount of non-academic literature on women and the media in Africa. This includes work by various NGOs and media opinion pieces on the subject. The existence of this literature shows that African societies at large are generally interested in the political empowerment of women. Civic society has also played a leading role in setting the agenda for the reduction of bias in media coverage of women in general. The single scholarly article on women and the media is now reviewed.

In an article titled "Missing links: African media studies and feminist concerns" (2009), Ghanaian feminist scholar Audrey Gadzekpo discusses the state of the African media in terms of its role in advancing the African feminist agenda. This article gives an overview of trends in media coverage of women in Africa. It notes that the general condition of African

women and media coverage of women in particular have improved since the 1980s. A number of factors are seen as having contributed to this improvement. First is general re-democratisation after decades of post-independence dictatorships. Democracy is seen as inherently linked with the necessary socio-cultural conditions, such as free speech and liberal thinking which are needed to foster change in gender relationships. In particular, democracy means the opening up of the information sector to a variety of players with a variety of worldviews and thinking about gender.

A major challenge of Gadzekpo (2009) is the scope of the object of her study: Africa is mostly discussed as a homogeneous entity with a homogeneous set of challenges as far as media and gender issues are concerned, all of which can have a homogeneous set of solutions. A more accurate picture, of course, is that Africa is the world's largest continent with 53 different countries, and many thousands of different races, ethnic groups, languages, cultures, religions, histories, worldviews, as well as political ideologies and regimes. All these variables influence societal attitudes towards female politicians and media coverage of female politicians.

Gadzekpo (2009) believes the African media needs to be reappraised in the context of the continent's significant strides political and economic development to see if it has also evolved in line with increased liberalization in those two domains. She also believes that African feminists in general and Africanist feminists in particular are able to fill any gaps she may identify in the area of media coverage of women in a more democratized Africa. Her article therefore consists of an assessment of the state of media coverage of women in Africa and a list of recommendations of gaps or deficiencies and what needs to be done by feminist scholars and activists to rectify them. She argues that 'redemocratisation' enabled an increase in advocacy and academic research on African media in relation to politics and governance in the 1980s and 1990s. She cites the examples of the work of such NGOs as the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) and the Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA). She also believes that the opening up of African societies during this period energised African feminist scholars who began to contribute more energetically to academic research on women and the media in their countries. She notes three major socio-cultural and economic changes she says took place during the period she examines:

- a shift from limited state-controlled and dominated media to “a liberalized, pluralistic media environment of privately owned newspapers and magazines as well as radio and television stations” (Gadzekpo 2009:71).
- an advertising boom accompanied by a burgeoning public relations sector with the participation of global partners; and
- de-regulation of the telecommunications sector, leading, for instance, to a massive boom in the use of mobile telephone by Africans so that many more Africans had access to telecommunication technology during that period than during the whole of the previous century.

Gadzekpo then enumerates developments on the global scale in the area of the media and women. She highlights the work of major international organisations, such as first the United Nations World Conference on Women, which took place in Mexico City in 1975. This conference was the first major event to identify the media as ‘a site for action’ for gender activists. Another major gender milestone that she cites is the 1995 fourth United Nations World Conference on Women held in Beijing. Concerning the media, this conference highlighted the following issues:

- Poor status of women in decision-making positions in the media;
- Continued stereotypical media portrayal of women and the increase in violent and pornographic images of women;
- Lack of gender sensitivity in media policies and programmes;
- Poor access of women to media and ICTs;
- Poor participation of women in media and ICTs;
- Increased promotion of consumerism and its attendant drive towards the objectification of women (Gadzekpo 2009:72).

Such contextualization of a discussion of African challenges in the area of media and gender correctly acknowledges the fact that Africa belongs to the global family and is consistent with Gadzekpo’s (2009) view that the condition of women and their coverage by the media had begun improving in the period she examined due to the espousal of such global ideologies as democracy and human rights. Gadzekpo (2009) then proceeds to identify concerns in the area of media and gender that are more specific to the African

continent. She characterises the state of the relationship between the media and women in the pre-‘redemocratisation’ era in Africa as follows:

Under the old political order, journalists were co-opted, intimidated, harassed and the media was generally considered an inhospitable site for female employees as well as gender activism. Editors and journalists who did not toe the government line were often jailed or hounded into exile and a caged media reported mostly government news and pronouncements. In terms of women’s issues, it was often the first ladies’ projects and pronouncements that got reported, with few or no contending perspectives either from the individual women who may have been the subjects of the news, or from gender groups, activists or scholars (Gadzekpo 2009:73).

Women were thus excluded from African media organisations as employees and owners, received scant media coverage, and the little coverage they got depicted their socio-cultural relevance as limited to non-‘masculine’ issues, such as charity. Gadzekpo (2009), however, found that there was marked improvement in the relationship between the media and African women since the 1980s and 1990s. One major factor that contributed to this improvement was the entry of more women into African media. She finds a direct correlation between the emergence of more women journalists and more empowering coverage of women, including in traditional male preserves such as politics, to the increase in the number of women journalists covering those areas.

Gadzekpo (2009) concludes her discussion by making the following recommendations for further improvement in the area of women and gender:

- Cooperation between gender and women’s empowerment, on one hand, and feminist academics so as to benefit from the resulting blend of experience and ability to structure and conduct research;
- Confrontation of institutional constraints, leading to the incorporation of gender into the curricula and research agendas of educational institutions and tertiary departments of media mass communication;
- Inclusion of gender panels on academic conferences convened by academic media associations such as the African Council for Communication Education (ACCE) as

well as inclusion of special gender panels or sections in international media associations, such as the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR).

Gadzekpo (2009) has provided a useful general overview of the state of the question of African women and the media that provides both optimism to activists and a challenge to them and feminist academics to work even harder to achieve the goals set by the various feminists schools of thought active on the African continent. A prominent feature by Gadzekpo is the discourse of advocacy that permeates, from a survey of the situation to the elaboration of a feminist agenda for the democratization of the media through a review of feminist movement work to emancipate women from the bondage of patriarchal value systems. The passion and commitment of the author to the cause of women are palpable and indeed desirable in an area which plays a significant role in deciding the fate of half of the continent's people. However, Gadzekpo's (2009) passion for the feminist cause means that her article blends elements of feminist activist and feminist academic discourses to an extent that risks compromising the academic quality of her work. Consequently, the agenda she sets for feminists scholars working on media coverage of African women is almost predictable as it resonates well with the concerns of the feminist organizations and conferences she describes. A lesson learnt here is that that feminist scholars need to prioritise academic rigour in order to ensure methodological rigour and objectivity, basic conditions for research that produces valid findings apt to lay a strong foundation for the advancement not of the feminist agenda, but of the quality of life and access to opportunities, including in politics, of African women in general.

Okwemba (2013) in "The African woman and child feature service" report also makes an analysis of the representation of women in Kenya. The major point is that female politicians in Kenya are marginalised by the media through omission. The report contends that the absence of Kenyan women's voices has cost them politically. According to the Okwemba (2013:10),

In the political sector, anecdotal evidence has shown that this exclusion has contributed to low visibility and performance of women vying for political positions. Although there has been an outcry over this, editors and journalists have always insisted they give balanced coverage to both genders. Some have challenged gender advocates to prove their claim of marginalization of women's voices.

The implication is that women keep trailing behind men because the media and society fail to take them seriously as politicians. The report points out that, although the Kenyan media is more than a century old, women and men are not uniformly represented. It reveals that gender stereotyping by the media continues to undermine the success of female politicians in Kenya through multiple ways. In Okwemba's analysis concerning the issue of the survivor ability between men and women the former were referred to as masculine and survivors in comparison to women. He argued that through these frames and interpretation women were more represented as victims than men. In essence women are represented as weaker.

The Kenyan media persistently confines female politicians to feminine issues. Important stories where it is established that women have made strides are hardly considered by the Kenyan media. On the contrary, the media focuses on inabilities and limitations of women much more than on their success. Further, the report notes a disturbing trend in Kenya where more women train to be journalists but never make it to managerial positions in the newsroom. The assumption is that entrenched stereotypical images are difficult to remove if men continue to dominate editorial positions in the newsroom. There is a notable persistence on developing cultural values that limit the involvement of women in the public sphere, such as politics. Campaigns for change in the media have been championed by various non-governmental and civic organisations in Kenya, such as the Kenya Education Writers' Association (KEWA), Media Owners Association (MOA), the Kenya Professional Journalists' Association, the Editors Guild, African Women and Child Feature Service (AWC), the Association of Media Women in Kenya (AMWIK), and the Network for the Defence of Independent Media in Africa (NDIMA). These organisations have assisted journalists through training and advocacy.

The above-mentioned organisations have transformed women through empowering them. For the purposes of this study, radio, TV and newspapers were monitored for over 15 days (Okwemba 2013). The research involved interviews with journalists, ordinary people and analysed news pieces from different types of media. In his report Okwemba (2013:13) argues that:

Domestic politics took the bulk of the local media coverage at 52 per cent, followed by political power and decision making at 24 per cent, while issues of security and defense and international politics command nine per cent and eight per cent coverage respectively. Other topical news covered in the Kenyan media are Government, social and legal, land, education, employment, infrastructure, crime and violence, celebrity, arts and media, economy, science, and health.

The report used a large spectrum to analyse the results. It made use of varying categories to come up with the conclusions. The study did a quantitative analysis content analysis of newspapers, radio and television over 15 days. The research intended to analyse the representation of voices for men and women in the above categories of media. The findings were largely negative with a large percentage (52%) of the media analysed restricting and confining women to domestic or private spaces. There was hardly any balance in the representation between the two sexes as only 18% of political views concerned women against the 74% for males. The assumption is that public spheres are largely meant for the male politicians. Confidence in males by the media is evident through the citations in the media. Male voices were more sought after than those of women. The trend that was discovered in other media were not different with international news as men also dominated the media stories. The suggestion given to explain the evidence and finding was that the results are consistent with the dominance of men in influential posts who are often treated as voices of authority. Another hypothesis was that the Kenyan journalists do not value or consider women in power as valid or good enough sources of news in sought after stories. This preference of males as sources of news was also noticeable even in circumstances where the choice of source was at the journalist's discretion.

These biases and stereotypical images perpetually marginalise women in modern societies. Even in times when the choice of source lay with the journalist more often than not a male voice was picked. Because of the greater prevalence of male voices in the media, it means that men's experiences are more articulated than those of women. The implication is that the female politicians' experiences remain unheard while those of men are imposed on societies. The experts cited by all the analysed media were largely male. In terms of opinion-shaping, the perceptions that are advanced favour men while disadvantaging women. This treatment of women by media suggests there are very few

female leaders and experts in Kenya. Dominance of the media by male journalists means they participated in shaping political news much more than their female counterparts. Female journalists were relegated more to what is often termed softer news in the media. This could also have been a determining factor where male journalists preferred to get political news from male sources.

In terms of roles within the Kenyan media, there is a common trend that continues to persist in the country mostly to the disadvantage of women. For a female journalist to succeed she has to have certain physical traits, particularly being young and attractive. Regardless of their professional qualifications or experience, the careers of female journalists are generally presumed over by the time they are 40 years old. Female journalists are encouraged or pressured to maintain their femininity. This is because the naturalised roles of female journalists are often in news anchoring and some positions that emphasise sexual appeal. While men are not necessarily the majority in the Kenyan population and within the media fraternity, they statistically dominate the most prominent positions in the field. Determination of what becomes news is by men as they are mostly the ones who gather news while women are in most instances just presenters. This trend has hindered the progress of women in the media. Other roles that were popular with women are copy editors and designers while men were the editors and reporters. As a result,

Another finding is that the high number of females in the newsrooms does not translate into better or more coverage of females by the media. With male reporters' stories exceeding those by their female counterparts, it would seem the male journalists covered more male news sources and actors (Okwemba 2013:18).

When they did cover female politicians, their focus was predominantly on their familial relationships than their accomplishments or achievements as politicians. This suggested that even though women can be politicians their acknowledged role falls within the domestic sphere, particularly rearing and nurturing children. On another note, women are generally expected to be dependent on men for them to be complete. Okwemba (2013:23) argues that media:

... entrenches the misconceptions that women need male patronage to succeed in politics, and that only married women, or women who can demonstrate a relationship with men are acceptable in political positions.

Kenyan media representation of women affects both women of all walks of life. Women confined to the domestic space are often viewed as inadequate and lacking in ambition while professional and ambitious women are castigated as they act out of gender. As a result, the media places women in a catch 22 situation in which whatever they choose to be they are doomed. Though the Kenyan media could have prioritised fighting against stereotypes in order to promote women, only 6 % of the analysed stories challenged stereotypes that disadvantage women. Only 6% of the stories also completely focused on and prioritised female politicians while much of the attention was given to men or mentioned women's issues in passing. From the survey, women were hardly prioritised in the Kenyan media as only 4% of the stories championed gender equality issues or gender rights. Ultimately, the Kenyan media continues to perpetuate traditional stereotypes of women that to disadvantage them within politics.

3.4 Representation of female politicians in Zimbabwe

There is a dearth of scholarly literature on female politicians and the media in Zimbabwe. This is quite worrying given that general societal interest in the coverage of women by the Zimbabwean media is quite high as shown in self-reflexive analyses by the media on the topic as well as the huge interest by NGOs on the subject. This can be confirmed by a Google search of the topic on the internet. More remarkable is the lack of attention paid to the category of female politicians, not only by scholars, but by society in general. Examples of NGO sector reports on topics related to that of the present study include that of Tsitsi Matekaire of the Women in Politics Support Unit titled "Analysis of coverage of women politicians by the print media in Zimbabwe" and "Gender Responsiveness of Policies and News: Sourcing Trends in Zimbabwe's Media Houses: A Situational Assessment of Gender Policy Availability, and Gender Sensitivity in the Media's Selection of News Sources" by the Federation of Africa Media Women Zimbabwe. The academic fields concerning women and media have been vastly explored, but separately from each other. Some of the scholars that have done important research in either politics and media but not necessarily about female politicians in the media include Chogugudza's (2010)

“Gender and war: Zimbabwean women and the liberation struggle”, Essof’s (2013) “The Zimbabwean women’s movement 1995-2000”, Gandari’s (2010) “An examination of how organisational policy and news professionalism are negotiated in a newsroom: a case study of Zimbabwe’s *Financial Gazette*”, Mabweazara’s (2011) “News making practices and professionalism in the Zimbabwean press”, Mano’s (2005), “Press freedom, professionalism and proprietorship: behind the Zimbabwean media divide”, and Chari’s (2008) “Representation of women in male-produced ‘urban grooves’ music in Zimbabwe”.

In the article, “Rethinking gender mainstreaming in the media: lessons from Zimbabwe media coverage of the first six months of the Government of National Unity”, Mwarire (2009) addresses the way gender issues were downplayed in the media during the implementation of the Government of Unity in Zimbabwe. He analysed the marginalization of gender issues in the period in question. He examines stories in *The Sunday Mail*, *The Standard*, *The Financial Gazette* and *The Independent*. His main aim was to examine news stories covering the allocation ministerial posts in the government of national unity (GNU). Mwarire’s study (2009) employed both the quantitative and quantitative research methods. He analysed 306 newspaper articles taken from four Zimbabwean weekly newspapers that publish in the English language. The articles were from the period of 13 February to the 31st of August 2009. He found that of the 381 voices cited in the 306 articles 342 were male, which translated to 89%, women’s voices were only 27 which was only 7%.The remaining 12 voices which were 4% could not be established. Mwarire (2009) also interviewed journalists who wrote articles on the allocation of cabinet posts during the GNU. He focused on the representation of female voices in the print media in *The Sunday Mail*, *The Standard*, *The Financial Gazette* and *The Independent*. This present study examines the representation of female politicians in *Kwayedza*, *Financial Gazette* and *The Standard*.

Mwarire (2009) contends that, the concept of professionalism in the media has come to mean male patriarchal thinking whereas voices of women are generally associated with subjectivity. For instance, despite violations of the provisions in the global political agreement such as the allocation of seats to female candidates the media remained silent about the situation. Of the 36 posts in the cabinet, only 5 were allocated to women. Mwarire (2009) argues that the media tended to focus and give attention to major parties

and their leaders that are exclusively male during the period under study. He also criticizes this overt marginalization of female politicians by the papers detrimental to the growth and print media market. Mwarire (2009) found that newspapers would rather associate female politicians with topics of a social nature rather than with hardcore political issues.

Mwarire (2009) notes that even the posts that were allocated to women from the three parties were those that are traditionally assigned to female politicians in Zimbabwe. This issue though crucial is often downplayed by the media, a space he feels could point to these obvious disparities. In essence, males largely continued to determine the pace and way forward in Zimbabwean politics and the media, equally male dominated remained silent about it. Thus, Mwarire (2009) notes that the way female politicians are represented is largely determined by the patriarchal situation in both the Zimbabwean society and the media. The news values and the media house cultures have been used to structurally exclude women and sometimes marginalise them through their representations. Mwarire (2009) describes it as the “the masculine nature of journalism that expresses itself”. According to Mwarire (2009:1),

While the appointment of cabinet posts forms the focal point of this analysis, the other themes seek to highlight the issues that journalists chose to write on without incorporating gender into their pieces. This paper makes the argument that the nature of news, the way how journalists determine what is newsworthy, is heavily reliant on an approach that is masculine and that it is this androcentric view of news that needs deconstruction if ever media products are to be gendered.

Mwarire (2009) argues that female politicians were not regarded as important news by the media during the GNU period. Instead, the media gave media coverage to the top male politicians within the GNU. Mwarire (2009) argues that just like in many societies in the world female politicians are more sidelined than their male counterparts. He also examines input by earlier scholars who argue that the noticeable gender disparities are not deliberate. Their argument is that if women do not make news they cannot be imposed on the media on the basis of gender. According to Gallagher (1989) cited in Mwarire (2009), “To think ‘professionally’ is, evidently, not compatible with thinking as a ‘woman. ‘Commonly regarded almost as a synonym for objectivity, the concept of professionalism has come to hide its value-based roots” (Mwarire 2009:2). However, Mwarire (2009) dismisses these claims and argues that the same organizations that justify the exclusion of

women on the notion of objectivity are not worried about the imbalances between men and women coverage of news and the dominance of men in newsrooms. To the critic it is an unacceptable excuse by journalists to evade the obvious disparities in the news coverage in order to maintain the positions of women in these societies. According to Mwarire (2009:2),

[...] 'objectivity', 'value-freeness' and 'neutrality' are off- springs of the hegemony of masculine modes of thinking and that the traditional science approach to knowledge acquisition they envisage, "not only ignores women's themes and experiences, it also denies the validity of women's ways of knowing.

Mwarire (2009) however notes that male politicians were adequately covered in the media. He notes that the male political leaders of the three parties dominated the news until the Government of National Unity (GNU) was put in place. This comparison served to clearly show that the media plays a big role in the marginalization of women.

Through his interviews with journalist Mwarire (2009) found that objectivity and balance is sacrificed for stories that sell newspapers. The media personnel interviewed argued that what sold newspapers during the GNU period was the names of Tsvangirai and Robert Mugabe and no one else. Thus, news about the two political leaders were prioritized. Despite the arguments that were put forward for the exclusion of female politicians by these journalists, Mwarire (2009) felt that the media could do much more to facilitate the visibility of women. He argues that,

It is ironic that while most news organisations have been justifying the exclusion of women from news discourse on account that their practices rest on notions of 'balance' and 'objectivity', "the news organisations have never claimed to balance the concerns of women against those of men, nor maintain balance between a male and female point of view" (Mwarire, 2009:8)

Mwarire (2009) thus argued that the media in Zimbabwe is still patriarchal dominated and women are generally marginalized by omission. Just like the manifestations in the GNU, the media like the political field is still largely dominated by men. While Mwarire's (2009)

study focuses on the coverage of female politicians in the media in the GNU the present study examines the representation of female politicians for nearly a decade from 2000 to 2008. The study also focuses on the three weekly newspapers in Zimbabwe.

In the article, “Engendering politics and parliamentary representation in Zimbabwe”, Dube (2013) explores the state of women’s representation in Zimbabwean politics. He focuses on the lower house of parliament of Zimbabwe. He purposely excludes the senate because it has not consistently existed since 1980. Dube (2013) contends that underrepresentation of women in politics continues to exist despite the fact that the country has ratified a number of regional and international protocols that push for women empowerment and gender equality in political representation. Some of these regional protocols include the SADC Gender and Development Declaration, which envisioned 50% women representation in Parliament by 2015, (Dube 2013). On the international level, like many United Nations member countries, Zimbabwe is guided by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), one of which was to increase the number of women in their local parliaments (UNDP, 2010). Some of the protocols discussed by Dube (2013) are the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR), the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BDPA) among others.

The author posits that, while Zimbabwean women constitute 52% of the total population, they are under-represented in politics. However, the weakness of his research is that in his article does not offer quantitative data to show the differences. He notes that this marginalisation of women is consistent the world over. This is despite the empirically proven fact that women are effective politicians (individuals professionally involved in politics, in particular elected office-bearers or those seeking election to office) because of their potential to impact political landscapes. The scenario of Zimbabwe also mirrors that of the world in terms of numbers and political representation. For instance, by 2011, nine (9) countries in the world did not have female parliamentarians at all. Dube (2013) argues that the current gender policy is specifically aimed at addressing the gender disparities in Zimbabwean politics.

Dube (2013) emphasises that the underrepresentation of female politicians should not be seen as suggesting lack of interest in politics by Zimbabwean women. To prove that women are indeed interested in politics, he points to the existence of an influential women's wing ('league') in each of Zimbabwe's political parties as well as the well-documented participation of women in the country's liberation struggle. He, however, contends that, patriarchal forces have prevented the full representation of women in parliament and government even though Zimbabwe is a democratic country. He believes the solution to the problem is the development of a culture of 'inclusion', through which all historically disadvantaged groups, such as ethnic minorities, are deliberately accorded representation in national bodies and activities. Dube (2013:201) argues that,

...genuine democracy cannot exist without the equal participation of men and women in politics... Democracy in its true sense means that a political system should have a fair and reflective system of representation in politics and decision making for the various segments of its population.

He further argues that successful democracies have thrived by involving different races, ethnicities and other minorities in politics. This is indicative of deliberate efforts to change the political environment. However, many nations have not felt the need to have women included in leadership positions as men, who constitute a large section of the politicians in many countries have not considered the inclusion of women pertinent or crucial. Officially, however, the current Zimbabwean government continues to be committed to move patriarchal domination in parliament which disadvantages the position of women in Zimbabwe in terms of political representation.

Dube (2013) argues that the inclusion of women in parliament has advantages for the nation, besides the visibility and empowerment of the women themselves. He claims that research has shown that women are more uniting and democratic than men who often display authoritarian tendencies. Further, the increase in representation of women in leadership positions would in turn encourage other women to run for political positions. Quoting Nzomo (1994), Dube posits that political parties that have won elections in transition governments in Africa have focused on and prioritised women's concerns. He cites the case of Rwanda, which boasts of the highest number of female politicians in Africa, resulting in a significant increase in pro-women policies in the country. Though

changes in women's welfare had not yet been registered, the policy changes targeted tangible benefits for women in Rwanda. Comparatively, though Zimbabwe has registered an increase in the number of female legislators, the representation of women in parliament has been very slow since independence (Dube 2013).

Dube (2013) argues that, whereas there has been a steady increase in the number of female politicians worldwide, there has been limited progress in women's empowerment. Nevertheless, he predicts that more women-tolerant and women-friendly governments are likely to emerge from ongoing political crises across Africa. This is precisely because it is easier to effect changes through a new constitution than an old one. Gender equality regulations are thus enacted in the transition periods of the conflicts. While this has worked for other countries, in Zimbabwe this opportunity could have been realised during the government of unity transition. This continually disadvantages women. Dube (2013) however, notes the peculiarity of such cases as the Zimbabwe's Government of National Unity (GNU) period from 2008 to 2013. In his opinion, the challenge then was that the Zimbabwean GNU was dominated by patriarchal forces from the three political parties that formed it. Women's voices were strategically silenced in order to exclude them. As result, the marginalisation of women was maintained and sustained in the GNU period and the aftermath. However, a more compelling argument consistent with Dube's (2013) theory is that the GNU was not underpinned by a new constitution whose production was part of the GNU's mandate. This was captured by Kwinjeh (2010:29) who argued that,

The co-chairpersons of the Constitution Parliamentary Committee (COPAC) are all male representatives of the three parties, Paul Mangwana (ZANU-PF), Douglas Mwonzora (MDC-T) and Edward Mkhosi (MDC). Even the chairpersons of the thematic committees and their deputies are predominantly male; of the seven chairs from ZANU-PF, only one is a woman, the MDC-T seconded three women out of seven chairpersons, while the MDC's two chairpersons are men.

Kwinjeh (2010) suggests that the dominant male players did not feel pressured to include women. In his (2013) historical analysis, Dube contends that there was no progress in the empowerment of women in politics between 1995 and 2008 in Zimbabwe. This is in contrast with many countries internationally who have witnessed a steady increase in female politicians.

The quota system, however, has challenges that are evident as the choices of women that are imposed are complicit to the patriarchal discourses. Sometimes women that make their way to politics fail to challenge the dominant masculine politics and are often confined to less powerful welfarist ministries and other positions that have little influence on critical areas such as the economy and defence:

Most women who make it into parliament and are selected for ministerial positions usually hold less powerful positions associated with femininity. Most of the women become appointed as ministers usually occupy the port-folio 'social affairs', which is a stereotype in itself (Dube, 2013:205).

In 2013, Zimbabwe remained one of the countries that was far from fulfilling the requirement of having more women in parliament. The highest in Africa was Rwanda which had 56.30% women in parliament while Zimbabwe lagged behind at 15%.

Dube (2013) points to stereotypes as one of the major causes of repression and oppression and marginalisation of women. These challenges, often coupled by patriarchy have subjectified women in most countries of the world. The gendered divisions between the private and public spheres have seen women being encouraged to embrace the domestic or private space while men occupy the public spaces. These ideologies filter out women that aspire to be politicians. Historically, women have not been able to control the economical space which gives them a challenge when they want raise funds for political and electoral campaigns. The assumption is that if more women become parliamentarians the perception that they belong to the domestic sphere will change and encourage other women to take part in politics. Dube (2013:206) thus argues that policies must be made that seek to strike a balance between the domestic and public lives of women. He argues that:

It is imperative for all policies to recognise women's multiple roles with respect to production and reproduction as they impact on their capacity to participate effectively in national development (Dube, 2013: 206).

Another stumbling block that restricts women is the socio-cultural situation in many African countries (Dube, 2013). In most African countries, girl-children are socialised into gendered roles to which they are expected to adhere as adults. Dube (2013:20) cites Mubhawu, a Zimbabwean male MP, who spoke against the gender parity aspect of the domestic violence bill saying,

It is against God's principles for men and women to be equal... I stand here representing God Almighty. Women are not equal to men. It is a dangerous Bill and let it be known in Zimbabwe that the right, privilege and status of men is gone. I stand here alone and say this bill should not be passed in this House. It is a diabolic Bill. Our powers are being usurped in daylight in this House.

Mubhawu's tirade demonstrates the general patriarchal sentiments of African men. In many instances, women have had to fight men for them to occupy political and leadership positions. In most instances, gendered language is often used to discourage women from even competing in electoral times (Gaidzanwa 2004). Dube (2013) thus argues that the political field is structured in a way that discourages women's participation. For instance, women are often intimidated by waves of violence which often erupt in electoral periods.

According to Dube (2013), one of the major challenges that have slackened women's empowerment is little education. While many women have acquired the minimum primary education, the economic situation has prevented them from attaining tertiary education. This is exacerbated by the fact that the local African culture tends to discriminate against the female child in favour of male children. As a result, the economic and the socio cultural aspects of Zimbabwean society reduce women's chances of competing equally with their male counterparts for political positions. Dube (2013) thus concludes that this has contributed in Zimbabwe's retardation concerning women empowerment politically. This has been achieved in selected African countries and Nordic countries because of the quota systems. His major conclusion and assumption is that empowerment of women in politics is not coincidental but a product of hard work by the concerned governments.

Another stumbling block is the loosely crafted policies concerning women. The Zimbabwean constitution has no clear or specific section that ensures the enactment of the quota system which promotes affirmative action in favour of women. Dube (2013) is,

however, cautious about the quota system as an isolated panacea. He contends that, while it increases the number of women in parliament, it does not necessarily translate to women empowerment. He argues that oppression and marginalisation can be eradicated by a combination of the following measures: the gender equality Act in the constitution, reforming electoral systems, and funding women to fully participate in elections.

In the article, "Analysis of coverage of women politicians by the print media in Zimbabwe". Matekaire (2003) assesses the representation of female politicians in Zimbabwe in 2002. She sought to analyse the way female politicians were represented in selected Zimbabwean newspapers and the implications of such representation. The research examined Zimbabwe's daily and weekly newspapers, namely *The Herald*, the *Daily News*, the *Daily Mirror*, *The Sunday Mail*, *The Weekly Standard*, *The Independent*, the *Financial Gazette*, and the *Weekly Tribune*. Her sample comprised of 20 articles published over a period of four (4) months. She used the triangulation method to analyse the newspapers and infer statistical representation of female politicians in the newspapers.

Matekaire (2003:1) contends that, besides shaping public opinion, the media also reflects the values of the society: "The media is a chronicler of events, an informer, an educator, a transformative space and a tool to change society. It has the capacity to make a very positive contribution towards social change". She discusses the necessity for female politicians to be part of the leadership structure for proper representation within governments. She further discusses the essentiality and justification of female political representation as women constitute 52% of the Zimbabwean population.

In her findings, Matekaire (2003:2) discovers that during the period under study the most covered politician was Oppah Muchinguri, the only female governor during the period under study. Of the articles published during the period covered by her study, 33% concerned Muchinguri. The representation of female government ministers was placed at the second position. From the analysis, it was discovered that Flora Bhuka was also one of the most covered politicians and Matekaire suggests that this may have been influenced by her position as the Minister of State for the Land Reform Programme. She suggests that this may have been caused by the historic controversial land reform which was one of the most topical issues during the period under study. Of all the female politicians and

levels analysed in this research Matekaire (2003) discovered that the least covered female politicians in comparison to all the categories analysed were local councillors who seemed to be totally disregarded by the media. The implication is that males in all categories were well represented in the newspapers analysed.

The categories of stories that were analysed were varied. These included coverage in terms of their political duties, constituency work, parliamentary debates, personal lives and in relation to their political parties (Matekare 2003:2). A large proportion of the stories was related to the women's positions and operations as politicians. From Matekaire's findings, all the explored papers marginalised female politicians through omission. This finding was justified by the paucity of stories that the researcher found. Judging from that result, Matekaire (2003) argues that women and their issues are generally trivialised by the media and Zimbabwean society in general. The only weakness is that Matekaire (2003) does not furnish us with information that suggests men were adequately represented in the outlined newspapers. This underrepresentation of women is exacerbated by the fact that even in instances where women become news the stories mostly concern their male political counterparts. An example cited by Matekaire was that of the female Deputy Speaker of Parliament and is titled: "*The Deputy Speaker's reading out of a ruling that the opposition chief whip in Parliament had been found in contempt of Parliament*" (Daily News, 11 October).

While the story's headline concerns the female Deputy Speaker, the bulk of the news story is concerned with the male chief whip and his fate. The story just makes a passing reference to the female deputy speaker while the male chief whip dominates the story. The research discovered that prominent female minister for Small and Medium Enterprises Sithembiso Nyoni never made news in the four month period under study. This suggested that the media was writing out and/or trivialising female politicians so that they are regarded as not newsworthy. Matekaire (2003) discovered that, besides these female ministers' media predicament there is a general silence concerning women's voices in the media. Even prominent female politicians are marginalised and not considered newsworthy.

Matekaire (2003) found only one report covering women parliamentarians' contributions to debates in the house. It was on Trudy Stevenson's contribution on Cuban doctors and health sector reforms. The only encouraging and redeeming factor found by Matekaire (2003) was that the media acknowledged the capacity of women as politicians in the articles that were published. A number of articles described the women by their proper titles in their various duties even in stories that were not particularly about them. The author found this encouraging as it had potential to inspire potential female politicians to take up political posts. Despite these notable positive improvements, Matekaire (2003) argues there are still visible and subtle barriers that discourage female politicians. She notes that the major challenge is the oppression of female politicians through excluding them from the media. Continual selectivity through gate-keeping contributes to the exclusion of women in the media as media are still dominated by men. She notes that there were very few reports concerning female councillors despite the existence of a plethora of issues that were taking place in local councils. This may also have been because of a number of reasons such as the lack of media interest to council issues. According to Matekaire (2003:5),

The fact that there were only two reports that featured the work of women councillors is an indication that women councillors are not considered to be at the centre of national debates. This is unlike the numerous stories that were published on the conflicts between the City of Harare as a council and the Minister of Local Government and general problems surrounding both urban and rural councils.

What is significant from the quote is the fact that the society witnessed a number of issues that could have made news through the female councillors which was disregarded. Matekaire (2003) thus argues that the media should play a significant role in the coverage of female politicians by highlighting their successes and activities to show the female politicians' relevance. She discusses some of the distinct differences and challenges between men and women's representation by the media during parliamentary elections. Matekaire (2003) contends that that women parliamentarians face harassment and violence which is not reported by the media or tackled by the government. Her argument is that the media should play its part by exposing the perpetrators and bringing them to book to encourage more women to join politics. One of the most notable cases she cites concerns the then MP for Mhondoro, Hilda Mafudze:

Hilda Mafudze, MP for Mhondoro subjected to violent treatment, Daily News, 16 September. The report alleged that Hilda Mafudze had been subjected to violent treatment by a group of people from one of the political parties at the nomination court in Chegutu during the run up to the rural district council elections. She was reported as saying she had to lock herself in her vehicle and that her detention had led to members of her party failing to register for the elections.

