

GENDER INEQUALITY AMONG MINISTERS IN THE EVANGELICAL  
LUTHERANCHURCH INZIMBABWE (ELCZ): A PASTORAL WOMANIST CRITIQUE OF  
THE EXCLUSION OF FEMALE CLERGY FROM THE TOP/SENIOR LEADERSHIP OF THE  
ELCZ

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## DECLARATION

I, Elitha Moyo, student number (46777733) declare that **Gender inequality among ministers in Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe (ELCZ): A Pastoral Womanist Critique of The Exclusion Of Female Clergy From The Top/Senior Leadership Of The Elcz** is my own original work and that all sources I have used or quoted have been acknowledged by means of in-text citations and complete references.

Signature.....

Date.....

**APPROVAL FORM**

The undersigned certify that they have read and recommended to University of South Africa acceptance of a thesis entitled, **Gender inequality among ministers in Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe (ELCZ): A Pastoral Womanist Critique Of The Exclusion Of Female Clergy From The Top/Senior Leadership Of The Elcz** submitted by Elitha Moyo in fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy in Practical Theology (with specialization in Pastoral Therapy).

..... **Name of Supervisor**

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..... **Date**

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

AICs: African Independence Churches

ACK: Anglican Church in Kenya

AOB: Any Other Business

CCAWOT: Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians

ZCC: Zimbabwe Council of Churches

CEDAW: Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women

CoS: Church of Sweden

CSW: Commission of Status of Women

DESB: Diaconia Evangelism Stewardship Board

EATWOT: Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians

ELCZ: Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe

ELCZ-CC: Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe-Church Council

FG: Focus Group

LL: Luther League

LLSF: Luther League Senior Fellowship

LUCSA: Lutheran Communion of Southern Africa

LWF: Lutheran World Federation.

MCSA: Methodist Church of Southern Africa

MP: Member of Parliament

NT: New Testament

OT: Old Testament

SADC: Southern Africa Development Community

ZEC: Zimbabwe Electoral Commission

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my husband and my children for the support they gave to me during my studies. I do not overlook their contributions, prayers for my studies and my health.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The study investigated the exclusion of female pastors from senior leadership positions in the ELCZ. The background to the study shows that since the inception of the ELCZ the office of the General Secretary position has always been held by men, all bishops have been men and all deans, women saved in the office of the Deanship are only three to-dates the rest are male. The principals of Bible schools and the United Theological College have all been male. The ratio of male pastors to female pastors is skewed towards males. The study's main purpose was to help the church and community to understand that exclusion of female pastors from church leadership is detrimental to the development of both community and church and that leadership is not determined by gender but by one's capabilities and abilities. The study used qualitative methodology and purposive sampling that led to 39 participants taking part. Amongst these, were bishops both former and sitting, pastors and laity of the church and society. Data was collected through the use of in-depth interviews, observations and focus groups. The study used African female theologians' theories of Mercy Amba Oduyoye and Elizabeth Fiorenza as lenses to investigate the phenomenon at hand. The two agitate for a ministry that is a partnership between men and women and discipleship of equals respectively.

The study's findings were that the ELCZ members and pastors were aware that female pastors were excluded from senior posts. Patriarchal obstacles are on the forefront of disadvantaging and disempowering female pastors in the ELCZ. Looking at the current lectionary or Almanac of the ELCZ that recorded all clergy including Bishops retired and active and Deans, female pastors are only 34 since the inception of the church in Zimbabwe in 1903 out of 150 pastors, (ELCZ Almanac/Lectinary January 2021 to December 2021). Referring female pastors in the whole church to a percentage it is 22% against 78% of male pastors which is also opposite to women



membership which is 80% of the whole church membership. The percentage figures of both female clergy and laity show the misrepresentation of women on pastorate side. It further noted that a cosmetic adherence to LWF directives on gender equality that calls for at least 40% participation of female pastors in church governance has not been fully achieved as female pastors continue to be excluded from senior leadership (LWF Gender Justice Policy 2013). In chapter four there is a claim by one interviewed male pastor who refused his wife to go for ministerial training pointing that the duty of her is to bear children and do house chores. The ELCZ continues to consider women as part of men's property and only good for household chores. The study concluded that the oppression challenges faced by female pastors in parishes are due to male dominated leadership that is connected to the sociological constructs of gender dynamics in societies. The ELCZ meaning its male dominate leadership including laity is not willing to stand for female pastors and give them the required support and protection. Female pastors in ELCZ also face persecution from other women instigated by men through patriarchal systems. This was clear that when people are socialised into something it is difficult for them to accept a new freedom. The study noted that there is a *'silent exclusion/conspiracies strategy'* against female pastors when it comes to voting and appointing of pastors to senior leadership posts in church. There are female seasoned pastors who are qualified for the senior positions which have been excluded by virtue of being women. The study established that the current exclusion of female pastors was as a result of religious and historical trends in the church supported by patriarchal connotations. This was normal during their era 1903 when they established ELCZ nothing was wrong that was their modus operandi as no one saw the abnormality. However, the contemporary church is where questions of exclusion of women in leadership are raised. That was the reason why the ELCZ established a gender justice desk and adopted a policy that is implemented by this desk. The study suggested a historical-religious gendered model of pastoral care that encourages the church and community to be

considerate of the equality between men and women before God hence the need for equity in leadership. The model uses six steps of investigating the current status and development of female pastors in church. The ELCZ should understand its historical perspective and religious beliefs then be considerate about the situation of female pastors. The study recommended a deliberate and targeted empowerment program for female pastors in ELCZ to better their current qualifications. The study further recommended the review of the constitution; sensitisation programs and procedures for elections and brings in sections that encourage equity amongst female and male pastors in senior positions.

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## CHAPTER ONE:

### INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH STUDY

#### 1.0 Introduction:

The discourses of gender imbalance and inequality have been an issue that attracted researchers across the academic board. Thus, the theme proved to be a cross-cutting issue especially when it refers to women in patriarchy leadership. The study addresses the reason why women clergy in the ELCZ are excluded from senior leadership positions within the church. Patriarchy is an ideology and a way of thinking that legally, culturally, socially, religiously and economically enforces male dominance and power (Rakoczy 2004:10; cf. Rothman 1994:141). Patriarchy in this study is defined as the culturally and socially constructed system that enforces gender roles and a gender binary between men and women and is oppressive to them both. Both men and women are socialised as per the system expectations, and it is considered to be a way of life.

#### 1.1 Background to the Study.

Gender imbalance, inequality and injustices still exist in Zimbabwean communities including the church and refer to ELCZ as per this study. This is supported by Chisale as she pointed that, “Within the Christian Church gender equality remains a theoretical notion...” (Chisale 2020:1). This means that gender injustice issues have been a thorn in the flesh for women for long time and these problems continue to exist even today in 2021. Mawura also argues that, “The attraction of African women to Christianity was not confined to the pioneer period”, even today in 21<sup>st</sup> century women still dominate the pews in mainline churches, African Instituted churches, Charismatic Movement and Pentecostal Churches, (Mawura 2013:412, Phiri 2004 and Chisale 2020). It is only on power side where women are absent or we find just few women in general positions that have little to do with decision making. Whereas, “their contributions to the growth of the church in Africa cannot be gainsaid” (Mawura 2013: 2011) Yet again, Sundlekle and Steed support the motion raised by Mawura saying, “though



women appear invisible, they have been the pillars of parishes and take care of the local church and its worship” (Sundkle and Steed 2000:681). Their argument validates the reason why this study was taken. Women are not in leadership positions but can be seen doing amazing works in the church and community and they are also the majority members in churches. On the other side again, The society around ELCZ practices leadership that is masculine oriented while women participation in leadership is secondary. This has however affected the ELCZ as its leadership dominated by men since inception is male driven. Patriarchal obstacles are on the forefront of disadvantaging and disempowering female pastors in the ELCZ. Looking at the current lectionary or Almanac of the ELCZ that recorded all clergy including Bishops and Deans both retired and active, female pastors are only 34 since the inception of the church in Zimbabwe in 1903 out of 150 pastors, (ELCZ Almanac/Lectionary January 2021 to December 2021). Referring female pastors in the whole church to a percentage it is 22% against 78% of male pastors which is opposite to women membership which is 80% of the whole church membership. The percentage figures of both female clergy and laity shows the misrepresentation of women on pastorate side, while church and the country at large have introduced various gender programs since the dawn of the new millennium and not many changes have been achieved. The teething troubles of ideological thinking and patriarchal behaviors coupled with cultural agents continue to dictate who should or should not lead organizations. This has been against the meritocracy beliefs of capabilities and abilities of individuals in organizations. The belief has however caused women to face exclusion and segregation from leadership posts of which the ELCZ is not an exception. This gives an alternative gender justice approach that provides an alternative platform for women both in church and community to address their exclusion from general leadership. Due to patristic tendencies women have suffered in the hands of their male counterparts as they continue to occupy back chairs, while male figures are sitting at the head of the decision table. The Asian Business Consortium (2014:23) reports that women continued to be denied

entry into meaningful leadership. The unorthodox process has led to loss of their respect and self-esteem as they are seen as second-class citizens. Women have been left with little space to participate in senior leadership indifferent societies and organizations. Tables below portray the ELCZ situation it comes to those in Senior Leadership positions.

Office	Total Number	Women	Men	%of Women to Men	%Men to Women
Deacons	9	1	8	11%	88%
Pastors	110	31	86	28%	72%
Deans	14	3	10	21%	79%
Bishops	7	0	7	0%	100%
Principals &GS	4	0	4	0%	100%

**Table1: Distribution of top positions in ELCZ: Source fieldwork**

The current study took a position to critically engage the challenges and reasons that have caused female pastors in ELCZ to be excluded from senior leadership positions. The meaning of senior or top positions in this study refers to those who are in church management and directors' positions who seat on decision making boards, such as Bishops, Deans, General Secretary and Chairpersons of different Boards including Church institutions' directors. Furthermore, it interrogated what the church is doing in addressing the continued exclusion of women pastors from senior leadership. The church is rooted in biblical teachings based on Genesis 1:27 that many people view difference ways that depend on one's school of thought. Presiding Bishop when addressing church men's forum in Gweru (8 February 2018) he referred to men as the backbone and heads of the church. While the scripture has been interpreted differently and the writer understands that scriptures speak with different voices to different people depending on one's context.

The tables below show the picture of the ELCZ Episcopal Council and the policy implementation board of the church which is the Church Council

Post of Episcopal Council	Current Occupant	Who are eligible
Presiding Bishop	Male	Male and Female
Bishop	Male	Male and Female
Bishop	Male	Male and Female
General Secretary	Male	Male and Female
Treasurer	Male	Male and Female

**Table 1.2: Episcopal Council is the interim decision board that monitors the day-to-day operations of the ELCZ at national level on behalf of the church council**

Post of a Church Council	Current Occupant	Voting system	Who are eligible
Presiding Bishop	Male	First past the post	Male and female
Bishop	Male	First past the post	Male and female
Bishop	Male	First past the post	Male and female
Finance chair	Male	First past the post	Male and female
DESB chairperson	Male	First past the post	Male and female
LDS Chairperson	Male	First past the post	Male and female
Disciplinary chair	Male	First past the post	Male and female

General secretary	Male	First past the post	Male and female
Dean Western	Male	First past the post	Male and female
Dean Eastern	Male	First past the post	Male and female
Dean central	Male	First past the post	Male and female
Pastors' rep Central	Female	First past the post	Male and female
Pastors' rep Eastern	Male	First past the post	Male and female

Pastor's rep Western	Male	First past the post	Male and female
Women rep Eastern	Female	Quarter system	Female
Women rep western	Female	Quarter system	Female
Women rep Central	Female	Quarter system	Female
Witnesses rep Eastern	Male	Quarter system	Male
Witness rep Western	Male	Quarter system	Male
Witness rep Central	Male	Quarter system	Male
LLSF rep Eastern	Male	First past the post	Male and female
LLSF rep Western	Male	First past the post	Male and female
LLSF rep Central	Male	First past the post	Male and female

Sunday school rep Eastern	Female	First past the post	Male and female
Sunday school rep western	Female	First past the post	Male and female
Sunday school rep Central	Female	First past the post	Male and female
LL rep Eastern	Male	First past the post	Male and female
LL rep Western	Male	First past the post	Male and female
LL rep central	Female	First past the post	Male and female
Chairperson of CA	Male	First past the post	Male and female
Diocesan chair Eastern	Male	First past the post	Male and female
Diocesan chair western	Male	First past the post	Male and female
Diocesan chair central	Male	First past the post	Male and female

**Table 1.3 Church Council representatives at National level**

For the analysis of the current ELCZ Church Council members it comprises of 33 members. If we move women reps where they are given as per gender, and we remove again witnesses section where men also are provided a seat in the council. The remaining 26 posts are contested on equal footing between male and females. The current set up shows that 5 out of 26 posts are occupied by female. That translates to 19% only, which is a mismatch of 62% members of the denomination who are women. A close look at the three diocese’s Sunday school superintended is all women this is so because women are associated with teaching kids at church. One participant said that women are not good for other big administrative jobs rather they are good for Sunday school teaching. Indeed Sunday school is represented by women councilors.

The researcher observed during elections of the current council members that those who nominated men were mostly women, and they sort of saying women can't lead in the presence of male Christians. This was in spite of women in church outnumbering men. They are socialised and religionised to believe that only men have the capacity to be voted into top leadership of the church. Women appear content in relegating themselves from top leadership. When the researcher tried to talk with other fellow female she observed and concluded that her contemporaries were also believe in the doctrine of only male pastors can lead them. While the society, and church work in cahoots in denying female pastors to occupy top leadership posts in church. It is however self-inflicting to note fellow female pastors denouncing fellow female pastors that they cannot be voted into top leadership of the church. Freedom from this environment where women were socialised and indoctrinated with certain ideologies, they find themselves acting not in support, but because of socialisation. In most cases such women cannot be blamed when the system was psychologically forced in their minds for over 100years. In context however, the scripture uses an inclusive language that delegates equal power and authority to both Adam and Eve (Genesis 1:28). The LWF (2013:24) noted that the ELCZ gender justice approach brings balanced power relations. Through gender justice, they can eradicate propensities to deny women senior leadership in church. Women should be allowed to enjoy the privileges in church. Women should be allowed to enjoy the privileges that go with being equally created by God. Female pastors are faced with such challenges and struggling thereof to remove the obstacles to be better their leadership chances in church.