The statement above generally indicates the treatment of women politicians which can easily discourage aspiring female politicians. What is significant to note is the fact that the perpetrators are not really punished for the violence and humiliation they cause to the female politicians. Matekaire (2003) also adds that in worse scenarios the media sets women against each other or develop the assumption that women are each other's enemies which is unfounded. She cites a story featured in the Daily News:

Governor allegedly chases Mutasa MP from function. Daily News, 2 October.

The story reported that the Governor for Manicaland had chased away Evelyn Masaiti, the MP for Mutasa from a function that was held in the MP's constituency. The Governor denied the allegations stating that on that day she had been actually in Harare attending Parliament.

Thus, the media, because of its patriarchal nature pushes and maintains stereotypes about women that are sometimes culturally formulated to make female leaders look like inadequate leaders. However, Matekaire does not interrogate the dynamics of oppositional politics, probably because the treatment of the women she mentions like Masaiti may have been victims of political divisions between ZANU PF and MDC. The polarisation of politics caused a lot of abuses particularly for women. In Matekaire's view media has to be positive about female politicians for the electorate to take them seriously. The number of female politicians has to increase for them to be relevant because this will encourage aspiring politicians.

3.5 Conclusion

From the above reviewed literature there is a clear indication that while there may be some semblance of improvement in the way women are represented in the media in developed countries, more has to be done to encourage more female politicians to take up public office. Women continue to be disadvantaged through media coverage as they are represented in distortions, biases and stereotypes that disadvantage them as a group. Fundamental conclusions in the reviewed literature above were that the media continue to trivialise and marginalize women by focusing on their physical appearance more. It is against this background that this research will examine how female politicians are represented in the Zimbabwean media through the selected newspapers.

The chapter reviewed literature through three distinct sections: media representation of female politicians in the western world; media representation of female politicians in Africa and media representation of female politicians in Zimbabwe. A remarkable finding of this exercise has been that, whereas there is a significant amount of literature on media representation of female politicians in the western world, less scholarly research on the topic has been found on the other two other sub-topics, particularly the situation in Zimbabwe. Most of the literature reviewed in this section pointed to the marginalisation of female politicians by the media in different set ups. Most of the images represented in the examined media concerning female politicians disparage and marginalise them. In many instances, female politicians are regarded as a novel phenomenon that cannot succeed in political office, which is contrary to the way male politicians are represented. Most of the reviewed literature shows media confining female politicians and women in general to the domestic sphere. It, however, has shown that one way of changing the situation in favour of women and female politicians is to have more female journalists and other female stakeholders, such as owners and managers, in the various media houses.

The reviewed literature informs this study by giving a background to the frames to be used in the analysis of newspapers analysed in this study. In most scholarly articles that assessed the representation of female politicians female politicians were reminded by the media that their place was in the domestic sphere. In this present study, two frames (female politicians as inherently wives and mothers; female politicians as unfit and inadequate for public office; and double bind dilemmas) will be analysed. The examined

literature review informs this study as the wifeness and motherhood frame is linked to the domestication of women. The study analyses newspapers that confine or criticise women who try to move away from the socialised gender roles of wifeness and motherhood. Through the inadequate and unfit them this study will critically analyse in terms of success or failure.

Analysis of the images will suggest the assumptions concerning the capacity of female politicians in the public space. Almost every article that was examined in the literature review exposes the double dilemma of female politicians who venture into politics. The most common was the judgement of the levels of femininity or masculinity in female politicians. A female politician that is portrayed as a good mother by the media is criticised as inadequate in the public space as much of her time is spent in the domestic sphere. A female who is a good politician is criticised for neglecting her family and the domestic sphere which is her primary role. Most of the double bind dilemmas are meant to portray female politicians as failures as they represent a catch 22 situation in which whatever female politicians do, they will be viewed as failures for one reason or the other. This review also reveals how this study intends to add to the existing body of knowledge on the treatment of female politicians in the print media through its focus on the on the representation of women in three Zimbabwean newspapers: *Kwayedza*, the *Financial Gazette*, and *The Standard*. The reviewed literature suggests that findings on gender bias depend closely on the conceptualisation of various aspects of the research: context; object of the research; and research methodology. Thus, whereas the majority of the reviewed literature generally finds that media representation of female politicians is systematically biased against them, there is a strong argument that this may no longer be the case in Western societies.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

Blaikie (1993:7) contends that methodology is “the analysis of how research should or does proceed. Methodology is thus primarily concerned with the way theories are formulated and employed within research and the justifications of the choices by the researcher in relation to the problem and goals of the research”. It is generally a framework connected to assumptions and hypotheses that are instrumental in conducting research (O’Leary, 2004). The present study focuses on the analysis of the representation of female politicians in three weekly newspapers, namely *Kwayedza*, *Financial Gazette* and *The Standard*, from 2000 to 2008. This chapter outlines the research design, data gathering and data analysis methods used in this study. In terms of theoretical framework, the study draws upon concepts located within the agenda setting, frame, double bind and the representation theories, all of which are discussed in detail above. In terms of research methodology, the study adopts a qualitative approach, which is now outlined and discussed.

4.2 Qualitative Research

Qualitative research was the most appropriate research method for this study as it best answered the why and how questions within this study (Creswell, 2007). Qualitative methods have also been proved to be flexible and responsive to the social context of the researched. Weil and McGill (1989:18) states that, “qualitative research helps to expose a new language, the language of genuine lived experience”. It has the capacity to enrich and re-define theory as it goes beyond the reliance on numbers and practice as it does not only rely on numbers. Qualitative analysis has been tested as a research method that deeply explores and interprets issues (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Creswell, 2013; Arora and Stoner 2009). It is often particularly based on field observations analysed without statistics (Dooley, 1984). Muranda (2004:53) points out that, ‘qualitative research is research that cannot be meaningfully quantified. Such research involves small samples of respondents who provide descriptive information about their thoughts, feelings and beliefs

that cannot be easily projected onto the total population”. Content analysis often makes use of coding schemes that are directed from text data. It often makes use of key words which are interpreted in the analysis (Babbie, 1992).

Qualitative research is premised within the constructivist research epistemology which views the involvement of the researcher and researched as legitimate and useful, thus admitting subjectivity into scholarly research (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The etic (researcher’s perception or view) and emic (insider or researched’s view) components of qualitative research also make it subjective. It is also hardly static as it is generally about human beings in their environments and they are hardly static. Qualitative research encompasses several forms and components that include the narrative, interpretive, phenomenological, ethnographic, grounded, and case study approaches. Exploration and analysis of these methods enabled the researcher to choose the more appropriate method to use for this research. This research does not employ the narrative research as it is generally more appropriate in studies that have to do with profiling of the lives and experiences of people (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990; Bloomer and Volpe, 2008). Another component of qualitative research, the phenomenological method focuses on a subject’s reactionary tendencies, using oral and written descriptions given by the participant. According to Lester¹⁹, “epistemologically, phenomenological approaches are based in a paradigm of personal knowledge and subjectivity, and emphasise the importance of personal perspective and interpretation. As such they are powerful for understanding subjective experience, gaining insights into people’s motivations and actions, and cutting through the clutter of taken-for-granted assumptions and conventional wisdom” (Lester²⁰). This approach is much more applicable to individuals that chronicle their experiences which is not what this research is concerned about. Ethnography seeks to scientifically describe the customs of peoples and cultures. Ethnographic methodologies give prominence to the interaction between the researcher and participants. The present study examines published newspaper stories and therefore did not require any interaction

¹⁹ [https://www.rgs.org/NR/rdonlyres/ F50603E0-41AF-4B15-9C84BA7 E4DE8CB4F/0 / Seaweedphenomenologyresearch.pdf](https://www.rgs.org/NR/rdonlyres/F50603E0-41AF-4B15-9C84BA7E4DE8CB4F/0/Seaweedphenomenologyresearch.pdf)).

²⁰ [1https://www.rgs.org/NR/ rdonlyres/ F50603E0-41AF-4B15-9C84-BA7 E4DE8CB4F/0/Seaweed phenomenology research. pdf](https://www.rgs.org/NR/rdonlyres/F50603E0-41AF-4B15-9C84-BA7E4DE8CB4F/0/Seaweed%20phenomenology%20research.pdf))

between the researcher and the newspaper personnel or the subjects of their stories. Grounded theory was partially used to the extent that the researcher had to gather newspaper reports from newspaper archives located in various cities in Zimbabwe.

The interpretive approach was much more extensively used in this research than the other forms of qualitative research. Interpretivism entails the interpretation of elements of the study by researchers so that interpretivism integrates human interest to a study. Thus, “interpretive researchers assume that access to reality (given or socially constructed) is only through social constructions such as language, consciousness, shared meanings, and instruments” (Myers 2008²¹). The interpretations within interpretive research are peculiar to people’s life experiences within socio-cultural influences. This is because issues concerning people are unique and peculiar to certain set-ups and contexts, a realisation which dictates caution on the universalisation of human experiences and thus research findings. This is premised on “the assumption that reality is multiple, subjective and constructed”. (Ferranto 2013:11). The present study thus made use of content analysis located within the interpretive approach. The major strength of this approach is that it rejects the homogenisation of human beings and prefers their categorisation. As a result, Morrison (1989) critically stresses the polysemous way of reading messages. According to (Mason 2002: 3), “the method also takes into consideration the complexity and context of the issues under research. In other words, it does not universalise issues under research”.

Qualitative content analysis is now outlined and discussed as a form of interpretive research.

²¹ [http:// research-methodology .net/ research-philosophy/interpretivism/](http://research-methodology.net/research-philosophy/interpretivism/)

4.3 Qualitative Content analysis explored

This study employed qualitative content analysis, a method of research which facilitates the exploratory orientation which may not be found in the quantitative research approach. In particular, qualitative content analysis, enables in-depth exploration of newspaper reports (Patton, 2002). This research used qualitative content analysis to examine the representation of female politicians in the selected newspapers. Qualitative content analysis enables the objective and systematic, description of manifest content of texts (Berelson, 1952; Creswell, 2007; Uprety 2009). According to Palmquist, Busha and Harter (1980²²), “it is used to determine the presence of certain words, concepts, themes, phrases, characters or sentences within texts or sets of texts and to quantify this in an objective manner”. This method is particularly relevant in studies that deal with textual and discourse analysis, power related issues, authority and domination (Creswell, 2007). Holsti (1969:14) argues that content analysis is any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages. According to Ncube (2010), content analysis is a class of research methods at the intersection of the qualitative and quantitative traditions.

This study used a content analysis methodology that leans more on the qualitative approach as it is concerned with identifying socio-cultural subtleties and nuances peculiar to Zimbabwean society that can only be unearthed by going beyond the surface of the text to reveal deep lying meaning. Indeed, content analysis, particularly addresses the how and why questions within the research. The present research unpacks why and how Zimbabwean female politicians were represented in the three selected newspapers.

Content analysis makes use of emergent and priori coding as analytical categories that are used are based on both issues emerging from the analysis and also theories that are used in the research. Emergent coding is largely concerned with codes that come from the analysis of collected data, and is thus a deductive form of coding (Elo and Kyngäs 2008; Patton 2002). Priori coding, on the other hand, is concerned with codes that are often generated from the conceptual frameworks and then applied to texts. This is an inductive form of coding (Elo and Kyngäs 2008; Patton 2002). This present study uses both priori

²² :<https://www.ischool.utexas.edu/~palmquis/courses/content.html>

coding and emergent coding. It uses emergent coding to code newspaper stories in terms of the following frames: motherhood and wifehood, and inadequate and unfit (for political office).

Content analysis also admits the use of multiple data collection methods, investigators, sources and theories, such that the method may use triangulation. The present study made use of archival research (Erlandson et al 1993), which is outlined later in this chapter. According to Stemler (2001²³), content analysis

... is a systematic, replicable technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding. It has the attractive features of being unobtrusive, and being useful in dealing with large volumes of data. The technique of content analysis extends far beyond simple word frequency counts.

Qualitative content analysis is therefore generally conceptualised in two distinct ways. In the first approach, the researcher brings research questions that are expected to be addressed through analysis and meaning finding within the research. Through the second approach the researcher analyses the text in-order to discover it. The present research makes use of selected newspaper stories to generate coding necessary to analyse the said stories. It employs and blends both the inductive (piori) and deductive (emergent) methods of content analysis to unpack the representation of female politicians in the selected newspapers. This present study coded news stories in terms of frames or aspects. According to Patton (2002:110), “The core meanings found through content analysis are often called patterns or themes”.

Content analysis researches study a wide variety of texts such as interviews, transcripts and archival documents (Patton 2002). The present study will examine the use of recurring frames in three weekly newspapers namely *Kwayedza*, *The Standard* and the *Financial Gazette*. The major advantage of content analysis for this present research was the potential to generate frames and categories from recurring words or phrases that could produce patterns. The importance of themes and context within content analysis is emphasised by many scholars (Patton 2002, Neuman 1994). It is therefore of paramount

²³ <http://pareonline.net/getvn.asp?v=7.&n=17>

importance for the researcher to find recurring patterns and generate frames in the data that is being analysed. The use of recurring frames is premised in the emergent or inductive research methodology as defined above. This present research, however, makes use of both the inductive and deductive methods of research. Inductive research analysis is often used hand in hand with qualitative research while deductive research is much more applicable within researches that are statistically oriented. The two methods inter-link in that inductive research is the one that is used first through coding, which is much more in the categorisation stage and followed by the deductive stage which is significant in the analysis of the categories that were formulated along with deviating frames. The deductive stage is also the interpretation stage within the research. Strauss and Corbin (1998:28) point out that inductive content analysis is concerned with deriving concepts, their properties and dimensions from data while deductive content analysis focuses on hypothesising about relationships between concepts. According to Elo et al (2014), the two methods comprise three processes, which are preparation, organisation and reporting of results. They argue that,

The preparation phase consists of collecting suitable data for content analysis, making sense of the data, and selecting the unit of analysis. In the inductive approach, the organization phase includes open coding, creating categories, and abstraction... In deductive content analysis, the organization phase involves categorization matrix development, whereby all the data are reviewed for content and coded for correspondence to or exemplification of the identified categories (Elo et al, 2014: <http://sgo.sagepub.com/content/4/1/2158244014522633>).

The present research made use of the following frames: (1) female politicians as mothers and housewives; (2) female politicians as inadequate and unfit politicians. It also examined the use of double bind dilemma in the representation of female politicians in conjunction with the said frames.

Through qualitative content analysis of text in the form of newspaper stories, the present study discovers important aspects of culture such as their taboos and various norms and values. Excerpts of selected stories were used to demonstrate and illustrate the development of various constructs of female politicians through the use of the frames identified above. This increased the reliability, validity and trustworthiness of the research.

It also gives prominence to evidence from the data and reduces any inclination on the part of the researcher to resort to pre-conceived ideas, biases and ulterior motives with regards to the object of the study. The excerpts of the original data are a constant interlink between that data and the findings of the study. The research also made use of pictorial images as texts in some of the stories that were analysed. This is because, on the one hand, dependability of content analysis as a method is determined by the amount and richness of the available data to be analysed and on the other hand, newspaper pictures are also texts.

4.4 Research Design

Bryman (2001:29) argues that a research design is a framework for the collection and analysis of data. The design is basically concerned with the choices and priorities within a research process. Thus, Cheek (2008:761) views research design as the way in which a research idea is transformed into a research project or plan that can then be carried out in practice by a research or research team. More specifically, these aspects include the dynamics of resources, time and the political, socio- economical environment in which the study takes place. A research design determines and shows links between the various aspects of the research, such as aims, methodology, assumptions, and sampling techniques. This study takes the interpretive descriptive method. The present research takes the form of a textual study using qualitative content analysis as a method of research.

4.5 Unit of analysis

Royce and Singleton (1988:67) define a unit of analysis in social research as the entities (objects or events) under study. More specifically, this research made use of two types of newspaper articles, namely news reports, feature stories and opinion pieces from the three newspapers examined here. This study examined 84 newspaper articles about female politicians that appeared in three newspapers during each election year from 2000 to 2008.

4.6 Corpus

A clear definition of a corpus facilitates replication of the study as well as generalisation of findings to similar corpuses and conditions. Corpus is a concept in communication studies that is closely related to the social research concept of population. Welman et al (1994) describe population as the object of the study. Kotler (1991) defines population as a group of study objects from which a researcher desires to collect data. Simply put, a research problem relates to a specific population which encompasses the total collection of all units to be analysed. According to Polit and Hungler (1999:37), “population is an aggregate or totality of all the objects, subjects or members that conform to a set of specifications”. It is therefore a bigger representation from which the sample is selected. The nature of a population thus varies according to the particular study. Examples of populations include individuals, social groups, animals, organisations, human products and events. Being a textual research located in the area of communication studies, this present research uses the term corpus instead of population to mean virtually the same thing but in relation to human textual production. A corpus consists of texts drawn from any of a wide range of text genres, such as conversations, speeches (written or spoken), correspondence, books, song, or as is the case of this present study, newspapers.

An objective of this study is to reveal the effect of language choice on the representation of female politicians in the three weekly Zimbabwean newspapers examined here. This study therefore uses a multilingual corpus consisting of news articles in English and Shona (the mother language of over 80% of Zimbabweans as well as one of the three official languages of the country). The corpus comprises all news stories on female politicians from all the issues of *Financial Gazette*, *The Standard*, and *Kwayedza* containing stories about female politicians and published during each election year from 2000 to 2008. Thus, the researcher collected newspaper stories about female politicians from the electoral years of 2000, 2002, 2005 and 2008, leading to a corpus consisting of a total of 84 news stories from the three weekly newspapers. One purpose of multilingual corpora is to facilitate translingual and intercultural comparison within the same text genre. This particular corpus has potential to be enlarged as this present study could lay the foundation for a longer research into the representation of female politicians and indeed Zimbabwean women in general, over a longer period of time and in a larger set of newspapers.

4.7 Sampling Techniques

In most studies, access to the entire corpus or population is near impossible. However, the results from a study of a carefully selected sample will be so typical of the corpus that they will reflect extremely closely those that would have been obtained had the entire corpus provided the data (Royce and Singleton, 1988; Chiromo, 2006). Thus, Welman et al (1994) describes a sample as the miniature image or likeness of a population (corpus) or a subset of a population. Sampling involves the selection of a few items from and representative of the larger corpus, which forms the basis for estimating or predicting a fact, situation or outcome regarding the corpus. Sampling is thus a way of selecting smaller representative units from a corpus in such a way that results obtained from examining that smaller representative data can be reliably generalized to the rest of the corpus.

4.7.1 Purposive Sampling

The present research will make use of purposive sampling techniques to come up with the data to be examined in the study. In general, there are two major sampling methods, which are probability and non probability sampling (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002). Non-probability sampling is also known as purposive, judgement, selective or subjective sampling. Probability sampling is generally associated with quantitative analysis while non-probability or purposive sampling is more commonly used in qualitative analysis. Purposive sampling also has an advantage of saving time, money and effort and overcoming restrictions on accessing the entire corpus by the researcher, as s/he identifies specifically the subjects to be interviewed or the objects to be studied for instance. In the case of textual studies sampling “aims at selecting all textual units that contribute to answering given research questions” (Krippendorff, 2004:119). As a result, this study, which is a qualitative textual study of newspaper stories, made use of non-probability or purposive sampling. In non-probability sampling, the researcher selects a sample strategically to his or her convenience. Such sampling thus largely depends on the researcher’s knowledge and characteristics for particular expertise. It is also for this reason that the method can be prone to biases and distortions. To control for such possible weaknesses, studies using purposive sampling may use small samples that allow for in-depth analysis and examination. For this reason, out of a corpus of 84 newspaper stories, this study constructed a sample of 18 stories, six (6) for each of the three (3)

newspapers selected in the study. Basing on literature and a preliminary reading of the stories in the corpus, the study assumes that the frames examined in this study generally occur in all articles on female politicians, such that it can be expected that a random selection of any two stories should yield examples of any of the frames.

4.8 Data gathering methods

Data used in this study were obtained from three weekly newspapers namely *Kwayedza*, *The Standard* and the *Financial Gazette*. The researcher visited the archives of the publishers of the three newspapers examined in this present study. She found that, in each of these archives, newspapers were preserved in the form of bound dossiers which she then perused in the search of stories covering female politicians in each of the four election years between 2000 and 2008. After identifying the relevant stories, the researcher photocopied each of them from within the bound dossier as it was not allowed to temporarily remove individual newspapers from the bound dossiers. A consequence of this was that often it was difficult to get a satisfactory copy as the binding hid sections of stories, making it impossible to photocopy them. The researcher thus resorted to typing the stories to enable ease of reading. Each photocopied story is thus accompanied by its typed transcription.

The internet was crucial in the initial preliminary period of this study but newspaper publications from previous years could not be accessed. Secondary sources of data were particularly important for identifying explicit or implicit hegemonic civil society's documented activities or strategies for maintaining state hegemony. Some of the prominent literature that was used in this study included important policy documents, speeches and interviews of the female politicians from different media outlets.

Making use of written sources has numerous challenges. Johnson and Joslyn (1995), posit that there is potential selective survival of the newspaper stories in archives. Newspaper house archivists may make choices on what to preserve and what not to, which can disadvantage the researcher. As a result, biased collection of the content the researcher gathers is possible (Creswell 2003). In the case of the present study stories were collected from bound dossiers that were found within media house archives and accessing the stories or bound dossiers was an arduous task. The stories could not be accessed electronically as they had not yet been uploaded; it therefore took very long to access the physically bound copies. The way the newspapers were preserved was a challenge on its own for potential researchers. The bound dossiers were haphazardly filed and thus it took quite a long time to find the relevant copies.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS OF THE REPRESENTATION OF FEMALE POLITICIANS IN THE *KWAYEDZA* WEEKLY NEWSPAPER

5.1 Introduction

This is the first of three chapters that analyse the representation of Zimbabwean female politicians by three Zimbabwean weekly newspapers. Chapter 1 was concerned with the topic, fore-grounding the research, Chapter 2 outlined the theoretical framework underpinning this study, while Chapter 3 reviewed literature relevant to the study and Chapter 4 was concerned with the research methodology of the thesis. Through literature review, this study has observed that the media has played a key role in constructing female politicians, thus impacting their fate in an otherwise male-dominated domain. It has been noted that media constructs of female politicians generally tend to revolve around the frames of motherhood, wifehood, female politicians as inadequate and unfit for political office, as well as double bind dilemmas.

The present chapter examines the representation of Zimbabwean female politicians by the *Kwayedza* newspaper, while chapters five and six examine the representation of Zimbabwean female politicians by the *Financial Gazette* and *The Standard* weekly newspapers respectively, all of them purposively selected for the study. The stories that are examined in this chapter were published in the electoral years 2000, 2002, 2005 and 2008. In the period under study, the electoral years featured different types of national elections: in the year 2000 there were parliamentary elections, in 2002 a presidential election, in 2005 parliamentary elections and in 2008 general elections which combined both parliamentary and presidential elections. For years featuring parliamentary elections, the study prioritises articles covering female parliamentary candidates. For 2002, which only had a presidential election, the research examines the representation of any female politician covered by the selected newspapers.

The three publications examined in this study represent both the public and private media as well as Zimbabwe's two dominant languages English and Shona. Of the three newspapers examined in this study, this chapter focuses on *Kwayedza*, which is a state owned newspaper. Like all other state-owned newspapers in Zimbabwe, *Kwayedza* is openly pro-government and pro-ZANU PF as well as anti-MDC. *Kwayedza* is also the only Shona language publication among the three examined here and indeed the only national Shona language weekly in Zimbabwe. Given that language implies worldview (Ottosson and Cheng 2012), it can be expected that a newspaper publishing in Shona reflects Shona worldview. The study seeks to verify the following hypotheses: media images of Zimbabwean female politicians are determined by the publication's political bias between ZANU PF and MDC, the Third Chimurenga as historical context, the African traditional worldview of the indigenous African majority of Zimbabweans, as well as the country's colonial past, and the Christian religion.

A total of 14 stories on Zimbabwean female politicians were found in *Kwayedza* in the four election years covered in this study. The study examined six (6) of those stories to illustrate the frames mentioned above. The stories were representative of the years within the period under study. Each of these stories was analysed and discussed according to the frame most prominent in them. They also represented the concepts that are captured within the generated frames.

5.2 The motherhood and wifehood frames

A recurrent frame in the *Kwayedza* stories that are part of the corpus of this study is that of female politicians as mothers. In a sample of six (6) articles, three use various discursive strategies to associate female politicians with motherhood while the rest construct female politicians differently but in ways that confirm the newspaper's systematic use of the motherhood construct. In the *Kwayedza* of August 13-21 2008:11, there is a story titled "*Danho remadzimai muchimurenga*" (the role of women in the liberation struggle). This story, published in the week immediately following Zimbabwe's Heroes Day Holiday, is a reflection on the lives of four of Zimbabwe's heroines, all of them dead. The story covers them in the following order: Mrs. Sally Mugabe, followed by Mrs. Julia Zvobgo, Mrs. Johanna Mafuyana Nkomo, and Mrs. Ruth Chinamano. This article focuses on retired

female politicians and one woman – Johanna Mafuyana Nkomo – whose life is inseparable from Zimbabwe’s political history because of her marriage to Joshua Nkomo one of the greatest heroes of Zimbabwe’s liberation struggle. Analysis of the article focused on the representation of the three female politicians namely Mugabe, Zvobgo and Chinamano. Sally Mugabe was born Sarah Francesca Heyfron in 1931. In 1968 she was the deputy secretary for women’s league. She was elected secretary General of the ZANU PF women’s league and was actively involved in the Akina Mama waAfrica a London based organisation for African and UK women. Julia Zvobgo was born Julia Tukai Whande. She became a member of ZANU PF in 1963 and was elected as Zvishavane MP at independence in 1980. She was elected secretary for publicity and information in the women’s league in 1984. Julia Zvobgo was a member of the central committee for the first 10 years after independence. In 1985 she was re-elected as a member of parliament for Zvishavane. Ruth Chinamano was born Ruth Nyombolo in 1925. She joined the National Democratic Party in 1960. She was the secretary of the Salisbury district of the Zimbabwe African Women’s Union. She became an MP in 1980 and was last elected to parliament in 1995.

Publication of such a feature story about some of the most iconic women in Zimbabwe’s political history may seem innocuous but the way even ageing and retired female politicians are represented in a particular newspaper during an election year sets the tone for the representation of current female candidates by that newspaper in an elective year. The story gives more or less balanced attention to each of the four heroines. The order in which the four heroines are covered suggests intention to echo on the surface of the article the symmetry introduced into Zimbabwean politics by the 1987 ‘unity accord’ that merged Zimbabwe’s two leading nationalist parties ZANU and PF ZAPU into a new political formation, ZANU PF. Mrs Sally Mugabe and Mrs Julia Zvobgo were the most senior female politicians from the old ZANU to be buried at the heroes acre. The story covered them in the order of their seniority, with Sally Mugabe appearing first in her capacity as former first lady and founder of ZANU’s women’s league. Similarly, Mrs Johanna Nkomo was the late wife of the founder and leader of PF ZAPU led by Joshua Nkomo, though she was not a politician, while Ruth Chinamano was the wife of his deputy. The story therefore reflected *Kwayedza’s* awareness of and adherence to the protocol of ZANU PF. This is evidence of the extent of the publication’s allegiance to that party.

Even more significantly, the number and order of appearance of these heroines in the story cued the reader to take the portrayal of these four women as a metaphor of the Unity Accord which brought together ZANU and PF ZAPU in 1987 as well as the distribution of power in that accord, with ZANU emerging as the senior partner. For the purposes of the analysis it is crucial to point out their political profiles:

Kwayedza's use of the motherhood and wifeness frame to represent female politicians in this story is vividly reflected in the descriptions of the three politicians. Unlike the other three heroines, Mrs. Nkomo never played an active political role in Zimbabwe. Her designation as a national heroine has even been questioned by some Zimbabwean historians (Chigora and Goredema 2009). Whereas the story locates Mrs Nkomo in the category of (*magamba echimurenga*), (liberation struggle heroes), it constructed her heroism in terms of her role as wife and mother in the lives of liberation struggle icon and leader of the Zimbabwe African people's union Patriotic front (PF ZAPU), Joshua Nkomo, Mrs Nkomo's husband, and their children. The analysis, therefore focused on the roles of the three other female politicians within the article. Extract 1 below illustrates this observation.

Extract 1:

Mai Sally Mugabe ndiye mudzimai wekutanga kupiwa ruremekedzo rwegamba nokuda kwedanho ravakatora munguva yehondo. Mudzimai akaramba akatsungirira kunyange apo President Robert Mugabe vakagara mujeri kwemakore anodarika gumi. Ndivo vaiva muvambi wesangano reMbuya Nehanda Women's Training Centre uye vari sachigaro we Child Survival and Development Fund pane mamwe masangano uhu huchive humbowo hwakakwana hwairatidza basa ravo samai venyika vaishanda. (Translation: Mrs Sally Mugabe was the first woman to be given the national heroine status. She persevered even when her husband was arrested and sent to jail for more than 10 years. She started the Mbuya Nehanda Women's Training Centre and was also the chairperson of the Child Survival and Development Fund, among others, which is ample evidence of her dedication as the mother of the nation).

From the outset, Mai Sally Mugabe is constructed in terms of her marriage to president Robert Mugabe: *Mai Sally Mugabe ndiye mudzimai wekutanga kupiwa ruremekedzo rwegamba nokuda kwedanho ravakatora munguva yehondo.* (My Translation: Mrs Sally Mugabe is the first woman to get the heroine status for her contribution in the liberation

struggle). The most prominent marker of motherhood in Extract 1 is the term '*mai*'. This is also evident in the description of Ruth Chinamano whose wifeness role is pointed out by the term '*mudzimai*'. This is captured in the quotation below:

Cde Ruth Chinamano, mudzimai wa Josiah Chinamano, anotsanangurwa semudzimai airwira mikana yakaenzana kusanganisira yemadzimai. Kunyange vakazvarwa kuSouth Africa uko kwaiva nerusarura ganda rwakanyanya vakazvipira kurwira rusununguko rwenyika yemurume wavo. Mukushanda uku vakasandura pfungwa yekuti mudzimai anogara pamusha chete apo vakashandawo mu African National Council. (My Translation: Cde Ruth Chinamano wife to Josiah Chinamano, is described as a woman that fought for equal rights particularly for women. Though she was born in Apartheid South Africa she fought in the liberation struggle of her husband's country. She changed the patriarchal mindset that restricted women to the domestic space as she was employed by the African National Council).

Ruth Chinamano is represented in terms of her association with her husband's success, "*mudzimai wa Josiah Chinamano*" (Josiah Chinamano's wife) even though the article went on to report that she was a champion of the liberation struggle in Rhodesia. Apart from being a fighter for political freedom, she is also portrayed as a staunch defender of conservative patriarchal socio-cultural norms and values, such as blaming rape on women's use of mini-skirts:

Semudzimai aikurudzira tsika dzakanaka izwi ravo rakanzwika mukutsoropodza kwavaiita hembe pfupi dzaipfekwa nevasikana vachiti ndizvo zvaikonzera kubatwa kwavo chibharo. (Translation: As a woman encouraged women to maintain their cultural values by criticising the wearing of miniskirts which she blamed for the exacerbation of rape cases)

For Sally Mugabe, other than in the context in which it is used in the extract, *mai* is a noun that means mother, as in *mai va Tendai* (Tendai's mother). In Extract 1, *mai* is used grammatically as an adjective and conceptually as a formal title affixed to the person of Sally Mugabe. Its closest translation in English is the title Mrs. However, the title Mrs. is but a loose approximation of the Shona *Mai*. A strong hint on the difference between Mrs. and *Mai* is that, whereas convention dictates that the English Mrs. is only affixed to surnames (or surname preceded by first name), as in Mrs. (Sarah) Jones, Extract 1 uses the title *Mai* with the subject's first name only – "*Mai Sally*" – while elsewhere in the story

the title is used to qualify her surname – *Mai* Mugabe. The availability of the Shona *Mai* to accompany a woman's first name alone suggests that the word is more strongly linked to motherhood than it is to a woman's marital status. Thus, even though *Mai* is generally used to refer to married women it would seem that this label constructs marriage as inherently connoting procreation. The collocation of the formal title '*Ma*' with the heroine's first name, as in Extract 1, suggests naturalizing a social role that mirrors the close bond between a mother and her children. In Bantu worldview, including Shona culture, the mother's role of nurturing the family is regarded as sacred (Manyawu 2012). The above discussion clearly suggests that, while the husband of Sally Mugabe was fighting on the battlefield, she was fighting another honourable war of keeping the family together.

Conversely, the implication is made that violent struggle, such as war, and the polarised political arena that has characterised Zimbabwe since independence, are no place for women who, constructed as mothers, are portrayed as more sentimental than their male counterparts. The story's argument is, therefore that, women that are mentioned within this article such as Sally Mugabe, Johanna Nkomo, Julia Zvobgo and Ruth Chinamano also deserve to be national heroines because their characteristics fit the bill of perfect wives and mother. This is clearly shown in Extract 2 below,

Extract 2:

Madzimai aya –zvikuru akaradzikwa kumarinda eheroes Acre –anosanganisira Mai Sally Mugabe, Mafuyana, Ruth Chinamano Julia Zvobgo ndivo vevamwe vakatora danho guru mukurwa hondo nekuchengeta mhuri. Mai Sally Mugabe ndiye mudzimai wekutanga kupiwa ruremekedzo rwegamba nokuda kwedanho ravakatora munguva yehondo. (My Translation: These women particularly those laid at the heroes acre who include Mrs Sally Mugabe, Mafuyana, Ruth Chinamano Julia Zvobgo are some of the women that sacrificed their lives in the liberation struggle and looking after their families. Mrs Sally Mugabe was the first woman to have the honour of being buried at the heroes acre.)

The construct of motherhood is, therefore, built up in the celebration of acts that occur naturally to all parents in similar circumstances to those of Sally Mugabe, Julia Zvobgo, and Ruth Chinamano during the liberation struggle: raising one's children; sewing clothes championing revolutionary, particularly women related organisations. *Mai* Zvobgo is portrayed as having also supported her husband before and after his arrest.

Mai zvobgo avo vakashaya mugore ra 2004 vakatsanangurwa munhoroondo yavo semudzimai mhuri...nemagariro emuAfrica pamwe nekudzidzisa mamwe madzimai...Chido chekusunganidza mhuri chakabuda mushure mekunge murume wavo, Cde Eddison Zobgo, vasungwa apo vakakumbira kuti vashande pedyo naye.
My Translation: (Mrs Zvobgo who died in 2004 was honoured as a woman who championed women's issues in Africa. Her family uniting character was evident when her husband was arrested and she requested to work close to where he was jailed).

The purpose of this glorification of these concerns appears to be to persuade the reader to see Zimbabwean heroines first and foremost as mothers, homemakers and pacifiers who may also be politicians. The use of these women as mothers and wives in politics cues the reader to judge them as mothers who are in politics because of their ability and willingness to be the pacifiers and caregivers who can easily and naturally sacrifice their political career if they must choose between their families and politics. This is indicated by the emphasis of the wifeness and motherhood roles within the story. That frame is bolstered by the fact that the article profiles Johanna Nkomo, who was actually not a political activist alongside three prominent political heroines. Consequently, the value of the other three heroines is constructed more in terms of the support they gave their husbands during the liberation struggle as well as their role as mothers than in terms of their political activities. In this story seven(7) sentences are concerned with wifeness, nine(9) with motherhood, two(2) cast the heroines as defenders of African culture while eight (8) associate them with politics. Thus the vast majority of a story about a social group defined by the ruling ZANU PF party solely in terms of its political worth actually treats politics as a subsidiary concern.

This is evident in the story's treatment of Julia Zvobgo a prominent political activist, liberation fighter and Member of Parliament for the first 10 years of independence, as shown in Extract 3 below:

Extract 3:

Mwoyo wavo samai havana kuusiya sezvo apo vakaenda kuEngland vakatora vana vavo mushure ndokuzodzoka vachironga zvidzidzo zvamadzimai (my translation: she remained so motherly that even when she travelled to England she did not forget her children and she later came back to champion the education of women).

The object "*Mwoyo wavo samai*" is a metaphor of ideal motherhood. *Mwoyo* (literally, the heart) is used to denote Mrs Zvobgo's feelings while the comparative *samai* (as a mother)

points to the expectations of the society in mothers. The frame of motherhood is further developed through both literal and metaphorical means in this extract. Mrs Zvobgo literally took her children along with her when she fled the country as a political exile in 1977. However, by collapsing the account of her flight to England with her biological children with that of her work with Zimbabwean women in her capacity as the wife of a public figure, the article extends the idea of motherhood to its representation of her work in the struggle for the emancipation of women in the public arena. This is particularly cued by the subordination of the two accounts (flight to England and work with women) to the clause “*Moyo wavo saamai havana kuusiya*” (she remained so motherly that). Thus, her activities in both the private (domestic) and public spheres are represented as proof that she was a good mother.

All three female politicians in the story are represented in terms of motherhood through, among other devices, the use of the noun *mai* (mother). This is emphasised by the way all of the politicians are constructed in relation to their husbands and children and their national motherhood throughout the story. Indeed, Shona culture (and the Ndebele culture which are dominant in Zimbabwe) allow for the use of the structure *Mai* (or *Ma*) + child’s name, such as *Mai Tichaona* (mother of Tichaona), in naming a mother, whether she is married or not. The culture also allows for the use of a married woman’s totem in addressing her, as in *MaDube* or *MaSibanda*. In both cases, the husband’s surname is obfuscated, thus highlighting only the woman’s identity as a mother. In essence, the three female politicians are thus reduced to motherhood and wifedom, which allows the article to view Johanna Nkomo, who is not a politician, as their equal and as deserving of heroine status as they are. Ultimately, the title *Mai* unifies a nation around a mother. Indeed, the article goes on to explicitly label Sally Mugabe as ‘mother of the nation’ in the phrase “*samai venyika*” (as the mother of the nation) in which the comparative *sa* (as) underscores the importance of her motherhood.

Analysis of the second Kwayedza article

Let us now turn to other *Kwayedza* articles to see how the motherhood and wifedom frame, is deployed in them. First is a story titled “*Ngatiremekedzei varwi vehondo – Madzongwe*” (Translation: Lets respect the war heroes – Madzongwe; *Kwayedza*, November 7-13 2008:9). Edna Madzongwe was elected President of senate in 2005. She

was re-elected and is still senator for the Chegutu constituency. Mrs. Madzongwe is a senior ZANU-PF cadre who has served as a senior civil servant and Senate President, a position she has held since 2005. Prior to that, she had served as Deputy Speaker of Parliament and held various Party posts.

The story is about the exhumation of the remains of Last Mabhunu, a liberation war hero who died in Mt. Darwin during the war, so that they can be properly identified and reburied with the dignity and honour they deserve at Chinhoyi Provincial Heroes' Acre. Apart from being a ZANLA combatant and now a liberation war hero, Last Mabhunu was also the nephew of Edna Madzongwe. Such exhumations were carried out by an association called the Fallen Heroes Exhumers of Zimbabwe. Those seeing her at the exhumation ceremony would therefore see a prominent politician and a relative of the combatant being exhumed or one or the other role. However, the article does not specify the capacity in which she spoke at the exhumation, even though it is clear that what made her speech newsworthy was her national political status.

This story uses the ambivalence blend of motherhood and political authority to build up the persona of Madzongwe. The purpose of Madzongwe at the exhumation is cast as political. All frames attributed to Madzongwe in the article are political: a call to remember and honour liberation war heroes; criticism of the MDC for supporting the sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe by various Western powers; and a call for ZANU-PF and the MDC to form a united front to further Zimbabwe's liberation agenda. Right up to the very last paragraph of the story, the reader has no idea that Madzongwe is actually closely related to Last Mabhunu. Only the last paragraph remarks – as an afterthought and in passing – that she was his aunt, which implies filial relationship. In Zimbabwean Shona culture, the person whose bones were being exhumed is a child to Madzongwe as he is her brother's son. The story provides no further detail about that relationship, meaning that it is treated as a minor circumstantial detail that should not detract from Madzongwe's political status and function at the exhumation. Edna Madzongwe is thus described as a powerful empowered woman who fits in her political shoes.

The ambivalence of Madzongwe's political-cum-blood relationship with Last Mabhunu in the event covered by the story examined here offered *Kwayedza* a challenge in terms of which frame to prioritise in its representation of Madzongwe. As already noted, from a content point of view, the story emphasises Madzongwe's political role over the personal dimension. However, representing discourse reflects a consistent move to frame Madzongwe in terms of motherhood. Whereas the Shona title "*Mai*" is used in the body of the article to prefix Madzongwe's name, as in "*Mai* Edna Madzongwe", a solitary reference to Madzongwe towards the end of the article and the caption under her portrait attach the political title "Cde" (short form of comrade the title used in Communist societies to denote members of a communist or socialist party) to her name ("Cde Edna Madzongwe"). However, even though the two titles are statistically balanced – two occurrences apiece – their distribution suggests the article's bias. First, the Shona *Mai* appears in the first section of the article and generally in its left half while the English Cde occurs towards the end of the story and in its right side. In this story, according to the title, what is important is Madzongwe's message. That message occupies the first five paragraphs of a ten (10) page article. The rest describes the circumstances of the situation of communication: four paragraphs on Last Mabhunu and a last paragraph that concludes by revealing Madzongwe's relationship to Mabhunu and once again quoting Madzongwe's peroration. The term *Mai* therefore occurs in the priority section of the article while the title Cde is used in the contextualising section. The motherhood and wifeness frame thus seem to be prioritized though Madzongwe is unequivocally acknowledged as a nationalist and politician in the story. This frame is strengthened by the collocation of the title *Mai* with Madzongwe's entire message save for the concluding remark about the need for government to support the Fallen Heroes Exhumers of Zimbabwe Association.

The ambivalence in the depiction of Madzongwe can be explained through Bhabha's ambivalence theory as cited in Kumar (2011), who suggests that one term can have two or several meanings. However, the article seems to seek a balance between the political leadership and motherhood frames by collocating an important political message with the title *Mai* while collocating the title Cde with Madzongwe's family relationship with Mabhunu. The ultimate effect of this distribution, however, is to remind the reader that a high-ranking female politician such as Madzongwe should be regarded primarily as a mother and wife especially as there is absolutely no reason not to consistently refer to her as Cde.

A story titled, *Musangano wekuratidza kudya kwechivanhu wakabudirira* (my translation: Traditional African food fair was a success; *Kwayedza* January 14-20 2005:5) associates the two most powerful women in Zimbabwe, Grace Mugabe and Joice Mujuru, with motherhood. Joice Mujuru was born Runaida Mugari in 1955. She held political positions during the liberation struggle. Mujuru served as government minister from independence in 1980 until 2014 when she was expelled from ZANU PF. At the height of her career Joice Mujuru was the Vice- President of Zimbabwe following Simon Muzenda's death. Grace Mugabe is the wife of the President Robert Mugabe and therefore first Lady of Zimbabwe. In 2015, she became the chairperson of the ZANU PF women's league and therefore a politician, but at the time the article discussed here was published in 2005, she was not yet a politician.

The story uses motherhood and wifehood to redefine the status of a female politician to her disadvantage. A feature of the story that casts female politicians as a social category that must be seen first and foremost as mothers is the use of Joice Mujuru as a substitute for Mrs. Mugabe to read the first lady's speech.

Extract 4:

Zuva ravhurwa gungano iri rakave rinoona kuvepo kwemutevedzeri wenyika wekutanga wechidzimai Mai Joice Mujuru vachive varipo semuenzi anoremekedzwa. Mai Mujuru vakange varipo vakamirira Mai Grace Mugabe avo vasina kuzokwanisa kunge varipo. Mumashoko avakaverengerwa naMai Mujuru, Mai Mugabe vakati ivo madzimai ndiwo ane dambudziko guru rekuve anochengeta nhengo dzemhuri pamwechete nekuchengeta avo vanenge vachirwara (my translation: On the day of the official opening of the Food Fair the first female vice president Joice Mujuru was there as the guest of honour. She was representing Mrs. Grace Mugabe who could not attend the workshop. In a speech that was read on her behalf by Mrs Mujuru, Mrs Mugabe said women are the ones with the responsibility of looking after the family and the sick).

As Zimbabwe's first lady, Mrs Mugabe is seen by many and portrayed by the media as the 'mother of the nation'. It is in this regard that she is labelled *Amai* (mother). The office of *Amai* is officially non political as it derives from one's marriage to the nation's president. Indeed at the time of the publication of the article examined here, Mrs Grace Mugabe was not a politician. She had, therefore, been invited to officiate at the event (see appendix 3) in her capacity as 'mother of the nation'. On the other hand, Joice Mujuru is Zimbabwe's

most celebrated female war hero, having accomplished among others, the unprecedented feat of downing a Rhodesian Air Force plane²⁴. She is one of few ZANU-PF cadres to hold at least a ministerial position in every cabinet since Independence in 1980 when she became the new government's youngest minister. In terms of comparison, this is a feat most politicians, including most males, are yet to achieve. At the time of publication of the story Mrs Joice Mujuru was the highest ranking ZANU PF female career politician. As Vice-President of the Republic and of ZANU-PF, she was the second most powerful politician in the country, poised to take over the reins of power should the incumbent president become incapacitated in any way or otherwise decide to retire. Reducing such a powerful political leader to reading speeches for the first lady who is not even a politician, especially at a low-key event where an occupant of a much lesser office than that of Vice-President, such as an aide of the first lady, would have sufficed, suggests that, in Zimbabwean politics, motherhood (as mother of the nation, Grace Mugabe is the country's 'first mother') takes precedence over political office. Since Grace Mugabe's 'national motherhood' goes with being the wife of the President, the suggestion is also made that it matters whether and to whom a woman politician is married. The fact that both women are portrayed as finding their respective roles normal shows that these roles emanate from a naturalized discourse practice. This suggests the influence and impact of socialization by the society.

The construct of women in general as mothers is underscored by the content of *Mai* Mugabe's speech. Take for instance Extract 5 below:

Extract 5:

Mumashoko avakaverengerwa naMai Mujuru, Mai Mugabe vakati ivo madzimai ndiwo ane dambudziko guru rekuve anochengeta nhengo dzemhuri pamwechete nekutarira avo vanenge vachirwara (my translation: In the speech read on her behalf by Mrs Mujuru, Mrs. Mugabe said women are the ones with the great burden of looking after the families and caring for the sick).

In Extract 5 above, the First Lady is represented as characterizing women as care givers and nurturers. Her advice therefore targets women; the mother of the nation gives advice

²⁴ <http://www.iol.co.za/news/africa/mugabe-s-deputy-aims-for-to-spot-.1609319#.UoZk6NMj>

to mothers at the national levels. This role and responsibility may explain, at least in part, why, upon realizing she could not attend the Food Fair, the First Lady chose not only another woman, but also one with the highest social status after the First Lady herself, Vice President Joice Mujuru, to stand in her place. While the motherhood frame may trivialise women in international spaces, in this story it can be interpreted as a symbol of power. *Mai* Mujuru, whose status as a prominent mother (*mai*) is more relevant than her political role in the story, thus stands in as mother of the nation.

5.3 Female politicians as inadequate and unfit politicians

Female politicians who depart from the gendered constructs of wife and mother may be stigmatised by *Kwayedza* as inadequate and unfit for public office or written out of the publication's narratives about politics and society in general. Two very similar *Kwayedza* stories about two female Members of Parliament (MPs), one from ZANU PF and the other from the MDC, who defrauded their respective constituencies of money collected for the purchase of fertilizer were identified. They are titled "*Gwachiwa mudare*" (My Translation: Gwachiwa appears in court; *Kwayedza*, December 4 to 10 2008:9) and *MP onenedzerwa nyaya* (my translation: an MP stands accused of fraud; *Kwayedza* 10-16 December 2000:7) respectively. This study will analyse in detail the story titled "*Gwachiwa mudare*", which describes the trial of the allegedly corrupt female ZANU PF MP Cecilia Gwachiwa. Cecilia was a ZANU PF MP for Karoi in 2008.

Appendix 4 starts by stripping Cecilia Gwachiwa of her political identity not only as a ZANU PF leader (She was an MP when the crime reported in Appendix 4 was allegedly committed) but also as a ZANU PF member. For the first five paragraphs of the story the reader has no clue as to the party Gwachiwa used to represent in parliament. Even when this information is eventually provided in the 6th paragraph it is by way of implication:

Extract 6:

Dare iri rinoti mari yakazobhadharwa kuna Robert Tichareva anova sachigaro weDCC mumusangano weZANU PF kuZvipani anovawo mumhan'ari munyaya iyi sezvo akabhadharawo mari yekuti anotengerwa fetireza. My Translation: The court alleges the money was handed to Robert Tichareva who is the ZANU PF District coordinating committee chairperson (DCC) for Zvipani. Tichareva is also a complainant in this case as he also contributed money for the purchase of fertilizer.

Extract 6 represents the court as identifying Robert Tichareva with ZANU PF district leadership in the Zvipane area. Two facts, one of them societal and the other textual, cue the reader to assume that Gwachiwa is also a ZANU PF member. Firstly, in the highly polarized political climate of 2006 (date of commission of the alleged fraud), there was no way a politician from a party other than ZANU PF could collaborate in the manner described in Extract 6 with a ZANU PF official. Secondly Extract 6 reports that the money collected on Gwachiwa's instigation was handed over to ZANU PF official Tichareva implying that the fertilizer scheme was set up as a ZANU PF project. There is, however no explicit link between Gwachiwa and any political party on the surface of the text. Given that *Kwayedza* is a state owned and pro ZANU PF publication it can reasonably be inferred that Extract 6 reflects a deliberate strategy to distance Gwachiwa from the ZANU PF party that she represented as an MP. This way, the party's image is shielded from the alleged corruption of a female politician. Mere suspicion therefore sufficed to prompt *Kwayedza* to treat a female politician to be associated with a party it supports. These and other signs that *Kwayedza* is cuing ZANU PF members to abandon Gwachiwa as a leader show disturbing readiness to destroy a female politician, even one from the party that the publication openly supports, on the slightest pretext. The paper therefore, seems to want female politicians to be so morally perfect as to not even be *accused* of wrong-doing.

Appendix 4 uses rhetorical exaggeration to predispose the reader against female politician Gwachiwa even though the story covers a stage in the trial process before the conclusion of the prosecution and, therefore, well ahead of Gwachiwa's defence and the court's judgment. Extract 7 below illustrates this discourse strategy.

Extract 7:

Fetireza yainge yavimbiswa vanhu iyi inonzi haina kuzombounzwa kwavari kusvika nanhasi uno izvo zvakazopa kuti vanhu ava vanomhan'ara vanomhan'ara kumatare edzimhosva (my translation: The promised fertiliser is said to not even have been delivered to the beneficiaries upto this very day, which caused them to report the matter to the authorities).

The reporter uses the emphatic verb *kuzombounzwa* where the neutral *kuzounzwa* would have sufficed. The adverbial morpheme *-mbo-* (equivalent of the adverb even in *kuzombounzwa*) is used as an intensive to underscore the notion that Gwachiwa's failure to deliver was highly unexpected and therefore most condemnable. The collocation of adverb *-mbo-* with the temporal clause *kusvika nanhasi uno* (up to this very day) further heightens the intensity of Appendix 4's animosity towards Gwachiwa. Whereas the more neutral adverb *nanhasi* would have sufficed, the story adds the intensive adverb *uno* (very) to build up the impression of the gravity of Gwachiwa's offence. Such use of emotion against Gwachiwa, a suspect yet to be judged, is further evidence of a pre-disposition to trash the images of female politicians at the slightest opportunity.

To underscore and sensationalise the (alleged) criminal aspect of Gwachiwa's conduct, the story uses a large mug shot-like photograph of Gwachiwa captioned "*Mai Cecilia Gwachiwa*". The photograph is a portrait taken from very close up, thus highlighting and even exaggerating certain features, such as Gwachiwa's large eyes and nostrils, to unflattering effect. One effect is that Gwachiwa appears startled and undignified. This is visual argumentation that works by insinuating the guilt suggested by association with police mug shots of arrested suspects. Thus by using such a picture to support its notion of Gwachiwa guilty, Appendix 4 highlights what it perceives as her unfeminine traits, namely corruption and fraud. Clearly, the newspaper sets an agenda of presenting Gwachiwa as unreliable and, therefore unfit for the political office.

A quick comparison of the two stories in the corpus of this study about female politicians suspected of wrongdoing suggests that *Kwayedza* has a content template for stories on female politicians it considers unfit and inadequate for that profession. The story titled “*MP onenedzerwa nyaya*” (my translation: an MP stands accused of fraud), published five years earlier, sounds uncannily similar to the story in terms of its content “*Gwachiwa mudare*”. Table 1 below shows the thematic content of each of the two stories and its distribution in both stories in the order in which it appears in those stories as well as its distribution in each of them.

Table 1: A thematic content of two articles

Frame	Story 1: <i>Gwachiwa mudare</i>	Story 2: <i>MP onenedzerwa nyaya</i>
1.	Offender is identified in terms of profession/career : MP for Hurungwe West	Plaintiff/victims specified: villagers in Mhondoro
2.	Consequence legal) of the crime is specified (court trial)	Crime: false pretence about ability to get and deliver cheap fertilizer and subsequent collection of money from interested villagers
3.	Crime: false pretence about ability to get and deliver cheap fertilizer and subsequent collection of money from interested villagers	Offender is identified in terms of her profession/career: MP for Mhondoro.
4.	Plaintiff/victims: farmers from her constituency	Personal identity (name provided)
5.	Personal identity (name provided)	Political identity: explicit association of the MP with a political party (MDC)
6.	Dates of trial specified (August 2006)	Details of the alleged crime are given
7.	Details of the alleged crime are given	Dates of crime specified (2000)
8.	Sites of crime and trial are specified	Identity of other actors in the trial (witnesses)
9.	Involvement of another party official is mentioned Plaintiff specified: aggrieved party official-cum-farmer	Magnitude of crime: number of victims and money involved specified
10.	Political identity: implicit association of the MP with a political party (ZANU PF) (Evidence of efforts to distance the MP from her political party noted)	Sites of crime and trial are specified
11.	Magnitude of crime: number of victims, their villages of origin and the money involved specified	Consequences (economic) of the crime specified: poor harvests; conflict between farmers and community members associated with the MP's fertilizer project
12.	More details of the alleged crime are given	More detail of the alleged crime are given (Identification of other actors in the project; a community member associated with the MP's fertilizer project)
13.	Consequences of the crime specified: lodging of complaint with authorities by aggrieved farmers More plaintiffs specified: aggrieved farmers	
14.	Other actors in the trial (court officials and witnesses and plaintiffs specified)	

Of the 14 content indicators or frames in the story “*Gwachiwa mudare*”, 12 also appear in the story “*MP onenedzerwa nyaya*”. For instance Story 1’s frame 10 is similar to frame 5 in Story 2. Of those 12 frames, eight (8) are identical in all aspects of their content. For instance, Story 1’s frame 11 is identical to frame nine (9) in Story 2. Only two (2) frames in Story 1 and 1 frame in Story 2 are peculiar to Story 1 and Story 2 respectively. This is evidence of the close proximity of the two stories in terms of content coverage. *Kwayedza* editorial policy does, therefore, seem to have strict guidelines pertaining to the coverage of issues that may suggest that a female politician is unfit for the profession.

The story *Nyaya ya MP nzenza yakoramuto* [my translation: the case against the loose (female) MP gets serious] reports the purported misadventures of a female MDC MP accused of sexual immorality (she allegedly had sexually intercourse with two male MPs at a workshop in the resort town of Victoria Falls) and of bringing her party’s name into disrepute.

Several discourse strategies suggest the story’s intention to construct female politicians as inherently immoral and, therefore, unfit for public office and /or naturally unable to assume political responsibility. The first such strategy is the story’s use of anonymity: The female subject of this damaging story is not identified whereas the political party to which she belongs is named.

Extract 8:

Zvisinei nekuvanza kwatakaita zita remudzimai uyu pamwechete nedzimwe nhengo dzakamuita bira rakamba idzi, mudzimai uyu akanangwa nemukuru webato rake nekuda kwemashoko anonzi aifambiswa enyaya yakaitika kumusangano wekuVictoria Falls uyu. [Though we did not mention her, the leader of the party is alleged to have summoned the concerned lady MP about the issue.]

The need to maintain the anonymity of the female politician who is the subject of the story is evidence that this story, which is the second instalment in *Kwayedza*’s coverage of the sad events, is pure hearsay. To publish hearsay in a national newspaper, which is Zimbabwe’s only Shona language source of hard news is to engage in mischievous sexism. While that mischief could be explained by the fact that *Kwayedza* is a state owned newspaper whereas the female politician concerned belongs to the opposition MDC, the

choice to focus on the sole female participant in events involving three individuals strongly suggests sexism. That choice to focus on the female politician and not her alleged male lovers, who are also politicians, constitutes the story's second strategy to undermine the image of female politicians in general. Further, the explicit identification of the political party to which the female politician belongs is likely intended to incite the leadership and general membership of that party to act against the female politician as well as pit party members against the generality of female politicians in that party. Consequently, the story jubilates at the rumour that the sad female MP was confronted by the party's president over her wayward behaviour subsequent to the publication of *Kwayedza's* first instalment about her sexual escapades.

Extract 9:

Nhengo yeparamende iyi yakashevedzwa apo gwaronhau redu rakanga richangobva mukubuda. Amai ava vanonzi vakasvikobvunzwa nemukuru webato ravo kuti vatsanungure pamusoro penyaya yaiva mupepa iri... My translation: (The MP was summoned for questioning by her party's president just after this newspaper had published this story about her sexual escapades. Her party's president asked her to explain the contents of the story we had published).

Kwayedza's self congratulatory attitude is apparent in the phrase "*apo gwaronhau redu rakanga richangobva mukubuda*" (after this newspaper had published this story about her sexual escapades). The publication therefore feels that it did the nation a great service by exposing the female politician and, therefore, that the female politician deserves to have her career compromised.

Kwayedza's sexist stance is underscored by its use of the derogatory Shona noun *nzenza* (woman of loose morals) to label the unidentified MP. The use of the judgmental and derogatory label *nzenza* in the story's title means that the story's intention is less to inform than to express an opinion, pronounce a judgment on the female politician. Further, the fact that the noun *nzenza* is only ever used in Shona in relation to women implies that, from the very outset, the story intends to put only the female politician on trial and not her male accomplices. This echoes patriarchal discourses in the Bible such as John 7:53-58 where only the woman is condemned to death by stoning for adultery whereas none of the men gathered to stone her bother to look for her (male) partner(s). *Kwayedza's* sexist

patriarchal discourse is underscored by the sarcastic metaphor used in Extract 7 above to characterize the sexual event involving the unnamed female MP; “*Dzimwe nhengo dzakamuita bira rakamba*”[my translation, the other MPs (sexually) feasted on her]. This metaphor treats the female MP as a passive object of the lascivious attentions of ravenous males. The contradiction between this portrayal of the female politician and the blame that the rest of the story lays upon her as the main *agent* of the sexual escapade produces a telling paradox. *Kwayedza* is therefore clearly inspired by sexist patriarchal thinking about women in its treatment of this female politician; women are objects in the sexual event and yet they, and they alone carry the moral blameworthiness for the sins of adultery and fornication. Thus, *Kwayedza* perpetuates the age old patriarchal tradition of blaming only the woman (Eve) for sin. The story’s gender biased stance is therefore unequivocal.

5.4 Double bind dilemmas in the representation of female politicians

In the first section of this chapter *Kwayedza*’s use of the wifhood and motherhood frame was critically examined and it was argued that female politicians were represented in terms of their adherence or not to the values of wifhood and motherhood. The second section of the chapter demonstrated the manner in which and the extent to which *Kwayedza* stories used the unfit and inadequate frame in their representation of Zimbabwean female politicians. The third section explores discursive strategies used by *Kwayedza* to build up double bind dilemmas in the representation of female politicians. Under this frame, the study analyses the ambiguities, ambivalences and paradoxes which manifest themselves in the representation of female politicians in the *Kwayedza* newspaper. The first double bind dilemma identified in *Kwayedza* stories examined here is the mother and non-mother dilemma as illustrated in the story *Mai Mujuru vanopedza zvidzidzo zvavo payunivhesiti* (translation: Mrs. Mujuru completes her university studies; *Kwayedza*, 25 December 2005).

Extract 10:

Mutevedzeri wemutungamiri wenyika Mai Mujuru svondo rakapera vakapemberera kupedza zvidzidzo zveBachelor of Science Degree in Management and Entrepreneurial Development izvo vakaita neyunivhesiti yeWomen's university in Africa.

Mai Mujuru nevamwe vadzidzi 138 vakavewo vokutanga pamwewo zvakare kuita zvidzidzo zvavo neyunivhesitiyi. Chimwe chakafadza pamhemberero idzi ndechokuti dzakaita dhumadhuma neapo Mai Mujuru varikupemberera gore ravo rekutanga vasarudzwa kuve mudzimai wekutanga kuve mutedzeri wenyika. Musi uyu pamhemberero idzi paive nemavhu nemarara evanhu aisanganisira mumwe mutevedzeri wenyikaCde Joseph Msika, Dr Stan Mudenge vanove gurukota rezvedzidzo yepamusoro naCde Oppah Muchinguri vanove gurukota rezvenyaya dzemadzimai nenharaunda.

Mai Mujuru vakave mumwe wemadzimai akatanga kuenda kuhondo vaine makore 16 izvo zvakakanganisa kuenderera mberi kwavo nechikoro. Asi nechido chekuwana fundo yepamberi vakatsungirira kuenda kuchikoro chero panguva yavaive gavhuna, gurukota renyika neapo vaive mutevedzeri wemukuru wenyika.

(Translation: Vice President Mrs. Mujuru last week celebrated the successful completion of her Bachelor of Science in Management and Entrepreneurial Development degree studies, which she did at the Women's University in Africa. Mrs. Mujuru and 138 other students were the university's very first graduates. Another cause for celebration was that Mrs. Mujuru's graduation coincided with celebrations of the first anniversary of her becoming the Zimbabwe's first female vice president. Many people graced this celebratory moment, including and co-Vice President Cde Joseph Msika, Minister of tertiary and higher education Dr Stan Mudenge, and Minister of Gender Cde Oppah Muchinguri. Mrs. Joice Mujuru joined the liberation struggle at the tender age of 16, which disrupted her education. However, because of her wish to be educated she made huge sacrifices to study even when she was a Governor, a Minister and Vice President).

The story above reports on Vice President Joice Mujuru's graduation ceremony. Consistently in the story, Joice Mujuru is represented in familial terms, which recall the private social spaces of motherhood and wifehood. Each of the four times that she is referred to by name, the title adjective *Mai* is affixed to her name; "*Mai Mujuru*". This is in sharp contrast with the other politicians mentioned in the story who are referred to using either of two titles, Cde (comrade) or Dr. Cde (short for comrade) is a Marxist revolutionary title associated with all ZANU-PF militants and leaders regardless of gender. In particular, the only other female politician and fellow liberation struggle heroine incorporated into the story, Oppah Muchinguri, is referred to as Cde Oppah Muchinguri, thus constructing her in purely partisan political terms. Oppah Muchinguri was born Oppah Chamu Zvipange Muchinguri in 1958. Muchinguri fought in the liberation struggle. She was the deputy

minister for External Affairs in 1989 and 1993. She was also appointed deputy minister for Environment in 1993 and 1997. In 1997 she was the minister of state in the President's office until 2000. In 2005 Muchinguri was appointed Minister of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development. She was also Governor of Manicaland province between 2000 and 2003, central committee member, Politburo member, secretary General for Women's league, Secretary for and tertiary education in the ZANU PF party. She became Minister for Higher and Tertiary Education and Water, Environment and Climate in 2014 and 2015 respectively.

The use of the adjective "*Mai*" (literally, mother) attributes to the subject two social statuses: wifehood and motherhood. Since, traditionally, motherhood is linked to marriage, and since men traditionally marry women in order to procreate, to be called "*Mai*" is to be constructed in terms of both those social functions. It seems, therefore, that appendix 5 gives prominence to the notions of natural (biological) and nurturing functions in its representation of Mrs Mujuru. This is despite the fact that Mrs Mujuru has a well documented list of public domain accomplishments spanning the military, political, and academic spheres.

The notion of wifehood cues the reader to construct the adult female subject as a being whose persona is completed by the presence of a husband in her life. Whereas the familial or relational term *Mai* (Mujuru) is generally used as an equivalent of the English title Mrs., it also connotes that Joice Mujuru is wife of Mujuru, mother of Mujuru's children or both. Bias towards the said connotation is suggested by the context in which the term is used in the story. For instance, if, in a story, all women who are married are referred to as *Mai* and the Shona title *Va* (Mr.) is affixed to all men, then there might not be an intention to highlight the motherhood or marital status of a particular woman or group of women. In the case of the extract examined above, there seems to be an intention to draw attention to Joice Mujuru's motherhood and/or status as a married woman. This cues the reader to construct her persona in terms of those frames, thus building up a married mother/politician double bind with the conflicting expectations of good motherhood and political success. The motherhood frame seems to draw the reader's attention to Mujuru's domestic roles and functions and yet what makes her newsworthy is her status as the leading Zimbabwean female politician and liberation struggle icon.

A quick survey of *Kwayedza* stories covering politicians shows that the use of gendered titles is limited to certain female politicians. For instance, in a story titled “*Paramende yorwisa masanctions*” (30 October 2008:8; my translation: Parliament fights sanctions), President Robert Mugabe is not referred to as *Baba* (father and/or husband) but as “*Mutungamiri wenyika*” (the President; literally: leader of the country), which acknowledges his political office and function. Story 6’s intention to highlight Joice Mujuru’s motherhood and marital status and obfuscate her profile as a public figure is underscored by the seniority of Joice Mujuru over Oppah Muchinguri both in the ruling party and government structures where she is a Vice President while Muchinguri is ZANU-PF Women’s League Chairperson and government minister. The said intention is further confirmed by the fact that none of the male government ministers named in the extract, all of them but Vice President Msika junior to Mujuru, is constructed in terms of fatherhood or marriage with all going by the revolutionary title of ‘Cde’ or the academic title ‘Dr’.

The location of this double bind in a story ostensibly celebrating Mujuru’s academic success seems peculiar as the private notions of motherhood and wifeness are apparently given pre-eminence in a public event where Mujuru’s status as a leading public figure is underscored by the presence of her colleagues in party and government. A possible explanation of this discursive strategy is the politicization of the title *Mai* and the noun *Amai*, such as it is used (virtually exclusively) in *Kwayedza* in relation to First Lady Grace Mugabe, to mean mother of the nation. Appendix 5 might therefore be treating Mujuru and Grace Mugabe as equals given that they are the most prominent women in ZANU-PF. Even though at the time of the publication of this story Grace Mugabe was not a politician, her marriage to President Mugabe meant she received more patronage and veneration than most, if not all, ZANU-PF politicians other than her husband. Such power and influence would therefore likely cue party members to treat the title adjective *Mai* and the noun *Amai* as superior to the more common political title Cde, thus achieving the politicization of the two Shona terms. This would therefore mean that, in this story, the motherhood/wifeness and political success binary is used to develop two levels of double bind dilemma. The surface level dilemma comprises the paradox of blending the values of motherhood with those of politics to construct the subject. The deeper level dilemma consists in using motherhood/wifeness to ostensibly elevate a female politician to the level

of 'mother of the nation', resulting in a blend of characteristics of first lady discourse and politics as *Mai* shifts from its use in general Shona to denote the private sphere of motherhood/wifehood to a political use in ZANU-PF discourse practice to denote a certain (if officially unacknowledged) rank in that social group. Thus, the subject is 'doubly' set up to fail, particularly at the deeper and less obvious level where she has no control of one of the sides in the double bind since she is not married to the president of the country.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has examined purposively selected *Kwayedza* stories to show how certain frames have been used to construct images of female politicians. The first frame is that of female politicians as mothers and wives. The study analysed *Kwayedza* stories to reveal the extent to which and the manner in which female politicians might have been constructed in terms of wifehood and motherhood. Out of 14 *Kwayedza* stories covering female politicians during the election years from 2000 to 2008, three were found to use the wifehood and motherhood frame. A major finding of the analysis is that the wifehood and motherhood frame has been used by *Kwayedza* to redefine female politicians in relation to the country's officially non political office of the first lady, resulting in a shift of power from even the state presidency to the first lady. So important is the wifehood and motherhood frame to *Kwayedza*'s construct of female politicians that even though stories that are ostensibly gender neutral may still find ways to incorporate echoes of wifehood and motherhood in their portrayal of female politicians.