This thesis is set to investigate the reasons behind exclusion of female pastors from senior leadership in ELCZ. As explained above on who those are considered as senior leadership in this study, the ELCZ lectionaries 2020 witnessed that the seating, retired and those who were already called by the Lord through death are all male no women was ever elected or appointed to the Bishop position. The first chapter looks at the problem statement, research objectives and questions, research significance,

research delimitation and limitation. The chapter further gives definition of key terms and concludes and structure of the following chapters.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe (ELCZ) was born out of Church of Sweden Mission efforts that started in around 1902 to 1903 (Soderstrom, 1984:19). The missionaries who came to Zimbabwe were heavily influenced by conservative traditions of the church. As such it took time to accept female ordination in their mission work Shiri addresses to 25 years celebrations of female ordination in the ELCZ 2016). Women ordination was an anathema for the semissionaries (Shiri, 2003:42). Women were excluded from ordained pastoral ministry from the beginning of the mission work of the Lutheran Church in Africa.

The 1984 7<sup>th</sup> LWF Budapest Assembly took a bold decision that accepted female ordination in all Lutheran Churches registered as member of the LWF. The resolutions were also affirmed at the 10<sup>th</sup> LWF Assembly in 2010 at Member churches agreed to go back and implement this groundbreaking pronouncement. The member churches were at different stages of women involvement in their church life. For the ELCZ the first hurdle was to sanction officially women as preachers in its congregations. In his book, Shiri (1984; 56) has lamented the unusual behavior where bible women could meet and invite a drunkard lay-preacher to deliver sermon to them. This was morally wrong for the development of Christian ethics amongst women. In other words, these men were preaching the ‘do as I say and not what I do’. The church took it step by step as it first decided to allow women to be preachers but did not discuss the ordination of women. Perhaps this was done to allow members to digest the decision and get used to female preachers. When it came to the women ordained ministry, indeed, this did not go down well with some sections of the church. As Shiri indicates in his book, some parishes complained why women were allowed to stand before men. The ELCZ executive took it on its own shoulders to implement the 7<sup>th</sup> LWF Assembly to ordain women in

Lutheran churches. The journey to convince the ELCZ stakeholders took three years for a landmark decision to be attained. In 1987 the church decreed that it had decided to ordain women as pastors (ELCZ-CC minute, No, 54, 1987). Like any other decision that sought to better the space for women in church, it brought a lot of grumbling amongst church members. Shiri (2003:42) also explained of experience in CoS where young ministers celebrated the decision by their bishop not to ordain female candidates. This happened in Gothenburg which was the center of conservativeness that influenced most missionaries that came to Zimbabwe. This was the same level of responses found in ELCZ when the idea for female ordination was tabled and debated. It is recorded that one ELCZ member requested the then Bishop to wait until his death that he can consider ordaining female members as pastors. The men were not prepared to see the ordination of female pastors, perhaps this was due to missionary influences that was anti-female ordination. Shiri (2003; 42) said that one scholar in Sweden concluded that ordination of women was a route that will bring curse to a church instead of blessings. In other words, female ordination was associated with curses. This then would mean to say female members or pastors can't be promoted as it will be bringing curses to the church. The ELCZ led by Bishop J C Shiri 1975 – 1991 ignored the discrimination statement by this Swedish person and in 1987 received the first two females to the ordained ministry, (Shiri address 26 October 2017).

Soderstrom (1984:44) traced the historical problem of women involvement in church. He went back to missionary time and noted that while missionaries (male) were celebrated and fully participated in missionary conference, their wives were not accepted and had no voting powers. This was against their fantastic work that helped for the success of mission work in every missionary effort. Missionary wives played a critical link and their presence made it possible for the furtherance of the gospel. Despite these, missionary wives had no voting powers (Soderstrom, 1984:44). They could not make any decision for the church and mission. In 1937 the exclusion of missionary wives was



abolished, and they were granted voting powers. Rev Gustav Bernander was the one who challenged the idea of exclusion and championed the inclusion of missionary wives in decision making meetings. Surprisingly this same decision brought a new dimension of women exclusion in church. The granting of voting powers to missionary pastors' wives was another tool of racial exclusion of black women. The decision only allowed wives of the European origins' missionaries. The indigenous pastors' wives like Mrs. J B Hove whose husband was ordained the first black minister in ELCZ were excluded from the decision. Prior to the 1937 decision the same CoS in 1929 agreed to allow indigenous male Christian members of the church to train as pastors. The decision excluded women in spite of their majority in membership in church. This was the same process that gave Rev JB Hove a chance to train as a pastor and eventually ordained at Masase Mission in 1937 by Rev Josef Othenius (Soderstrom, 1984:79).

The struggle for female pastors went up to 1990 when ELCZ finally had its first female pastors' ordination. The first two female pastors were Rev Dr Chiropafadzo Moyo and Rev Chipu Mtombeni. The two were deployed to serve as lectures at the United Theological College (UTC). This appears to have been a departure from the common tradition that new pastors were supposed to serve in parishes before they are permitted to serve as trainers of new pastors (ELCZ Almanac, 1990). The justification why the two were not deployed to parishes explained by the then Bishop of ELCZ was that the two were the pioneers of the ordained ministry and the acceptance of female pastors was a process thereof. The two female's deployment was in town specifically Harare since Harare congregants were used to female pastors from their training practice as pastors in training (Shiri address 26 October 2016). Thus, such deployments have been affected because of failure by the church to fully convince the church members to receive female pastors. Church leadership might have felt they needed more time to convince members of the church about female pastors.

While there appeared to be a hesitation on deployment of the first group of female pastors in 1990, there was a drastic change when the second group of female pastors came in 1997. All the three female pastors were deployed to different parishes in rural areas. Amongst the three newly ordained female pastors, one was deployed in a parish in Mberengwa. The parish refused her a chance to lead and denied her entrance into church premises. The parish was not prepared to have a female pastor as their leader. Lay leadership of the said parish convinces every member of the parish to gather and unite to reject the deployment of a female pastor. According to the Dean's report (1998) there was a conspiracy led by retired ministers to reject the female pastor. The conspiracy influenced parish and congregational councils to unanimously reject the female pastor.

It was unfortunate that the cloud of culture was so strong to the extent that women were used as pony to frustrate the rejection of the female pastor. They fought hard in trying to push out the female pastor. Instead of these women to celebrate the success of the other women, they however joined a male train that they did not know where and when they were to disembark. On the other side there was also a cultural train where both males and female lacked understanding of gender transformation due to prevailing of strong patriarchy practice. Parish women members joined a male chauvinistic mentality unknowingly in the name of God's purity code. The church leadership including male pastors and community leaders failed to resolve the matter faced by the female pastor. It took her two months of suffering from denouncements and rejection by the church. It was after protracted negotiations that some few members of the church were convinced women deserved to be pastors; hence they accepted her as their pastor. It was however still a problem as the parish council was still in denial as they continued to sing a hymnody of denial. The partial acceptance was however with some conditions as the parish refused her from taking pastoral duties as prescribed by the church. The retired pastors and evangelists in the area came into play as they offered pastoral care to the parish through officiating sacraments and offering services such as funerals.

Klingorova & Havlicek (2015) concluded that gender discrimination has been rampant in most African societies that believe in patriarchal orders. For instances such as Zambia, which most of its community traditional leaders were women due to its matrilineal traditions. However, Pre-colonial Zambia was 80 percent matrilineal and matriarchal, but this was changed to patriarchal rule by British colonizers and Christian missionaries. Many women chiefs were either ignored or not recognised by the colonial government, who were now keeping the historical records. The patriarchal biased system continued after the colonial period, and post-colonial historians took up and maintained the male perspective of history. Oral history has kept female history, but little of it made its way to print or schools (Kapwepwe 12 September 2019).

Thus, women leadership also brought in Africa by colonial where this belief has spilled into religious organizations such as churches. Women ended up believing that positions in church are not for them but for men. The available space for leadership position is therefore a legitimate place for men only. In most cases women have been left stranded and lost their self-belief as decision makers in the society. In support Haskins (2003) concurred that the system has left men as officially legitimated oppressors of women in every part of society including in church.

Klingorova & Havlicek (2015) brought a new dimension when they concluded that religion played a role that is both positive and negative. For Klingorova & Havlicek (2015) the effect of religion on gender equality is complex and depends on the time and place. The severity is different as each area and time has its own dynamics. For Verveer (2011) believed that men have unfairly benefited in the circus as compared to females. The gender inequalities have benefited men and deprived women of a chance to exercise their rights and skills. Women have lost on critical opportunities to represent their organizations in public spheres. This also caused them to lose out the opportunity of social economic justice due to lack of self-esteem and confidence. Women's rights have been trampled

upon and caused them to be poor and suffer socio-economic problems. Exclusion of women from critical decision-making boards is very difficult as there is resistance from men and some women, so it is a struggle to achieve women emancipation which is not an easy walk in the park. A report by the Commission of Status of Women (2006) hypothesized that, women exclusion from leadership is a package for the non-development of a country. Every society should learn to accept the ability of women in leadership position if they desire to develop. Klingorova and havlicek's (2015) conclusion that gender equality comprises economic growth, social and democratic advancement is dependent on the caliber of men and women in society. Participation of women in decision making boards is associated with great emancipation for a society. In supporting the above statement Chisale (2020:7) pointed that: "As women are the majority in the church, they should participate in leading the church. Accordingly, African women theologians have campaigned for 'the end of sexism and the establishment of a more just society of men and women who seek the well-being of the other'" (Phiri, 2004:16). This is the reason why there is a paradigm shift within organizations as a means to promote profitable and sustainable development of a society. Inclusion of female members of the society has suffered for a longtime, but its resumption will create a more gainful advantage to the society. Religious organizations should lead the pack in supporting the change of mindset. Sinclar (1986) in Klingorova & Havlicek (2015) were clear that societal culture and tradition is in most cases linked to the religion of the area. In fact, '... in most African settings there is no separation between culture and religion...' (Moyo 2013:210, Moyo 2014: 121).

The association between religion and culture has a mutual hand hence religious structures are rooted in a sphere of mutual influence with social customs and configurations of social organization. The research study went out to investigate the why of the exclusion of female pastors in the senior leadership of the ELCZ. Women are willingly excluded from senior position and then draw a theological remedy which will help to increase inclusivity of women in church structures without

looking at gender construct of someone.

### **1.1.1 Zimbabwean government**

Accordingly, the government has ratified decisions that promote gender equality in Zimbabwe. It has gone further to dedicate a ministry that deals with gender issues at a broader level. The constitution of the land has the provisions that deal with gender equality as contained in section 24. The section encourages the government and citizens to be provided with an equal opportunity to be freely employed regardless of their sex. This study is significant since it helps to inform the government to assess how far its structures such as churches are responding to issues of gender, specifically to women leadership and decision making. The study informs the government on areas they can further polish up in terms of their own gender policies. Women in particular urge the government to put in place measures for implementation of programs such as family care facilities that empower women to appreciate all opportunities (Zimbabwe Constitution, 2013:22).

The study further works as a monitoring tool for government implementers of gender justice programs. Thus, the implementers have to be monitored and take full measures that all boards whether it is in church have women representatives and are fully participating. Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) has it on record that the registered voters for 2018 had 54% and 46% women and men respectively. This is a clear indication that majority of Zimbabwe's population are women, but when one looks at senior leadership in both public and private entities men are the majority. Such awareness will assist government; society and church apply a principle of sisterhood whenever they are choosing leaders. The sisterhood experience is one way that government can learn out of this study as it sought to bring together women as they share their experiences. In the processes they then draw the way forward on how to tackle the elephant in the room. As a researcher the society is eagerly waiting for results of such studies that will then inform the future of the church and society.

Currently, the government is struggling to implement the 50/50 for gender participation. This study adds some value on how they can at least improve the implementation of quarter systems both in its circles and private entities. The study enables the government to create collaboration between civil societies and churches to tackle exclusion of women from senior leadership in the country.

## **1.2 Research Problem**

The continued exclusion of female pastors in senior positions in ELCZ has been cancerous to the organization for a long time. Female pastors in ELCZ have been denied leadership positions. The church due to its patriarchal environment around it appears not to be concerned with the state of female pastors' exclusion from senior leadership in the church. This is notwithstanding that the church in recent years has participated and ratified policies that are meant to promote women and girls' participation in leadership (Ministerial Board minutes 2015 and CC minutes 2015). The gender justice programs were started in 2012 and that culminated in the gender policy launch on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2015 in Gweru ELCZ Vashandiri Center (ELCZ Gender Justice Launch report, ELCZ Gender Justice Annual report 2015). Fiorenza (1993) concluded that Jesus' ministry is a ministry of 'disciples of equals. Men and women through baptism have shared opportunities and responsibilities for leadership in church. The idea is unfortunately not observed in the ELCZ when it comes to senior leadership positions.

Consequently, the study is intended to investigate the factors behind the exclusion of female pastors from senior leadership in the church. It is therefore a question of finding if the current status of female pastors in ELCZ a result of their role in community is, does this gives a holistic approach to ministry in the church. Based on practical theology that postulates that Christian ministry is engraved in Jesus Christ who welcomed everyone despite of their gender and race, age, and tribe. Problem statement of this study brought out evidence that indeed shows that there is exclusion of female clergy from

senior leadership positions. This means that this research is about finding the sources/causes of the exclusion of women from senior leadership. This suggests that the study is not meant to prove that women are excluded from the senior leadership of the ELCZ. The fact that women are excluded is a reality and can be proved through the current almanac/lectionary of the church. Therefore, the study seeks to identify the root causes of the exclusion of women from senior leadership of the ELCZ.