The second frame which was examined is the 'female politicians as inadequate and unfit frame'. Under this frame, stories from *Kwayedza* which developed unflattering images of female politicians in order to characterize them as unfit and incapable of handling public office were examined. Such *Kwayedza* stories seem to seek less to inform than to express opinions and pronounce judgments on the female politicians they cover. Thus, the publication often resorts to rhetorical exaggeration in-order to influence readers to condemn female politicians as unfit for office on the sole basis of suspicion of immoral or criminal activity. It also uses sexist derogatory labels to predispose readers against selected female politicians. The sexist inclination of *Kwayedza* is suggested by the fact that these strategies target female politicians from both sides of the polarized political divide in Zimbabwe. Ultimately, comparison of *Kwayedza* stories that portray female politicians as unfit and inadequate for public office suggests that the different story writers draw on a pre-established content template in developing such stories, thus reinforcing the notion that the newspaper has a predisposition, if not an agenda, to cast females as inherently immoral, and, therefore, alien to the field of politics. Only one (1) story out (of the 14 *Kwayedza* stories covering female politicians during election years from 2000-2008) was found to develop a double bind dilemma in its characterization of a female politician. That story develops the mother/ non mother dilemma in its coverage of the then

most powerful and most senior female politician in the country, vice president Joice Mujuru. The story develops the paradox of singling out Joice Mujuru, the highest ranking ZANU PF and state official at the event covered for association with wifehood and motherhood, thus setting two diametrically opposed goal posts for her; politics, on one hand and wifehood and motherhood on the other. *Kwayedza's* inclination to develop such sexist double binds exclusively for female politicians is suggested by the fact that, when male politicians are covered, discourses emanating from their private domestic life are not incorporated into stories about them.

Overall, a relative lack of interest in female politicians (as demonstrated by the limited number of stories found compared to those of the other publications examined here) – which, of course may have a number of explanations – and a marked promptitude to, brutality, and glee in building up images detrimental to female politicians suggests that *Kwayedza* may be misogynic in its treatment of this social category. The next chapter examines the use of the same frames in the representation of female politicians in the *Financial Gazette*

CHAPTER SIX

ANALYSIS OF *THE FINANCIAL GAZETTE* WEEKLY NEWSPAPER

6.2 Introduction

This study is concerned with the treatment of female politicians by three Zimbabwean national weekly newspapers, *Kwayedza*, *Financial Gazette*, and *The Standard*. The study is particularly concerned with frames used to construct female politicians by each of these three publications. This chapter focuses on the privately owned *Financial Gazette* newspaper while Chapter Seven below examines *The Standard*, which is also privately owned. Chapter Four focused on the portrayal of female politicians in the Shona language *Kwayedza* weekly newspaper. *Kwayedza* stories used the wifehood and motherhood frame in conjunction with double bind dilemmas to portray female politicians as unfit and incapable of holding public office. This chapter examines the representation of female politicians in the *Financial Gazette* newspaper.

Concerning the choice of subjects to cover, the *Financial Gazette* shows an unequivocal preference for ZANU PF female politicians, particularly prominent politician Joice Mujuru. Twenty-one (21) stories on female politicians published in the four election years between 2000 and 2008 by the *Financial Gazette* were found. Eleven (11) of those stories covered only ZANU PF female politicians while only three (3) were dedicated solely to MDC female politicians. One (1) story was about a Zimbabwe Union of Democrats (ZUD) female politician, one (1) article was on Zimbabwean female politicians in general and the remaining five (5) on both female and male politicians. Of the total of twenty one (21) stories eight (8) cover Joice Mujuru and all eight (8) incorporate her picture. It would therefore appear that the *Financial Gazette* prioritises not only the coverage of ZANU PF female politicians, but also that of Joice Mujuru in particular. A possible reason for this bias towards ZANU PF in terms of sheer coverage could be the fact that the newspaper is owned by a prominent ZANU PF politician, Gideon Gono (Gandari, 2010). While the prominence given to Joice Mujuru could be explained by the fact that in 2005 she was appointed ZANU PF and Zimbabwe's first female Vice President the *Financial Gazette* stories on her are critical of her elevation to that position. Ownership of the newspaper by

a ZANU PF politician does not therefore seem to have swayed editorial policy in her favour. On the contrary, it would seem the *Financial Gazette* focuses on ZANU PF female politicians in order to criticise them. Given the ownership of the Financial Gazette, it is possible that the publication is engaged in ZANU PF factional politics.

This chapter focuses on the headlines, pictures, main news stories, as well as sources of stories on female politicians found in the *Financial Gazette*. It makes use of the multi-modal approach to analyse the *Financial Gazette* stories. Close textual analysis is important in this chapter as it highlights the surface and hidden meanings in the stories concerning female politicians. The chapter will also make use of the agenda setting theory, frame theory and the theory of representation.

The chapter examines six stories from *Financial Gazette* published on the following dates 22-28 April 2002, 25-31 July 2002, 1-7 June 2000, 13-19 January 2005, 5-11 January 2005 and 22-28 May 2008. Of these stories two cover MDC politicians while the other four are dedicated to ZANU PF female politicians. Of those stories six were retained for detailed analysis in this chapter. These six were found to be representative of both the distribution of the newspaper's attention to the two dominant political formations, ZANU PF and MDC, as well as the newspaper's treatment of female politicians on both sides of the political divide. The images of women as depicted in the *Financial Gazette* will be critically discussed under the three sections which are:

- female politicians as mothers and housewives;
- female politicians as inadequate and unfit politicians; and
- double bind dilemma in the representation of female politicians.

6.2 Female politicians as mothers and wives

The tendency, noted in *Kwayedza* (see Chapter Five), to use the motherhood frame to trivialise Zimbabwean female politicians continues in the privately-owned English language *Financial Gazette*. An example is the story "Still waiting for the promised land" published on 22-28 April 2002. This is a story by female *Financial Gazette* reporter, Grace Mutandwa, about Lucia Matibenga, leader of the MDC women's assembly. This was a feature article

on the political career of Lucia Matibenga. Its overarching generic structure is that of the biography. It uses such discursive elements as dates, names of places, events anecdotes to weave together the story of the political career of Lucia Matibenga. It traces her history from the involvement of the youthful Matibenga in the 1970s war of liberation through her activism as a prominent unionist and an activist fighting for a new constitution for Zimbabwe right upto her involvement in the MDC, including her rise to the helm of the women's wing of that party. Some of her political activities include having been the candidate for Shurugwi seat for MDC. In 2009 she became the minister of labour and public service until 2013. She currently belongs to MDC Renewal headed by Tendai Biti.

A prominent stylistic feature of the article is the incorporation of Matibenga's voice mostly through direct discourse representation. Consequently, although Mutandwa is the narrator of the story, the reader gets the impression that S/he is listening to Matibenga telling her own story. The reporter has therefore, made the conscious decision to give the impression that the story is told from the subject point of view. "Still waiting for the promised land" is therefore, an important political text written by a female reporter about a female politician. Moreover, the discursive strategies deployed by the reporter reflect an inclination to be sympathetic to Matibenga and her political orientation. In terms of its content, the story first discusses Matibenga's life and dedication to the ZANU PF party and later her discontent with it, which compelled her to join the opposition Movement MDC as a founding member. It also alludes to Matibenga's participation in the 1970s war of liberation in Zimbabwe before tracing her rise as a trade unionist to become the first female vice president of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) and the president of the Southern African Trade Union Coordination Council (SATUCC). The climax of her political career was her appointment to the powerful post of Minister of Public Service in the government of national unity that was formed after the 2008 elections.

Matibenga's story appears to be gender neutral but close scrutiny of the text reveals discourse strategies that cue the reader to construct female politicians in terms of motherhood and marriage. The reporter uses a very brief allusion by Matibenga to her late husband to provide a brief autobiography of Joel Matibenga, to suggest that Lucia Matibenga benefits from the political legacy of her late husband. Lucia Matibenga is quoted as saying:

Extract 11:

It was during that period that I met Saviour Joel Matibenga who was to become my husband. He was a ZIPRA cadre who was incarcerated on several occasions.

The reporter then proceeds to elaborate on issues that Matibenga merely alluded to by providing details of Joel Matibenga's military and political career:

Extract 12:

Her husband, now late and buried at the Midlands provincial heroes acre, was part of the team of the Patriotic Front combining ZANU PF and Nkomo's guerrilla leaders which took part in the 1979 Lancaster House Agreement talks in London which ushered in Zimbabwe's independence.

The reporter's expansion of Matibenga's cursory allusion to how she met her husband elevates Mr Matibenga's status from a mere detail to a major feature of that story. Although he has been dead for many years, Lucia Matibenga has continued to make headlines as a political powerhouse in her own right. The statement from the story testifies to this thus:

Extract 13:

Her husband, now late and buried at the Midlands provincial Heroes acre, was part of the team of the Patriotic Front combining ZANU PF and Nkomo's guerrilla leaders which took part in the 1979 Lancaster House Agreement talks in London which ushered in Zimbabwe's independence.

The *Financial Gazette* is pressured to include the husband's political profile which includes his role in the liberation struggle and his involvement in the Lancaster negotiations towards independence so as to boost Matibenga's credentials by association. This is despite the fact that Matibenga's achievements as outlined in the story are much more than those of her husband and even much more heroic. Her successes have also spanned decades while the husband had a shorter political career. This ambiguous representation of Matibenga puts her in a double-bind. The story celebrates her but at the same time success is hinged on husband. One reason for that representational impasse is because the face of politics has largely been perceived as male. Women's achievements are mostly attributed to men's supportive role as if to imply that women cannot accomplish heroic feats on their own. Society views men as the natural politicians.

According to Pantti (2006),

[...] this cultural model of the politician as `male, and of politics as an essentially male pursuit, affects the ways in which politics is reported. What they are saying is that the image and language of mediated politics supports the status quo (male as norm) and regards female politicians as novelties, or as “others”.

Judging from the above statement, it is evident that the reporter understands the dynamics and expectations of society and its expectations of a woman. Society gives value to wifehood and motherhood as the primary values of a woman. While there may not be anything wrong in associating women with the biological identities of wifehood and motherhood, these roles can be constricting if and when they are projected as the only roles that women should aspire for. In the story the, reporter succumbs to the pressure to portray Matibenga in relation to her familial circles. The reporter discusses her as, a mother of four adult children.

Matibenga says her family has been her main support and inspiration in her whirlwind campaign against the ZANU PF government across the country. The reporter frames her as a mother to satisfy cultural and societal expectations. Kian (2007:5) contents that, “Media have the potential to shape, change, and re-enforce values and attitudes”. The reporter further extends these relations by introducing Matibenga’s husband. He is represented as a powerful person that also played a crucial role in the Zimbabwean politics. The irony is that the discussion and inclusion of Matibenga’s children and husband is to further represent her as not only a dedicated politician but also a committed mother and wife. These images of wife and mother are used to suggest that Matibenga can only be accepted as a stable politician who represents love and responsibility through the familial relations associated with her. In other words in the story, initially the politician is framed in a motherly and wife role. However, there is evidence by the reporter to avoid negative stereotypes and biases on her as a female politician because this can be counter-productive. It is argued here that this portrayal can point to some improvement in the way female politicians are framed and represented.

The *Financial Gazette* media house policy portrays oppositional politics, especially the MDC, favourably. Visually, Matibenga’s picture in the story is also full of life and happiness that may denote a confident, comfortable and content person. The visual reinforces positive images of Matibenga confined in the verbal signifiers in the story.

This is easily explained by the multi-modal approach for which newspaper genres can support each other.

The story is anchored in motherhood because of the mention of her children. The double bind dilemma here is that in the patrolling eyes of patriarchy, Matibenga can only either be a good mother who is domesticated or bad mother who values public life but one cannot be successful in both. The fact that these strategies are incorporated into a story within a so called pro opposition newspaper suggests the extent to which Zimbabwean media houses are entrenched in patriarchal values and attitudes. The story reads like like it is celebrating Matibenga's success and yet it cannot avoid a double bind that threatens to ruin her image as a female politician. She has to live up to the competing and contradictory images of a mother and a politician, two roles that run parallel to each other and can never converge. This representational impasse is likely to cue the reader to view Matibenga's political career and personal life as doomed to end in failure, thus confirming the view that, "media images of women have been regarded as contributing to women's second class status in society, limiting their contribution to wider democratic discussions and their individual life chances" (Carter, 2011:3).

The *Financial Gazette* (25-31 July 2002) continues to use the motherhood frame in a story titled "ZANU PF, MDC lock horns in Kadoma polls". The reporter, Sydney Masamvu, writes about Edita Matamisa, an MDC prospective mayoral candidate for the city of Kadoma. The context of the story is an alleged move by ZANU PF to prevent Matamisa from holding an election campaign rally. The frustrated Matamisa retreats to her home where she is followed by large numbers of MDC supporters singing and chanting her praises in defiance of the measures taken by her opponents to frustrate her campaign. Edita Matamisa was the MDC candidate for Kadoma parliamentary elections in 2000.

The story can be divided into two rhetorical stages. On the surface of the text, the story associates Matamisa with power and leadership. The reporter describes her as a strong-willed and powerful woman. This is suggested by words such as "bold" and "courageous". To build up Matamisa's stature as a leader, the story argues that Matamisa has held a number of leadership positions in her life, such as headmistress and also a sub-deacon at her church. It uses that as evidence that Matamisa is a good politician.

The notions of power and leadership are underscored by a statement by Ndabeni Ncube who was the MDC Mayor for Bulawayo: “When you look at Matamisa you see the stuff that our party is made of: bold and courageous women who stand for what is right and on a matter of principle”. Finally, as revealed in the analysis of *Kwayedza* above, the “*Amai*” (Mother) metaphor, as in the slogan “*Amai ndizvo*”, is used here to suggest that Matamisa is a supremely powerful female politician in the MDC party. However, a keener analysis shows that this story also uses three double binds in its portrayal of Matamisa, thus hinting that, despite celebrating her as the story does, Matamisa is bound to fail as a politician in the long run.

The reporter reinforces motherhood stereotypes by discussing women as peace loving people who can easily foster progress and change the face of politics. Matamisa is described as a peace loving person. This is a well known stereotype, a biased expectation often imposed on female politicians by the media. Matamisa is further described in more feminine terms as a clean, loving person with the potential of uniting Zimbabweans within the MDC. These feminine characteristics are encapsulated in the slogan “*Amai ndizvo*” (mother is the one) used to salute her by the adoring crowd gathered at her home. The title “*Amai*” (mother) makes the reader to regard Matamisa more as a mother than an office bearing politician. The various suggestions of patriarchally defined femininity and motherhood noted above in conjunction with the slogan “*Amai ndizvo*” and the notion of eager supporters spontaneously converging at Mrs Matamisa’s home builds up an image of Matamisa as a true mother of Kadoma. Matamisa is therefore constructed as a good mother uniting her ‘children’, the people of Kadoma around the domestic hearth. This is an elaborate use of the motherhood frame to describe a female politician. The contradiction between the surface and profound textual levels in the portrayal of Matamisa is indicative of the story’s use of double bind in its apparently celebratory portrayal of the MDC female politician.

Much as this story may appear to celebrate Matamisa, it sets her up to fail on both the motherhood and political aspects of her life since the two are incompatible social practices. A subsidiary double bind arises in juxtaposing the notion of moral purity suggested by Matamisa’s Christian identity with notions of political activism, a domain proverbially known as the ‘dirty game’. The reader is cued to expect Matamisa to achieve the impossible feat

of successfully navigating the political space while remaining morally undefiled Christian woman. The third and last double bind used in the story collocates politics and marriage in the story's construction of Matamisa. This is achieved through the use of representing discourse to subtly incorporate the patriarchal discourse of marriage into this portrayal of Matamisa:

Extract 14:

“The MDC will win Kadoma because of what it stands for. I am confident that Kadoma residents will overwhelmingly endorse my candidature to allow the town to make a new start,” said Matamisa, flanked by Cornelius her husband of 31 years.

Note that this is the very first time that the story incorporates a verbatim quotation of Matamisa. The representing clause “said Matamisa, flanked by Cornelius her husband of 31 years” associates the possible future first female mayor of a Zimbabwean city with marriage and the patriarchal virtues of fidelity to one's spouse and the longevity of marriage. The suggestion is thus made that Matamisa's success in marriage will ‘naturally’ lead to her success in politics, which of course is a fallacy. The collocation of the very first utterance of Matamisa with the image of her being flanked by her husband suggests to the reader that in a God fearing society, a female politician's authority to speak, which is arguably the primary function of a political leader, derives from her husband. Thus the *Financial Gazette* suggests that a woman is incomplete without her husband and that her utterances are validated by her husband. Such a characterization of women that flip –flops between mother, wife and politician suggests the instability of the meanings associated with the signifier woman.

The analysis of the story has shown that the double bind discursive strategy can be a highly effective tool in the representation of other frames of female politicians. The manner in which this story has used double binds to build up the wifeness and motherhood metaphors of Matamisa puts her on an untenable pedestal where public interest is drawn to her private life so as to use it as a yardstick in assessing her suitability for public office. The risk that this may eventually become the basis on which she is rejected by the voting public is heightened by her portrayal as a near perfect mother and wife. The ambivalence in the portrayal of Matamisa reminds one of Bhabha's (1994) view that a stereotype is in fact never stable as it can command conflicting meanings.

Having explored the slippery collocation of images of women as mother, wife and politician, the next section critically examines the representational impasse of women as inadequate and unfit for political office as depicted in some stories in the *Financial Gazette*.

6.3 Female politicians as inadequate and unfit politicians

The story of 1-7 June 2000 titled “*Lesabe’s Political comeback faces tough, stony path*”, by Njabulo Ncube, illustrates the *Financial Gazette*’s use of the inadequate and unfit frame in its portrayal of Zimbabwean female politicians. It reports about the purported rejection of Thenjiwe Lesabe’s bid to stand as ZANU PF candidate for the Gwanda North Parliamentary seat in that year’s legislative elections. Lesabe is represented as a political failure that the ruling ZANU PF party wants to impose in Gwanda only to be resisted by the party’s members from that constituency.

The next discussion explores the appointment of Lesabe as a candidate for ZANU PF in Gwanda in the Matabeleland region. Thenjiwe Lesabe was born Thenjiwe Virginia Khumalo in 1932. She joined the Southern Rhodesia African National congress 1957. In 1960 she joined the NDP and was the chairlady of the women’s committee in the Bulawayo district. When The People’s Caretaker council was formed in 1963 Lesabe was elected the national executive of ZAWU in 1975. In 1980 Lesabe was elected MP for Matobo under the PF-ZAPU. She also represented Umzingwane in parliament 1980. Lesabe also served as deputy secretary for women’s affairs in a committee chaired by Simon Muzenda under ZANU PF. In 2004 when Sally Mugabe died Lesabe was appointed secretary for women’s affairs and later politburo member. In 2009 she left ZANU PF and rejoined the resuscitated ZAPU in which she was elected chairperson of the council of elders in 2010.

The story uses certain textual and linguistic strategies to cue the reader to view this female politician as not only unpopular but inherently unqualified and unfit to hold political office. Insinuations of failure are captured in the very first statement of the story, which reads,

Extract 15:

Gwanda –A desperate bid by the governing ZANU PF party to rescue the head of its women’s league, Thenjiwe Lesabe from political oblivion by imposing her in the Gwanda North constituency has hit a snag because of opposition from most party supporters, it was established last week.

The adjective “desperate”, cues the reader to think that Lesabe is a creature of the ZANU PF national leadership who has lost all relevance at constituency level. Indeed, the political party is represented as “imposing” Lesabe on Gwanda North Constituency. The location of that adjective “desperate” at the head of the article reflects an intention to use the story to dismiss Lesabe as a loser. The idea of ‘a bid hitting a snag’ suggests Lesabe’s dependence on underhand dealings to remain politically viable, thus bolstering the idea that she does not deserve to be an MP. To further strengthen the impression of rejection of a failed female politician, the story uses the vague but strong adjective “most” to qualify opposition to Lesabe. The desperation of Lesabe’s political situation is underscored in the next sentence by the nominal phrase “political oblivion”, which suggests finality and irreversibility of her fall from grace. Thus the story passes judgment on Lesabe’s viability and future as a ZANU PF politician. The subjectivity of the terms discussed here suggests the bias of the reporter and the newspaper in which he writes.

The first of these is the multiplicity of arguments to support its position that Lesabe’s fate as a politician is inescapable rejection. The title of the story “Lesabe’s Political comeback faces tough, stony path”, summarises the challenges Lesabe is likely to face in her effort to be elected MP for Gwanda North constituency. The noun “come-back” suggests a resurrected or resuscitated person, a notion fraught with hope that is however swamped by a sea of words that show that her rebirth is a stillbirth. The word “stony” suggests a rough, unforgiving and unyielding opposition to her as a politician. The reporter uses a mugshot of Lesabe which depicts her as an unsmiling old woman whose age is emphasised by white hair showing under a hat that emphasises her age, thus strengthening the notion that she needs to retire from active politics and age gracefully. This notion of age and women is emphasized by Lauzen and Dozier (2005:444) who argue that:

... research shows that women are also portrayed as less successful the older they get and less appealing overall, meanwhile men get portrayed as more successful and appealing the older they get. The research also shows that women's success are based on youth and looks, while men's success are more directed at achievements such as high status occupations.

The fact that she looks old and sad also fits well with the discourses of mercy redemption and political resurrection by ZANU PF. This is building an argument that Lesabe is being "recycled" by her party. Terms such as "oblivion" suggests that Lesabe as a mediocre politician. Words and phrases such as "recycled", "from the archives", and "underperformer" decisively convince the electorate that Lesabe is an unfit and unqualified politician. Her history as a seasoned politician is undermined in the story. Lesabe's rejection is underscored through the preparedness of ZANU PF members to defect from the party if she is imposed on them.

The story uses discourses and representational strategies to build the argument that Lesabe is unfit to be MP for the Gwanda North constituency. It incorporates two sets of witnesses of varying political stature within ZANU PF. The reporter first uses indirect discourse representation to incorporate the hostility of some senior ZANU PF members and officials towards the candidature of Lesabe:

Extract 16:

ZANU PF officials in Gwanda said they discussed the issue of Lesabe during a stormy meeting this week, where many publicly said the new constituency had been created solely to accommodate her. "People told her to her face at the meeting that she was not welcome because she comes from another part of Matebeleland South, where she was a legislator for many years" one insider said.

Lesabe is also alienated by the generality of ZANU PF supporters from the Gwanda North constituency. Indirect discourse representation together with free indirect discourse representation are used to report the views of this group:

Extract 17:

The imposition of Lesabe by ZANU PF's politburo had created sharp differences within the party's provincial executive members here, as well as among supporters. The supporters feel she is unqualified for the role and to make their point clear (sic) they argue that if ZANU PF insists on her as a candidate for their constituency they would rather vote for the opposition party Movement for democratic change (MDC).

The first sentence of Extract 20 quoted here is in the voice of the narrator. This voice however, draws upon the voices of three ZANU PF structures: the party's politburo, its provincial executive and its supporters. Such use of free indirect representation is likely intended to give the impression that the reader is witnessing a debate among the various organs of ZANU PF. This is an important discursive strategy to show that the politburo has been selfish and undemocratic in selecting Lesabe to stand as the party's candidate for Gwanda North. In the second sentence of Extract 20, the narrator-reporter incorporates the voice of Gwanda North ZANU PF supporters through indirect discourse representation. The sentence comprises two independent clauses each reporting an utterance attributed to the supporters. The representing clause, "The supporters feel", infuses the notions of sentiment and emotion into the utterance "she is unqualified for the role". The ambivalence of the subject "supporters", helps to build up the impression of mass revulsion in response to the nomination of Lesabe thus making her rejection a personal and subjective reaction of each individual party supporter. The reader is cued to interpret this subjectivity as addressed not only at Lesabe the politician but also Lesabe the person, the woman, thus suggesting that the label 'unqualified' maybe extended to female politicians in general. The second utterance attributed to the supporters is a threat to the party's leadership: The supporters are prepared to join bitter rival MDC if Lesabe remains their candidate. The immediate context of this threat is the representing clause "to make their point clear (sic) they argue that".

This clause reflects the resolve of the supporters on this matter. Combined with the threat, it underscores the very emotional and subjective response of the constituency to the appointment of the female politician Lesabe thereby, further illustrating the notion that Lesabe's gender is also in question.

The reporter's determination to portray Lesabe as unsuitable is reflected in his recourse to repetition:

Extract 18

Party insiders said this week the imposition of Lesabe by ZANU PF's politburo had created sharp differences within the party's provincial executive members here, as well as among supporters, with many threatening to vote for the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) should she stand in the constituency in the June 24-25parliamentary election.

The utterances of subject "party insiders" reiterate and emphasise utterances of subjects represented in Extract 21 above. The reporter also uses language that is derogatory in his description of Lesabe to project his lack of faith in her as a politician. He says that:

Extract 19

Lesabe, who doubles up as national employment Minister drifted into the political wilderness in March this year when she was trounced by a political novice, Thomas Dube, in the ruling party's primaries to choose a candidate for her Mzingwane constituency in Matabeleland South.

Phrases such as "drifted into the political wilderness" denote a clueless and confused individual. Her failure to win in the ZANU PF primaries is exaggerated and used as an excuse or suggestion that she is not an able politician. Words such as 'drifted' suggest rudderless and directionless motion as Lesabe navigates a political space portrayed as a dangerous "wilderness". The noun 'wilderness' and the attendant notion of danger evoke the practice of hunting, a traditionally male preserve in Zimbabwe, thus underscoring the suggestion that Lesabe is a woman in male territory and therefore bound to fail.

Lesabe's weakness is evidenced by the report that "she was trounced by a political novice, Thomas Dube, in the ruling party's primaries to choose a candidate for her Mzingwane constituency in Matabeleland south". "Trounced" suggests a person that is beaten totally out of shape which emphasizes her unpopular status as a politician.

Negative stereotypes are further developed in the story of 13-19 January, 2005 titled "Just how did they arrive at the 30 percent quota system? The fuzzy maths of SADC". The story queries the ascension of Joice Mujuru to the post of Vice-president of ZANU PF and Zimbabwe in 2005. It locates this appointment in the context of the 1997 Southern African Development Community (SADC) ruling giving a 30 representation quota for women in the governments and civil services of member countries. The reporter, Mavis Makuni, debates the merits and demerits of the SADC declaration of the quota system with Mujuru as sole case study.

Makuni, who is a woman, dismisses the 2005 promotion of Joice Mujuru to the Vice Presidency of ZANU-PF as well as the State as undeserved and shows ZANU PF's propensity to abuse the SADC protocol on gender equity to score cheap political goals. She contends that such abuse of a noble regional stance on the condition of women actually reverses gains by the feminist movement since independence as the appointment of inept and unqualified female politicians to positions of responsibility sets them up to fail, thus suggesting to the general public that women are inherently unfit for public office. The story uses claims of widespread opposition to Mujuru's ascendancy to validate its argument against ZANU PF's use of the gender quota system. Makuni uses her punch line – "Just how did they arrive at the 30% quota system?" – and headline – "The fuzzy Maths of SADC" – to preface the story. She thus places a rhetorical question ("Just how did they arrive at the 30% quota system?") in the most prominent position of her article, thus using insinuations of ridicule and to cast aspersions on the SADC quota system and beneficiary, Joice Mujuru's suitability for the position of Vice President. Makuni cues the reader to also trivialise Joice Mujuru's credentials as a politician and her suitability for the lofty position of Vice President. The "fuzzy maths" of the SADC female quota decision becomes a metonym for the "fuzzy female Vice President" Zimbabwe gets as a result of that policy. This collapsing of the two phenomena is apparent in the following extract:

Extract 20:

The 30 percent quota system has generated considerable interest in Zimbabwe because of the ascendancy of former freedom fighter Joice Mujuru to the position of Vice- President.

Given the time lapse between the promulgation of the SADC protocol in 1997 and Mujuru's appointment to the Vice Presidency in 2005, the suggestion that public opinion has spontaneously made the connection between the two rather is preposterous. The insinuation is that the ruling ZANU PF expediently invoked this policy to justify the rise of Joice Mujuru to the Vice Presidency because her political credentials alone would not have sufficed. The rhetorical effect is to suggest that Joice Mujuru is an incapable politician unfit to be the nation's Vice President. In fact, Makuni portrays ZANU PF as not particularly concerned with gender parity within the party or state institutions:

Extract 21:

In addition, speculation has been rife that the ruling party presidium's decision to elevate Mujuru was not exactly underpinned by a commitment to gender balance. Rather, critics say, it came handy as a way to thwart the political ambitions of the Speaker of parliament Emmerson Mnangagwa.

ZANU PF's top leadership, the presidium, is thus cast as Machiavellian and incapable of taking and adhering to a principled position on gender parity. The suggestion that Mujuru was used by powerful ZANU PF politicians in factional power games reduces her to a mere pawn available to the real poles of power within her party. The fact that the top brass in ZANU PF's highest decision making body, the Politburo, are men strengthens the notion that female politicians wield no real power within the party. Indeed, the infamous pro-Emerson Mnangagwa 'Tsholotsho Declaration' of the same year attacked the appointment of Joice Mujuru as Vice President, arguing that she was not fit to occupy such a political office. The shadow of doubt is continual and recurs throughout Mukuni's article as more questions are raised than answered. One such question is implicitly raised in the allusion to the barring of male candidates in constituencies reserved for the female quota.

Extract 22:

The policy has also been invoked to bar certain individuals from contesting party primary elections. The male candidates were simply told the constituency was being reserved for women.

To reserve seats for female politicians is seen as suggesting women cannot compete with men for political positions. Note that this extract concerns the selection of ZANU PF candidates for the 2005 parliamentary elections. Its collocation with criticism on the ascendancy of Joice Mujuru to the Vice Presidency, however, cues the reader to think that more capable male candidates have been overlooked by a party hypocritically taking advantage of the SADC gender quota declaration to thwart the ambitions of certain males in the party. President Mugabe's "I have a dream" remark is incorporated to suggest that Mujuru's nomination cannot be contested. Emerson Mnangagwa is explicitly barred from competing with Joice Mujuru. Makuni's sole allusion to President Mugabe underscores her suggestion that the party is aware of Mujuru's unsuitability for the position of Vice President: In his enigmatic "I have a dream" remark President Robert Mugabe gave a very clear hint that Mujuru could be his anointed successor as the country's next president.

The phrase "I have a dream" recalls Martin Luther King Jnr., who was a church pastor and human rights activist. Mugabe's allusion to the legendary figure was obviously meant to make his preference of Mujuru as Vice President more palatable to his party. The notion of "a dream" also makes Mujuru's nomination seem inevitable and inherently uncontestable as it echoes the religious discourse of divine revelation, a strategy particularly effective in a Zimbabwe awash with all manner of Pentecostal revelatory ministries. Further, by incorporating President Mugabe's invocation of Martin Luther King Jnr, a legend of the civil rights and black emancipation struggle to validate his choice of Joice Mujuru, Makuni suggests a desperate lack of credentials to back Mujuru's nomination. Makuni's construction of the unsuitability of Joice Mujuru for the position of Vice President is underscored by the fact that, despite all the strategies noted above, dissenting voices within the party take bold and aggressive action to thwart her rise:

Extract 23

Mujuru's appointment was however not welcomed by everyone in the ruling party. As the Tsholotsho indaba, which was allegedly organized to derail the historic appointment, has demonstrated, there was outright opposition to her candidacy.

Makuni uses the conjunction 'however' to introduce the narrative of the failure of attempts to prop up an unfit female politician. The "Tsholotsho *indaba*" or meeting is used to symbolize intra-ZANU PF scepticism about Mujuru's leadership credentials as well as the open rebellion it incites among senior ZANU PF members represented by those who organized and attended the *indaba*. The prominence of such adjectives as "controversial" and "fuzzy", which simply mean unclear, serves to cast aspersions on Mujuru's claim to power. This is despite her well-documented exploits as a prominent liberation war heroine and the only female to hold a ministerial position in all of Zimbabwe's governments since Independence in 1980.

In terms of visual strategies, a mugshot of Mujuru with a downcast expression seems intended to suggest her own doubts about her credentials. This picture chosen by the newspaper is a clear contrast of the pictures of a happy Joice Mujuru that were used by other publications. The juxtaposition of that picture with the title "The fuzzy maths of SADC" as well as the fact that Mujuru is actually facing those words may be intended to give the impression that the words of the title are an indictment and judgment of her.