### **1.3 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of the study is to expose factors and reasons behind the exclusion of female pastors from senior leadership in ELCZ. Thus, the key research question is: what are the causes of the exclusion of female clergy in the senior leadership of the ELCZ?

### **1.4 Research Question**

This study is guided by the following research questions:

- Why the ELCZ after 115+ years of its establishment in Zimbabwe still don't have female in senior leadership of the ELCZ?
- What are the possible solutions to the problem of the exclusion of female clergy from the senior leadership of the ELCZ?

### **1.5 Aims and Objective**

The research aims to investigate the reasons that have led to exclusion of ELCZ female pastors from senior leadership. It has been observed that for a long-time female pastor have suffered in the hands of patriarchal system that has relegated them to the peripheries of leadership seats in church. The approach has disempowered and disadvantaged female pastors in their quest to grow and contribute to decision making of the church. The research was guided by the following objectives:

- To critically discuss the causes of the exclusion of female in senior leadership of the ELCZ

-To explore possible solutions to the problem of the exclusion of female clergy from the senior leadership of the ELCZ

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The study is to Exposition of the challenges faced by African female clergy in the ELCZ in the 21<sup>st</sup> century where many institutions are striving to promote gender equity. The study also exposes that the church, that is supposedly a guardian of morality and human dignity is in actual fact still stuck in gender injustice. This study contributes to the greater project of the emancipation of women from the seemingly insurmountable shackles of gender injustice. The thesis is a wakeup call to churches, faith-based organization and many other institutions to guard against gender injustice. The study is an exposition of the fact that many well-meaning institutions can talk about gender justice but are yet to practice such principles that promote human dignity espoused in the Bible that all human beings are created in the same image of God. The church is expected to advocate for gender justice yet in its core there is still gender injustice.

#### **1.6.1 Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe**

The study enables the church to remind them that while ordination of female pastors was achieved with pomp and fun, there is still another work of pushing up the leadership ladder for female pastors. The study will further help ELCZ to evaluate the effectiveness of its gender justice program within the church. The fact that female pastors continue to be excluded from issues of leadership becomes a major concern to a church that believes in women emancipation. The church will be more informed to come up with policies that take care of gaps and bridges that have been left un-attended by the previous efforts. Instead of supporting the perpetual exclusion of female pastors from platforms of decision making, the church will however be equipped to be considerate of women issues in its life. The church will be significantly helped to eradicate all discrepancies and disparities that support gender injustice. This study will assist the church in coming up with most transformative



empowerment programs that discontinue the female pastors' exclusion from leadership in ELCZ.

### **1.7 Delimitation of the Study**

The study was carried out in Zimbabwe which is a landlocked country bordered by Botswana, Mozambique, Zambia and South Africa in the Western, Eastern, Northern and Southern side respectively. The study mainly concentrated in areas that ELCZ is operating. The church is found in all ten political provinces of Zimbabwe. At the same time ELCZ is governed through three dioceses which are Eastern, Central and Western. The clergy and members that participated in this study were chosen across the breath and length of the church. However, specific areas of interest were chosen based on uniqueness of such areas. Areas such as Gurungweni, Gungwe and Chabwira parishes were the main targeted places for this study. The study considered the traditional and cultural factors of those areas and ultimately the presence of ELCZ in those areas.

### **1.8 Limitations of the Study**

The study was limited by refusal of some pastors in contributing and sharing their experience in church. Some felt insecure to share deep thoughts on gender justice as they felt it was against church principles as they were not spokespersons of the church. The researcher had to ask for clearance from ELCZ head office to persuade individual pastors to participate in the study. Due to majority of pastors and leaders in senior positions being men, the danger was masculinity voice drowning feminist voice. To counter that the researcher had to purposively identify female pastors as key informants of the study. Furthermore, the use of qualitative approach helped the study to limit the weakness as data was accepted not as a popular voice but based on value to the study.

Especially clergy they may not want to share their deep theological feelings on the issue of women exclusion? Since clergy, are teachers and interpreters of the Bible, which gives the rise to the problem subject in this research? Furthermore, Lutheran church Bishops are men, Deans and male

clergy are the majority regardless of 75% women membership. On the side of Community leadership, culture norms and values might be hindrance, especially on discussing harmful cultural practice that oppress women and promote men supremacy. Shortcomings of participants may be reluctant to give informative data fearing being stigmatized by other members of the society since others criticized those who are challenging patriarchal rule as being against African culture. The researcher might also face challenges on focus group interviews. Gathering of people in such a time where people are pre-occupied by economic issues like selling and buying those items that brings food on the table for their families. Due to the position of the researcher as a pastor in the church, the study will leverage on that good will to get people to participate in these focus groups. Focus groups are a critical component of research since they use form of opinions on topics and those opinions are critical to this study (Neville, 2004). Finally transport constraints might be another contributing factor to this study as currently the researcher's limitation is funding, she is financing herself. Nevertheless, since the researcher is scheduled to hold some gender workshops around the country, these are sponsored by the church and other Faith Based Organizations (FBO) the researcher will grab such opportunities to carry out research and meet different people and pastors within the ELCZ and community.

### **1.9 Definition of Key Terms**

**Baptism:** Is the sacrament rite, involving the use of water, by which a candidate is admitted to the Church. According to Lutheran teachings baptism is viewed as an essential for salvation of person, and that individual receives God's grace and that children too are welcomed into God's kingdom (Tappert, 1998; Kolb & Wengert, 2000). Baptism gives every ELCZ member the right to be elected or hold any office of trust if the person is 21 years and above, having five years as a Lutheran member.

**Case of Sisterhood:** Refers to a digital incarnation of the traditional place of women coming together to share debate, learning and lead. In other words, it is a free space for women to discuss, learn from each other and practice their abilities in leadership.

**Church:** according to Childress & Macquarrie (1986) the term church is commonly applied to structures for Christian veneration, or an audience gathered for worship. While in other terms the word church equated with the ownership of buildings and how worship is organized. However, in this study the term church refers to the congregation of all believers where the gospel and sacraments is ministered in its purity and administered according to the true Gospel respectively (Tappert, 1998). Again, the term church was used interchangeable with ELCZ. The denomination with female pastors should enjoy the rights of being believers and baptize members of the church through occupying senior leadership.

**Decision Making Board:** Is the organization's highest level of leadership that refers to the executive and non-executive. When in church it is the combination of lay leaders and clergy, whereby some run the organization on daily bases but some in intervals.

**Gender:** refers to socially created differences inequalities and opportunities associated with being female or male and to the social interactions and relationships between women and men. Gender determines what is expected, allowed, and valued in a woman or a man in a given context (LWF: 2016).

**Gender Equality:** means equal opportunities, rights and responsibilities for women, girls, and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men are the same but that women and men's opportunities rights and responsibilities do not depend on whether they are born female or male (Lutheran World Federation, 2013).

**Gender Equity:** is the means “the just and fair distribution of benefits, rewards and opportunities between women, men, girls and boys”. It refers to the fair treatment of women, girls, boys and men according to the irrespective needs and perspectives (Lutheran World Federation, 2013).

**Gender Justice:** suggests the protection and promotion of the dignity of women and men who, being created in the image of God, are co-responsible stewards of creation (Lutheran World Federation, 2013).

### **1.10 Research Outline**

The research project consists of seven chapters where each is aimed at looking on specific are as stated below.

#### **Chapter one: Introduction to the research**

- The first chapter set in motion the expected areas of the research through giving the research background, problem statement, objectives, and research questions, significance of the study, the delimitations and limitations. It concludes by giving definition of key terms.

#### **Chapter Two: Literature Review Theoretical bases**

- Every study was done in the midst of other previous studies; hence, this study presents literature and theories that will help to inform the need for this study. Literature helped to identify the niche for this study. Chapter two is dedicated to literature review. This enabled the study to get much understanding in its scope exclusion of female pastors in senior position in both church and community.

### **Chapter Three: Research Method and Design**

- This chapter was concerned with the way how data was to be collected in answering the research questions. The chapter presented the plan how this research was to be undertaken as in relation to the research problem, topic, objectives, and questions. The research methods and design chapter chose the data needed, the techniques, which were questionnaires, interviews, and perusal of secondary data in files. It also shows how data was analyzed and presented for the study.

### **Chapter Four: Empirical Report**

- Chapter four presented the empirical research findings from interviews and questionnaires. The chapter presents the data which was collected from different participants.

### **Chapter Five: Data analysis and Pastoral response**

- This chapter presented the analysis of the empirical data presented in chapter four. The data is analyzed in eyes of the literature review and theories presented in chapter two. The analysis drew some meanings out of the presented data.

### **Chapter Six: Findings**

This chapter presented the findings on female pastors were excluded and the findings which were used to help come up with a new pastoral paradigm approach that the ELCZ can adopt to address the problem of female pastors' exclusion from senior leadership posts in the church.

### **Chapter Seven: Conclusion**

Chapter seven presents the conclusions, recommendations and areas of further studies. The recommendations are mainly for ELCZ on how they can address the exclusion of female pastors in ELCZ.

## **CHAPTER TWO:**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

The previous chapter is the opening one of this study that introduced and gave the background of why this research. Thus, the current chapter deals with literature that directs and informs this research topic. This chapter is divided into four sections: section one is covering Bible, gender and women, section two: History of the church and women, section three: Practical theology and pastoral care and section four is womanist and feminist theologies. Some issues that would be discussed in these sections are that the chapter concentrates on the relevant theories and empirical studies on women's exclusion from senior leadership positions in different organizations in the world. The existing gaps in women exclusion from senior leadership is a common problem in the world. Literature review shapes and identifies the current research niches that contributed to the need for this study. The motivation is to fully address women exclusion from senior leadership posts in various organizations. This is without the fact that many of these organizations do have policies and standing orders that talk about women emancipation. The same policies provide methods for women participation in decision making platforms within the companies and organizations as directed by the supreme laws of individual organizations and countries.

Consequently, the understanding gained from literature provides light on the study that is on gender inequality among ministers in Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe (ELCZ): A Pastoral Paradigm on Women Oppression. The literature is discussed according to the research questions. Hence it will start with giving a brief overview of gender understanding from 1980 to date. It further looks at biblical roles of women and current efforts by many organizations to address gender inequality; finally, it will look at possible strategies that organizations can use in addressing gender

inequality. Under the theoretical view the study will include theories by church fathers, feminist theology and African theologian perspectives. However, the study is dominated by the two model writers namely Elizabeth Fiorenza and the mother of African Women Theology Mercy Amba Oduyoye. Their writings are some of the gender justice classic documents about women experiences. They are the groundbreaking theories that complement the understanding of exclusion of women in leadership positions.

## **2.1 SECTION ONE: BIBLE, GENDER AND WOMEN**

### **2.1.1 Biblical view of gender roles**

Understanding of the role of women as prescribed by the bible calls us to first look at the creation of human race and the laws thereafter. The biblical view of gender role is scandalized by different agendas of different people. In essence the Jewish culture caused a misrepresentation of biblical teachings about gender issues. It was also further complicated by conclusions of church councils of the first century. For instance, Clark (1993:1790) state that the Council of Chalcedon states that:

*“Thus, we do not permit women to be teachers of the word of God. Indeed, even Jesus Christ our great teacher who is the sending power behind all teaching of the word he did not permit or mention anywhere those women were sent to be preachers of the word.*

It is absolutely clear from the above statement that the meeting relegated female members from participating in church business like leadership and preaching. It also closed any efforts or justifications of women involvement in preaching and presented Jesus Christ as an example of male chauvinist.

In his popular essay of Lewis wrote that:

*Priestesses in the Church recognized that any decision by the Church of England to ordain women as priests would likely be very divisive: dividing the Church of England from other historic churches and dividing the church internally against itself. In hindsight, Lewis proved to be correct on both counts. But in Lewis's own mind, the central problem was theological in nature, relating to the very nature of the incarnation itself. A priest is a double representative, representing the people to God and God to the people. He had no problem with a woman representing the people to God, but he did have a problem with a woman representing God to the people. But what is the problem here: "Since God is infact not a biological being and has no sex, what can it matter whether we say He or She, Father or Mother, Son or Daughter (2010, November 1)?*

Lewis' conclusion is genuine and fair to all sex. He pointed to the logical understanding of God's sex of which many are misled by the term "father" that is referred to human figure which is also same term referred to God. Lewis went on to explain God's biological being by saying it is God himself who instruct humanity how to speak of Him. The masculine oriented language found in the Bible is neither arbitrary nor unessential but critical for us to determine the objective of God when he created human race. In actual fact, the problem of women exclusion in church leadership roles especially priesthood is a human being inversion through misapprehensions of the Bible.

The point that Lewis brings out in his essay is also of the nature of Priest in the Old Testament (OT) was opposite to the coming of Jesus Christ as presented by the New Testament (NT). Hence in the OT all priests were male, and it is true that when Jesus incarnated, he was male. However, the key changes to be understood raised in the NT church were that all members are viewed as priests who are in church to offer sacrifices and thanksgiving to God (1 Peter 2:5, 9). That means priesthood



refers to both male and female as believers. Thus, even Jesus himself highlighted on some of the changes when he proclaimed the fulfillment of his mission.

He talked about coming to heal the broken hearted ... deliver the captives and downtrodden and set free the oppressed (Luke 4:18). Taking the above verse in reference to the women exclusion in the OT priesthood covenant, the NT covenant liberates females. In this change, there is no slave nor free, no Jews nor Gentiles and no male nor female, because in this NT covenant all become one through baptism. Lewis concluded that God's purpose to incarnate Jesus Christ as male was based on an assumption that he stands as a complete representation for both female and male persons. Yet again, in (Genesis 1:27) the image of God is represented by both male and female it is not for one special sex but for both sexes. Many references could be given but the truth remains, through Jesus Christ both male and female have access to God and God's grace.