The discourse strategies used here show clearly that even though the story examined here is ostensibly about the SADC system, it is actually an attack of the historic rise of female politician Joice Mujuru to the second most powerful office on the land. That attack casts doubt on female politicians' ability to wield power at the highest levels. The fact that the story's author is a woman lends even more credence to the notion. What is, however, also interesting to note is the double standards by the reporter where Joice Mujuru's rise to power was concerned. The reporter clearly criticizes the 30 percent quota system by the SADC as having loopholes because in Zimbabwe it was used to help women such as Joice Mujuru to assume power. The reporter, however, supports the United States policies that seem aggressive in the endorsement of women in politics.

The views popularized in the *Financial Gazette* are clearly sceptical of women's capacity to fill the highest political office. The tendency of the newspaper to look down on women who aspire to become politicians is further amplified in the overt characterization of women as entrapped in a double bind dilemma in politics.

6.4 Double bind dilemma in the representation of female politicians

The double bind discourse strategy can be deployed longitudinally over a period of time as a newspaper builds up a certain construct of a group of female politicians. To illustrate this strategy, two stories about two prominent ZANU PF female politicians published in *The Financial Gazette* in the same year around the same period (the period leading up to the 2008 general elections) are examined one after the other. These politicians are Edna Madzongwe and Joice Mujuru. Both are ZANU PF stalwarts, veterans of Zimbabwe's liberation war, and both have been politically active throughout all the years of Zimbabwe's independence. At the time the stories examined here were written in 2008, Edna Madzongwe was Senate President while Joice Mujuru was Vice President of both ZANU PF and Zimbabwe. Coincidentally, they both ascended to those positions in 2005. They are, therefore, very powerful women who represent the elite of ZANU PF female politicians. The two stories examined here work together to build up a woman/female freak double bind of ZANU PF female politicians. The first story shows *The Financial Gazette's* attitude towards aggressive ZANU PF female politicians epitomized by Edna Madzongwe.

The story implicitly condemns her as an unfeminine female freak. The first story is titled "Madzongwe intimidates prosecutors". It denounces Edna Madzongwe's alleged attempt to manipulate prosecutors to fraudulently cause Richard Thomas Etheridge, the legal owner of Stockdale Farm, which Madzongwe had allegedly invaded and occupied, to be evicted from the said farm. The story claims that because of Madzongwe's reprehensible conduct, three prosecutors were compelled to recuse themselves from the case. Read in isolation, such a story appears typical of independent press reporting on the conduct of ZANU PF politicians, both male and female, during the Fast Track Land Reform Programme period. However, when read in the context of other stories, such as that about Joice Mujuru, the story about Madzongwe suddenly makes Madzongwe the 'sinner' in a double bind involving 'saints' such as Mujuru. Here is how the story begins:

Extract 24:

Outgoing Senate President Edna Madzongwe has resorted to intimidating prosecutors to win a land case after they allegedly refused to prosecute a white farmer she wants evicted.

The verb “intimidating” suggests a corrupt and violent politician who intends to use her political office to frighten people in order to succeed in her intentions and subvert court proceedings. Another verb “resorted to” implies Madzongwe’s desperation to have her way, thus suggesting her selfishness. The reporter shows displeasure in Madzongwe’s alleged aggressive behaviour and this is clearly represented when it is pointed out that:

Extract 25:

After the prosecutors recused themselves from the case, Madzongwe stormed into their offices on April 29 and accused them of refusing to deal with the case because they thought that the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) would come to power.

The verb ‘storming’ appears intended to cue the reader to view Madzongwe as emotional, rude, aggressive, arrogant, and violent. Storming suggests forcefully entering other people’s spaces without warning or being allowed to enter. Madzongwe is therefore represented as a ruthless person that has no respect for the professional spaces. This purported irrationality evokes bad character traits linked to women in patriarchal environments. The reporter magnifies the significance of Madzongwe’s aggressive irrationality by depicting the effects of her intimidation on prosecutors constructed as her victims: “The prosecutors are said to be now living in fear as war veterans and ZANU PF supporters have threatened to deal with them”.

The journalist uses words such as ‘fear’ to emphasise the disturbed state of the prosecutors who appear traumatised. The use of war veterans is also meant to highlight the potential of violence since the war veterans of Zimbabwe are generally and wrongfully associated with shedding blood. This violent history of the war veterans who also include Madzongwe is the reason why prosecutors feel intimidated.

The fear of intimidation is further highlighted by the prosecutor who alludes to the case being a dangerous one and his lack of freedom of speech concerning the matter. The reporter notes that the Chegutu prosecutors refused to comment on the matter. The Mashonaland West area prosecutor said: “My hands are tied I’m not allowed to comment”. The story is laced with the discourse of intimidation that aim at portraying Madzongwe as an unfit and incapable politician. The phrase “deal with them” also supports the aspect of instilling fear in the prosecutors by Madzongwe. Besides the ruthlessness implied, her mental stability is also questioned through the reporter who says that:

Extract 26:

Madzongwe stormed the prosecutors’ offices and started shouting at them. She said ‘you are now refusing to deal with my case because you think the MDC is coming into power’. She is now interfering and compromising the work of law officers”, a source said.

Shouting in such a situation denotes an emotionally unstable and ill-behaved person. It also points to her emotional instability, especially when she does it in a public place. It would appear that she intended to use her political office as she insinuates the double standards that she thought were now being shown by the prosecutors. The reporter represents her as an uncouth and corrupt woman who does not respect the law when he/she pointed out that Madzongwe brought about 30 to 50 ZANU PF supporters to try and intimidate the prosecutors. Unfortunately the case did not take place as the prosecutors recused themselves.

The reporter, therefore, does not see Madzongwe as a good and balanced politician, most likely because he believes it is unbecoming of a woman to be emotional, aggressive and violent. The characteristics for which Madzongwe is criticised are however common and celebrated among her male counterparts in ZANU PF and in government since these are the very same qualities that are required to lead a revolution such as the Third Chimurenga and its FTLP.

Such treatment of Madzongwe is therefore tantamount to an attempt to exclude her from a historic process instigated and championed by her party and government. The *USA Today* (cited in Brooks 2010:1) states that, “The greatest challenge for women candidates is to demonstrate ‘toughness’ in a way voters are comfortable with. ‘If you’re too strong, you’re labelled a bad word. If you’re not strong enough, you get run over’”. In the context of political parties, it is also evident that female politicians feel pressured to adopt male characteristics in order to be taken seriously in politics. This pressure suggests a double bind dilemma in which women are enjoined on one hand, to look motherly and also on the other hand to appear aggressive to satisfy the dictates of political office, which is viewed as an inherently male precinct. Tannin (2007) cited in Brooks (2010:1) argues that, “Our image of a politician, a leader, a manager, anyone in authority, is still at odds with our expectations of a woman. To the extent that if a woman is feminine, she’s seen as weak. To the extent that she puts it aside and is forceful, aggressive and decisive, she’s not seen as a good woman”. In this instance, it is clear that Madzongwe is being represented as being unsuitable for public office for unfeminine behaviour. The tough conduct that Madzongwe shows, of forcefully grabbing land from white farmer Etheridge is hardly feminine and the reader is cued to regard it as disappointing. The paradox of woman/female freak is thus salient throughout the story. This is in sharp contrast with the treatment of another ZANU PF female politician, Joice Mujuru, in the same newspaper. This is aptly captured in the definition by *The catalyst report* (2007:1) which defines the double bind as,

A psychological impasse created when contradictory demands are made of an individual...so that no matter which directive is followed, the response will be construed as incorrect or... situation in which a person must choose between equally unsatisfactory alternatives; a punishing and inescapable dilemma.

The intention to construct ZANU PF female politicians, such as Madzongwe and Mujuru, in terms of the woman/female freak double bind is confirmed by the claim that legendary ZANLA combatant Joice Mujuru, famous for single-handedly shooting down a Rhodesian Air Force helicopter during the 1970s liberation war and known beneficiary of the often violent FTLRP, is a proponent of non-violence in politics. From the outset, Joice Mujuru is portrayed as a saint. The story in the *Financial Gazette* of 5-11 January 2005 discusses Joyce Mujuru as a peace-maker.

The story is titled “Mujuru’s gospel of non-violence gives hope”, with the noun ‘gospel’ immediately evoking Jesus Christ, the gentle Messiah who preached love and non-violence. She is therefore deliberately cast as a messianic figure from the very title of the story. Her supreme altruism and integrity are also highlighted in the statement within the story, which reads: “When the scandal involving the war victims fund surfaced, Mujuru was the only person to surrender the inflated amount of money she had been allocated”. Indeed, the article constructs her in terms of difference from the rest of ZANU PF politicians, such as Madzongwe. The caption beneath a portrait of a very feminine Mujuru, highlighting soft plump features on a calm and serene face reads: “Vice President Joice Mujuru... a different kettle of fish”. She is thus cast as a rare dove among rapacious vultures, a saint lost among sinners, an example for female politicians of all political persuasions. Given its prominence, the picture cues the reader to construct Mujuru in terms of her cleanliness and moral rectitude.

The first task that reporter Mavis Makuni, herself a woman, sets herself in her portraiture of Mujuru is to naturalise the notion of the inherence of non-violence in female politicians. To validate this claim, she cites British military practice:

Extract 27:

A short while after the invasion of Iraq by Britain and America in 2003, an overseas newspaper published a story about a debate that had been raging within the British military establishment. The debate centred on whether or not women soldiers should be deployed to the frontlines of battle. The question was asked whether women had the emotional inclination an ability to shoot another human being from point blank range. In the end it was decided that women were not suited for such a gruelling task. [...]. Far from conveying the impression that women were perceived as weaklings, this decision represented recognition of the compassionate nature of women. This was acknowledgement that women are more uneasy about using violence as a tool in conflict resolution.

To use British voices to validate Mujuru is the height of mischief in that Mujuru was the second most powerful leader of a party that had thrived on anti-British rhetoric particularly in the era of the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP). Association of Mujuru with the British is tantamount to labelling her an ally of the MDC and their alleged British sponsors. Such ‘mischief’ can, however, be expected of a sophisticated publication whose owners have a stake in ZANU PF politics.

To use a military decision to exclude female soldiers from combat to support the claim that Joice Mujuru is inherently pacific contradicts the well-documented military and political history of Mujuru and may be intended to set her up to fail as a leader of a party whose historical bedrock is its militancy and espousal of violence as just means to attain and defend revolutionary ideals. This is a war hero around whom a myth of courage, violence and ruthlessness has been developed, at least by her own party. For instance, she chose for herself the nom de guerre "*Teurai Ropa*" (spill blood) during the liberation war, implying she espoused bloodshed and violence as core values in the struggle to liberate Zimbabwe. Her well documented conduct and beliefs thus contradict Makuni's claim that women are inherently uneasy about using violence as a conflict resolution strategy. Indeed, Mujuru's ZANU PF party has prolonged that struggle into the 21st century in the form of the FTLRP and yet it is for adopting the FTLRP's violent methods that Madzongwe, a loyal party activist, is condemned in the article examined above. Makuni's story about Mujuru is thus clearly based on a lie, which shows that the overriding intention is to develop the woman/female freak double bind that sets up ZANU PF female politicians to fail regardless of the side of the bind they find themselves. According to Gerbner (1972:44) "...representation signifies social existence". In other words, the media are thought to convey to audiences what types of roles and behaviours are most approved of and valued in society.

Makuni casts Mujuru's non-violence as "unusual", thus continuing to build up a discourse of Mujuru's difference started by the caption beneath a picture, a discourse which justifies the messianic traits attributed to Mujuru in the title of the story. That difference is enhanced by her participation in an inter-denominational prayer for peaceful elections: "By taking the trouble to show up for this important prayer meeting and speaking out against violence and vindictiveness, Mujuru has brought a special and different dimension to her office". Repetition of the adjective "different" drives home the notion that Mujuru is a saintly woman in the midst of evil. The clause "by taking the trouble to" suggests the incongruity of Mujuru in a Christian prayer meeting for peaceful elections. Desperation for creating a scoop story causes Makuni to exaggerate the nature and value of the participation of Mujuru, whose membership of the Salvation Army Church is well-known.

That exaggeration includes the dubious claim that Mujuru “led [the] national prayer service”, which contradicts the notion of her “taking the trouble to show up” at that prayer meeting. It extends to the attribution of femininity to Mujuru alone in a prayer “organised by women”: “By coming forward to join other women as an ordinary Christian, Mujuru has added a special feminine touch to the anti-violence campaign”. The story’s overarching discourse strategy is therefore unequivocally to construct Mujuru as the ideal woman, mother, Christian, and female politician.

To complete its appropriation of Mujuru and the womanhood she incarnates to the MDC side of Zimbabwe’s political divide, the story concludes by attributing the last of its four columns to a human rights activist, Gordon Moyo of Bulawayo Agenda, an NGO linked to the Open Society Initiative. In a polarized political environment where ZANU PF claims such civic organisations are unpatriotic as they are sponsored by Western nations to further the interests of the MDC by pursuing the regime change agenda, the celebration of her political values by a human rights activist is tantamount to setting up Mujuru to be treated with suspicion by fellow ZANU PF activists. Johnstone and Swanson (2003:262) described how hegemonic power is preserved by the construction of ideals that can be successfully fulfilled by the dominant group but ensure the failure of subordinate groups.

This examination of two *Financial Gazette* stories about two different female ZANU PF politicians has revealed strategies used to construct the woman/female freak double bind as well as its possible rhetorical effects. Thus, at first glance, nothing in the story about Edna Madzongwe suggests that anything but her apparently corrupt use of power is in question. There is not even a single trace of gendered discourse, such as notions of sex, marriage or motherhood in the story. Actually, taken in isolation the story on Edna Madzongwe is entirely gender-neutral. In isolation, the story could easily pass for a typical *Financial Gazette* story reflecting the paper’s stance that the FTLRP is a criminal offense. However, once read in the context of other *Financial Gazette* stories on female politicians, such as the one about Joice Mujuru, a goal to develop a certain construct of the female politician begins to emerge. The constructs revolve around the simplistic notion that female politicians are either ‘true’ women who display certain stereotypical feminine traits such as motherhood and non-violence or female freaks who are in fact men in women’s bodies.

6.5 Conclusion

Regardless of the *Financial Gazette's* publication policy, which encourages diversity and pluralism, female politicians, when they were covered, were represented through negative stereotypes. The *Financial Gazette* still resorts to the wifehood and/ motherhood frame in its portrayal of female politicians. The thrust of the general argument of *Financial Gazette* articles on female politicians seems to be that, much as female Zimbabweans can and should hold political office their personae can only be complete if they are associated in one way or the other with marriage and/or motherhood. While *Kwayedza* tends to unapologetically rely on both frames and double bind dilemma, the *Financial Gazette's* is much more subtle in its use of them.

The double bind dilemma permeates all *Financial Gazette* stories on female politicians to the extent that, even in those stories where the two frames mentioned earlier are prominent, the frames are constructed in terms of double binds. This is evident in the publication by the *Financial Gazette* of stories covering two prominent ZANU PF politicians Edna Madzongwe and Joyce Mujuru. On the one hand, Madzongwe is criticised for being aggressive and violent during the FTLRP as such behaviour is considered unfeminine. On the other hand, Mujuru is celebrated for being peace-loving and generally behaving as a true mother of the nation. However, the same story that praises her for this apparent 'feminine' quality cues the reader to associate Mujuru with the British and the Opposition MDC that ZANU PF loathes. The treatment of the conduct of these two women by the same newspaper – condemnation for the one who behaves like a true ZANU PF militant and praise for the other who espouses values associated with ZANU PF'S arch enemies – suggests that the *Financial Gazette* sets up ZANU PF female politicians to fail. This examination of two *Financial Gazette* stories about two different female ZANU PF politicians has revealed strategies used to construct the woman/female freak double bind as well as its possible rhetorical effects. Thus, at first glance, the story on Edna Madzongwe is entirely gender-neutral and, read in isolation, appears to reflect the *Financial Gazette's* anti-FTLRP stance. However, once read in the context of other *Financial Gazette* stories on female politicians, such as the one on Joice Mujuru, a goal to develop a certain construct of the female politician begins to emerge.

The construct revolves around the simplistic notion that female politicians are either 'true' women who display certain stereotypical feminine traits such as motherhood and non-violence or female freaks who are in fact men in women's bodies. Both types are bound to be disliked by the reader, thus reducing the chances of success of female politicians in an election year.

Going by the stories examined here, the *Financial Gazette* seems to subscribe to feminist thinking that is opposed to the use of affirmative gender quotas. It seems to believe that women are susceptible to abuse by political parties seeking to gain cheap political mileage by appearing to uphold internationally defined ideals on gender parity while in fact defeating the purpose for which these ideals exist by appointing clearly unsuitable female candidates to powerful public offices. However, the difficulty of obtaining unanimous public approval of female candidates to public political offices means that, whereas the *Financial Gazette* would like to cue the reader to see ZANU PF as trapping female politicians in a double bind, it is actually the newspaper that is formulating and developing that very same double bind. Indeed, the story examined above is only attacking the SADC gender protocol as an element of its response to the appointment of one female politician that it deems unsuitable for the position of vice president, whereas the appointing authority is not quoted as having opted for a female politician on the basis of the SADC protocol. The double bind can be formulated as follows: in the prevailing patriarchal political culture in Zimbabwe, it is difficult for females to be appointed to senior political positions and yet to use affirmative action quota protocols implies that female politicians are unsuitable for higher office.

The *Financial Gazette* also uses subtle suggestion to build the impression that female politicians are inherently incapable and unfit as politicians. The story "Lesabe's Political comeback faces tough, stony path" uses certain textual and linguistic strategies to cue the reader to view Mrs Thenjiwe Lesabe as not only unpopular but inherently unqualified and unfit to hold political office. Textual strategies used include giving prominence to notions of 'recycling', which imply 'used' and 'unwanted'. The sheer quantity and harshness of terms ostensibly meant to suggest her failure as a politician, such as wilderness, oblivion, drifting, and trounced, reflects desire to cue the reader to dismiss Lesabe as inherently unelectable and any voters who may be inclined to choose her as misguided dimwits.

The association of the notion of inherent unelectability with a female politician is likely to suggest to the reader that female politicians in general are naturally unfit for and incapable of assuming any meaningful political responsibilities.

Elsewhere the *Financial Gazette* uses the accumulation of descriptors of female politicians that are drawn from gendered stereotypical discourses of women, such as peace loving or pacific, religious and motherly, to construct female politicians, such as Edita Matamisa, in terms of their other social status as married women and mothers. This strategy is highly sophisticated and subtle and may be denied by the newspaper and the ordinary reader whom it influences even more effectively because of its very subtleness. In the story titled “Still waiting for the promised land”, discourse representation is used as a subtle means to insert elements of the discourses of marriage and motherhood into a feature story of prominent MDC female politician Lucia Matibenga. This is done through the apparently innocent intervention of the reporter-narrator to elaborate on an allusion by Matibenga to her late husband. Thus the motherhood frame is inserted and given prominence by the reporter in a political feature otherwise more closely based on the subject’s treatment of the frames that arise in it.

It has been found that the vast majority of the *Financial Gazette* stories on female politicians cover ZANU PF female politicians. It would therefore appear that the *Financial Gazette* prioritises not only the coverage of ZANU PF female politicians, but that of Joice Mujuru in particular. On the contrary, it would seem the *Financial Gazette* focuses on ZANU PF female politicians in order to criticise them. Given the ownership of the *Financial Gazette*, it is possible that the publication is engaged in ZANU PF factional politics. This notion is supported by the fact that stories on MDC female politicians generally cover them more positively than the treatment reserved for some prominent ZANU PF female politicians. This shows a marked difference between the *Financial Gazette* and *Kwayedza* where coverage of female politicians from the two dominant political formations in Zimbabwe is concerned. *Kwayedza* is openly and, at times, crudely partisan as it casts all the ZANU PF female politicians that it covers in celebratory terms while showing open hostility to MDC female politicians. The next chapter focuses on the third and last newspaper examined in this study, *The Standard*.

CHAPTER SEVEN

ANALYSIS OF PRIVATELY-OWNED *THE STANDARD* WEEKLY NEWSPAPER

7.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the representation of female politicians in the privately-owned *The Standard* weekly newspaper. The previous chapter examined the representation of female politicians in the *Financial Gazette* newspaper. The *Financial Gazette* made use of both frames as well as the double bind dilemma. The *Financial Gazette* newspaper covered more ZANU PF female politicians than opposition ones. It tended to represent female politicians as mothers and wives but in a much more subtle way than *Kwayedza*. *Kwayedza* (analysed in Chapter Three) gave prominence to familial relationships to cue the reader to view female politicians as primarily mother or wives.

Kwayedza was government funded and favoured female politicians from the ZANU PF party. It generally emphasized the notion that female politicians, especially those from the MDC political party, were not capable to run the political office. The way female politicians were represented in the *Financial Gazette* reflected the patriarchal attitudes in the Zimbabwean society. Throughout the stories in both *Kwayedza* and *Financial Gazette*, female politicians were exposed to double bind dilemma of having to combine femininity, such as values of wifehood and/or motherhood, with political behaviour, such as aggression, associated with males. The dilemma places female politicians in a catch 22 situation which renders success in both aspects of the dilemma impossible. This present chapter explores the representation of female politicians in *The Standard* newspaper.

The chapter analyses the newspaper's use of the frames of female politicians as mothers and housewives, female politicians as inadequate and unfit for political office, and double bind dilemmas in representations of female politicians. *The Standard* focuses on both the ruling government and opposition female politicians.

The Standard newspaper company has a number of directors who include Trevor Ncube (Chairman), Mike Curling, Beatrice Mtetwa, Raphael Khumalo (Group CEO), Anna Krynska-Godlewska, Jarek Gora, Linda Mhlanga. Whereas the Board of Directors is gender balanced, the editorial team of *The Standard* newspaper, like the two other newspapers examined in this study, was exclusively male (Ncube 2011). During the period under study, the editor of *The Standard* newspaper was Davison Maruziva. Iden Wetherel was the Group Senior Associate Editor, while Vincent Kahiya was the Group Editor in Chief. The deputy editor at the present moment is Walter Marwizi. Kholwani Nyathi is the current news editor of *The Standard* newspaper. Other editors at the organization include the Arts Entertainment Editor Godwin Muzari and the Sports Editor Fanuel Viriri. According to Willems (2009:4), political economists have understood media power as the ability of national governments or global business conglomerates to control media output and to dominate markets. These were all liberal individuals who were against ZANU PF's continued hold on power and generally believed in gender parity. The chapter, however, still seeks to find out if the male dominance at the organization does not have an implication in the way female politicians were perceived by the audience. The previous chapter (Chapter Six) examined the ways female politicians were depicted in *The Financial Gazette* newspaper. The chapter will analyse the portrayal of female politicians through the frames mothers and housewives, female politicians as inadequate and unfit politicians as well as double bind dilemmas. Generally, *The Standard* praised female politicians from the opposition politics while condemning those from the ruling ZANU PF. The analysis is meant to find out whether or not *The Standard* also confines women to the above mentioned frames and to what extent it was affected by the Third Chimurenga and ensuing political polarisation, indigenous Zimbabwean African traditional worldview, and ownership patterns in Zimbabwe. The chapter finds that, while there are minimal obvious biases and stereotypes of female politicians, there are still strong traces of pointers to the marginalization of women in the newspaper.

The chapter made use of the agenda setting theory, the representation theory and the frame theory to explore how female politicians are represented in *The Standard*. The agenda setting theory was propounded by McCombs and Shaw in (1972). A media agenda comprises issues that are selected and deemed important by the editors and meant for the public to also perceive as important.

It will then be argued that the appreciation of the meanings of a newspaper story is also determined by the emphasis that is placed on it by the editor of the organization.

The frame theory will also be used to analyse the images and views of the media concerning female politicians in *The Standard* newspaper. Through the prism of the frame theory, this chapter study examines images of female politicians produced by *The Standard* newspaper in order to produce meaning. The analysis will be based on the selected frames of female politicians as mothers and housewives, female politicians as inadequate and unfit for political office, and double bind dilemmas. The frames are shaped by the media organisation's ideological position which has remained largely patriarchal, its ownership structures, the Third Chimurenga as historical context, the African traditional worldview of the indigenous African majority of Zimbabweans, as well as the country's colonial past, the existing political terrain, and the Christian religion. These factors engendered the typically Zimbabwean norms which produced the terms by means of which images of female politicians were generated by *The Standard* during the period under study (Butler 2009).

Whereas there are indications that *The Standard* newspaper tries to cover female politicians objectively, there are also subtle traces of tendencies to trivialise and/or marginalise female politicians. These traces are generally weak traces that are likely overlooked or are unconsciously inserted by the journalist without consciously being aware of them. They are, however, still significant as unconsciously resorting to them means they have become naturalised and may not attract the scrutiny of the casual reader who is still influenced by them. The collocation of subconscious and deliberate discursive choices in a story suggests possibilities of multiplicity of meanings, which in turn points to ideological ambivalence in the identities of the female politicians covered. The same images of female politicians analysed evoked different allocation of meanings. Thus the representation of female politicians in *The Standard* is generally sophisticated and requires close scrutiny to identify and interpret subtle paradoxes of in the representation of female politicians.

7.2 Female politicians as mothers and housewives

A survey of *The Standard* news stories covering every election years from 2000-2008 has revealed that *The Standard* newspaper has made no use of the motherhood frame in its coverage of either the opposition MDC or ruling ZANU PF party female politicians in Zimbabwe. This is a remarkable finding given the male dominance of the Zimbabwean media in general and *The Standard* in particular. The readership of *The Standard* is generally liberal, urban, relatively educated, sophisticated and westernised and politically leaning towards embracing change. Such a readership could therefore be inclined to expect and demand Western constructs of women in terms of equality to men in the newspapers that target it. Of the frames that were analysed, *The Standard* makes use of the image of women as inadequate and unfit for political office and double bind dilemma in its representation of female politicians.

Whereas motherhood was used in the previously analysed newspapers as a means to confine women to the domestic front while men venture out of the home as breadwinners, women nowadays are very much able to have children within or without the institution of marriage and still build for themselves successful professional careers (Lovenduski, 2002; Allen, 2006). For Bhabha (1983:1), stereotype is, by contrast, a “complex, ambivalent, contradictory mode of representation, as anxious as it is assertive”. In this respect, the desire or aim of any newspaper to represent a negative picture can invite the reader or audience to want to see the other side. For Bhabha (1983), therefore, a stereotype is not static in interpretation. The Standard’s pro-MDC and, therefore, anti-Third Chimurenga stance means that it is more inclined to take a more positive view of the participation of women in politics than pro-ZANU PF *Kwayedza*. He argues that men that name objects in a nation and allocate identities sometimes name what prejudices those identities.

Therefore, even publications from media with predominantly patriarchal worldview may find that using the motherhood frame as a means of demeaning or otherwise discriminating against women often proves futile. A number of scholars view motherhood as empowering (Familusi 2012). But female politicians can also re-signify the frame of motherhood and in the process infusing it with new meanings unexpected by patriarchy. These meanings may both confirm or subvert patriarchal certitudes.

This is consistent with this study's earlier finding about the use of the title 'ama' in reference or in relation to Grace Mugabe wife of the president and Vice President Joyce Mujuru in the *Kwayedza* newspaper. This study in chapter 6 has found out that, such use of the term 'ama' has contributed to the development of a new political category in the Zimbabwean political hierarchy where a select few female politicians are elevated to a status second only to that of the state president in terms of real power. This is true of the story "Losing ZANU PF candidate punishes voters" published in *The Standard* on 30 to 6 April 2005, which critically assesses the behavior of female ZANU PF election candidate, Sithembiso Nyoni, in the aftermath of her loss to the MDC's David Coltart in the 2005 legislative elections.

Sthembiso Nyoni was born Sithembiso Gladys Gile Nyoni in 1949. She founded the Organisation of Rural Associations for progress (ORAP) 1981. Her political career started at the University of Zimbabwe fighting against racial discrimination of the Smith government. Nyoni joined cabinet in 1995 as deputy Minister of Public Construction and National Housing. She participated in the 2000 and 2005 parliamentary elections and lost but was appointed non-constituency member of parliament by the President. In 2008 she represented ZANU-PF and beat Mlilo Thembinkosi. In the GNU period between 2008 and 2013 she was the head of Small to Medium enterprises.

The story "Losing ZANU PF candidate punishes voters" discusses Sithembiso Nyoni's loss in the 2005 parliamentary elections in the Emganwini suburb in Bulawayo. The reporter accuses her of having harassed people from the constituency and withdrawing the electricity transformer she had installed for the people of Emganwini who had not been having electricity for a long time during the campaign period. She is portrayed by the reporter as a harsh and vindictive politician. *The Standard* newspaper's Zimbabwe readership would therefore not be surprised by the condemnation of ZANU PF's Nyoni and the celebration of the MDC candidate Coltart. Indeed on the surface of the story there appears to be no sign of any gendered discourses. However close textual scrutiny of this story, reveals subtle discursive strategies that suggest an implicit a double bind between feminine and masculine characteristics. Throughout the story, Nyoni is represented as heartless, a characteristic not ordinarily associated with femininity and/or motherhood (Braden 1996, Garcia-Blanco & Wahl-Jorgensen2011). This is captured through the first

statement which also a headline titled 'Losing ZANU PF candidate punishes voters'. The former MP is said to have punished voters for not voting for her. The word 'punishes' frames her as an evil person considering that Zimbabwe is a democratic country where citizens are expected to exercise their democratic right through voting for a candidate of their choice. The reporter captures this in the very first statement which reads,

Extract 28:

Bulawayo Emganwini suburb has been plunged back into darkness following the removal of an electricity transformer by the Zimbabwe electricity Supply authority (ZESA) last week allegedly on the instigation of disgruntled losing ZANU PF candidate Sithembiso Nyoni.

Words such as “plunged”, “darkness”, and “disgruntled” in Extract 35 above show that Nyoni is vindictive, which stems from the notion of the punishment of the residents of the constituency. She is portrayed as holding the constituency at ransom. Her argument is ‘if I lose you lose’. The ransom she requires is election victory in the constituency. The use of the label and adjective ‘losing’ presents her as a continuous loser by the reporter. The notion therefore cues the reader to perceive Nyoni as a loser. It goes beyond this particular election such that her general conduct is constructed around the notion that she is a bad loser. Whereas such conduct is typical of the attitude of the ruling party towards the electorate (the party shows that it has the power to do anything and no one is allowed to vote against it), the reader is cued to condemn Nyoni as adopting unfeminine behavior since such conduct reflects no compassion at all. She is framed as a politician that treats her constituency with cynicism and disdain, values that ordinary Zimbabweans do not associate with womanhood, let alone motherhood since it is a well-established fact that Nyoni is not only a mother, but a grandmother. That brings us to the double bind dilemma concept in the portrayal of female politicians. This portrayal of Nyoni emanates from an implicit double bind about female politicians, which is the expectation that as a mother she should treat her constituency in similar fashion as she would treat her own children and family. This is despite the fact that male counterparts such as Nyoni’s rival David Coltart are not subjected to such crippling expectations in politics. In other words, the newspaper works for a stereotype of woman as mother and expect the woman politician to be motherly and kind rather than practice real politics which is presumed to be a man’s game.

The use of David Coltart (MDC representative of Bulawayo South constituency), who contested Nyoni both in 2000 and 2005 and beat her, to condemn Sithembiso Nyoni's conduct likely stems from an intention to subtly exploit this double bind. This is strongly suggested by the salience of the notion of cynical loser in the very first utterance attributed to Coltart who says,

Extract 29

“People from this region have been subjected to empty promises in the past 25 years and this is very unfair to the residents. I will obviously consult the residents first and raise the matter in parliament. These people definitely need electricity just like anyone else”.

The emphasis on the people's abuse by a female politician, Nyoni, casts her as a ruthless politician. Close analysis, however, reveals that Nyoni's conduct is still consistent with that of a mother, because she takes the electricity away from people who do not support her, thus identifying them as not belonging to her (political) family. She can now give it to people who support her and are part of her family. Indeed, this interpretation is also used in analysis of male politicians in Africa who are seen as 'father' figures. The length of time cited by Coltart as a lifespan of this cruel cynicism (25 years) confirms the story's intention to construct Nyoni as inherently a loser such that unsuitability as representative of constituency extends beyond the single election reported in the story to cover the entire life of Zimbabwe's independence. The story is framed through Nyoni's cruel actions at the beginning and Coltart's mature and measured voice at the end to underscore the gulf between the inherent loser and the winner. In between these, two other sets of voices are incorporated in a manner that underscores Nyoni's cynicism and loser mentality. The first set of voices to be quoted in this category belongs to the Zimbabwe electricity supply authority (ZESA). The first is an anonymous source who reports that it is indeed Nyoni who called Emganwini suburb to be plunged back into darkness.

This is followed by a ZESA official, Ndlovu who not only confirms what the anonymous ZESA source said, but also portrayed as attempting to show Nyoni's cruel action as part of a process to actually improve power supply Emganwini suburb. The incorporation of this apparent lie is likely meant to suggest to the reader that Nyoni's moral depravity extends towards manipulating and corrupting national institutions for her own benefit and gratification. Much as the story does not appear to use gender in its construction of Nyoni the incorporation of her portrait into the story does remind the reader that she is a woman, thus cueing the reader to deploy the double bind discussed above to construct Nyoni as the epitome of a 'loser' and vindictive female politician.

The reporter makes use of words such as 'plunged back' and 'fix' to denote the uncouth character of Nyoni and cruel character of Nyoni. To 'fix' points to unladylike behaviour. It can suggest something evil by a person whose intention is to fix the people. This kind of framing of the female politician may the readers as it is not expected of female politicians. She is also cast as a liar and manipulative person. This is suggested through the statement where she tries to justify her taking of the transformer. Nyoni says that,

Extract 30:

It's true that Zesa employees have taken the transformer from Emganwini for safe keeping. However, anyone who assumes that I have ordered or instructed Zesa to remove it after losing the election is just too naughty.

From the above statement, the most powerful expression of the cruelty of Nyoni's action and the sheer helplessness of the community is sharply contrasted with Nyoni's self-serving cynicism. A community that says they woke up in the darkness is constructed as a homogeneous entity akin to a family that has been betrayed by a mother figure of Nyoni. To continue framing her as a manipulative politician the reporter quotes sources that continue portraying her as a liar and betrayer. Another source cited is the ZESA source from Bulawayo who said that, Nyoni, who is also the Minister of Small and Medium enterprises Development, directed the parastatal to remove the transformer last Sunday night in order to 'fix' the residents for not voting her into parliament.

7.3 Female politicians as inadequate and unfit politicians

The next article, a political analysis, illustrates *The Standard's* use of the image of female politicians as inadequate and unfit politicians. The story "ZANU PF'S latest Gimmick: women", examined here was published on 13 to 19 February 2005 following the appointment of Joyce Mujuru as Vice President of the ruling ZANU PF party and of Zimbabwe. It was written by two female politicians belonging to then Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). The writers view the promotion of Mujuru to the vice presidency as a desperate move by the party to fool people that it is inclusive of women even at the highest echelons of the party. For Kwinjeh and Misihairambwi using a scapegoat notion suggests that ZANU PF is destined to fail within party hence the need for somebody or group to carry the blame for that inevitable defeat. This is also the way the two, then MDC female politicians viewed it. They argue in the story that,

Extract 31

In a desperate bid to deal with the twin problems of succession and growing national unpopularity the ruling party has found a scapegoat: women. Women have become the latest cover for the regime to implement and complete its ridiculous agenda of retaining power at all costs.

Words such as 'desperate', cover and ridiculous in the quote above makes it interesting to note that the current events (October 2014) within ZANU PF, in particular the first lady's diatribes against Vice President Joyce Mujuru, show clearly that powerful elements within ZANU PF consider that Joyce Mujuru's ascendancy to the Vice Presidency in 2005 was the beginning of the story of a programmed political failure. Putting her there was like setting her up to fail so that she could be used as a 'scapegoat' of the failure of the ZANU PF party, to run the country or within the ZANU PF as a party. The lack of commitment to empower women in the party is captured by Kwinjeh and Misihairambwi who argue that:

Extract 32

During its 24 years and many more years as a party ZANU PF has routinely neglected and marginalized the women in its ranks and Zimbabwean women as a whole...They argue that, many women first became activists in the women's movements in Zimbabwe having realized that ZANU PF had killed a generation of Zimbabwean women. The liberation struggle did not result in our emancipation. In fact, as a liberation party that went through an armed struggle, its structure and system are based on male superiority ideology: patriarchy.

Basically, the *Financial Gazette*, through the story of 15 January 2005, around the same time assessed the story of Mujuru in relation to the SADC quota system. Both *The Standard* newspaper and the *Financial Gazette* are sceptical of the intention of ZANU PF in promoting Joyce Mujuru to the Vice Presidency of the party and the government of Zimbabwe. Her promotion may have come as a result of the mounting pressure from the women's organizations and ZANU PF women to promote women to political positions in Government that started around 2000. The statement, "In fact, as a liberation party that went through an armed struggle, its structure and system are based on male superiority ideology: patriarchy", suggests that, ZANU PF should not rule in peace times. If it does, it will oppress women as these tendencies are considered to be inherent in a party that gained power through war. Kwinjeh and Misihairambwi's argument is that even if Mujuru had the necessary credentials to be Vice President, as a woman she would be denied the space and opportunity to influence important decisions in the party and government since the party's intent is only to use her and other women as a window dressing 'gimmick' or trick. Thus because of that notion, she is set up to fail as a politician. This is captured by the statement, "It must first be understood that Mujuru is only acceptable to President Robert Mugabe as his Vice President because she does not threaten his hold on power either nationally or within the ruling party". ZANU PF male top politicians needed a woman because society perceives women as weak. Therefore, Joice Mujuru is treated by Kwinjeh, Misihairambwi and *The Standard* newspaper as a weakling who is not capable and does not have potential to challenge Mugabe's policies. They note that,

Extract 33:

If one examines the way the new quotas for “women’s empowerment” are being handled, it becomes clear that Mugabe is in control. There was no democratic process of nominating or selecting constituencies for women. The women being put in the so called constituencies set for them are simply replacing Mugabe’s enemies.

It is clear from the above statement that Misihairambwi and Kwinjeh think women are gullible as they can be used by the males. Thus their view on the promotion of Joyce Mujuru to the post of Vice President does not show commitment to women empowerment in Zimbabwe. Kwinjeh and Misihairambwi are actually dismissing the gender quotas as anti-feminist policies. Their argument is that women should not be given promotion favours. Their promotions should be on merit. This is because those favours are means available to men to abuse women. For them women should be recognized on their own merit. They argue that patriarchy will not be defeated by quota systems because it knows how to take advantage of policies such as the quota systems to perpetrate itself. Thus Kwinjeh and Misihairambwi argue that,

Extract 34

Reform of a corrupt political party or system does not come with appointing a woman. Mujuru’s appointment does nothing to address the real question of governance and democracy. The crisis confronting Zimbabwe is not about the biology of those in the governing hierarchy, but their ability to deal with critical national issues.

Kwinjeh and Misihairambwi suggest that appointed women that may never win in a fair democratic election as they ride on the patriarchal system in ways that benefit the women. Thus, for Kwinjeh and Misihairambwi they use their individual capacities while perpetuating the disenfranchisement of the generality of women in the party and nation as a whole. Thus the suggestion is made that women such as Mujuru are not only unfit politicians but also unfairly elevated to lofty positions of power for the sole benefit of powerful men, but they are also cynical partners in this betrayal of their fellow women.

Kwinjeh and Misihairambwi suggest that they want a policy framework defined and developed by women and men together which these ZANU PF women have not developed. Kwinjeh and Misihairambwi also advocate for a just working framework for all social working frameworks including politics.

Extract 35

If this is the behaviour of ZANU PF what is the lesson for women in the alternative movement MDC? We are fighting the same beast patriarchy, which transcends every aspect of our lives –at home, in church and even in the political system we belong to. As we struggle within the MDC, we are clear that patriarchy is an enemy we will fight within and outside as we refuse to play junior partner to our male counterparts. It is important that the issue of gender power relationships cannot be separated from the whole fight of human rights and democracy.

From the above evidence it is clear that the framework that they advocate as MDC should favour both men and women and there will be no need for the quota system. This approach can be utopian since patriarchy has got roots in time immemorial. They further highlight the weaknesses of the quota system through dismissing Mujuru's appointment as just a short term measure to pacify women in Zimbabwe and within the ZANU PF party by their argument that,

Extract 36

She has been propelled to the party's top most position precisely because she poses no threat to any of the distinct factions engaged in a bitter power struggle within ZANU PF. These include the ZAPU faction, Emmerson Mnangagwa faction and of course the Mujuru faction led by her husband, Solomon.

The story also distils Mujuru's credentials to just one attribute, which is her marriage to Solomon Mujuru, the former ZANLA commander, former Zimbabwean army commander and Retired Commander of the armed forces turned millionaire business man and highly influential ZANU PF power broker. Thus, the story underscores its argument that on her own Joyce Mujuru is not worth much as a politician.

This is in spite of Joyce Mujuru's well documented military exploits as a ZANLA combatant and military officer during Zimbabwe's liberation war as well as that she is one of the selected few ZANU PF politicians to consistently hold a ministerial position from Zimbabwe's independence to the date of publishing of the story examined here.

The story of 23 -29 July 2000, 'Dongo's fall attributed to refusal to join MDC', traces the fall of Margaret Dongo, president of the Zimbabwe Union of Democrats, in the election of 2000 where she failed to get a parliamentary seat. The reporter strongly suggests that on her own Dongo was too small to amount to anything in the then new Zimbabwean political landscape dominated by ZANU PF and the newly formed MDC. Despite her previous achievements in the Zimbabwean politics, the reporter suggests that, as an opposition politician, her only chance of success in this new dispensation is for her to join the MDC. Margaret Dongo's political career started in the Chimurenga liberation struggle against the white regime. She was the co-founder of the Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association (ZNLWV). In 1990 she became the MP for Harare East. She competed against Vivian Mwashita in 1995 and lost only to regain the seat after a re-run November the same year. She formed the Zimbabwe union of democrats (ZUD) in 2000 but lost her seat to the MDC candidate. She has since joined Joyce Mujuru's Zimbabwe people first party.

There is a notable persistent tendency in the story to highlight Dongo as a failure, which is emphasized through the professional voices referred to by the reporter. The first interviewee is Masipula Sithole, a renowned political analyst in Zimbabwe who argues that, "There was no way she could have won outside the MDC because the feeling of the people in the country was that any other opposition party should blend with the MDC". It is also important to point out that voices that are sought after as experts are also not very innocent or clean slates. Academics and experts that are quoted by the media are also partisan. Masipula Sithole's statement seems to assert with finality that, standing on her own, Dongo was bound to fail because she was not good enough. The reporter deliberately chooses to frame Dongo in this manner, which is not accurate because in previous election of 1995 Dongo contested as an independent candidate in her constituency and won the seat.

She is also one of the serious opposition politicians to challenge Mugabe, despite being a war veteran, after disgruntlement within the ruling party. This was a big feat because her party and ZANU Ndonga of Ndabaningi Sithole were the only ones at that time to achieve any meaningful successes in Zimbabwe. Critically, Masipula may be justified in his criticism of Dongo as a politician because her successes were largely noted before the coming of the MDC party which was bigger and more popular than Dongo ZUD party.

Sithole (the interviewee) argues that Dongo's future was bleak in comparison to that of the MDC. He frames Dongo as a political liability because he thinks she is a failure. This is captured in his statement that "The people of Harare South voted MDC not because they didn't like Dongo but because they felt voting MDC made rational sense... They were looking for a way forward". For him, Dongo had failed to provide the 'way forward' for the Zimbabwean people. Phrases such as "better sense" are used to suggest that people with a clear political vision should abandon Dongo because she cannot succeed in the current politics. The fact that these experts are quoted in *The Standard* shows us that media is not entirely innocent. An expert is a person of authority that can shape public opinion. Sithole in this case is meant to influence the opinion of the electorate. According to Allen (2006:2) "the media serves to reinforce the status quo in terms of gender privilege and hierarchy in our society". The reporter further alienates Dongo by representing her as a politician whom other female politicians do not believe in. He uses an anonymous fellow woman politician to dismiss Dongo as a politician who is not serious. He states that:

Extract 37

Dongo's dismal performance was a typical example of how women failed to make inroads in the political field, said another female politician who refused to be named. She said Dongo should have considered factors which would have worked to her advantage instead of clinging to her relatively small party. Said the female politician: "She needed to be politically sensitive to the situation in Zimbabwe. She failed to take heed of advisors.

Dongo is thus dismissed as both a woman and politician by another woman politician. This study suggests that this is influenced by the patriarchal ideology which has convinced women that men are more capable political leaders than women. In this instance the rival

female politician is not only comfortable being under the male political leadership, but also feels that Dongo could have had a better chance in politics if she was under either of the male political leaders of the two dominant and competing parties, MDC and ZANU PF. The female interviewee frames her as an unsuitable politician. This is strongly indicated by the statement that says, “She was advised to join MDC and she refused. She should have compromised between her desire to hold on to power and her need to enter parliament”. The term “small party” implies that Dongo’s party was doomed to fail and Dongo should have joined bigger parties in order to succeed. This does not only belittle Dongo as the president of a party, but also her political acumen in comparison to ZANU PF and MDC politics. The damage to Dongo’s credibility as a woman politician is exacerbated by other claims, such as: “She shot herself in the foot”; and, “That was wrong strategizing”. Such claims portray an inexperienced and unable politician doomed to fail. The claim, “...there was no way she was going to be ignored once she joined MDC” suggests that her image and her political party may not have attracted much of the electorate in Zimbabwean politics’ shows that the only solution the interviewees felt was available was to follow other bigger parties as she could not stand on her own. Needless say that the MDC which is referred to in the story was headed by Morgan Tsvangirai, a male politician. There is also a consistent call for Dongo to join bigger politics in order to succeed. Another MDC politician, Welshman Ncube suggests that if Dongo joined the MDC she could have been saved. The statement which says “... that we allow them to stand on our ticket”, implies that the MDC is an indispensable opposition party that other small parties need than the other way around.

Because of this implied lack of vision, Dongo is framed as an unfit politician. There is a recurrence of statements and words that suggest that she is a failure or she is doomed to fail. This is explicitly captured in the phrase, “she failed to take heed of advisors”. She is thus constructed in terms of ‘smallness’: a ‘small’ woman (she is physically ‘petite’), running a ‘small’ party, endowed with intellectual pettiness (‘smallness’ of vision and character), and with ‘small’ political stature and ambition. That is the net effect, in the context of the article examined here, of the argument that, “Dongo should have considered factors which would have worked to her advantage instead of clinging to her relatively small party”. The combination of discursive strategies seen here cues the reader to regard ‘smallness’ as typical of women politicians.

This hint is particularly aided by the fortuitous fact that the two major political parties in the country are run and dominated by males.

Interestingly, the reporter brings in a voice that vouches for Dongo as a good politician. Angela Mpofu of Dongo's ZUD represents her as a very tough lady and a woman of principle. She says that she has known Dongo for a long time; she says her president would never have joined the MDC just for the sake of securing a parliamentary seat. She believes in multi-party democracy and not in situations whereby parties are swallowed by others. The positioning of voices within a story is not coincidental in any media story. The endorsement of Dongo as a politician is placed at the end of the story. It is, therefore, dominated by perceived independent experts, political analysts and other politicians cited throughout the story who are all critical of her. The interviewee is a lone voice in the story and her contribution is strategically dismissed by the fact that she happens to be Dongo's publicity person.

Though the reporter clearly views Dongo as a failure, Dongo's publicity person, Angela Mpofu, presents a double bind twist in the story. She represents Dongo as an independent thinker and a 'survivor' in politics. This is captured in the statement where Dongo is reported to have said that:

Extract 38

...she (Angela Mpofu) says her president (Dongo) would never have joined the MDC just for the sake of securing a parliamentary seat... She believes in multi-party democracy and not in situations whereby parties are swallowed by others.

The way the reporter puts across her statements does not cue the electorate to trust her as she is a lone and unreliable voice because of the contrary sentiments given prominence earlier throughout the larger part of the story. The desire to render this positive voice insignificance is underscored by the fact that, unlike previous other voices, it is not quoted verbatim but is paraphrased by the reporter. The reader thus 'encounters' all other speakers in the story but only gets told about Angela Mpofu's thoughts by the reporter.

7.4 Double bind dilemma in the representation of female politicians

In 2005, not long after she was appointed Vice President of Zimbabwe and the ruling ZANU PF party, the *The Standard* weekly ran two stories about Joyce Mujuru, one in its “Standard Business” section and the other in the “Local News” section. Both stories focus on Mujuru’s work with Zimbabwe’s struggling ‘parastatal’ companies, a responsibility given her by President Robert Mugabe. Parastatal companies are large business concerns that used to be wholly state-owned but have now been partly privatised with the government retaining a controlling stake. They include the National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ), the Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA) and Air Zimbabwe (AZ). Joyce Mujuru is Zimbabwe’s most celebrated female war veteran. She is also one of only a few ZANU PF leaders to serve in each of Robert Mugabe’s governments since Independence in 1980. She is the widow of ZANU PF hero and ZANLA Commander and former Commander of Zimbabwe’s Armed forces, the late General Solomon Mujuru. There is a clear difference between the ways Joice Mujuru is represented in the *Kwayedza* newspaper which is ideologically linked to the ZANU PF party. *The Standard* newspaper on the other hand exposes the excesses of the ruling ZANU PF. In this case, even if Joice Mujuru may not be the best person to appoint to Vice Presidency, her promotion is still an achievement to women as she is the first female Vice President.

The two stories examined here are titled “Mujuru cracks whip” *The Standard* 07-13 February 2005 and “Mujuru berates Air Zim bosses over Dubai Trip” *The Standard* 28-4 November 2005 respectively. The story titled “Mujuru cracks whip” is located in the “Standard Business section” of the newspaper, suggesting that it is concerned with financial or commercial matters or any other aspects of business. The story is concerned with a meeting that Mujuru had with Reserve Bank Governor, Gideon Gono, and a coterie of officials described as “top management of over 16 parastatals, their board members and senior government officials under whose ministries parastatals fall”. Such a gathering, both in terms of sheer numbers and stature of participants, reflects the power vested in and the responsibility placed on Mujuru’s shoulders by means of her task to directly oversee state enterprises. That a female politician has been placed in charge of the business side of the state suggests that she is highly trusted by the President and his cabinet as a whole.

The venue of the meeting, however, raises eyebrows: the meeting takes place at the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe and not at the Vice President's offices or at any other venue in Harare. That the meeting takes place at the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe warrants some scrutiny as it draws attention to one of the participants in the meeting, Reserve Bank Governor, Gideon Gono and the role, if any, he is to play in the work given to the Vice President. The Vice President's task is summarised in the story's first paragraph: "Government began a promised clean-up of state enterprises last week by threatening to sack non-performing heads at an eight-hour meeting chaired by Vice President Joyce Mujuru". Mujuru is therefore Government's chosen enforcer of its decision to demand results from the executives running Zimbabwe's perennially underachieving parastatals. However, locating the meeting at the Reserve Bank gives the role of host of this powerful meeting and exercise to Gideon Gono. Taking that role away from Mujuru diminishes her role while incorporating that detail into the second paragraph of the story gives it a prominence that suggests desire to quickly draw attention to the Reserve Bank Governor. That discursive strategy is confirmed in the suggestion in that paragraph's first sentence that Mujuru and Gono were co-speakers:

Extract 39

At that meeting – held on Tuesday at the Reserve Bank – Mujuru and central bank governor Gideon Gono announced a raft of performance targets that the parastatal heads will be expected to meet in the next few months.

This rapid shift from Mujuru single-handedly cracking the whip in the title, through her chairing the meeting, to her symbiosis with Gono, all in the story's title and first two sentences, cues the reader to view Gono as Mujuru's equal, at least in-so far as the task at hand is concerned. This is consistent with the widespread view that, at the time of publication of the story examined here, Gono's behaviour and authority were no longer consistent with those of a Reserve bank governor under ministerial order, but were suggestive of quasi elevation to unofficial Prime ministerial role. According to Magora (2010:1),

At the height of his powers, Gono was effectively the Prime Minister of Zimbabwe, with the power to reduce mere ministers to tears. There was so much animosity towards him that Mugabe posted his own armed and uniformed guards on the pavement outside the Central Bank building on Samora Machel Avenue in Harare. He moved with a mini-motorcade of three cars filled with guards back then.

The *Newsday* of 28 November 2013 described him as having “presided over the economy straddling across ministries in his new role as de facto Prime Minister” (Mpfu 28/11/2013²⁵)

The article thus suggests that Gideon Gono’s power was beginning to overshadow even that of the Vice Presidency, probably aided by the fact that the incumbent was a woman. The double bind here is reflected in that Mujuru, being a woman, could only be seen as benefitting from a SADC quota system on the representation of women, and yet benefitting from that quota set her up to fail as it implied that she lacked the necessary qualities for the job. By constructing her as the epitome of the ZANU PF ‘feminine’ politician, the independent press was setting up Mujuru to fail. *The Standard’s* construction of her in the story examined here now shows that one way of naturalising the impression that she will inevitably fail is to portray her as needing Gono to share the microphone with her from the very outset of the story, which the reader is likely to take as the beginning of her speech in the meeting and which is also her very first gesture in her very important task of stopping the rot in the parastatals. This painted the picture of a poor housewife thrust into the deep end of the political administration pool, a pool where Gono and the rest of the participants, the vast majority of them males, will be thought of by the reader as being more at ease than Mujuru.

The question, however, remains as to the “whip” she is said to be cracking in the title. It turns out that Gono is portrayed as having his hands more firmly on that “whip” than Mujuru. The first discursive clue to that reversal of the balance of power between the two protagonists is the distribution of actions and sheer textual space to either of them. After blending the two into one voice in the story’s second paragraph, the first of the two to be cited separately by the story is Gono. His voice occupies virtually the entire second column.

²⁵ <https://www.newsday.co.zw/2013/11/28/gonos-tale-good-bad-ugly/>).

It is followed by that of Mujuru, which is accorded only one short paragraph. Mujuru is thus muted and demoted to a place after Gono while Gono is not only given the megaphone but thrust to centre stage. While Gono and Mujuru are each quoted as making one announcement, the story explains Gono's announcement in detail while that of Mujuru is merely stated. Quotations of Gono are categorical: "Gono has announced"; "Gono has tied strict performance targets to the funding"; "The RBZ's new plan was announced". This builds an the impression of self-assurance, surefootedness and leadership, so that Gono is seen as capable and trustworthy. The detailed explanation of his plan cues the reader to think that the reserve bank governor has taken his task seriously and given it much thought. The overall impression is therefore that this plan is likely to yield good results. As for Mujuru, the caution with which she is cited – "Mujuru [...] is said to have spelt out"; "Mujuru is said to have declared" – cues the reader to doubt the utterances attributed to her. The impression is given that those utterances have reached the reporter via an unnamed source who may neither be named nor entirely trusted.

The hesitation the reader will have in trusting the 'source' is likely to extend to his/her attitude towards Mujuru. Use of the conditional – "there would be" – shrouds Mujuru's utterances in the hypothetical so that her ideas appear not to be grounded in reality and must therefore be viewed as not entirely reliable. This is in sharp contrast to the indicative mode of Gono's utterances, which is the mode of the real. This confirms the impression given in the beginning that Mujuru does not have her feet firmly on the ground in the world of big business while Gono is at home there. Consequently, the reminder that Mujuru "has been placed in charge of state enterprises" in the one paragraph allocated to her utterances sounds more like criticism of the decision to give such an assignment to her than a need to remind the reader of the Vice President's mission. Thus, a seemingly innocuous account of a business meeting turns out to be yet another instalment in the independent press' development of a double bind that is meant to eventually convince the reader that Joyce Mujuru is not fit to be Vice President of Zimbabwe and that men are more capable, in general, than their female counterparts in positions of power.

The second story examined here is meant to look like an illustration of the expected failure of Mujuru. Its title demonstrates Mujuru's frustration: "Mujuru berates Air Zim bosses over Dubai trip". Her anger is the very first word of the story: "Angered by the ill-fated Dubai trip, Vice President Joyce Mujuru last week read the riot act to Air Zimbabwe bosses at a stormy meeting held at her Munhumutapa offices". The story portrays her as a woman using more of her emotions than anything else. Given that anger is a sign of defeat and frustration, highlighting it could be indicative of an intention to suggest to the reader that Mujuru is out of her depth in the business world, the one world where cool temperaments thrive better than tempestuous ones. Indeed, loss of control is suggested by the description of Mujuru's meeting with Air Zimbabwe officials as "stormy". Mujuru's frustration is underscored in the story by the frequency of futile meetings she has already had with Air Zimbabwe officials – three meetings in seven months.

The woman/freak double bind discovered in the *Financial Gazette's* representation of Mujuru is now complete in *The Standard*. Mujuru displays both the feminine and freakish aspects of her in the two stories examined here. The freak is the one who resorts to violence, wielding a whip, proffering all manner of threats and prone to ill-advised displays of anger. Interestingly, this story cites the one titled "Mujuru cracks whip": "In February Mujuru [...] summoned top management to a meeting at the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ), where she warned that non-performers would be sacked". This throwback to the earlier story reminds the reader of how Mujuru played second fiddle to Gono in that story. Recall of the whip and threat to dismiss non-performers contrasts with Mujuru's frustration to painfully highlight her inability to act on her threats. This confirms that the whip she cracked in the first story was indeed more firmly in Gono's hands than hers. The suggestion is thus made that her femininity softens her while her attempts at being strong and aggressive are but the vain ranting of a frustrated woman.

7.5 Conclusion

This chapter has examined five newspaper stories taken from *The Standard* weekly newspapers. The stories were coded in terms of the frames of female politicians as mothers and housewives and female politicians as inadequate and unfit politicians as well as double bind dilemma in the representation of female politicians. A remarkable finding of this chapter is that *The Standard* newspaper appears not to have used the motherhood and wifehood frame at all in its coverage of Zimbabwean female politicians throughout the four election years from 2000 to 2008. This was regardless of the political party affiliation of the female politicians covered by the newspaper. However, *The Standard* newspaper was consistent in its negative portrayal of female politicians from ZANU PF. Given that the motherhood housewife frame is probably the most primitive tool used by Zimbabwean newspapers to tie female politicians to the domestic sphere is regarded as being inherently theirs that it serves to portray them as inherently unsuitable for the public sphere of politics. Not using this frame suggests that *The Standard* newspaper has a relatively strong gender parity policy. It would therefore seem that *The Standard* appears to count as among the least patriarchal in outlook. However, closer scrutiny has shown that *The Standard* has developed subtle and sophisticated discursive strategies to perpetuate aspects of patriarchy in its treatment of female politicians. These include the inadequate and unfit frame and the double bind dilemma. These frames, while not overtly chauvinistic or patriarchal, may actually cause more harm to female politicians than that of motherhood and wifehood. *The Standard* makes use of the unfit and inadequate frame to dismiss especially female politicians from ZANU PF. These images contribute to the marginalisation of female politicians as they give the wrong impression of female politicians. However, female politicians from the opposition are represented in more positive light. This is especially so as this study has already established that motherhood has already been constructed by certain political formations and media houses as constituting a new and uniquely Zimbabwean elite political category of a very select few female politicians second only to the presidency (See Chapter 4).

As used by *The Standard* newspaper the inadequate and unfit frame masquerades as objective and therefore purely professional criticism of female politicians. However, salience of the notion that the propensity to fail is inherent in female politicians betrays imbuelement with patriarchy. The fact that this frame is often used by female writers and politicians in constructing fellow female politicians reflects the extent to which *The Standard's* value system is influenced by patriarchal thinking and the polarised political landscape in Zimbabwe. Thus, the two stories about Joyce Mujuru in *The Standard* are clearly linked to each other but develop a double bind – woman/freak – which can only be appreciated once one has also read the stories about Joyce Mujuru published in the *Financial Gazette* (see Chapter 5). Thus Mujuru who is portrayed by the *Financial Gazette* stories as an ideal feminine politician is constructed in *The Standard* as failing in her mission to turn around the fortunes of Zimbabwe's parastatals because she adopted the unfeminine and therefore freakish strategy of using force which is foreign to her persona, hence the need for the male Reserve Bank (RBZ) governor, Gideon Gono, to act as the true enforcer of government policy vis-a-vis the parastatals. The way ZANU PF female politicians are portrayed is influenced by a number of factors, ranging from the patriarchal ideology and the acute polarization of the Zimpapers publications and the private media. The private media, thus frames ZANU PF female politicians as inadequate and incapacitated for the political office. The last chapter is the conclusion of the study. It summarises the study, reviews its findings and makes recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

This study has emanated from the observation that, over and above much more obvious entities such as political parties, men and women constructed as distinct interest-driven groups have rivalled each other for the right, authority and power to govern Zimbabwe. The various media organisations in the country have participated in this struggle of genders by developing and distributing images of female and male politicians and cueing society to see each group in a certain way. The study has therefore examined media representation of female politicians in Zimbabwe during the four election years between 2000 and 2008, elections being the most visible manifestation of competition for political power and office. A sample of 18 stories (taken from a corpus of 84 stories), six(6) each from three Zimbabwean weekly newspapers namely *Kwayedza*, *The Standard* and *Financial Gazette* was examined from a perspective of representation as well as framing located within agenda setting theory. The study used qualitative content analysis to examine the representation of female politicians in terms of the frames of motherhood and wifehood, inadequate and unfit (to hold political office) as well as double bind dilemma. The study remained alert to its location within a period of heightened political polarisation as well as the use of different languages (Shona and English) by the newspapers it examined. Each newspaper was examined separately to investigate its use, if any, of the two frames and the double bind dilemma.

The corpus examined in this study comprised all stories about female politicians that appeared in the three newspapers during each election years from 2000 to 2008. The research analysed stories concerning female politicians during election times because an election is a critical moment in the political life cycle of a political organization, a politician and the society to which they belong. The study specifically focused on various peculiar linguistic choices, the positioning of stories in the newspapers, and the visual representation of subjects. The study tested the following hypotheses:

- *Hypothesis1*: Zimbabwean newspapers generally represent the country's female politicians as unfit for public political office.

- *Hypothesis 2*: Images of Zimbabwean female politicians developed by a given newspaper are determined by discourses about female politicians produced by the political party favoured by that newspaper. Thus, pro-ZANU PF state-sponsored newspapers are hostile to female politicians from opposition MDC and supportive of ZANU-PF female politicians while the reverse is true for privately-owned pro-MDC publications.
- *Hypothesis 3*: Images of female politicians developed by a given newspaper are determined by the language (Shona or English) that it chooses to use. Use of Shona favours patriarchal images of female politicians while use of English favours more liberal and therefore more empowering images of female politicians.

The print media was chosen because it was the only segment of the media in which private ownership and control had been allowed by government, and thus able to more accurately mirror the political situation in the country, whereas television and radio remained closed to private players. Other than representing both state-owned government-controlled publications and the privately-media, the three newspapers examined here are also representative of Zimbabwe's two dominant languages, English and Shona: *Kwayedza* publishes in Shona while the *Financial Gazette* and *The Standard* are English language newspapers.

8.1 General media representation of female politicians

The study has found that female politicians are marginalized through omission as they are underrepresented by all three newspapers. This means that, in all the election years analysed in this research, female politicians were generally regarded as not newsworthy. *Kwayedza* had a total number of 14 stories, *The Financial Gazette* had 21 stories and *The Standard* had 49 stories in the four years under consideration. Altogether, therefore, a total of 84 stories on female politicians were found during the four election years under study. This represents a total of 21 stories per election year, which is less than two stories per month, and seven stories per year per publication on average. It is quite shocking that, on average, there were five (5) months of total silence by each newspaper in each of the four (4) most bitterly contested elections in Zimbabwe's history.

Given that there are 52 weeks a year and, therefore, 52 issues per weekly publication, each of the three (3) newspapers published 208 issues over the four (4) years under study. This makes a grand total of 624 for the three (3) newspapers over the four (4) election years. The gap between this reasonable minimum expectation and the actual total found at a time of unprecedented public interest in Zimbabwean politics is, therefore, indicative of only cursory media concern with female participation in Zimbabwean politics. For a politician, media silence is the worst form of marginalization as the electorate is not aware of the politician, let alone what she stands for if she is not covered by the media. Atkeson and Krebs (2008) have argued the same in their study of American media coverage of female politicians participating in mayoral elections.

Related to the strategy of marginalization by omission is that of marginalization by unfavourable location in the newspaper. Most of the female politicians' stories hardly make headlines in any of the three selected newspapers, which was likely to cue the reader to treat them as unimportant. Of the three newspapers studied here, *Kwayedza* showed by far, the least interest in female politicians. This suggests that its Shona worldview may favour traditional patriarchal distribution of social roles according to gender, with politics and public governance considered males domains. This is consistent with literature on the condition of Zimbabwean women, such as Nhongo-Simbanegavi (2000), Schmidt (1992), and Gaidzanwa (1985).

8.2 Representation of female politicians in the three newspapers

Overall, the study established that all three newspapers mostly used double bind dilemmas to construct Zimbabwean female politicians in terms of the frames of female politicians as mothers and housewives and as inadequate and unfit for political office. It was also evident that, whether a female politician was represented as a mother, wife or through double bind dilemmas, the objective of the concerned newspaper would be to frame the female politician as inherently incapacitated or unfit for political office.

Of the three newspapers, *Kwayedza* is the worst in its representation of female politicians. Judging from the discursive choices made in its articles on female politicians, it is evident that there is preference by the newspaper to confine female politicians to the domestic sphere. *Kwayedza* also frequently used the double bind dilemma. Female politicians are either represented as good mothers who cannot be good politicians or as good politicians who are unfit mothers. The stereotypes served to remind the reader that politics is a tough job for women and the place of a woman is the home. An example that has been highlighted in the analysis is that, even though Joice Mujuru is the most senior female politician in ZANU PF and in government, and arguably the most successful of all female politicians in ZANU PF, *Kwayedza* still viewed her more as a mother and wife instead of the Vice President of both ZANU PF and Zimbabwe. This double bind is often used by the *Kwayedza* in instances where they want to make female politicians feel guilty about being career or professional women. Female politicians seem to be represented around family first before they are acknowledged for any other role in their lives. Even renowned politicians, such as Julia Zvobgo and Joyce Mujuru, are more celebrated as wives and mothers and not as politicians. Thus, the media treats the male and female genders as separate and different. This research suggests that the reason for these biases and stereotypes is that *Kwayedza* prefers to maintain the traditional gender roles of women. This finding is attributable to the fact that *Kwayedza* published in Shona, which makes it susceptible to Shona traditional culture, which tends to locate women more in the private than the public spaces. For instance, Shona traditional culture, like virtually every other African culture, values motherhood (Famulusi 2012). This is contrary to the western worldview informing public debate on the place and role of women in Zimbabwean society.

The *Financial Gazette* uses the motherhood and wifeness frames in conjunction with the double-bind dilemmas. The double bind strategy permeates all *Financial Gazette* stories on female politicians to the extent that, even in those stories where other frames are prominent, they are constructed in terms of double binds. This is evident in the publication by the *Financial Gazette* of stories covering two prominent ZANU PF politicians Edna Madzongwe and Joyce Mujuru. On the one hand, Madzongwe is criticised for being aggressive and violent during the FTLRP as such behaviour is considered unfeminine.