### **2.1.2 Roles of Women in Old Testament**

According to Madu (2014:123) it is undisputed that women in the bible left landmark of development and transformation of their society despite all odds against them. Women such as Ester, Deborah, Hannah and others were involved in super tasks that can be an encouraging point for 21<sup>st</sup> women. They made a difference in their societies against all hate and intimidation and even death lingering upon their heads. At the same time the Old Testament presents Eve with a destructive eye, she is perceived as the route of sin and that she was misled to eat the sacred fruit and the source of all human problems. In his song Paul Matavire says if he was Adam, he was to ask God one simple question "for how long have I been in this orchard? What sin did I commit before this woman was created (Paul Matavire music track 1992). Such is the mentality of the Old Testament that Eve is the source of sin. In such, woman's role is associated with the advent of sin and death for human race. Bearing in mind that OT passages are crystal clear that roles of women were considered to be inferior

to men. Nevertheless, the role played by women in the bible was critical it starts from being a praises and leaders of societies.

Miriam is found in Exodus leading the Israelites in singing and thanking God for the victory at Red Sea. Deborah is designated as a prophet and great army leader in Israel. Esther is another woman in the Old Testament who saved Israel from death planned by the king and his generals. Several women in the Old Testament played pivotal roles amongst the Israelites as a service to their beloved communities. The likes of Sarah, Pharaoh's daughter, Deborah, Esther, Judith, Miriam, Rebecca, Naomi, Rachael, Rahab, Ruth, Salome, Susanna, the Egyptian midwives, and Hanna the mother of Samuel to mention but a few. These women are heroines of the past and present time in faith circles as their work and relationship with God has ushered salvation to both people of the past and present day.

Despite ill treatment and demeaning of women's roles in the Old Testament it is clear that the few areas women are mentioned they are offering inspiring and critical roles to their communities. For instance, Prophetess Deborah was the messenger of God to inform Barak that Sisera was to be delivered into his hands. The bible clearly states that Deborah was the prophetess and also a wife of a man called Lappidoth. She was also the judge of Israel during that same period. Old Testament testifies to leadership of women as judges, it is also true that women endeavors were omitted in many instances due to patriarchal leadership and mentality.

Thomas Aquinas cited by Kasomo (2010:127) put forward a damaging description of women by saying that:

*"Woman is an occasional and incomplete being, a misbegotten male. It is unchangeable that woman is destined to live under man's influence and has no authority from her Lord".*

This line of thinking was also supported by the writings of Arthur Shopenhauer (1999:89) cited by Kasomo (2010:127) that shoots on the character of a woman, when they concluded that, while women have long hair, however they have short ideas. This was concluded from the misreading of Ecclesiastics 42v9-14.

### **2.1.3 Roles of women in New Testament**

It is clear that New Testament section of the bible has portions that appear to see woman as' second-class citizens. For instance, 1 Cor 14:34-35 instructs those women should listen and not speak when in church. In case they want clarification, they needed to ask their husbands only not in church but at home. Using this scripture alone it was concluded illegal for women to speak in church rather they were supposed to be silent and obedient to such laws that trample over their rights to be heard in church. According to the New Testament Jesus' ministry gives a much greater participation of women in Christian leadership. The male-dominance in social structure was changed by the participation of women. This tradition was also adopted by Paul for he had a number of women as co-workers in the ministry of grace. This was against the common interpretation and application of 1Cor14:33b-36. 1Timothy 2:11-14 also depicts women as the blame mate of the fall even to a point of blaming Eve for the sin committed by Adam.

However, on the other hand the praise towards Eve for having played pivotal role in the salvation history is parallel to none. As the mother of humankind, the NT credits her for playing a critical role for the salvation of human race. It is doubttable true that New Testament has a number of women who played critical roles in the life of their society. This was notwithstanding the opposition and not being heard by their communities. In other words, they did not focus on the publicity but rather on the mission and need to do what was right before God. The approach includes such women as Mary the mother of Jesus and Mary Magdalene, Elizabeth and Jairus' daughter and many other women in

the NT (John 8, Mark 5:21-24,35-43). These participated in a different role that has ultimately affected the past and the current society. For Instance, Mary's acceptance (Lukel1v1ff) to be the mother of Jesus is a critical role that has changed the world starting with her community even up to date.

While men including the Disciples of Christ were in hiding Mary Magdalene wore a brave face and visited the tomb of Jesus Christ. She is ascribed to be one of the first evangelist to spread the news of His resurrection (Mathew 28v1-7; Mk 16v5-7). Unfortunately, women ascendance is mainly portrayed and reported by Luke in Luke-Acts books. Luke depicted womenfolk in an exceedingly broadminded and almost modern manner, giving the new distinctiveness and novel social status. This, however, cannot deny the fact that women in the New Testament also had played critical role wherever an opportunity was availed.

It is clear that while the gospels struggle to portray women as followers and disciples of Jesus however there is still a theory of presenting them as subordinate service by excluding them from the power center of the Jesus' movement. Some of the women who played a focal part in the early church and society are clearly mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles book by Luke such as Tabitha (Acts 9:36-42), Pricilla 18:21-24, 38-43. These include Sapphira, the slave girl of Philippi Tabitha, Lydia, Damaris to mention but a few. The list is endless of women in the NT who played groundbreaking roles in making sure the church's mission was enlarged.

#### **2.1,4 The problem of the bible**

The two testaments of the Christian bible underplayed the substantial roles played by women. It appears in most cases the bible writers concentrated on what women should not do more than what they could do. The significant role of women was selectively presented by the redactors of the bible. The biblical writers who are all presented as men were clouded and influenced by the patriarchal

society that led them to demean the contributions of female members of their society. Both old and New Testament put women in the subjection of men.

## **2.2 SECTION TWO: HISTORY OF THE CHURCH AND WOMEN**

### **2.2.1 Church Fathers' View about Women Leadership Roles in Church**

Over the years the Christian practice has been influenced and informed by church fathers. That has caused the Christian tradition to inform generations after generations over years. Church fathers have viewed women as running short on lack of image of God. This subordinate status is a borrowed stance from the denigrating interpretation that left women with no status as if they were foreigners in their space (Mwaniki 2018:1). The influences of church fathers ruled the nature of women to the extent of lost human identity. It is important to give some samples of Church fathers' views about women inclusion in leadership.

#### **2.2.2 Lutheran Church Fathers' Understanding on Relations of Gender and God's Image**

The main Lutheran church father to be highlighted is the 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup>-century leading church reformer, Martin Luther. He was born and grew up as Roman Catholic and later became a leading protestant reformer and founder of Evangelical Lutheran Church (St Louis, Luther works 1958) part of a Lutheran denomination in Zimbabwe studied in this research. The understanding of Luther which is relevant to this topic under study is imperative since he is the one who laid down the teachings and traditions of the studied denomination. Luther maintained the church fathers' position and declarations of the early church councils. He abandoned Catholic priesthood vows and married Katharina von Bora as a way of fulfilling scripture roles and activities of women remaining confined inside the home. Luther added on women's role by attributing all domestic outside activities such as agriculture, entrepreneurship and inside duties such as house chores and family care to his wife, (St Louis, Luther's works, 1958:202) that is all what we read about Katharina. Therefore, women's role as manager of a household is a sum up of their hard work as producers and economic enablers of

their families and communities. In addition to Katharina's hard work as an entrepreneur and housewife, she also bore six children to Luther and that was her role in that family. While women go out to do such roles, they are less recognized. She also looked after four adopted children, (Katharina von Bora Luther-Lutheran reformer 20 December 2016). Although Katharina was educated as a former nun, she never enjoyed the white-collar job but taken as an example of more committed and trustworthy pastor's wife. This was a celebrated example and role for a clergy wife; she was not equal to Martin Luther (Susan C. Karant-Gunn, (eds.) 2003:4-14). The reason is that Luther's teaching about married women roles was that, "the wife ought to stay home and look after the affairs of the household as one who has been deprived of the ability to administer those affairs that are outside and concern the state...(Luther lectures on Genesis3:11 in Luther's works).

Wood (2017) article shares the perspectives of feminists' writers on church fathers about women inclusivity and their recognition in a leadership position. The church fathers such as Augustine of Hippo adopted the philosophers' views about women, particularly Plato and Aristotle among others. Wood argued that Women were oppressed, marginalized, and dominated in a male centered world, (wood, and 2017:1). That is to say, in a patriarchal society, men are viewed as superior, stronger and more rational than women and that God created men to dominate. What Wood raised are still issues that are being considered in societal and church dialogues and can be interpreted as per their understandings. During Women Human Rights training in Geneva, Neuenfeidt in her presentation emphasized that: religion is described as "net" that can be used by the owners anyway and for any reason. It could be positive or negative. One can place it where one wants it to be or can use it to put words to provoke hatred, cause division and destruction using religion. Yet again, one can use it to build hope, peace and reconciling using religion, (October 29; 2019). First century church fathers' views on Women role.

Plato and Aristotle believed that women are inferior to men and labelled them essentially as child-

bearers and housekeepers, (Wood, 2017:2). The view by Plato and Aristotle impacted and assassinated women characters when it comes to a leadership role. It further negatively influenced on the first-century church fathers hence that was the period of church initiation and confirming the females being subjective. Wood cited another great feminist Ruether who pointed to the philosophers, who heavily criticized Aristotle's views on women by saying that the influences of Aristotelian biology on Christian theology can hardly be underestimated. Aristotle's biology gave scientific expression' to the basic patriarchal assumption that the male is the normative and reprehensive expression of the human species, and the female is not only secondary and auxiliary to the male but lacks full human status in physical strength, moral self-control and mental capacity. The lesser 'nature' thus confirms the female's subjugation to the male as her 'natural' place in the universe (Wood, 2007:2).

Thomas Aquinas concurred with this when he concluded that women when they think they think evil and they were made from a crooked rib which is focused on the opposing direction from the man (Kasomo, 2010:129). In other words, the presence of women in any society brings evil and crookedness as they are a product of corruption. Kasomo (2010:128) cited Augustine's views that women need to cover their heads, simple because they don't have the image of God. A woman can only get the image of God when taken together with man who is her head. Due to this fact a woman is always assigned the role of a helpmate. The helpmate is only assigned to procreation (Kasomo, 2010:129). While on the other side, Plato, taught that women were not fully human and not capable of reasoning and their only hope was to return to earth again as men to perfect them. Thomas Aquinas cited by Kasomo (2010:129) rudely argued that 'a woman is a misbegotten male' and that she is a helpmate who is formally subjugated. Hence, women cannot be leaders in any society or in church. Only male figures can represent Christ both in society and church. Thomas Aquinas gives it as the reason why Christ was incarnated as a male figure.

Plato's thinking that has been just highlighted above needs to provoke women mindset that spent time pulling each other down, not supporting fellow women instead of uniting and transforming themselves for transformation against portrayed characters by philosophers. Even those few in leadership should prove the leadership capabilities beyond philosophers' thinking that describes women like those men who have fallen prey to their irrational and emotional side, and that an inferior being, women must be ruled by men.

Church fathers in the process inherited philosophers' discrimination against women leadership roles. Augustine of Hippo-(354-430 C.E.) was a Western respected church father who was looked upon by both Roman Catholics and Protestants as "the font of orthodoxy" (Ruether1983:93). In his view of being created in the image of God, he stressed the equality of man and woman on a "spiritual level" but maintained the 'physical subordination' emphasizes on the bodily difference of a woman to man. Augustine argues that Man is called the "image of God' because God has stamped him in this way. The image has to do rather with authority that women do not have. For he is subjected to no one, while she is subjected to him..." (Gen. 3:16). Therefore, man is in the 'image of God' since he has no one above him, just as God has no superior but rules over everything. The woman, however, is 'the glory of man', since she is subjected to him (Clark1993:35-36). The position by Augustine does not only denigrate women but appraises men supremacy and authority over women in all spheres of life. Augustine emphasizes on the subordination and exclusion of women in the image of God.

For Tertullian he viewed women as the gateway of the devil that continues to expose, the vulnerability and inferiorities of women. Tertullian pointed to women in designative statements like "You are the Devil's gateway; you are unsealed of the tree, you are the first forsakes of the divine law; you are the one who persuaded him whom the Devil was not brave enough to approach; you so lightly crushed the image of God the man Adam; because of your punishment, that is death, even the



Son of God had to die and you think to adorn yourselves beyond your “tunics of skin” is the best to convince God’s grace, it’s not enough to meet the godly standard of God’s image (Forester Church,1975:90).

According to Tertullian (155-255)’s view, God’s image in women was disqualified by the fruit Eve and Adam ate regardless of God’s grace to everybody including women. He pointed it clearly that men only qualify for the image of God, and he is reflecting the evilness of women including their wickedness character in church and society, therefore they have no place in these institutions. Due to their weaknesses, they are un-forgiven to God. Church father Tertullian continues judging women as he further says; “Therefore, cover your head and your figure with sackcloth and ashes”. He went on to highlight the reason why they have to cover their head that is, a woman does not possess the image of God in herself but only when taken together with the male who is her head so that the whole substance is one image. This shows how a woman’s character is theologically disregarded, disrespected and oppression of women that is portrayed by religious leaders. Aristotle weighed in by also stating that “the female is a male which for some accidental reason did not better its full development”, (Wood, 2017:3). In addition, Euripides argues that “The woman is the worst of all evils” Thomas Aquinas continues with the attack by using a hermeneutical meaning of the term famine which means the ‘absence of faith’. Women’s nature was defined according to the insatiable lust, for that reason they can easily agree with anyone who is evil in mind including the devil himself. Kosomo (2010:130) argues that due to the evil nature of women, they are easily associated with the crime of witchcraft men have been served from that due to the maleness of Christ. Church fathers observed that present women were far inferior to Eve because they are the vehicle for the fall of humanity. The man is the undisputable ruler of home, the world wages wars and tills the soil while woman is like a nail driven into the wall she stays at home and waits for the man to bring for her food and other necessities.

Mwaniki (2018:5) noted that “The gender-biased view of the Church Fathers was not only informed by interpretations of the gender-biased biblical text but also by the construction of masculinity and femininity in the ancient world view”. Women were designated for indoor activities that include childbearing and rearing, preparing meals production of clothing as in Proverbs 31:17-25 referring to vicious women. “...She is not afraid of snow for her household, for all her household is clothed with scarlet...” Meaning, what gives her recognition in the community is procreation, taking care of the family and doing house chores. Hence verse 23 says, “Her husband is known in the gates when he sits among the elders of the land”. It also fulfils that, “she is the glory for her husband” (Proverbs 31:11). Church fathers, therefore, as religious leaders used religion to undermine women roles and leadership capabilities.

Lutheran church global is a teaching church that reads and has based its teaching from church history in reference to the church fathers understanding. Therefore, without written down evidence of involvement of women efforts for reversal of exclusion of and dehumanization of women will be a hard rock to the crack. The church fathers adopted, inherited and implemented an old traditional belief, practiced and argued regarding women’s moral, inter, victual and natural capacities from great philosophers (Plato and Aristotle). These were targeted to convince and dehumanize women both their capacity to lead, recognitions, dignity and respect (Wood, 2017:1).

### **2.2.3 Zimbabwean Culture and Women Exclusion**

The traditional African society has not been as welcoming and fair to women as expected (Gudhlanga 1998). While when one goes through the scripts and the arrangements of roles in African society, at times it shows that women in Africa have a great say and the society is dealing with them as equals. However, African women have been treated as property of men, exploited, oppressed and degraded by the same society. Gudhlanga (1998; 14) concluded that Zimbabwean tradition and Culture is

remarkable that it brings positive impact on the lives of women. She noticed that women in the home, community, and public domain, have a domestic responsibility to fuel the functionality of homes. This therefore refers to the processing and preparing of food, claiming, and caring as part of women duty. While Gudhlanga noted such positives Kasomo (2010:132) noted that African society has often treated female members as second-class people. This is mainly shown through African proverbs and sayings that equate women to stoves, old cooking pots, large wooden stirring spoons, hoes, cows and even dogs (Kasomo 2010:132). Such derogative terms in African proverbs and sayings are associated with women. In African society women and girls have been denied education due to the fact that in future they will be married and that will be a loss to a family.

Parents (father) prefer to drink beer with the little money that they could have paid school fees for a girl child (Kasomo 2010). At the same time women are even given into marriage to someone they don't like. These are the negatives that the African society is exerts to their female population. African Theologian Oduyoye in Kasomo (2010:130) retaliated and says:

*"We are told that we are needed as mothers, caretakers, cheap labour in the field and factories. Due to women's low self-esteem, they underrate themselves and leave leadership role to men. The traditional way is that women do most of the work in the church and in the society and men hold most of the leadership"*

On the other hand, they would have helped their husband with farming work. Zimbabwean culture defined ownership of land as communally or collectively possessed by both male and females. In that regard women had their own piece of land (*sevu*) to do their own crops of choice that would be for the family needs (Gundlanga, 1998:15). The Zimbabwean understanding has respect and gives women a space to contribute for the stability of families and society (Chinyava1974). The current challenge of gender injustice is a problem of greedy and jealous that has overtaken the good of the

tradition of seeing women as critical contributors to life.

According to (Hudson 1986:99) women in the society had socialization roles where they acted as aunts, grandmothers, and mothers. Thus, in the same instances, women acted as advisors and transmitted tradition and culture to the young Zimbabwean. Their roles included initiation of young people into adulthood life and most women were regarded as sacred and respected with such roles (Chinyava 1974). As advisors and mothers, women were playing an important role of settling disputes and concerned with wellbeing of the family. Gundlanga (1998:15) highlighted that on the other hand men acted as fathers, uncles, and grandfathers and played similar roles of, initiating boys, into manhood. That shows in traditional Shona society everybody had social roles or obligation to perform. Failing to fulfill their obligation resulted in measures taken against that person. That also shows every person was important and taken seriously Chinyava 1974).

In public domain men were lead hunters, carpenters, builders' chiefs, village heads and soldiers. Just like men, women were also important public figures. Hence some were headers; others were midwives, spirit mediums and entertainers (Baterzaat et al, 1998; 154). Women and men both in some instances were acting as consultants' religious leaders that were called *Mbonga* those who performed religious rituals. Women *Mbonga* remained pure virgins and unmarried who served *Mwari* (God) shrines of Mabweedziva. Their duties were to ask for rain from Musikavanhu (God) on behalf of the society. In addition of being *Mbonga* some women performed roles of chiefs, village heads and elders (Baterzaat et al, 1998; 154). Gundhlanga concluded that Shona women had significant influence and power over their communities. As a result, they were highly recognized in their customary society as what is represented by Mbuya Nehanda the spirit medium that played a critical part in the first Chimurenga in Zimbabwe. She led the Shona uprising of 1896-1897 against the white settlers (Gundhlanga, 1998: 16, Ranger, 1967:2009). All the above given facts about

women roles in different categories highlighted shows the positive African Zimbabwean Shona tradition and culture.

Powerful women leaders were not only limited to Zimbabwe but also emerged all over in Africa for example the Xhosa people of South Africa there was Unongaquaze who was an important Xhosa prophetess and leader in 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Nguni people of SA also had female leader Nyamazama, she was powerful and killed the last Rozvi chief (Comer-Cooper, 1966:23), just to highlight on these few but they are more. Gundlanga's argument is that issues of Gender equality and inclusive leadership are a new phenomenon, originally not issues of concerns. In our Zimbabwe Shona and Ndebele tradition both men and women were given same recognition in various roles regardless of sex and gender. Therefore, the big task is to find out what happened and what went wrong for women to be refused their traditional and cultural roles that women ancestors enjoyed? Hence Shona society communally it never argued for Women Human rights, property was for both wife and husband including their children so what happened, who changed the tones (Gundhlanga, 1998: 16, Ranger, 1967:2009).

Gundlanga pointed to the Capitalism as the one which brought the concept of privatization of property ownership. She argued that African way of ownership is different from European concept of ownership. African way of ownership concept does not have privatization ownership which requires the title deeds documentation with specifying names of beneficial (1998:17). Instead in African tradition ownership is collectively a concept of communal relationship which is imperative, what individual owns enjoyed by many and used by a clan (Gundhlanga 1998)). She argues her point of leadership inclusive of men and women in Africa in late nineteenth century as changed the Shona solid relations. Capitalism from its early stages and through the Victorian Age expressed a patriarchal notion as only male imperialists are worshipped and honored. Women appear to have occupied the

back seat, they are really or totally not mentioned (Chinyava 1974). The question remains were women not part and parcel of the group who came to Africa. This can be evidenced by the fact that many of the prominent people on the imperial front were made for example Cecil John Rhodes dies a bachelor, wives of David Livingstone, Mungo Park, Frederick Selous and Robert Moffat were never mentioned (Gundlanga, 1998:18). Hence, this pointed that, women were not important and were not on the forefront and whenever they appear it was for seductive destruction (Boehmer, 1985:17).

Yet again, imperialism brought with it economic marginalization of women. It is believed to have been originated from their way of doing business in Africa. The concept was then supported by the African patriarchal beliefs (Chivome and Gamahaya 1997:14). A number of legislative measures were introduced by colonial government. These include an appointment Act of 1930 that neglected black into marginal areas and the settlers of copied fertile lands. The influx of men to white establishment left women to shoulder all the burdens at home on their own. Women were impoverished since they occupied barren land (Gundlanga 1998). They were not allowed to get employment and they became poorer than men. The colonial government preferred women to remain in the rural areas and bear more children who would provide cheap labor to support colonial economy (Chivome and Gamahaya 1997:14). It was difficult for women to move to town to search for domestic work to white people; their wives were scared of infidelity of their husbands.

Hence some women would opt for cohabitation with other African men for survival some became prostitutes (Gundlanga. 1998:19). Those educated women who had acquired education and worked as teachers got less pay than their male counterparts with the same qualifications as theirs (Ngwenya 1983; 83). This was a deliberate colonialist policy of divide and rule “Ranger 1985:6 and Gudhlanga 1998: 19). Therefore, patriarchal leadership was inverted by colonial government to mean patriarchal dominance. Schmidt (1990:626) concluded that colonial legal system was too strong for Zimbabwean women to break it down to their advantage. They failed dismally to manipulate the

system and were left with no option but just to take a back seat and experience the discrimination. It left them useless and powerless. The introduction of a new marriage system that codified a customary law further left women with no share in their marriages. Women were denied property ownership that included no rights on land (Ncube 1987:11). Women were reduced to nothing and became more dependent that they had to succumb to their husbands without questioning. This was critical for their survival in marriage and society (Ncube 1987:11). Schmidt cited one white colonial woman said,

*“Until quite recent years, this was the traditional among our own races. The native women of today have no brain power or civilization of the mothers and grandmothers of the present white generation: her brains not sufficiently balanced to allow her to think and act in all matters for herself aimed consider the male shoulder be encouraged and assisted to exercise total care within all reasonable bounds over his woman folk (Native Commissioner, Hartley, 1924).”*

Such thinking towards human beings demonstrates and undermines humanness of a female person. Gundlanga’s argument for colonial introduced patriarchal system that has implications even in today’s women life. However, another question to be asked again is that, for how long are we going to listen to such facts as raised above by Gundlanga (1998) and explained to others without taking corrective action? This is the side of African Zimbabwean culture and traditional position that favored women ‘s roles before colonial rule. Whereas today Zimbabwean people are in a new era Zimbabwe for Zimbabweans do we continue to perpetuate Victorian values that dumped women into powerless situation? These questions would be answered as the reader views the next chapters.

#### **2.2.4 Gender Biased In the Middle Ages**

Changing from Stone Age can also mean changing of views to the positive or negative on the issue of women ordained ministry. Thomas Aquinas a prominent theologian of the middle age supported

Church Fathers and the declarations by the Councils by adding: “God’s image is also established in woman as it is found in man, the biblical story tells us that man is created at the beginning and women comes on board as the end of man” (Thomas Aquinas, 1964:61). The prominent theologian’s view emphasizes on the denial of women involvement in the ministry of the church by tightening the incompleteness of God-given humanity of women, Tavard (1973:213) further argued that “women cannot be a dominant force because they are subjective to their counterparts. Therefore, Tavard (1973:213) says women cannot obtain the sacrament of orders thus women cannot be priests”. Instead of there being a change in the middle age period for the positive for women involved in the church and society, leadership role due to their inferiority complex and exclusion of women intensified. However, as the reformation processed, Martin Luther enlightened and came up with the concept of “Priesthood of all believers” as a way of being sensitive to exclusion ministry. The doctrine of priesthood of all believers incorporates women into the holy ministry as compared to Roman Catholic who believe that women cannot be in a sacrament of orders (Karant-Nunn, (eds.) 2003:4-14). This was a breakthrough in sixteenth century but unfortunate up to date churches are struggling with the idea of women as leaders (Karant-Nunn, (eds.) 2003:4-14). The question that should be answered by this study is that, does this Lutheran doctrine of “Priesthood of all believers” refer to the gender equality, women inclusion, and full participation by offering free space and equal recognition to women in the church and society? The question will be answered in upcoming chapters.

### **2.2.5 Women Experiences in the Jewish Religion**

There is a positive step, for those who went as far as opening education of Torah to the fully reformed who ordaining women. However, Moore and Kaplan partial” Runzo(eds) (2008: 160), highlighted on issues of human right saying, “the Jewish tradition took a concrete step to ensure human right in a wide variety of areas. In some cases, as for example in its treatment of women, classic law did not



go as far in establishing egalitarianism as we moderns might like”. As some Jews taking the egalitarian stance devotedly, others take it partially and justified as if they are inclusive. (Marion, Kaplan and Moore, (2011: 162), say, “women study the Torah was their limitation being determined by *Hivsch* which quotes (Deut.11:19) says “you should teach them to your sons”, not your daughters (Kiddushin29:6) limiting the commandment to teach of Torah to the instruction of our sons exclusive of our daughters, sentence *V’limad’tem otam-et b’neichem* and not the sentence *v’shinantam I’vanekha-* (Deut.6:6). Women were not exposed to the Torah which was reserved for men; one acknowledges that this brought the teaching of fear of God. So in that respect women needed to be respected and be given an opportunity to show their reverence to God. Adumelika (2017:1) writes that Jewish history had it that women had little role if not nothing in Jewish religious leadership. It described the writer as trying to justify the injustice treatment of women exclusion in leadership. Yet they said, at least it does not forbid Torah studying women altogether but says they have restricted the study of Torah for women in specialized areas”.

In other words, it means that women are excluded. Hence, Parsons, (2002) argues that Jewish women were less educated. They were just exposed to an education system that allowed them to read, write and little arithmetic that would help them to run their households. Women in Jewish community were allowed to have basic religious education that will enable them to observe Kosher. This is a set of Jewish religious dietary laws. However, the issue of women included in interfaith dialogues might be in a slow-motion currently as there are still some barriers although some Jewish groups had cleared the ground by opening doors for women ordained ministry Adumelika (2017:1). To avoid speculations let’s hear more by three interviewed Contemporary Jewish women whom two of them are part of the process, in which way or whether there is such process called interfaith dialogue going on currently and how many women involved if they are any, they will share with us.

The Torah teaching offers the world a glimpse of the biblical forefathers’ relationship with their

wives. Such people as Abraham and Sarah, Rebecca and Isaac, Rachel, Leah and Jacob based on the principle that *ma'aseh avot Siman le-banim* (the deeds of the ancestors serve as a model for descendants) are cases where we find male figures who are greatly honored as compared to their wives. Yet again, "it is clear from the Biblical narratives that females did not serve in the broader leadership position role filled with males" (Leadership and Authority website). This depicts the truth of saying religion and its Biblical interpretations negatively polarized women's leadership positions and roles from the worship places to the societies. Hence Judaism religion was (is) as "openly discriminatory regarding women. They were regarded as incapable of bearing witness tasks of men (as well) they neither study the Torah nor participate in the sanctuary service".<sup>1</sup>

For the Jews, "the rebirth of a female was a misfortune". The Rabbi Simion Jicaq would say that "All are happy when a male is born. He said when male is born, he brings peace to the world, he brings bread in his hands, but when a female is born nothing is coming with her". As if that was not enough, the gravity of dehumanization of women in Jewish religion is so tense. Boys and men would recite such prayers where they thank God for making them male not female. It is true that as we listen in between this morning benediction it was a curse and blessing to be created a woman and man respectively. While women were asked to recite a prayer with such words 'He has made me according to His will' (Lewittes, 1994: 110). This prayer shows that women were socialized to be inferior while men were socialized to be strong and be bold against any life challenges.