On the other hand, Mujuru is celebrated for being peace-loving and generally behaving as a true mother of the nation. However, the same story that praises her for this apparently 'feminine' quality cues the reader to associate Mujuru with the British and the opposition MDC that ZANU PF loathes. The treatment of the conduct of these two women by the same newspaper suggests that the *Financial Gazette* sets up ZANU PF female politicians to fail. The comparative analysis of two *Financial Gazette* stories about two different female ZANU PF politicians has revealed strategies used to construct the woman/female freak double bind as well as its possible rhetorical effects. The analysis has revealed a goal to develop a certain construct of the female politician. The construct revolves around the simplistic notion that female politicians are either 'true' women who display certain stereotypical feminine traits such as motherhood and non-violence or female freaks who are in fact men in women's bodies. Both types are bound to be disliked by the reader, thus reducing the chances of success of female politicians in an election year.

Further, the *Financial Gazette* seems to subscribe to feminist thinking that is opposed to the use of affirmative gender quotas. However, this study has shown that the *Financial Gazette* has deployed double bind that can be formulated as follows: in the prevailing patriarchal political culture in Zimbabwe, it is difficult for females to be appointed to senior political positions and yet using affirmative action quota protocols implies that female politicians are unsuitable for higher office. This must also be related to the political ideology and affiliation of the newspapers.

The *Financial Gazette* also uses subtle suggestion through selected textual and linguistic strategies to build the impression that female politicians are inherently incapable and unfit as politicians. For instance, the story from the *Financial Gazette* of 1-7 June 2000 titled "Lesabe's political comeback faces tough, stony path" gave prominence to such notions as recycling a used and unwanted female politician in-order to dismiss her as inherently unfit and incapable refer the reader to specific pages or section in the relevant chapter. The association of the notion of inherent unelectability with a female politician is likely to suggest to the reader that female politicians in general are naturally unfit for and incapable of assuming any meaningful political responsibilities.

Such strategies are highly sophisticated and subtle and may be denied by the newspaper and the ordinary reader who they influence even more effectively because of their very subtleness. In some *Financial Gazette* stories on female politicians discourse representation is used as a subtle means to incorporate elements of the discourses of marriage and motherhood.

The Standard newspaper appears not to have used the motherhood and wifeness frame at all in its coverage of Zimbabwean female politicians throughout the four election years from 2000 to 2008. Not using this frame suggests that *The Standard* newspaper has a relatively strong gender parity policy. It would therefore seem that the *The Standard* counts among the least patriarchal publications in Zimbabwe, which is consistent with the fact that, with a total of 49 stories on female politicians during the period under study, it showed by far the strongest interest in female politicians. However, the examination of the inadequate and unfit frame and the double bind discourse strategy has shown that *The Standard* has developed subtle and sophisticated discursive strategies which perpetuate aspects of patriarchy in its treatment of female politicians. These frames, while not overtly chauvinistic or patriarchal, may actually cause more harm to female politicians than that of motherhood and wifeness. This is especially so as this study has already established that motherhood has already been constructed by certain political formations and media houses as constituting a new and uniquely Zimbabwean elite political category of a very select few female politicians second only to the president. Therefore, the absence of the motherhood and wifeness frame in *The Standard* does not suggest that the newspaper is less patriarchal than the other two. However, as already established by this research, the motherhood frame may actually be a form of elevation of female politicians by the media as it is used on a select few female politicians who are considered very important in the ZANU PF hierarchy. This makes the inadequate and unfit frame and the double bind dilemma more harmful to the personalities of female politicians.

The inadequate and unfit frame used by *The Standard* masquerades as objective and therefore purely professional criticism of female politicians. However, salience of the notion that the propensity to fail is inherent in female politicians betrays imbuelement in patriarchy.

The fact that this frame is often used by female writers and politicians in constructing fellow female politicians reflects the extent to which *The Standard's* value system is influenced by patriarchal thinking. Analysing *The Standard* newspaper's use of the double bind dilemma within a study that has examined the use of the same frame by other Zimbabwean newspapers has helped to reveal inter- textual patterns between stories within the same publication as well as across publications. Thus, the two stories about Joyce Mujuru taken from *The Standard* are clearly linked to each other, but develop a double bind – woman/freak – which can only be appreciated once one has also read the stories about Joyce Mujuru published in the *Financial Gazette* examined earlier (see Chapter 5).

This research therefore, concluded that tropes and categories that apply to one newspaper may not apply to another. Thus, the motherhood and wifehood frame was much more applicable to the *Financial Gazette* and *Kwayedza* than to *The Standard*. All three newspapers examined here employ the double-bind dilemma in their representation of female politicians. While *Kwayedza* and the *Financial Gazette* make use of all three tropes, including the motherhood and wifehood frame, this category was not found in the stories taken from *The Standard*. This suggests a remarkable shift by *The Standard* newspaper from the traditional gender roles assigned to males and females in Zimbabwean society. The newspaper, however, still contains residual negative aspects in its coverage of female politicians. For that reason, the research concludes that very close textual analysis of the sophisticated language of the *The Standard* is required to discern the residual negative tendencies that are found in its stories. While *The Standard* does not make use of the motherhood and wifehood frame, it still uses the double bind dilemma to represent women as incapable and unfit to run the political office.

8.3 Media and party political ideology

Hypothesis 2, which is that images of Zimbabwean female politicians developed by a given newspaper are influenced by discourses of the political party favoured by that newspaper, was largely validated by the analysis. As expected, in the highly polarised environment of early 21st century Zimbabwe, the newspapers examined here generally represented female politicians in ways that made obvious their preference of political party. Thus, the pro-ZANU PF and state-sponsored *Kwayedza* is hostile to female politicians from opposition MDC and supportive of ZANU-PF female politicians while the reverse is true for privately-owned pro-MDC publications. Privately-owned *Financial Gazette* also showed obvious bias towards ZANU PF, the party in which its owner, Gideon Gono, is a prominent member. This study found that this could be partly indicative of Gono's approach to intraparty factional battles. As an ostensibly neutral publication, the *Financial Gazette* would have some latitude to back or criticize chosen ZANU PF politicians without immediately raising too many suspicions among party supporters since it was generally expected in Zimbabwe for privately-owned newspapers not to echo ZANU PF thinking. At any rate, these suppositions require further study particularly in the area of media political economy. Such a study could focus specifically on the nature and extent of the influence of ownership patterns on the representation of female politicians in Zimbabwean media stories.

8.4 Language and representation of female politicians by the three newspapers

Hypothesis 3 predicted that images of Zimbabwean female politicians developed by a given newspaper would be determined by the language (Shona or English) used by that newspaper. Thus, the use of Shona would favour patriarchal images of female politicians while the use of English would predispose a newspaper to be more liberal and therefore give more agency to female politicians. *Kwayedza*, is published in Shona while the *Financial Gazette* and *The Standard* are published in English. This concern was justified by the fact that language is related to the values and worldview of a given society.

Discussion of the use of these two languages by the Zimbabwean media could be accounted for in terms of Zimbabwe's diglossia (Ferguson, 1959) whereby English, seen as a 'highly codified' language, tends to be associated with public domain usage (such as the state, formal education and the judiciary), while Shona, generally deemed a 'lower' language, dominates private spaces (such as interpersonal conversation, gossip, and prayer).

This study has found that the representation strategies used by *Kwayedza*, which published in Shona, were not radically different from those of *The Standard* and *Financial Gazette*, which published in English, as all three newspapers exhibited a tendency, albeit to varying extents, to trivialise, marginalise and write out female politicians. However, unlike the two English language weeklies, *Kwayedza* readily used derogatory language in its representation of female politicians. Examples of such use of language were found in such stories as “*Nhengo yeparamende ye MDC yakada kurova mutapi wenhau ino*” (translation: MDC Member of Parliament wanted to beat journalist of this newspaper) and “*Gwachiwa mudare*” (translation: Gwachiwa appears in court) about an MDC female MP and a ZANU PF female MP respectively, which have been examined above. Examples of insults included such nouns as “*nzenza*” (slut), “*mbavha*” (thief), and “*hure*” (prostitute), which Zimbabweans generally find less shocking in Shona than in English. *Kwayedza*, thus exploited opportunities to openly insult subjects, which are more readily available in Shona idiom than in English and to which the Zimbabwean society is more accustomed to in Shona than in English. Conversely, *The Standard* and *The Financial Gazette* adopted a more ostensibly polite and subtle attitude and tone in their representation of female politicians than *Kwayedza*. Instead, stories in both *The Standard* and *Financial Gazette* used external voices in the form of interviews and quoted sources to demean or marginalize female politicians. However, while *The Standard* and *Financial Gazette* appeared to be detached from the quoted voices that overtly demeaned female politicians. It was clear that they agreed with the opinions of their sources. As Pantti (2006) suggests, no voice within a media story is accidental or coincidental.

Attribution of agency for any derogatory utterances targeted at female politicians to 'independent' voices by both English language newspapers helped them to appear serious and professional by established Western media standards for such newspapers. In comparison, *Kwayedza*, publishing in Shona, could still be seen as honest and sincere by its audience without necessarily adhering to the same guidelines as the *Financial Gazette* and *The Standard* because of the 'lower' (in terms of diglossia) language it used and the uses with which it is ordinarily associated, such as conversation, often dispensed with such stringent requirements for evidence and referencing of sources.

Stories about female politicians in all the three newspapers used gendered labels in the form of nouns and nominal groups. In *Kwayedza*, for instance, female Vice President Joice Mujuru was consistently referred to as *Amai* (a noun meaning mother) while the male president of the country was labelled *Mutungamiri wenyika* (a nominal group meaning leader of the country), thus constructing Mujuru in terms of the private domain of interpersonal family relations and Mugabe in terms of his official public office. It has further been found that Shona terms such as *amai* have been used without translation in English language stories in the same manner and with the same effect as in the Shona language *Kwayedza*. This is an indication that English language newspaper personnel and their audiences, who mostly use Shona as their mother language, needed the resources and opportunities offered by the Shona language but less available in English in their representation of Zimbabwe's female politicians.

Restriction of the term *amai* to the two most prominent and arguably most powerful women in Zimbabwean politics, Grace Mugabe and Joice Mujuru has been found to elevate these two individuals above all other women in politics, so that the two of them constituted a new exclusive elite class of female politicians second only to the president. Thus, whereas *amai* literally means mother and its use may be taken to mean a gendered portrayal of female politicians that downplays their political agency, close textual analysis has shown that it can also be used as a metaphor of female political might. Labelling a female politician as *amai* may, therefore, does not demean her, but rather enhances her position in society in the context of Shona traditional culture and worldview.

In fact, events in ZANU PF politics in 2014 show the culmination of the construction of the political class of the *amais*. Along with some senior ZANU PF politicians, *The Herald* newspaper has recently argued that being *amai* gives Grace Mugabe politically empowering access to the state president, thus justifying her claim to enter the political fray at the highest levels and at the same time seeking to eliminate her political rival, Joyce Mujuru, from the elite political category of *amai*. The demotion of Joyce Mujuru from the select class of the *amai* is reflected in the fact that Grace Mugabe labels Joyce Mujuru a 'baby' ("*mwana*") that can be dumped by its (political) parents, the president and Grace Mugabe, because of its alleged misbehavior (*Daily news* October 21 2014). In response, Joyce Mujuru defends herself by casting herself as President Mugabe's 'daughter' as a way of claiming the political legitimacy that derives from Mugabe's name and stature within ZANU PF.

8.5 Female politicians and media ownership

Hypothesis 4 was that media ownership determines media representation of female politicians. Representation has two aspects to it: frequency of coverage and portrayal of a subject. Portrayal of female politicians in the newspapers examined here has already been amply discussed. In terms of frequency of coverage, all the three newspapers marginalized and trivialised female politicians through omission as the number of stories about female politicians published in the four election years was shockingly low (See "General media representation of female politicians" above). However, the nature and scope of this study as a textual analysis did not allow it to properly investigate possible links between media political economy and the choice and content of stories, such that there is room for further study in this area. Such a study could, for instance, investigate the possible effects of male domination of the Zimbabwean media organogrammes in the coverage and representation of female politicians. Nevertheless, what can be said with a strong measure of certainty is that the so-called Third Chimurenga, which was the context of this study, was a time of militant political struggle, which, just like the Second Chimurenga (liberation war) before it, was a male dominated process (Nhongo-Simbanegavi, 2000; Gaidzanwa, 1985).

This meant that the struggle of women for political empowerment, ongoing since independence and even before then, was relegated to the media backburner as a national socio-economic struggle and crisis unfolded and took centre stage in both the private and public spaces. Media omission of female politicians during this period might therefore be less indicative of media hostility to women than of national focalisation on the grand protagonists on the national stage, who happened to be male, in a political environment in which the electorate voted more for a given party than for a given candidate (Mawarire 2009). For instance, the late Vice President, Simon Muzenda, once said that, “If ZANU-PF chose to put a baboon as a candidate ‘then you will vote for that baboon’” (*The Telegraph*, 22 September 2003).

This thesis is the first extensive scholarly study of the representation of Zimbabwean female politicians by the Zimbabwean media. A major strength of this study is that it is diachronic in nature, an aspect not found in any other study of media coverage of Zimbabwean female politicians. This study is also the first to give prominence to the linguistic factor in the coverage of female politicians by the Zimbabwean media during the third Chimurenga period. It has achieved this by examining selected newspapers publishing in Zimbabwe’s two most influential languages, Shona and English. However, the scope, nature and structure of this study are such that the generalization of its findings to media coverage of women in general must be avoided. The fact that this study examined the coverage of female politicians by three newspapers over a period of eight years, but only focusing on the four years during which Zimbabwe held national elections, means that a more extensive study of each one of the three newspapers covering each one of the eight years is required to reach definitive conclusions about the coverage of women by the Zimbabwean media. Though this research specifically analysed the way female politicians were represented in the selected newspapers, future research on female politicians and the media could focus on how female politicians can be better prepared to handle media attitudes in order for them to succeed.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Danho remadzimai muchimurenga



Appendix 2:

Ngatiremekedzei varwi vehondo – Madzongwe

Ngatiremekedzei varwi vehondo – Madzongwe

RUZHINI neMunyori w
mekedza vaiva varwi v
vapepenyu nevakafa kubu
zvavanonita vakatidzika k
Mashoko aya skatanzw
Mai Edna Madzongwe a
marangwanda egamba s
Last Mabhuu Tangangai, y
ra1979 kwaDroitto kuMt
Mai Madzongwe vapo bato
rinopikisa reMDC-T ravapere
era zvirango zveupfumi a kutam
budzika kwevanhu vachin
Tzvi zvose kurasika gwazidz
isa zvinangwa zvevarwi Mabhuu
vakafira nyika ino avo kupa avo
nhasi kuti tinovigwa patre
Vakakurudzira mapatsaurirana
anoti reZanu PF, MDC-T kurirane
vachitarisa donzvo revasasango
nekuda kusunungura nyika
Cde Mabhuu vakazoti Heroes
Acre uko vakaitwa Provimu (ndeh
hu) nemusi wa29 Gumiguru uyu
akazowanikwa kuburikidzeFallen
Heroes Exhumers of Zimbabwe
naCde Jimmy Mutsi mubhokisi
nevamwevo.
Gamba iri rakanda kuti1979
ndokunorwira kwaGwasu, ndoku
zofira kumakomo 1947o
nekwaMudzengerere muswa se
dege.
Apa pakafawo manwanzomwe
musi uyu Murwi uyu, uyo Medic
achirapa vanwe anonzi gamba
neruoko mushure mekubandega

MAPFUPA aCde Mabhuu aiburitswa muguva achiiswa mubhokisi kuti azonovigwa kunzvimbo inovigwa magamba yeChinhoyi Heroes Acre.

vemufi Benjamini Gwanzura, amai vake, Winnie Gwanzura, mwana Nolleen Gwanzura, vatungamiri vedunhu reMt Darwin nedzimwe hama dzakasiyana.
Cde Madzongwe, avo vanova vatete kune mufi, vakatenda zvikuru sangano reFallen Heroes Exhumers of Zimbabwe nebasa guru rekuviga patsva marangwanda emagamba.

CDE EDNA MADZONGWE
Vakakurudzirawo kuti Hurumende ibatsire sangano iri nezvekushandisa sezvo vasina midziyo yechizvinozvino yekuitisa basa iri.

Appendix 3:

Musangano wekuratidza kudya kwechivanhu wakabudirira

Musangano wekuratidza kudya kwechivanhu wakabudirira

neMunyori weKwayedza

MAZUVA akange akamirirwa nevakawanda eZimbabwe Food Fair ayo akange achizotaridzwa kudya kwedu kwechivanhu uko kunovaka muviri akave anosvika ndokupfuura mune zvakanaka svondo rapfuura.

Zuva ravhurwa gungano iri rakave rinoona kuvepo kwemutevedzeri wenyika wekutanga wechidzimai, Mai Joyce Mujuru vachive varipo semuenzi anoremekedzwa. Mai Mujuru vakange varipo vakamiririra Mai Grace Mugabe avo vasina kuzokwanisa kunge varipo. Mumashoko avakaverengerwa naMai Mujuru, Mai Mugabe vakati ivo madzimai ndiwo ane dambudziko guru rekuve anochengeta nhengo dzemhuri pamwechete nekutarira avo vanenge vachirwara.

Vakati ivo zvirwere zvakaita seDiabetes, Gout neGomarara zviri kukonzerwa nekudya chikafu chisingavake muviri. Vakati ivo nzira dzechivanhu dzekugadzira chikafu dzinoti netsei izvo zvavakazoti nzira dzekuderedza kunetsa uku dzinofanirwa kutsvagwa. Vakati avo vanoona nezvekugadzirwa kwezvemukudya vanofanirwa kuona kuti kudya kwechivanhu kwawanikwa zviri nyore.

Mai Mugabe vakapa mhosva kuvabereki yekuti ndivo vari kuve vanoita kuti vana vavo vakure vasingazive kudya kwedu kwechivanhu uko kunovaka muviri. Vakati zvakare vanhu vazhinji vanofunga kuti kana vabudirira muupenyu havachafanirwe kudya zvechivanhu asi zvekunze chete.

Dr Olivia Muchena avo vanove gurukota reScience nezvakavandudzika vakati chinangwa chemazuva maviri aya chaive chekukurudzira kudyiwa kwechikafu chemuno munyika uko kunovaka muviri. Izvi vakati zvinozoita kuti zvirwere zviri kunetsa veruzhinji zrive zvinokwanisa kuderedzwa. Vakataura zvakare kuti kudya kwedu kwakaita semadora, tsambarafuta neshwa kune zvinovaka muviri

zvakati wandei kupfuura zvinomhanyirirwa nevamwe zvekunze.

Dr Joseph Made avo vanove gurukota rezvekurima nekubudirira kwemaruwa vakati Food Fair iyi yakave inouya munguva iyo varimi vakange vawanda munyika muno kuburikidza nekugovewa kwevhu patsva. Varimi vanodarika 215 000 vakave vanobatsirikana kubva mukugovewa kwevhu uye varimi vave munyika muno vave kupfuura 2 000 000. Ivo sebazi rinoona nezve kurima vakati vakaona zvakakodzera kuti vave vanokurudzira kupfuiwa kwezvipfuyo zvedu zvakaita sehanga, madhadha, tsuro nembudzi.

Vakati zvakare vari kupa ruzivo pamusoro pamarimirwo angaitwe zvekudya zvinovaka muviri zvakaita sezviyo, mapfunde, mhunga, nyemba, nyevhe nederere. Zvimwe zvavari kukurudzira kurimwa kwezvinhu zvakaita sembambaira nemadhumba. Vakatora mukana uyu kuzivisa varimi vese vanenge vachida kurima izvi pamwe chete neinsonzi irish potato kuti vave vanoenda kumahofisi avo vononyoresa kuitira kuti vave vanowana rubatsiro kubva kuhurumende.

Dr Elizabeth Xaba avo vanove munyori mubazi rezveutano nekugara zvakanaka kwavana vakati ivo bazi rezveutano riri kutarisira shanduko mune zvekudya zvevanhu vemunyika muno izvo zvavakazoti vanotaririra kuti vanhu vave vanosanganisa zvavanodya.

Food Fair iyi ichave inoitwa zvakare gore rinouya sezvo ichazenge ichiitwa pagore rega rega uyezve varongi vemutambo uyu vari kutarisira kuti panosvika nguva iyi vanenge vave nebuku rinorairidza mabikirwo angaitwe kudya kwedu kwechivanhu kwakawanda wanda.

Appendix 4:

Gwachiwa mudare

Appendix 5:

Nyaya MP nzenza yakora muto



Story 6: *Mai Mujuru vanopedza zvidzidzo zvavo payunivhesiti (translation: Mrs. Mujuru completes her university studies; Kwayedza, 25 December 2005).*

Mutevedzeri wemutungamiri wenyika Mai Mujuru svondo rakapera vakapemberera kupedza zvidzidzo zveBachelor of Science Degree in Management and Entrepreneurial Development izvo vakaita neyunivhesiti yeWomen's university in Africa.

Mai Mujuru nevamwe vadzidzi 138 vakavewo vokutanga pamwewo zvakare kuita zvidzidzo zvavo neyunivhesitiyi. Chimwe chakafadza pamhemberero idzi ndechokuti dzakaita dhumadhuma neapo Mai Mujuru varikupemberera gore ravo rekutanga vasarudzwa kuve mudzimai wekutanga kuve mutedzeri wenyika. Musi uyu pamhemberero idzi paive nemavhu nemarara evanhu aisanganisira mumwe mutevedzeri wenyikaCde Joseph Msika, Dr Stan Mudenge vanove gurukota rezvedzidzo yepamusoro naCde Oppah Muchinguri vanove gurukota rezvenyaya dzemadzimai nenharaunda.

Mai Mujuru vakave mumwe wemadzimai akatanga kuenda kuhondo vaine makore 16 izvo zvakakanganisa kuenderera mberi kwavo nechikoro. Asi nechido chekuwana fundo yepamberi vakatsungirira kuenda kuchikoro chero panguva yavaive gavhuna, gurukota renyika neapo vaive mutevedzeri wemukuru wenyika.

(Translation: Vice President Mrs. Mujuru last week celebrated the successful completion of her Bachelor of Science in Management and Entrepreneurial Development degree studies, which she did at the Women's University in Africa. Mrs. Mujuru and 138 other students were the university's very first graduates. Another cause for celebration was that Mrs. Mujuru's graduation coincided with celebrations of the first anniversary of her becoming the Zimbabwe's first female vice president. Many people graced this celebratory moment, including and co-Vice President Cde Joseph Msika, Minister of tertiary and higher education Dr Stan Mudenge, and Minister of Gender Cde Oppah Muchinguri. Mrs. Joice Mujuru joined the liberation struggle at the tender age of 16, which disrupted her education. However, because of her wish to be educated she made huge sacrifices to study even when she was a Governor, a Minister and Vice President).

Appendix 7:

Still waiting for the Promised Land

Still waiting for the promised land

By Grace Muzandwa
Arts and Lifestyle Editor

SHE worked tirelessly, collecting bundles of clothes from the city and, during harsh cold winter nights, sneaking into the deep forests to pass these on to the members of Ian Smith's government.

That was in the 1970s, a height of Zimbabwe's independence war.

She had just her whole life devoted to that and every time seeing people of the same kind, always persistent. "I help people to get their education back, to get back to the guerrilla army of Robert Mugabe's ZANU PF party."

Today, disgraced by the conduct of her former

household chores after their father and mother divorced.

"Her high school friend my husband or seeing her friend a few people in jail, as I moved from Harare, where I was doing nursing, to Shurugwi, a smaller town where I lived with an aunt and uncle," she recalled.

That move also saw her

commitment to Zimbabwe.

"While in the NCA, I helped campaign vigorously for a new constitution and also campaigned against the government-sponsored draft constitution which was widely rejected by the people in February 2000," Muzandwa said.

After that, she joined the government through her open support for the MEC, the only opposition party to win the 2000 Presidential Election. Robert Mugabe's two decades in power, she has also contributed the ruling party by being able to promote areas widely known as ZANU PF's major strengths.

She is also the leader of the MEC's public interest campaign, which has revealed numerous aspects of the ruling party's ill-fated claims that have been turned into a hub of civic and political education.

"After the political violence of the pre and post June 2000 parliamentary elections, she devoted much of her energy to ensuring that her party



Lucia Muzandwa - leader of the MEC women's assembly

to step up from entering some areas but today we can safely say there is no area where we don't have one or two corners and that's a start in a country where terror has become the order of the day."

A woman of remarkable strength, Muzandwa says the MEC initially lost the presidential election in March but the party must not lose hope.

"There is no time to sit down and mope," she said, making clear that her new struggle against the ruling government had just begun.

"We all have to come up with a strategy to ensure that our country regains its rightful place in the world," she said.

"Zimbabweans should be able to produce live and work in their own country again. We need to continue working towards bringing about change."

In the 2000 parliamentary election, Muzandwa stood as an MEC candidate for Shurugwi, south of Harare, but lost to ZANU PF's

Francis Mhema, now Tourism Minister.

Despite being awarded twice by ZANU PF appointments in 2000, she says she has encouraged her people to fight.

She says the MEC is going full steam ahead to work bringing about political change in the country and will not allow ZANU PF to bully it.

She berates the government's violent take-over land reforms and points out that while all Zimbabweans agree that reasonable land redistribution is inevitable and vital, this can only succeed in a peaceful, transparent and orderly environment.

"It's not our culture to grab property that does not belong to us. This is why our chiefs were involved in providing our land to those who needed it and it was done in an orderly fashion."

A member of the ruling party, Muzandwa has been an active member of the ruling party since 2000 and has been an active member of the ruling party since 2000 and has been an active member of the ruling party since 2000.

PEOPLE & PERSONALITIES

hermes and convinced that only a few are benefiting from "the level of milk and honey" — also ZANU PF — she has joined the ranks of the opposition of Movement for Democratic Change (MDC).

For aligning herself with the new strategy, Lucia Muzandwa recently lost her job in December 2000. She was dismissed and left for dead by campaigning in the name of Mugabe's supporters.

A seven-inch scar on the back of her head remains as a permanent testimony to the way ZANU PF treats its political foes.

But Muzandwa is a woman who grows stronger in her opinions and beliefs. She insists she is subjected to what she was in oppression.

In Harare, Zimbabwe's second city of Bulawayo in 1964, Muzandwa went to schools in that city as well as in the Muzandwa province.

Her high school days were marked by protest marches by students against the former white minority government of Ian Smith, which fought Mugabe's guerrillas and those of black nationalist son Joshua Nkomo to try to hold back black majority rule.

This week Muzandwa said the Political Council that her last fight for basic rights was with pots when she battled with her sibling teachers over how they should share out the

could campaign successfully towards this year's presidential election.

"We still faced major problems as it was almost impossible to visit areas

openly campaign for the MEC. We lost people and several others were either abducted or severely assaulted," she said.

"The ruling party used

Story 7: Still waiting for the promised land

By Grace Mutandwa : Arts and lifestyle Editor

She worked tirelessly, collecting bundles of clothes from the city and during harsh cold winter nights, sneaking into the deep forests to pass these on to the enemies of the Smith's government.

That was in the 1970's, the height of Zimbabwe's independence war. She had put her whole life on hold so that she and many other young people of the time in Masvingo province could help mobilized basic necessities such as clothes for the guerrilla army of Robert Mugabe's ZANU PF party.

Today, disgruntled by the conduct of her former heroes and convinced that only a few are benefiting from "the land of milk and honey"- a free Zimbabwe- she has joined the ranks of the opposition of Movement for Democratic Change (MDC).

For aligning herself with the new enemy, Lucia Matibenga nearly lost her life in December 2000. She was beaten and left for dead by rampaging mobs of Mugabe's supporters.

A seven stitch scar on the back of her head remains as a permanent testimony to the way ZANU PF treats its political foes.

But Matibenga is a woman who grows stronger in her opinions and beliefs the more she is subjected to what is known as oppression.

Born in Zimbabwe's second city of Bulawayo in 1954, Matibenga went schools in that city, as well as in the Masvingo province.

Her high school stint was marked by protest marches by students against the former white minority government of Ian Smith, which fought Mugabe's guerillas and those of black nationalist icon Joshua Nkomo to try to hold back black majority rule.

This week Matibenga told the Financial Gazette that her first fight for basic rights was with pots when she battles with her sibling brothers over hoe they should share out the household chores after their father and mother divorced.

"After high school, I tried my hand at nursing but found it too emotional for me. I hated to see people in pain so I moved from Hwange, where I was doing nursing to Shurugwi, a smaller town where I lived with an aunt and uncle," she recalled.

That move also saw her dabble in guerrilla politics. "Working with others, we

clandestinely collected clothes and whatever was needed by the freedom fighters and moved into rural areas to pass on the goods,” she said.

“It was during that period that I met savior Joel Matibenga, who was to become my husband. He was a ZIPRA cadre who was incarcerated in several occasions by the Smith regime.”

ZIPRA is the short hand for Zimbabwe People’s Revolutionary Army led by Nkomo from bases in Zambia.

Her husband, now late and buried at the Midlands Provincial heroes acre, was part of the teams of the Patriotic front combining ZANU PF and Nkomo’s guerrilla leaders which took part in the 1979 Lancaster House Agreement talks in London which ushered in Zimbabwe’s independence.

After independence in 1980, Matibenga left active politics to join the clothing group Edgars, where she worked as a stock clerk. She also became involved in unionism. Increasingly becoming disgruntled with the government, she joined the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) and in 1998 was elected the Midlands head of the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA), which campaigned for a new and democratic constitution for Zimbabwe.

“While in the NCA, I helped campaign rigorously for a new constitution and also campaigned against the government sponsored draft constitution which was widely rejected by the people in February 2000,” Matibenga said.

Apart from raising the ire of the government through her open support for the MDC, the only opposition party to seriously challenge President Robert Mugabe’s two decades in power, she had also confounded the ruling party by being able to penetrate areas widely known as ZANU PF’S no go stronghold.

She is also the brains behind the MDC’s underground campaign which has created nationwide women’s self-help clubs that have been turned into little hotbeds of civic and political education.

After the political violence of the pre and post June 2000 parliamentary elections, she devised ways of ensuring that her party could campaign successfully towards this year’s presidential election.

“We still faced major problems as it was almost impossible in most areas to openly campaign for the MDC. We lost people and several others were either abducted or severely assaulted,” she said.

“The ruling party tried to stop us from entering some areas but today we can safely say there is no area where we do not have one or two converts and that’s a start in a country where terror has become the order of the day.”

A woman of formidable strength, Matibenga says the MDC unfairly lost the presidential ballot in March but the party must not lose hope.

“There is no time to sit down and moan,” she said, making clear that her new struggle against Mugabe’s government has just begun.

“We all have to come up with a strategy to ensure that our county regains its rightful place in the world,” she said.

“Zimbabweans should be able to proudly live and work in their own country again. We need to continue working towards bringing about change.”

In the 2000 parliamentary ballot, Matibenga stood as an MDC candidate for Shurugwi, south of Harare, but lost to ZANU PF’s Francis Nhema, now Tourism Minister.

Despite being assaulted twice by ZANU PF supporters in 2000, she says she feels encouraged to keep on fighting.

She says the MDC is going full steam ahead towards bringing about political change in the country and will not allow ZANU PF to bully it.

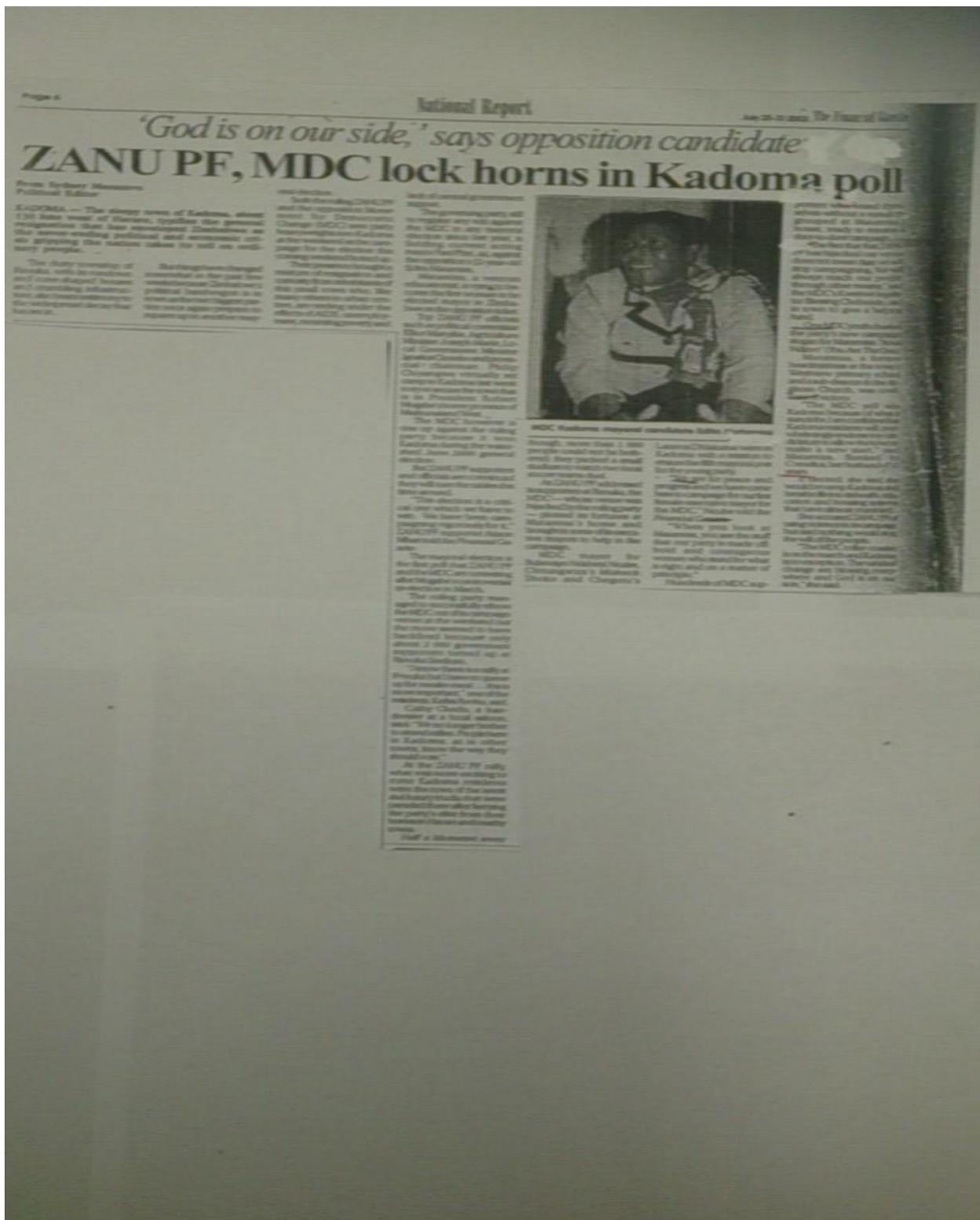
She bemoans the government’s violent fast-track land reforms and points out that while all Zimbabweans agree that equitable land redistribution is inevitable and vital, this can only succeed in a peaceful, transparent and orderly environment.