### **2.2.6 Historical understanding and development of Gender in 1980-2000**

Over the years gender issues have revolved depending on the country and community. There is a

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<sup>1</sup> Leadership and Authority, Jewish Women Archmed sharing stories inspiring change. <https://Jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/leadership-authority/and> were expanding our Encyclopaedia of Jewish Women and we need your help! Nominate her to be included!

remarkable difference on gender appreciation between countries, continents, communities and churches. The socialization exerted to people in different communities has great impact on gender and thinking of both men and women. Consequently, some women have misconceived their being women as implying being voiceless and subservient to male counterparts, even when such actions violate their rights (Machingura and Nyakuhwa, 2015). Corwant (1956:300-1) cited in Machingura and Nyakuhwa (2015) also concluded that there was a problem of interpretation of women's status as the world use male lenses to put together the thought patterns about women in society. Morality and behavior of women in most African societies are defined and judged by men using their own standards and values. As a result, this has left women's status in doldrums and resulted in women being treated as weaker sex, part of children and many other demeaning values are ascribed to female individuals. This is a clear behavior of most patriarchal societies that devalue women. In turn deny them of their rights to be leaders of their own societies and organizations. As if that is not enough, women are in most cases responsible for societal or family misfortunes. Most old women are blamed for witchcraft acts which has degraded and sponged away women's confidence in both public and private life (Machingura and Nyakuhwa 2015).

Adoption and ratification of gender policies have been the order of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Gender Protocol, Barometer 2012). This has been the desire to promote equality and women's rights amongst people, in spite of their sex. The international instruments such as Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocols and Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), on gender have helped to shape responses of every nation and organizations on issues of gender. Like many other countries in SADC has signed and ratified agreements that bring the emancipation of women through gender equality and women's rights.

In addition to the SADC Gender Protocol, Zimbabwe is a signatory to the CEDAW signed in 1991 and rectified in 1997 which promotes a total elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and girls.

However, these are modalities on paper, and yet the gap between what is stated on paper and the realities that women and girls are facing in Zimbabwe remains dire (SADC, 2017). Thus, the research is trying to find the reasons why gender inequality and women exclusion is rampant in senior leadership in different organizations in Zimbabwe.

Yet again, accountability arrangements that help women are based on two facts which are inclusion and rights of women as vital measures that determine if performance of individuals in an organization should be used as an assessment tool (SADC, 2017).

At its sitting CEDAW of 18 December 1979 negates the ever-thriving discrimination against women being practiced in all systems, conditions and declared that parties should adopt appropriate arrangements in their desire to eliminate discrimination based on gender especially against women. It further encourages proper legislation that will modify and abolish such laws, customs, regulations, and patriarchal practices which promoted is crimination against women (CEDAW, Article 2:5, 6). Despite all these efforts put in blue print the reality is that women continue to experience ever exclusion in both church and society. All the same these agreements are reviewed almost every year or so, but the situation of women remains a sorry endeavor.

### **2.2.7 Global and national perspectives on women**

The eighteenth and nineteenth century saw some great change of women in Europe and other developed countries. It however remained a problem in countries where the society is heavily influenced by patriarchal sentiments. While women in developed world gained their space and empowerment, women in developing world were rather stripped of their power and possessions. This included the married women who were considered part of the property of their husbands. Their possession was/is credited to the account of their husbands. Weitz (2003) observed that even the renowned scientist Charles Darwin concluded that men were the most developed humankind and women were undeveloped.

In support Nina (2009) blamed the yesteryear society that concluded that women were irrational, vulnerable, and incapable of independent thinking. Consequently, women were kept in the private sphere and short of nationality as well as being denied their right to be property owners. In the same vein violence against women by males or husbands was seen as legitimate (Nani, 2009; Welby, 1990). Seguino & Were (2014) noted that besides that gender equality was one of UN millennium goals, the worst seven countries out of ten on gender unequal were in Sub Sahara Africa. Their study noted with concern that inequality was still prevalent in this region as witnessed in various domains. There is not much progress of gender equality in the said region. Women are still suffering from domination of men, whether it is in church or community in general (Seguino & Were, 2014). UN (2012) report concluded that poor development of certain countries was associated with gender inequality challenges.

### **2.2.8 Women and gender inequality in Zimbabwean churches**

Machingura and Nyakuhwa (2015:92) noted that while the status of women in Zimbabwe has been deliberated upon indifferent forays, there are still critical answers sought for to answer questions such as are women inferior, equal, or superior to their male counterparts. A report on gender and land (2015:112) quoted one participant who said that:

*Until reasonably latest years, this was the custom among our own races. The native women of today have not the brain power or civilization of the mothers and grandmothers of the present white generation: her brain is not adequately balanced to allow her to think and act in all matters for herself, and I consider the male should been encouraged and assisted to exercise tutelage, within all reasonable bounds over his womenfolk*

The above statement shows that Zimbabwean community views women as ‘half human’ and that man should help to teach woman always. Such thinking has also engulfed the views of church towards women

especially in areas of church leadership. This view resonates with Machingura and Nyakuhwa's (ibid) observation that various Zimbabwean societies use patriarchal spectacles to judge women's behavior. Culture and tradition (Patriarchal) believe that a genuinely raised woman accepts being subordinate to men. In other words, any women complaining or seeking to be at par with men is uncultured. Williams (1997:106) opines that patriarchy has given birth to features that push away women by defining life and determining relationships according to male domination. These peculiarities brew attitudes of superiority against inferiority individuals thereby, allowing domination by male over females even in church. Machingura and Nyakuhwa (2015:112) in their study of Church of Christ in Zimbabwe were left with questions on the proper attitude of the denomination towards status of women when they noted:

*“It is still a bone of contention as to whether the Church of Christ is upgrading or down-grading the status of women. Though the church has been known to be the voice of the voiceless in dealing with critical issues like the welfare of widows and orphans, disabled persons; one wonders what has happened to the case of women on leadership positions. Were they born to be followers of men? ... Patriarchy is to blame on most challenges faced by women in our society and church today”.*

In view of that Phiri (2003) observed that the church has been mum on occurrences of gender justice that comprise violence against women. Community is finding it difficult to confer full rights to women especially in areas of leadership; the church has also carried the same attitude towards women. Church enjoys helping women as widows, single mothers and under some vulnerable groups but they are not prepared to see them as leaders in church. Hadebe who was cited by Chisale (2020) urges that whenever the church is confronted with a need for gender analysis, there is resistance. Resistance occurs because the Church in Zimbabwe is a fertile ground for the oppression of women as it promotes patriarchy as the norm in Christianity, Chisale (2020).

The ZCC is criticized for not fulfilling its pledge or claim that their talk is based on what the bible says and they in turn keep quiet where the bible is also silent. The church in the world especially most mainline claim to adapt to the biblical teachings, but they have tendencies of either misinterpreting or deliberately ignoring certain portions of the bible especially those that put women on the limelight like Gal3:28.

The most common biblical text followed by many churches is Ephesians 5:21 due to its patriarchal nurture that augurs well with African (Shona) culture. Most women in church leadership positions are suffering from gender a stereotype which calls for women to be submissive to men. In the ELCZ one may not know from afar but when closer or being part of the structure one can understand women marginalization in it. This was noted in ZCC that even female pastors were subjected to these harsh demands of the society (Machingura, 2011).

## **2.3 SECTION THREE: PRACTICAL THEOLOGY OR PASTORAL CARE**

### **2.3.1 Current strategies to promote inclusion of women by Churches.**

Madu (2014:123) appreciated that women constitute over 50% of the world's population, but their role remains insignificant. Madu (2014:34) identified five critical roles that women play in our society today. These comprise the motherly position that women always play to their family. Again, a woman is a producer and home-manager, in most communities' women till the land to produce food for the family. The largest percentage of food produced in the world is because of women efforts. This is the same produce and family chores that women act as home managers. They manage activities and how food or financial expenditure is to be used when and how. They also act as community organizers and socio-cultural initiators. Since, women are always at home they help in organizing communities from the way they react to pandemic, death, and happiness. Women are always present with their people hence organizing becomes easier. The fifth activity or role is of a

political activist they influence family, community and national even the world in political thinking. This is due to the time they spend with their families; they can easily influence their people politically (Madu, 2014). While these are critical roles society has not given women enough space to practice and lead as expected. Rather a man is the one who is head of most societies and organizations. The worst culprit of women oppression is the church. According to Mapuranga (2014) he observed that in AICs men dominated the religious space of these churches while women were left to occupy less important spheres or just take the position of being followers. However, women have started to salvage their lost power irrespective of male dominance which is a positive attitude. Jones (2000) identifies five methods of subjugation that women in religious institutions are subjected to. Women in church are limited as they are exploited, marginalized, powerless, cultural imperialism and suffer violence from male dominance. It has been reported that in 2013 more church denominations were debating on the ways that can be used to promote participation of women in senior leadership of the organization in comparison with the 2007 status (Finca, 2013). Madu (2014:213) is dismayed that:

*“Despite women’s resourcefulness, their worth has consistently been downplayed and demeaned in the theories, symbols, rituals, religious practices and structures of the society”*

However, there church pews remained largely occupied by women more than men. In that regard most minute services are largely done by women, such activities as church service and healing tasks while men’s organizations are preoccupied by senior leadership roles. In addition to their claimed supremacy men take liability for spirituality of both women and men in church. While expectation was for the two organizations to work together in fighting the cancerous gender-based violence, most gender activities are being done by women organizations. Regardless of the high numbers of women in church, a large fraction of senior leadership is occupied by male ministers. In that regard male



ministers are the majority in the clergy, and they dominate the clergy leadership. Throughout the world including whether first or third world, it has been noted that female members of the society are excessively burdened by high weight of poverty. Hoare and Gell (2009) argues that women experience poverty due to deprivation and marginalization, due to this lameness those in poverty have no power to influence social processes as they lack leadership roles. Consequently, women remain trapped in a cycle of poverty for their entire life on earth. The most painful thing is that the status is inherited by the next generation of women members of our society.

There are therefore strategies that have been introduced by different organizations in their effort to curb discrimination of women from participation in decision making platforms. Maphosa, Tshuma and Ncube (2015) noted that the Zimbabwean government has signed, and ratified various instruments as influenced by regional and international community on gender equality. In spite of the presence of all these good international and national policies, the country has been lagging behind in empowering and encouraging participation of women in senior leadership, whether in church or in politics. Machingura (2015) noted same scenario in most churches that though they have adopted and engraved new policies in their books, little has been done to advance the prominence of women especially in areas of leadership.

Article two (2) and twenty-one (21) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) clearly states that every individual has a right to participate in decision making of his/her country regardless of their gender (United Nations, 2015). This was introduced as a strategy to escalate participation of women in decision making boards of organizations and nations. The regional board thus SADC also created a gender protocol as per article 12:1 that encouraged member states to adopt a 50% threshold participation of women in decision making positions (SADC,2008). As a nation Zimbabwean's constitution of 2013 made it clear that women have to benefit on equal opportunities as their

counterparts in all domains of life. The Zimbabwean situation puts it at 41% threshold of achieving set targets as per the SADC Gender and Development Index. Morna et al (2014) observed that perceptions of the citizens in Zimbabwe are at 61% when it comes to their view about their government's commitment to gender in governance. Report on women and power (2016) indicated that most are women faced with a pleated trudged hurdle to power. Their trudged is based on scary obstacles not only to earning access to decision-making positions and processes but also to influence other women to support each other in times of need. This has made many women in different societies and organization to fail to go up the social and leadership ladder. In most organizations conflict customarily generates constitutional reform with such significant moments for people to introduce new concepts and subjects into the constitution of an organization. They provide a kairos moment for expansion and inclusion of rights, including those groups on the edge of the society such as women's rights to power and leadership (Waylen, 2008:23). Hence, constitutional reforms are momentous occasion towards the realization of women's participation in key leadership positions within organizations.

### **2.3.2 Contextual models to demystify the myths around gender inequality in Church.**

A Bangladesh community mediator was quoted saying:

*“women's leadership and authority have symbolic power because it challenges widespread beliefs that men are leaders and women's place is in the home: ‘When I first started, it was tough to talk. People are always asking why women are talking so much [...] now they support me. I had to prove my honesty and capability”.*

Demystifying gender inequality fears is one critical role that should be embraced. In Bangladesh they have used performance and capabilities of few women in leadership post as the panacea to change the attitude of society towards women. For example, Solomon Island report (2016), in

Malawi the current women MPs were not active in any political party before they contested to be members of parliament. However, they have been active in faith-based organization. They sharpened their political tooth during their time with these organizations. Women and Power in Solomon Islands report (2016) recommended that policymakers in this country must take the issue of the rights of women and leadership with utmost gravity. This will enable each country to implement conference decisions on women emancipation. It has been noted that most countries and organizations are zealous to appendage their signatories on conference resolution, but implementation is poor when back home. In Kenya a report noted that woman rights are only achievable when an unbiased gender relation is adopted by both men and women through their actions as concerned citizens (Solomon Island Report, (2016).

#### **2.3.4 Pastoral Care/Theology and Therapy**

Ramsay (2004:4) explains pastoral theology basing its knowledge on the ministry of care by ordained pastors where the contextual and biblical theology is applied and integrated with social sciences approach in promoting healing and transformation (wholeness) (Ramsay, 2004:5). Besides, Ramsay again argued that pastoral theology incorporates a theological property that enlightens how wisdom can be used in a beneficiary manner. The behavioral sciences are incorporated into the practice of pastoral care that brings dignity and integrity to people who are at the end of the society (Ramsay, 2004:6).

The genuine pastoral care helps communities to operate within the expected zone that provide care to all persons and groups in every society. Ramsay, (2004) adds, to accomplish its task, pastoral theology develops for public debate and policy interpretations of our common life, norms by which this life will be lived, and practical strategies for healing, sustaining, guiding, and liberating individuals, cultures, and the natural order. Ramsay's (2004:15) pastoral care uses transformation

concepts, sustainable guidance and liberating culture to wash away societal problems. Ramsay (2004) believes that application of practical theology helps church to address the human needs in its fullest. Furthermore, societal problems such as gender can be addressed through practical theology as it is supposed to be addressed in its context. This shows that practical theology if well understood can help to address communal problems (Ramsay, 2004:15).

### **2.3.5 Pastoral Care and Counselling to the Caregiver**

Ackerman (2003:121) highlighted that this chapter of Pastoral Care and Counseling for caregivers in anticipation highlights on what the caregiver went through during their execution of their duties. Some of the experiences are caused by lack of support from church. In doing that Ackerman raised some 2 important focuses areas as first the role of practical theology which is related to her previous chapter of this subject and some other chapters. What is important and relevant to this study is her second role which talks of the role of the church and pastoral counseling in caring the caregivers (Ackerman 2003:121). Offering pastoral care and counseling to the vulnerable may be inadequate and valued chances may lose out as intended beneficiaries may have unresolved grievances Hamilton (2005:169). The content that the church unclearly responds to the suppressed or oppression of women female clergy requires first and foremost a preparedness “to listen and lament with those who suffer” (Ackerman 2003:122) and was according to per their context.

### **2.3.6 Involvement of Caregiver to Pastoral Care or Theology**

The concept of pastoral care makes sense when there is sharing and togetherness which (Pembrokes 2003:17), describes as participation, discovering depth of meaning through togetherness as the relationships expressed by the preposition ‘with’ that is eminently inter-subjective and meaningful (Pembrokes 2002:14). Pembrokes views of participation of caregivers as the precondition to meaning -making as awakening the pastoral care and counselling implementer to be involving or inclusive. Hence, “true participation is described as a self-commitment to full immerse for the church into caregivers’ situation (Pembrokes 2002:14), so that they would be able to perform their given tasks. These aspects of participatory approach

are relevant to the caregivers in their anticipatory given tasks this includes the concept of inclusivity (Pembrokes 2002:31), care for the marginalized, (Poling 1991:186). Pembrokes brings in the what she calls 'I -Thou' attitude of communion, of journeying with others to find voices and devoutness ethical approach in which the encounter is beneficial and therapeutic for all concerned (Pembrokes 2002:33, Neuger 2001:71 and Kotze and Kotze 2001:9). 'I-Thou' refers to when a person is addressed by the absolute eternal 'You', namely God-in-You. Thus, the meeting because an 'I-Thou' communion... a form of God in the world (Buber 1979:166 Dette Noome 2009, adds on the concepts of 'I-Thou in English 'thou' in prayer actually indicated complete closeness rather than the archaic version of respectful but remote formality.

### **2.3.7 Womanist Pastoral Theology**

Sheppard (2006), in the book Pastoral Theology care in Chapter 6 contributes to womanist pastoral theology where she offers an intersectional thinking of African Women's experience she goes through in religion. Sheppard argued that intersectional assistance in response to the way in which particularly in law cases involving discrimination failed to recognize that women are frequently the target of oppression and gender discrimination of which the context of the study is different with that of Sheppard but when it comes to remedy of how to respond to the problem it is the same. Women in this study also experience discrimination and not recognized and gender discrimination. If we seek to proclaim a clear sense of what it implies to live well on others, then there is a danger that we will be suppressing other viewpoints and experiences that are valid as our own. Lynch (2002:48) emphasizes the point saying: Likewise, there is a danger that such thinking can function in ways that uphold existing social arrangements and restrict the potential for raising more critical questions about social justice and human well-being of women caregivers.

Yet again, it is not obvious that every pastoral care practitioner works for the well-being of the needy, Lynch and Bond (2002:49) argued that "concerned with the extent to which the cultural practices and social structures, within which we work, also help or hinder human well-being". This comes when practitioners don't move with and continue observing the denied of women's fully practices their God-given talent. The

writer pointed out the weakness of church as leading entity on pastoral issues. On the other hand pastoral care turned a blind eye or towards the most damaging end of the experiences and acknowledging the abuse and suffering presented to them (Lynch, 2002:49). This type of response to the vulnerable leads them to deny or minimise the woman's experience.

If we are concerned to promote the good life through pastoral practice, it therefore follows that we should be bringing a moral perspective to bear on pastoral practice thus involves more than thinking about the professional basis of the pastoral relationship or the content of pastoral discussions. Pastoral practice, informed by a vision of the good life, that should inevitably involve critical reflection on the social context in which that practice takes place.

Mattis urged that Contempt substantial evidence regarding the imposing roles of religion and spirituality in the lives of women usually, and African American women in particular, searches of the divine lives of women remain incomplete in research on both the psychology of religion and the psychology of women. (Mattis, 2000, p. 1)

Mattis' study on pastoral care suggested that black women, religion and devoutness play a significant role as a coping system (Mattis 2000). Her point is on the connectedness of religion and devoutness and positive social and psychological growth for Africa Americans (Mattis 2011). Meaning that the writer commended that the church and even social development as giving positive support and hope to the despair women. Whereas other pastoral care researchers also challenged the dominant of singular models of African church and religious knowledge (Taylor et al., 2004). Hence, these researchers argued that most intersectional issues form the experiences of women in the church such as furthering their education, empowered to be in the managerial decision-making forums. Yet again Gilkes (1980), contends for the need for a culturally positioned psychodynamic viewpoint on religion. Her point critiques communal knowledge study that focused on social pathology and willingly characterised African communal life as non-standard and not studied that portrait different from explored societies. Whereas churches play a pivotal role of providing;

“there is need for a true asylum and a regular setting for group therapy and an objective, mediator between perceptions of experience of black people and the messages of the wider social system” (Gilkes, 1980, p. 31). This is expressed by a culturally specific group of psychology of black religious practices with the aim of expressed their pastoral care in unique practices, that is therapeutic. Gilkes also pointed that the therapeutic act offers four purposes: (1) “the articulation of suffering”; (2) location of persecutors; (3) provision of asylum for “acting out”; and (4) validation of experiences. She also offers the alternative way that improves self-esteem and role continuity ...” Where religious practices heal mental health suffering, empirical research suggests that for black women, religion and devoutness have a significant role as a coping mechanism. Specifically, her interests are concerned with the intersection of religion and spirituality and positive social and psychological development for African Americans (Mattis, 2011). Others have also challenged the prevailing singular models of black religion and religious experiences (Taylor et al., 2004). These researchers give consideration to the importance of context, and in so doing, point toward the necessity of examining the interlocking features of religious experience. They argue that a multitude of intersectional issues shape black experience of religion such as class, region, and education, as well as gender and denomination. Their biggest contribution in this work is its empirical evidence to discuss the “functions of religion” and the “effects of religion” (Taylor et al., 2003). Cheryl Townsend Gilkes argues for the need for a culturally situated psychodynamic perspective on religion (Gilkes, 1980). She critiques communal knowledge research that focused on social pathology and willingly characterised black community social life as non-standard without researching distinguishing difference from explored societies. In “The black church as a therapeutic community,” Gilkes *Womanist Pastoral Theology* 135 observed some new mental health treatment models seem to “possess overwhelming similarities to the activities of the black church” and elements of religious practices appearing in some black religious contexts “act as a deterrent to ... psychiatric symptoms within the black community” (Gilkes, 1980, p. 31). Gilkes’ argues further that black churches provide “a true asylum and a regular setting for group therapy.

However, Ackerman argues showing the other side say: religion and religious experience is not as “straightforward” as these primarily positive outcome models suggest, especially in terms of the way religion functions, in the life of the individual and communities, beyond the manifest and obvious (Ackerman 2003:123). As a scholar who is also from other context experience it is her view, but this view does not dismiss Gilkes’s view that is also relevant to this study whereby female pastors in the ELCZ in need of a therapy mechanism to heal and rebuilt their confident to use their God given talents in ordained ministry. Lastly, the result is that deep inside of religious experience we discover a physique of “religious” formational practices that based in, and requiring of individuals and communities, the turning of a blind eye, as the mechanism of denial to attend to the problems. In other words, religious practitioners are both invited to consciously engage certain aspects of their experience and the dynamic forces operative in religious contexts, and to disavow others. Although the church had some discrepancies that were highlighted above in this section of pastoral care and counseling it still has the obligation of taking care and give hope to its members and communities surroundings.

## **2.4 SECTION FOUR: WOMANIST AND FEMINIST THEOLOGIES**

### **2.4.1 Influence of Culture as engendered women positions in Church and Community in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

As we noted in the just ended section of the theological understanding framework by the early church leaders, it shows that their teachings and declarations have a great impact in influencing women exclusion from leadership posts. Community and church believed in this without questioning. Due to such approach women were left out of influential roles in the church. Culture is the other concept that plays a substantial role concerning women space and roles in the community and sometimes also in the church. Culture was defined by Mercy Oduyoye (1993:109) as a world overview, and the way how people live, give value and the psychology that directs their thinking formulas. Sociology and



social arrangements have carved and cultured humanity environment to differentiate their style of life from other people. Women in these situations of culture that marginalized communities must negotiate their cultural identities in multiple and complex ways into consideration gender and other differences (Mercy Oduyoye, 1993). Life can only be meaningful when women recognition and gender differences are corrected through men in the process.

The church in Africa has further been influenced by cultural dimensions on the view of women in society. While the society undermines women in its midst, churches have a serious dictatorial idea upon women more than any other ordinary life today. This is regardless that women hold the majority number both in society and in church. Shiri in his book argues that female members of ELCZ would invite a drunkard man to come and preach to them. This was since they underestimated themselves. Women are considered to be the sustaining force in most societies and churches. Due to them dominating in numbers, women cannot be ignored in their participation both in church and society. The unfortunate part is that even the church has been found wanting as it continues to support and persuade the unjust means brought by cocci-cultural perspectives in Africa. While society has opened to gender, church remains rigid and closing all possible key sectors where women should participate.

What we witnessed from Church Fathers, declarations of the councils and other religious leaders thinking continues to mirror the contemporary church and society. Hence, African or Zimbabwean culture and traditional society coping from church practice that shows women exclusion from way back during the initiation stage of the Christian religion.

Okure would say that; “In African culture often women have been treated as second class”, as portrayed in many African proverbs and sayings. In most of these proverbs’ women are referred to as stoves, old cooking pots, large wooden string spoons, hoes, cows, merino sheep, field and fire and even dogs usually with derogatory meanings” (Okure 2000). In most situations due to desperations,

women themselves accept all these character defamation descriptions. This culture makes little difference in any talk of women's liberation that is met with cynicism, hostility or ridicule" (Okure 2000). Hence in many African societies, the traditional role of women seems to be largely passive". Argument by *African women theologians' contribution towards the discussion about alternative masculinities* by Dube, (2016:10-12) point out that.

Alternative masculinity functions as a tool to critique the manner in which culture broods' patriarchy and hegemonic masculinities. They call people to be free from any form of oppression; it is people's right to live as they please without cultural baggage. Most of their ideas have been deployed against certain oppressive practices within the African culture. For example, most African societies expect women to fetch water, firewood, cook and carry all domestic chores. In cases where *lobola* was fully paid, a woman is expected to be obedient. The African culture even condones beating wife, in cases where she is seen as not obedient to the husband.

The above view is the philosophical idea that the church father adopted and continued to be driven by churches and societies even today. The twenty-first researcher has to find an alternative instrument to replace the philosophers' ideal as Dube proposed above African theologians such as Mercy Oduyoye (1990) exposes such problems as she points out that: "I did a study of Okan proverbs (attempting) to demonstrate that women fall niches of linguistic imagery that socialized them to accept their place in society and to view with caution any call for more space". In her writing Oduyoye, observed that gender socialization is the norm that strategically has distorted the quality of women relations and continues to deny the parity between women and men.

The other imperative point which Oduyoye (1990), has exposed is that women are educated to be weak and to take second position in life as opposed to men. Women are forced even by culture, to

accept this belief that they are a second-class citizen. Oduyoye's points how should the oppressive cycle keeps ridiculing and pushes them away from claiming their rights to lead. Women have the responsibility to be united in the cause for liberation of all women in the world. There is a need for women to challenge the hierarchical structures of the church that continues to undermine the participation of women in the church. This will also mean to deal with obstacles that are on the ground which also prevent women from leadership. Though it remains a toll order for women to overcome these problems, solidarity between women is the first step to correcting the unjust systems. Currently, there is still high attitude and lack of confidence by many women when it comes to women leadership. As a result, support is not seen and this weakens women in favor of men. In gender justice discourse it is imperative to pay attention on how culture and social contexts articulate their differences as a result of culture, language, and social realities without assuming that women's experience is the same everywhere. When it comes to women oppression and exclusion in church and society's high leadership positions, the church is to be blamed. Hence, Christianity was brought to the third world within gun boats and cannons in the colonial period together with their culture. The third world women are tormented by two minds as they face African culture while on the other side their belief in Christian values and culture are a problem for them to have one clear stand. Their newly found liberating power from the biblical faith has not helped much to empower women in church and society (KwokPai-lan, 1997:27). Missionaries came to Africa and introduced their religion together with their cultural assumptions. This defined womanhood in a new way that brought different gender roles and sexuality. But still, this did not serve women's situation. Gundlanga (19980, argued that colonialism brought its Victoria values and dumped them upon Shona men and women, these values despised and undermined the female gender (1998:20). African culture was regarded as primeval due to such practices as zenanas and harems, female infanticide and suttee concubine and polygamy, foot binding and child marriages (KwokPai-lan1997:27).