“It is not our culture to grab property that does not belong to us. Traditionally our chiefs our chiefs were involved in parcelling out land to those who needed it and it was done in an orderly fashion.”

A mother of four adult children Matibenga says her family has been her main support and inspiration in her whirlwind campaign against the government across the country.

Appendix 8:

ZANU PF, MDC lock horns in Kadoma poll



Story 8: ZANU PF, MDC lock horns in kadoma poll

From Sydney Masamvu: Political Editor

Kadoma- the sleepy town of kadoma, about 130 kms west of Harare typifies the general resignation that has enveloped Zimbabwe as this never-ending political and economic crisis gripping the nation take its toll on ordinary people.

The dusty township of Rimuka, with its rundown and cone shaped houses and crumbling infrastructure, also bears testimony to the widespread decay that has set in.

But things have changed somewhat in the as few weeks because Zimbabwe's political bandwagon is in town as the two biggest parties once again prepare to square up in another mayoral election.

Both the resulting ZANU PF and the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) sent party heavyweights into Kadoma at the weekend as the campaign for the election this coming weekend hotted up.

Their presence bought a mixture of resignation and curiosity from inhabitants of this small town who like many others in urban centres are reeling under the effects of AIDS, unemployment, mounting poverty and lack of central government support.

The government party still to register any win against the MDC in any mayoral election since last year is fielding current acting mayor Fani Phiri, 44, against the opposition's 55 year old Edita Matamisa.

Matamisa, a veteran educationist, is vying to become the first woman to be elected mayor in Zimbabwe on the opposition ticket.

Top ZANU PF officials such as political commissar Elliot Manyika, Agriculture Minister Joseph Made, Local Government Minister Ignatius Chombo provincial chairman Philip Chiyangwa virtually set camp in Kadoma last week to try to secure the town that is in President Robert Mugabe's home province of Mashonaland West.

The MDC however is one up against the ruling party because it won Kadoma during the watershed June 2000 general election.

Nut ZANU PF supporters and officials are convinced they will turn the tables this

time round.

“This election is a critical one which we have to win. We have been campaigning vigorously for it,” ZANU PF supporter Atison Mhari told the Financial Gazette.

The mayoral election is the first poll that ZANU PF and the MDC are contesting after Mugabe’s controversial election in March.

The ruling party managed to successfully elbow the MDC out of its campaign venue at the weekend but the move seemed to have backfired since only about 2000 government supporters turned up at the Rimuka Stadium.

“I know there is a rally at Rimuka but I have to queue up for mealie-meal...this is more important,” one of the residents, Keifas Revhu said.

Cathy Chedu, a hairdresser at a local saloon, said: “We no longer bother to attend rallies. People here in Kadoma, as in other towns know the way they should vote.”

At the ZANU OF rally, what was more exciting to some Kadoma residents were the rows of the latest 4X4 luxury trucks that were paraded there after ferrying the party’s elite from their homes in Harare and nearby towns.

Half a kilometre away though, more than 1000 could not be bothered: they packed a small stadium to watch two local soccer teams duel.

As ZANU PF addressed its supporters at Rimuka, the MDC- whose venue was hijacked by the ruling party- plotted its fortunes at Matamisa’s home and brought some of its executive mayors to help in the campaign.

MDC mayor for Bulawayo Ndabeni Ncube, Chitungwiza’s Misheck shoko and Chegutu’s Lazarus Dhalkama were in Kadoma with a mission to ensure the fifth mayoral post for the young party.

“We are for peace and progress and we have come here to campaign for our first female executive mayor for the MDC,” Ncube told the Financial Gazette.

“When you look at Matamisa, you see the stuff that our party is made off: bold and courageous women who stand for what is right and on matter of principle.”

Hundreds of MDC supporters who found themselves without a venue regrouped at Matamisa’s house, ready to resume a door-to-door campaign.

“The fact that ZANU PF has hijacked our venue does not mean that we will stop campaigning. We will always reach our people through other means,” said the MDC Kwekwe legislator Blessing Chebundo, also in town to give a helping hand.

One MDC youth chanted the party’s new campaign slogan for Matamisa: “Amai

Ndizvo (you are the one)".

Matamisa a former headmistress at the town's Westview primary school and a sub-deacon in the Anglican Church, was confident of victory.

"The MDC will win Kadoma because of what it stand for. I am confident that Kadoma residents will overwhelmingly endorse my candidature to allow the town to make a new start," said Matamisa, flanked by Cornelius, her husband of 31 years.

If elected, she said she would revamp Kadoma and breathe life into its health, education and housing systems that have almost crumbled.

She accused ZANU PF of using violence in its campaign but said nothing will stop the will of the people.

"The MDC roller coaster is on the march and Kadoma is no exception. The winds of change are blowing everywhere and God is on our side," she said.

Appendix 9:

LESABE'S POLITICAL COMEBACK FACES TOUGH, STONY PATH

The Financial Gazette

The Financial Gazette, June 1-7, 2000

NATIONAL REPORT

Lesabe's political comeback faces tough, stony path

By **Simon Njabulo Ncube**
Bulawayo Bureau Chief

BULAWAYO — A desperate bid by the governing ZANU PF party to rescue a head of its Women's League, **Thenjwe Lesabe**, from political oblivion by posing her in the Gwanda North constituency is hit a snag because of stiff opposition from most party supporters, it was established this week.

Gwanda, the provincial capital of Matabeleland South, was split into two constituencies — Gwanda North and Gwanda South — following recommendations of the Wilson Sandum-led Demarcation Commission last week.

Gwanda North, the new constituency comprises the tier Gwanda town, Mtshizi and nearby rural areas like Gwanda South, where NUPF is fielding **Abednico Ncube**, is entirely rural.

Party insiders said this week the imposition of Lesabe by ZANU PF's Politburo had created sharp differences within the party's provincial executive members here, as well as among sportsmen, with many threat-

ening to vote for the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) should she stand in the constituency in the June 24-25 parliamentary election.

"We don't want re-cycled politicians in our midst," **Peter Mokeona**, an outspoken ZANU PF councillor here, said openly.

"You can't take someone from the archives and impose her on the people. This is what is destroying the party. Lesabe failed in her former constituency and now she wants to try her luck here. We

'We don't think she has anything new to offer Gwanda North. She has done her part and must just leave the political scene gracefully'

will not allow this."

Lesabe, who doubles up as National Employment Minister, drifted into the political wilderness in March this year when she was soundly trounced by a political novice, **Thomas Dube**, in the ruling party's primaries to choose a candidate for her Mzingwane constituency in Matabeleland South.

ZANU PF officials in Gwanda said they discussed the issue of Lesabe during a stormy meeting this week, when many publicly said the new constituency had been created solely to accommodate her.

"People told her to her face at the meeting that she was not welcome because she comes from another part of Matabeleland South, where she was a legislator for many years," one insider said.

"We don't think she has anything new to offer Gwanda North. She has done



Thenjwe Lesabe

The party officials said after heated arguments, it was finally agreed that primary elections be held today to elect a candidate for the constituency.

"Already there are about seven party cadres that are keen to represent ZANU PF in the constituency. They have submitted their names so we are going to hold primaries today," one party official said.

ZANU PF's secretary for administration in Matabeleland South, **Andrew Langa**, confirmed the Lesabe debacle and said the issue must be resolved through primaries.

Party insiders said if Lesabe were allowed to stand, it would create a bad precedent.

"It will encourage people who lose in one constituency to try their luck elsewhere. This is bad, especially when these people don't come from these areas," one said.

Meanwhile the ruling party in Bulawayo is also in a quandary over the candidature of disgraced former Cabinet minister **Callistus Ndelo** amid revelations that independence war veterans there have given him up to today to decide if he has a chance to win the coming elections against **David Coltart**, the MDC candidate.

Many members fear that Ndelo, who in the 1980s openly broke ranks with his former ZAPU party could lose the seat because of his unpopularity among the city's predominantly ZAPU supporters.

Although **Joshua Nkomo's** ZAPU party merged with the ruling ZANU PF party in 1987, many in Bulawayo have not forgiven Ndelo for siding with ZANU PF and branding ZAPU a dead donkey.

THE FINANCIAL GAZETTE JUNE 1-7-2000

Story 9: Lesabe's political comeback faces tough, stony path

From Njabulo Ncube Bulawayo Bureau Chief

GWANDA- A desperate bid by the governing ZANU PF party to rescue the head of the Women's league, Thenijiwe Lesabe. From political oblivion by imposing her in the Gwanda North constituency has hit a snag because of stiff opposition from most party supporters, it was established this week.

Gwanda, the provincial capital of Matabeleland south was split into two constituencies- Gwanda North and Gwanda South- following recommendations of the Wilson Sandura-led Designation Commission last week.

Gwanda North, the new constituency comprises the entire Gwanda town Mtshabezi. And nearby rural areas while Gwanda South, where ZANU PF is fielding Abedinco Ncube is entirely rural.

Party insiders said this week the imposition of Lesabe by ZANU PF's Polit-buro had created sharp differences within the party's provincial executive members here, as well as among supporters, with many threatening to vote for the opposing Movement for Democratic change (MDC) should she stand in the constituency in the June 24-25 parliamentary election.

"We don't want re-cycled politicians in our midst." Peter Mokeona, an outspoken ZANU PF councillor said openly.

"You can't take someone from the archives and impose her on the people. This is what is destroying the party. Lesabe failed in her former constituency and now she wants to try her luck here. We will not allow this."

Lesabe, who doubles up as National Employment Minister, drifted into the political wilderness in March this year when she was soundly trounced by a political novice, Thomas Dube, in the ruling party's primaries to choose a candidate for her Mzingwane constituency in Matabeleland South.

ZANU PF officials in Gwanda said they discussed the issue of Lesabe during a stormy meeting this week where many publically said the new constituency has been created solely to accommodate her.

"People told her to her face at the meeting that she was not welcome because she

comes from another part of Matabeleland South where she was a legislator for many years,” one insider said.

“We don’t think she has anything new to offer to Gwanda North. She has done her part and must just leave the political scene gracefully.” Others accused Lesabe, a towering figure who also lost her bid last year to become ZANU PF’S vice president of being an under performer and said this would not help the constituency especially Gwanda town, which was recently granted a city status.

The party officials said after a heated argument, it was finally agreed that primary elections be held today to elect a candidate for the constituency.

“Already there are about seven party cadres that are keen to represent ZANU PF in the constituency. They have submitted their names so we are going to hold primaries today,” one party official said.

ZANU PF’s secretary for administration in Matabeleland South, Andrew Langa, confirmed the Lesabe debacle and said the issue must be resolved through primaries.

Party insiders said if Lesabe were allowed to stand, it would create a bad precedent. “It will encourage people who lose in one constituency to try their luck elsewhere. This is bad especially when these people don’t come from these areas,” one said.

Meanwhile the ruling party in Bulawayo is also said in a quandary over the candidature of disgraced former Cabinet minister Callistus Ndlovu amid revelations that independence war veterans there have given him up today to decide if he has chance to win coming elections against David Coltart, the MDC candidate.

Many member fear that Ndlovu, who in the 1980’s openly broke ranks with his former ZANU PF party, could lose the seat because of his unpopularity among the city’s predominantly ZAPU supporters. Although Joshua Nkomo’s ZAPU party merged with the ruling ZANU PF party in 1987. Many in Bulawayo have not forgiven Ndlovu for siding with ZANU PF and branding ZAPU a dead donkey.

Appendix 10:

THE FUZZY MATHS OF SADC: JUST HOW DID THEY ARRIVE AT THE 30 PERCENT QUOTA SYSTEM?



Story 10: The fuzzy maths of SADC / just how did they arrive at the 30 percent quota system?

Mavis Makuni: own Correspondant

Its fuzzy maths. That is the only way to describe the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Gender and Development Declaration quota system.

The gender policy which was adopted in 1997, requires national governments to reserve 30 percent out of the total number of decision making and public service posts for women.

Governments were given a deadline to meet these targets by the end of this year, but events on the ground make it very doubtful that that any SADC country will pass the test.

The 30 percent quota system has generated considerable interest in Zimbabwe because of the ascendancy of former freedom fighter Joyce Mujuru to the position of Vice-President.

The ruling ZANU PF late last year invoked the SADC declaration to instruct its 10 provinces to nominate a woman candidate to fill the vacancy created by the death of Vice-President Simon Muzenda in 2003.

In his enigmatic “I have a dream” remark, President Robert Mugabe gave a very clear hint that Mujuru could be his anointed successor as the country’s next president.

Mujuru’s appointment was, however, not welcomed by everyone in the ruling party. As the Tsholotsho indaba, which was allegedly organized to derail the historic appointment, has demonstrated, there was outright opposition to her candidacy.

Mujuru’s rise to the top has, in fact, been unique in a controversial way in that it has claimed an unprecedented number of political casualties. Most of those linked to the Tsholotsho meeting have been punished one way or another.

In addition, speculation has been rife that the ruling party presidium’s decision to elevate Mujuru was not exactly underpinned by a commitment to gender balance.

Rather, critics say. It came in handy as a way to thwart the political ambitions of Speaker of measures against non-compliers.

As an example, discrimination employment – hiring, salaries, fringe benefits, etc. -

on the basis colour, race, sex, religion or national origin is prohibited under executive order. A federal enforcement agency, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance, is responsible for making sure that affected organisations comply with the stipulated conditions. The enforcement agency is empowered to bar flouters of the anti-discrimination regulations from getting contracts and grants. Culprits also stand to lose any federal funding they have already received. However, despite this vigilance the EEOC has still struggled with huge backlogs of discrimination charges, which needed to be investigated and resolved. The SADC Gender and Development Declaration glaringly lacks an enforcement mechanism and a regime of sanctions for non-compliance. It depends solely on governments to voluntarily honour their obligations. It is safe to say it is too much to expect some of the governments, which have no qualms about flouting principles pertaining to democratic governance the rule of law or human rights, to lose sleep over gender balance. They are bound to do everything possible to find loopholes or resort to other tactics to delay or avoid having to implement the policy. On their part, the SADC policy formulators have demonstrated a lack of political will and commitment through their preparedness to promote an unfair quota system. By what mathematical formula did these bureaucrats calculate that groups of people who represent the majority in most SADC countries are entitled to only a third of the national political cake? The purpose of quota system and affirmative action programmes is to enable previously disadvantaged segments of the population such as minorities and women to catch up in different spheres of human endeavour. The SADC Gender and Development Declaration quota, which set the 30 percent benchmark, could prove counter-productive in the long run. It can have the effect of actually institutionalising the gender imbalances it is purportedly seeking to eradicate. Most governments will not meet the 30 percent quota. The few that will comply will pat themselves on the back for a half backed achievement. The affected segment of the population will, however, have no cause to celebrate until the SADC policy planners get their maths right.

Appendix 11

LOSING ZANU PF CANDIDATE 'PUNISHES' VOTERS



Story 11: Losing ZANU PF candidate ‘punishes’ voters

By savious kwinka

Bulawayo: Emganwini suburb has been plunged back into darkness following the removal of an electricity transformer by the Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (Zesa) last week allegedly on the instigation of disgruntled losing ZANU PF for Bulawayo South, Sithembiso Nyoni, *The Standard* has been told.

Nyoni lost to David Coltart of opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), who polled 12 120 to her 3777 votes in the just ended parliamentary elections in what was viewed by residents as “vote buying.”

A source at Zesa office in Bulawayo said Nyoni, who is also the Minister of Small and Medium Enterprises Development, directed the parastatal to remove the transformer last Sunday night in order to “fix” the residents for not voting her into parliament.

In an interview on Thursday, Nyoni confirmed to *The Standard* that Zesa employees had indeed taken the newly installed transformer but for “safekeeping” from thieves. “It’s true that Zesa employees have taken the transformer from Emganwini for safe keeping. However, anyone who assumes that I have ordered or instructed Zesa to remove it after losing the election is just too naughty,” said Nyoni.

A Zimbabwe Electricity Distribution Company (ZEDCO) official, Angilacala Ndlovu, confirmed that the transformer, which was installed during the parliamentary election campaign, had been removed.

Ndlovu, however, claimed that the transformer was only removed because it was small and they needed one with a bigger capacity.

“Instead of the 100Kv transformer, I am informed that a 350Kv transformer is required for the area. Anytime this week, the 350Kv transformer will be transformer will be installed at Emganwini,” Ndlovu said.

Nyoni admitted sourcing the transformer during the election campaigns period before instructing Zesa to install the transformer to supply electricity to the residents of Emganwini. The resident said they were “shocked” to wake up on Monday without electricity in the whole suburb,

“When I woke up around 2AM I discovered there was no electricity. Initially I assumed that maybe there was a power failure, but in the morning I was convinced that something was wrong,” said Charles Mpala of Emganwini.

Another resident who preferred anonymity said: "I thought that since I had not paid electricity, Zesa had disconnected power supply to my house, but I discovered that the transformer that was installed during the run-up to elections with the help of Sithembiso Nyoni had been removed at night."

Coltart said he would raise the matter in Parliament, after consulting the resident of Emganwini. People from this region have been subjected to empty promises in the past 25 years and his is very unfair to the residents.

"I will obviously consult the residents first and raise the matter in Parliament. These people definitely need electricity just like anyone else," Coltart said.

He accused the ZANU PF government of making false promises such as the construction of Shangani Gwayi dam project since 1980, which has not been completed.

Coltart also cited the Zambezi-Matabeleland water project, which has been widely talked about during the past 25 years.

Appendix 12 "ZANU-PF'S LATEST GIMMICK: WOMEN"

By Priscilla
Misihairabwi & Grace
Kwinjeh

HAVING thoroughly messed up the land distribution process, Zanu PF has a new target — women.

In a desperate bid to deal with the twin problems of succession and growing national unpopularity, the ruling party has found a scapegoat: women.

Women have become the latest cover for the regime to implement and complete its insidious agenda of retaining power at all costs.

During its 24 years in power, and many more years as a party, Zanu PF has routinely neglected and marginalised the women in its ranks and the Zimbabwean women as a whole.

However, desperate to retain its stranglehold on power, the ruling party is now making a cynical attempt to hoodwink the public into believing it cares for the welfare of women. Recent developments within the ruling party concerning the fate and status of women cannot go unchallenged.

The recent history of Zimbabwe is rich with examples of Zanu PF trying to repackage itself to gain national support and international acceptance. In 2000, a popular movement rejected the government-sponsored draft Constitution on principle — because the people knew that the process was flawed, and that no worthy document could emerge from such a process. Just as many pro-democracy activists saw through that deceit, we must rise to the challenge and see the recent development within Zanu PF in the same light.

Many women first became activists in the women's movement in Zimbabwe having realised that Zanu PF had failed the generality of Zimbabwean women.

The liberation strug-

gle did not result in our emancipation. In fact, as a liberation party that went through an armed struggle, its structure and system are based on male superiority ideology: patriarchy.

From the onset we need to demystify the appointment of Joyce Mujuru as Second Vice-President and the status of Zanu PF women as a whole. The patriarchal nature of Zanu PF has ensured that no strong woman in her own right has emerged out of the Zanu PF system before now. This is also why the question of gender equality, both nationally and within the party, remains unresolved.

It must first be understood that Mujuru is only acceptable to President Robert Mugabe as his Vice president because she does not threaten his hold on power, either nationally or within the ruling party. She has been propelled to the party's top most position precisely because she poses no threat to any of the distinct factions engaged in a bitter power struggle within Zanu PF. These include the Zanu faction, Emmerson Mnangagwa faction and, of course, the Mujuru faction led by her husband, Solomon.

Putting Joyce Mujuru in the Vice presidency does not change the fact that Zanu PF remains the same dictatorial regime with nothing to offer the people of Zimbabwe. It is still the source of our misery. Women and children form the majority of the three million people in need of food aid. They are the victims of the collapsed education system and those experiencing the effects of the crumbling health sector. They continue to suffer as a result of Zanu PF's bankrupt policies, and the party's sole interest in retaining power at all costs.

Reform of a corrupt political party or system does not come with appointing a woman. Mujuru's appointment does

nothing to address the real questions of governance and democracy. The crisis confronting Zimbabwe is not about the biology of those in the governing hierarchy, but their ability to deal with critical national issues.

If one examines the way the new quotas for "women's empowerment" are being handled, it becomes clear that Mugabe is in control. There was no democratic process of nominating or selecting constituencies for women. The women being put in the so-called constituencies set for them are simply replacing Mugabe's enemies. The absurdity of the whole process becomes evident when we see that women form the majority of those protesting against the imposition of "women's constituencies".

Even those women who have been in parliament in the past 24 years, it is clear that they have operated within a

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framework defined by the men – hence their failure to push the women's agenda at a broader national level.

If this is the behaviour of Zanu PF, what is the lesson for women in the alternative movement, MDC? We are fighting the same beast, patriarchy, which transcends every aspect of our lives – at home, in church and even in the political system we belong to.

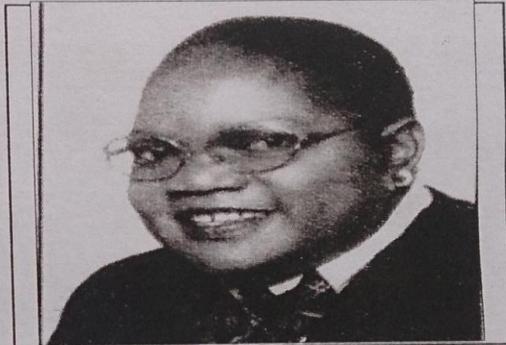
As we struggle within the MDC, we are clear that patriarchy is an enemy we will fight within and outside as we refuse to play junior partner to our male counterparts. It is important that our colleagues understand that the issue of gender power relationships cannot be separated from the whole fight for human rights and democracy.

Therefore, we remain cognisant of the fact that in the alternative movement we have a twin struggle. We must

remain vigilant in transforming our national political system into a people centred one. Internally we must ensure that our party lives up to its promises and moves towards a better life for all women in Zimbabwe, regardless of their political affiliation.

This commitment is made at many levels. Within the MDC, there is a grassroots women's agenda. Our National Women's Assembly, held in Masvingo in October 2003, passed a resolution stating that one third of all MDC posts throughout all MDC party structures will be reserved for the nomination of women candidates. The National Executive and National Council adopted the resolution unanimously. On top of this we have mainstreamed gender in all party policies.

Nationally, as MDC women we will continue to fight for democracy and human rights for all Zimbabweans. We will



VICE-President Joyce Mujuru — is she not just part of Zanu PF's gender equality window-dressing?

carry the burden of arrests, torture and rape from an illegitimate and evil regime.

Likewise, we will continue to insist that our own system does not do to even one woman what Zanu PF has done to Zimbabwean women.

To achieve that we call upon our allies in civil society, the region and the international community to stand with us as we push the MDC women's agenda forward.

Story 12: ZANU PF'S latest gimmick: women

By Priscilla Mishairabwi & Grace kwinjeh

Having thoroughly messed up the land distribution process, ZANU PF has a new target-women. In a desperate bid to deal with the new twin problems of succession and growing national unpopularity, the ruling party has found a scape-goat women. Women have become the latest cover for the regime to implement and complete its insidious agenda of retaining power at all costs. During 4 year in power, and many more years as a party ZANU PF has routinely neglected and marginalised the women in its ranks and Zimbabwean women as a whole. However, desperate to retain its stranglehold on power, the ruling party is now making a cynical attempt to hoodwink the public into believing it cares for the welfare of women. Recent development within the ruling party concerning the status of women cannot go unchallenged. The recent history of Zimbabwe is rich with examples of ZANU PF trying to repackage itself to gain national support and international acceptance. In 2000, a popular movement rejected the government sponsored draft Constitution on principle- because the people knew that the process was flawed, and that no worthy document could emerge from such a process. Just as many pro-democracy activists saw through the recent development within ZANU PF in the same light. Many women first became activists in the women's movement in Zimbabwe having realized that ZANU PF had failed the generality of Zimbabwean women. The liberation struggle did not result in our emancipation. In fact as a liberation party that went through an armed struggle its structure and system are based on male superiority ideology: patriarchy. From the onset we need to demystify the appointment of Joyce Mujuru as Second Vice President and the status of ZANU PF women as a whole. The patriarchal nature of ZANU PF has ensured that no strong woman in her own right has emerged out of the ZANU PF system before now. This is also why the question of gender equality, both nationally and within the party remains unresolved. It must first be understood that Mujuru is only acceptable to President Robert Mugabe as his vice president because she does not threaten his hold on power, either nationally or within the party. She has been propelled to the party's top most position precisely because she poses no threat to any of the

distinct factions engaged in a bitter power struggle within the ZANU PF faction, Emmerson Mnangwagwa faction and, of course, the Mujuru faction led by her husband, Solomon. Putting Joyce Mujuru in the vice presidency does not change the fact that ZANU PF remains the same dictatorial regime with nothing to offer the people of Zimbabwe. It is still the source of our misery. Women and children form the majority of the three million people in the need of food aid. They are the victims of the collapsed education system and those experiencing the effects of the crumbling effects of the crumbling health sector. They continue to suffer as a result of ZANU PF's bankrupt policies, and the party's sole interest in retaining power at all costs. Reform of a corrupt political party or system does not come with appointing a woman. Mujuru's appointment does nothing to address the real questions of governance and democracy. The crisis confronting Zimbabwe is not about the biology of those in the governing hierarchy, but their ability to deal with critical national issues. If one examines the way the quotas for "women's empowerment" are being handled, it becomes clear that Mugabe is not in control. There was no democratic process of nominating or selecting constituencies set for them are simply replacing Mugabe's enemies. The absurdity of the whole process becomes evident when we see that women form the majority of those protesting against the imposition of "women's constituencies". Even those women who have been in parliament in the past 24 years, it is clear that they have operated within a framework defined by the men- hence their failure to push the women's agenda at a broader national level. Of this is the behaviour of ZANU PF, what is the lesson for women in the alternative movement, MDC? We are fighting the same beast, patriarchy, which transcends every aspect of our lives- at home, in church and even in the political system we belong to. As we struggle within the MDC, we are clear that patriarchy is an enemy we will fight within and outside as we refuse to play junior partner to our male counterparts. It is important that our colleagues understand that the issue of gender power relationships cannot be separated from the whole fight for human rights and democracy. Therefore, we remain cognizant of the fact that in the alternative movement we have a twin struggle. We must remain vigilant in transforming our national political system into a people centered one. Internally we must ensure that our party lives up to our promises and moves towards a better life for all women in Zimbabwe regardless of their political

affiliation. This commitment is made at many levels. Within the MDC, there is a grassroots women's agenda. Our National Women's Assembly, held in Masvingo in October 2003, passed a resolution stating that one third of all MDC posts throughout all MDC party structures will be reserved for the nomination of women candidates. The National Executive and National Council adopted the resolution unanimously. On top of this we have mainstreamed gender in all political parties. Nationally, MDC women will continue to fight for democracy and human rights for all Zimbabweans. We will carry the burden of arrests, torture and rape from an illegitimate and evil regime. Likewise, we will continue to insist that our own system does not do to even one woman what ZANU PF has done to Zimbabwean women. To achieve that we call upon our allies in civil society, the region and the international community to stand with us as we push the MDC women's agenda forward.

STORY 13:

Mujuru's gospel of non-violence gives hope

Mavis Makuni: Own Correspondant

A short while before the invasion of Iraq by Britain and America in 2003, an overseas newspaper published a story about a debate that had occurred within the British military establishment.

The debate centred on whether or not women soldiers should be deployed in the front lines of battle. The question was asked whether women had emotional inclination and ability to shoot another human being from point blank range.

In the end it was decided that women were not suited for such a gruelling task. They were therefore only to be deployed in non-combat situations and capacities.

Far from conveying the impression that women were perceived as weaklings, this decision represented recognition of the compassionate nature of women. This was an acknowledgement that women are more uneasy about using violence as a tool in conflict resolution.

I was reminded of this episode this week after reading about something unusual attributed to a top Zimbabwean political leader.

This was the involvement of Vice-President, Joyce Mujuru in praying for the coming general elections to be free from violence.

Newspapers reported on Monday that the Vice-President led a national prayer service for violence free parliamentary elections in March. The prayer, organized by women from various denominators, was held at the National Sports Centre on Sunday.

Mujuru, who was reported to have clad in her Salvation Army uniform made an unequivocal plea for peace. "Day and night we should pray for peace, tolerance and co-existence". By taking the trouble to show up for this important prayer meeting and speaking out against violence and vindictiveness, Mujuru has brought a special and different dimension to her office.

Violence has been a burgeoning crisis in Zimbabwe for many years. Many innocent people have been killed and other have been maimed in politically motivated

attacks. Throughout this painful period different male authorities figure have gone through the motions of condemning the atrocities and promising that culprits would be dealt with.

However, their statements always rang hollow because the situation on the ground never improved. In addition, because some official policies and actions seem to imply approval and institutionalisation of violence, their sincerity was always in doubt.

By coming forward openly to join other women as an ordinary Christian, Mujuru has added a special feminine touch to the anti-violence campaign. Humility and empathy count for a great deal in a leader. Observers have welcomed these small individual touches. Mujuru has introduced in conduction herself in public.

Even before she became vice-president, the former freedom fighter was praised for her ability to remain above the fray during the intense jockeying for position within the ruling party. During this time her name came up regularly and sometimes some uncomplimentary things were said. Through this turbulent period, Mujuru kept her mouth shut and acted as though nothing had happened.

Observers have also referred to Mujuru's preparedness to admit being fallible and doing something about it. When the scandal involving the looting of the War Victims Compensation Fund surfaced in the 1990's, Mujuru was the only person to surrender the inflated amount of money she had been allocated. This action demonstrated beyond doubt that she is a different kettle of fish.

Human right activist, Gorden Moyo of Bulawayo Agenda, while welcoming Mujuru's gesture on violence, however she said she needs to things further.

"If Mujuru continues this God- fearing approach and takes it and sells it to Cabinet and the Presidium. I am sure Zimbabweans will acknowledge and appreciate the birth of new political culture," said Moyo.

Attending an anti-violence prayer meeting was not enough on its own unless it was followed up by a concerted effort to win over her male colleagues. Moyo said Mujuru was astute and carried enough political clout to ensure that she would be listened to.

"There is no contact without impact. If Mujuru is to make a difference that all Zimbabweans will cherish, she should preach the gospel of non-violence to her male colleagues"

Moyo said the fact that Mujuru was a God fearing and active member of the Salvation Army was a source of comfort and hope to Zimbabweans. He hoped the combination of Mujuru's military background and her membership of a church that was an "army" focusing on saving souls enhanced her commitment to human values. Both the secular and spiritual armies demanded a high level of discipline and integrity. The Vice-President has these attributes.

"What remains is for her to make her dream of non-violence a reality," Moyo said.

STORY: 14

Madzongwe intimidates prosecutors

Clemense Manyukwe: Staff Reporter

Outgoing Senate president Edna Madzongwe has resorted to intimidating prosecutors to win a land case after they already refused to prosecute a white farmer she wants evicted.

As a result of the threats the prosecutors have rescues themselves from the case in which Richard Thomas Etheridge of Stockdale Farm is charged with refusing to vacate the property in favour of Madzongwe.

The withdrawal of prosecutors Alen Chifokoyo, Ngonidzashe Mutanana and Consulta Jere, has forced the Attorney General's office to deploy the Mashonaland West area public prosecutor Edmore Makoto, to deal with the matter.

Sources said Madzongwe first accused the prosecutors on February 5 this year, of being biased. The ruling politician is to have accused the law officers of receiving bribes from white farmers.

After the prosecutors recused themselves from the case, Madzongwe stormed into their offices on April 29 and accused them of refusing to deal with the case because they thought that the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) would come into power.

The prosecutors are said to be now living in fear as war veterans and ZANU PF supporters have threatened "to deal with them".

"Madzongwe stormed the prosecutors' offices and started shouting at them. She said 'you are refusing to deal with my case because you think MDC is coming into power'. She is now interfering and compromising the work of law officers," a source said.

Madzongwe was to have gone to court on April 8 with between 30 and 50 ruling party supporters, but the case failed to kick off after the three prosecutors themselves recused themselves.

The case only resumed last week after it was taken over by Makoto. The Chegutu prosecutors refused to comment on the matter.

The Mashonaland West area prosecutor said: "My hands are tied, I'm not allowed to comment." One of the lawyers who dealt with Etheridge's case, David Drury,

yesterday confirmed that the Chegutu prosecutors had recused themselves from the Madzongwe's land case.

"Someone from the AG's office and Madzongwe are said to have accuse them of bias. The suggestion that they received bribes is rubbish," Drury said.

Efforts to get a comment from Madzongwe were fruitless with her secretary at parliament saying she could not be reached.

Last year Madzongwe occupied the farm but the High Court ordered her to vacate it. The court said if Etheridge was to be evicted, that had to be done through a due legal process. Sources said prosecutors countrywide are now reluctant to take up land matters because of political intimidation from ruling party members.