Most of the cultural issues condemned by western feminists and missionaries were not demonic and satanic such as polygamy that was a way of preventing infidelity and in HIV/AIDS period it's a preventive measure. To some extent one can agree that it was inhuman and against the communal way of life. Note to withstand, for western feminists to compare civilization with African culture was selfish and gives room for African men to critic women oppression and defend cultural harmful practices as a way of defending imposed culture by westerners. Hence, third world theologians had to fight against that in the name of protecting their national culture for instance; Oduyoye (1994) has criticized western feminists' mania on the issue of manipulation of women in African. Oduyoye went on to challenge men in Africa for creating the unacceptable national and cultural identity that leaves women outside the kraal and why she would cry at every turn when she read about African self-identity and authenticity. She argues that her major challenge was being created by male writers who were harsh and inconsiderate to women in their society. While they pointed to the fact that past events were not golden; Oduyoye (1995) was concerned if that un-golden includes dehumanization of women by men. In other words, were men prepared to tell their story of mistreating women repeatedly over centuries? The other key issue was if men were prepared to eliminate this unacceptable behavior towards women (Oduyoye, 1995:121).

Besides Mercy Oduyoye's criticism of western feminists, more third world theologians also engage in intercultural critiques, pointing out that fighting violence against women should be done from an informed position with African cultures and by people concerned and not necessarily through foreign imposed culture and fallacies (KwokPai-lan 1997:27).. The idea of valuing other culture superior than the other has legitimized abuse of women by men. In the process women have remained inferior and subordinates to men through a system that disregard the essence of their womanhood. This viciousness, in the process turns ugliest especially when one borrowed culture dominates the indigenous culture (Tamez, 1996:13). The statement by third world women theologians is in

retaliation against intercultural assimilation at the expense of dehumanize indigenous culture and replacement with a foreign one.

#### **2.4.2 On the voices of African women theologians**

This study sought to investigate the continued exclusion of female pastors from senior leadership in ELCZ. To accomplish this section the study will be hinged on theories that seek to inform reasons why women are excluded from senior leadership. Priede, (2014) opines that theory informs practice because it helps with the insights to understand and interpret the phenomena in relation to a particular context. In a nutshell theory directs the thinking around a specific problem to be studied. In this regard theories become analytical tools to understand and explain the exclusion of female pastors from senior positions in ELCZ. In this case, theories are to be used as a conceptual frame and guide the study in the setting of the main research questions, instruments, data collection, analysis and interpretations (Priede, 2014). Theories in this study are used to explain and understand the findings, practice and behavior of people towards exclusion or inclusion of female pastors in senior leadership. Theories also helped in understanding what already exists and in supporting or refuting new findings in relation to exclusion of women from senior leadership in church and community. The theoretical frameworks employed are of Mercy Oduyoye and Elizabeth Fiorenza as models for the kind of church that should exist in society.

Lartey in his book cited Clebsch and Jackle who defined Pastoral Care as the pacesetter for any serious community discussion. They further describe pastoral care as serving acts done by church for those in its vicinity. Pastoral care sought to bring total healing to troubled people and communities. Pastoral care is a basket used to carry and contain concerns and bring meaning to life (Lartey, 2003:21) Pastoral care is about helping troubled communities and concerned people like those suffering because of their gender or social constructed meanings. This problem-centered focus

with the implied problem-solving approach has affinities with the types of therapies, educational philosophies, and management techniques that seem to have appeared in the US in the 1960s". It also raised provoking questions such as "What is pastoral care for? What purpose does it serve? Is there a need for it? Does it do any good? Can pastoral care be usefully distinguished from other forms of care"?

#### **2.4.3 Mercy Amba Oduyoye: Christian ministry as "a partnership of both women and men".**

Womanist theologians focused on the notion of involving women in leadership roles. One of the most famous womanist theologians is Mercy Oduyoye, a Ghanaian Methodist theologian, with her view that ministry is a partnership between men and women. The debate by these theologians began way back in the 1976 as they tried to champion the idea of women inclusion in imperative issues of life. These efforts gave birth to many organizations/movements which include among others, the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (EATWT), in the continents such as Asia, Latin America, and the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians (CCAWT) in the African continent. The Circle was formed based on Oduyoye's advocacy for the rights of women and their inclusion in leadership positions in Africa. This movement brought a theology which aimed for the participation of women without gender boundaries. Among other women who contributed include but not limited to, Musimbi Kanyoro, Nyambura Njoronge, Musa Dube, and Isabel Phiri.

This group of theologians started to contextualize their experiences referred to by Mercy Oduyoye as "the irruption within irruption" in a bid to drive the women issues from their relevant and contextual experience set-up. The group focused on issues such as the women's place in church and society as an imperative part of the voice of the earth's voiceless majority seeking to penetrate into unjust structures, (Oduyoye 1994:24). Numerous concerns were raised by the group from women and the

church, the Bible, women and theology, Christology and women and the struggle for liberation and the women and spirituality just to mention but a few (Abraham, (1986). At the conference of 1986 some recommendations were made as follows: “reaffirming of the consciousness of the identical accountability for both men and women as they dominate creation. The presence of women in Christian communities has been calling the churches to be the voice for the marginalized people especially women. Mercy Amba Oduyoye (2001) argues extensively for her dream of church ministry that bothers itself on the corporation of both women and men. She announces her groundbreaking dream in her book *Introducing African women’s theology* (2001). She started to craft this vision from around 1986 in different works. Oduyoye’s vision was created out of the various debates on whether women should be ordained or not. Mercy Amba Oduyoye helped to highlight the importance of women involvement in the high communal structures of society or church.

The exposure and experience of Mercy starting from her education in various universities that consist of the University of Ghana and the University of Cambridge triggered her awareness of the need to speak against women exclusion from senior positions. Mercy was previously the deputy General Secretary of the World Council of Churches in Geneva for seven years (1987-1994). She also worked as the only African woman lecturer at the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Ibadan teaching Church History and Christian doctrine and later taught at the Harvard University. Mercy contributed a lot in the life of women by taking a stance for the promotion of African women’s theology and leading the formation of The Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians. Mercy after the established of the Circle of Concerns movement was (is) known as “Mother of the circle of Concerned in Africa and abroad” (Rucher, 1995).

The issue of women exclusion or regarding women involvement in leadership, in general, was

discussed since 1980 and became a major consideration since then to date (Masimo-Ouma, 2011:31). In 1986 August, African women theologians came together for the first time in Africa in Cameroon to deliberate on the themes important for African theological development. In observation, the notion of above writer Fiorenza (1994) of “discipleship of Equals” and Oduyoye’s (2001) “Partnership between women and men” pointed to the common issue that is raised in (Genesis 1:26ff). The bible instructs that man and woman are to rule over all creation together. There is nowhere God instructs superior rule to men only, meaning God’s plan from the beginning was for women and men to work in partnership and equal ground.

In her writing on “Partnership between women and men”, especially in leadership, Oduyoye seeks to encourage African women that they have similar characteristics of leadership as men. Thus, they too have the qualities to lead in various leadership positions in church and society. Oduyoye emphasizes her point of women’s role that women should capitalize on the space of being a “queen mother” which already exists in African Cultural practice in most communities. Queen Mothers are appointed based on advancing age, elderly and experienced women who are mentors and nature, other young women, to be mentors as well. Oduyoye takes the issue of leadership and partnership very seriously as same as the issue of reciprocity is important for engagement between men and women in all cultural contexts of societies.

In her agenda, Oduyoye focuses on the leadership of various churches in Africa and around the globe. She targets women at leadership level regardless of them being few in number. Oduyoye’s idea of partnership in leadership was (is) supported by other African theologians such as Isabel Phiri and others. They together urge more women to take up leadership positions and critically view roles of culture and tradition which discriminate women from leadership positions in both church and society. In her idea of partnership in leadership, she implores the notion of “cultural hermeneutics” which



allows women to reinterpret biblical views from an African perspective and extract texts that benefit them. She pointed out that it is not all in African tradition and culture that liberates hence the need to observe harmful cultural practices that harm and oppress women and girls.

She also says “Any biblical interpretation becomes undesirable if it harms women, the vulnerable, and the voiceless”, (2001:12). In a way, Oduyoye pointed to the fact that one’s context and experience is to be seriously considered in Biblical interpretation. This would bring in the issue of merging these, one’s experience and Biblical interpretations. Therefore, has to be deliberately lived with intentions and a proper conscious. Where community has lost such ethos of life one has to remind and be conscious of life experiences and their implications, (2001:12). Hence experiences are to analyze, not only for their historical, social, and ethical implications but also for their capacity to create what grows to become cultural norms, (2001:12).

In other words, Oduyoye is suggesting that women must analyze everything that would be seeded for cultural norms especially that which will positively change the women stories. She also argues on strategies that can change attitudes and cultural viewpoints upon women inclusively and the need to oppose and deconstruct existing patriarchal structures and their oppressive plans. These are supposed to be understood by women, Thus, Oduyoye says society in many a times asks what is culture, how do people understand the experience, the relationships between people due to culture and who are the beneficiaries? Is it just, (2001:17)? t shows African women taking a critical stance on African culture as well as promoting its commitment to wholeness and enhancement of life in the community”, (2001:13-14). What Oduyoye argues for is for African Women to assertive in communicating African women’s opinions and various notions. She advocates for “identifying what enhances transforms or promotes in such a way as to build communities and make life-giving and life-enhancing relationships”, (2001:16). It is clear that in her ideology of cultural hermeneutic

suggests for a cultural liberation as the key hermeneutic of the gospel and Christian faith.

#### **2.4.4 Elizabeth Fiorenza's: "discipleship of equals"**

Elizabeth Fiorenza's (1989) notion of "discipleship of equals" is based on her understanding of a God that called all people into his vineyard through baptism. Fiorenza's belief of "discipleship of equals" is based on the dynamic work and lives played by women during the early days of Christianity. Their roles according to Fiorenza justify the fact that all were called by God through baptism not through one's sex. The notion is well developed in her work of 1993 titled *Discipleship of equals A critical ecclesiology of liberation* (1993). She then coined the notion of the title of the book challenging her church Roman Catholic's hierarchy which is very patriarchal in its structure. Susan Rackosy (2008) who is also a Catholic feminist theologian challenges the same issue of Roman Catholic Church set-up. The two challenged the issue of ordained ministry as space dominated by males, regardless of women dominating worship space as majority members. This is in agreement with what Machingura and Nyakuhwa (ibid) observed in CCZ that women were not considered to be part of the ordained ministry, they were segregated. One women pastor vented her desperation of seven years after completing theological studies but no ordination, but junior male students have already been ordained and deployed as pastors in charge of their parishes.

Fiorenza raised the notion of "discipleship of equals" regardless of gender construct. She, in the early stages of her book refers to the stories she heard as she grew up. She highlighted that numerous story had no power to block women from their roles as wives and mothers in their nuclear family. For him the stories were loaded with magnificent contributions of women to the development of Christianity over the period since the first century. Women's contributions were outstanding, creative, independent, and influential for the success of missionary work and growth of Christianity (Fiorenza, 1993:40). This means that the issue of women inferiority complex is man-made to deprive their

talents. Fiorenza's approach to her book should be understood in her previous context work on early Christianity and as a feminist hermeneutics.

Parsons, (2009:3) defines feminism as an important tool to disfranchise the patriarchal problems in our society today. The association that ascribes male figures with a superior power that dominates females as inferior and appendage to men; is not only wrong but absurd and against God's intention of creation. It is bluntly a lie that women are weak, less in thinking and inferior, rather women are strong and capable people to change the world. As a way to rebut the unorthodox thinking about women, feminists have in the process created a paradigm shift that puts women on the center of activity and refutes dominance by men in society. It shows equal forces of feminist theology when it comes to the notion of women's inclusivity to all spheres of full leadership participation". Hence, Fiorenza's hermeneutics concentrates on giving an interpretation about who women are and allowing them to build a strong religious movement all over the world. This causes women to break the silence and interpret biblical texts equal as male in reference of all being created by God's image. This approach brought in women the desire to liberate themselves from dehumanization shackles of patriarchy and men.

Therefore, according to Fiorenza, Feminist hermeneutic is all about an attempt to interpret biblical texts in the interest of women who have been kept under slavery for a long time (Ruether cited Russell and Clarkson, 1996:99). According to her, all Biblical material should be read with a hermeneutical lens even their interpretations for the purpose of avoiding being interpreted negatively and divide the body of Christ.

However, in her book "Discipleship of Equals" Fiorenza depicts that all believers regardless of gender must gather in love as a discipleship community which represents God's people and embraces His values. In her mind, Fiorenza visualizes this community as the church ministry that is inclusive

and discipleship of equals. In another way, Fiorenza's quest of "Discipleship of Equals" complements Martin Luther's doctrine of "Priesthood of all believers". Lutherans are certain that God's grace is available to all. In this sense the believer is also a priest: "God is likewise reachable to all human beings, hence every Christian in spite of sex has equal opportunity to be a minister and a leader in church (Loew, 1066:40). This confirms to the idea that Christians have equal opportunities to serve God in church. If everyone has an equal opportunity it means every available position in church is equally available to every person whether one is a man or woman. Equality in God's ministry is the basis for greater inclusivity in church as observed by Fiorenza on equality of disciples regardless of their sex. Fiorenza pointed to the notion of women's quest of being fully included into Church ministry especially in the ordained ministry. "Discipleship of Equals" is a tool for inclusivity and motivates women to adopt a liberated mind and stand for their justice.

Fiorenza through her previous experience of the same idea says: "By tracing my own unfolding journey of vision and struggle and by relating it to the collective struggle of women in theology. She argues that someone has to intervene in the situation over those who are abusing Christianity as religion to define biblical texts in a way that demean women in church and society. Her call for the discipleship of equals as not misleading other fellow women, rather calls them to be united and engage in different ministries out there such as of healing, caring, feeding, preaching, the list may continue and liberate people of God both women and men. Fiorenza by titling her work Discipleship of Equals refers to "Equal rights and equality" is customarily connected to liberal feminism which is said to fight for rights of women to become men. Consequently, combining this term with discipleship is considered by some to be an argument for women's equal opportunity with men to follow as disciples in the footsteps of Jesus, and to imitate His example" (1993:10). The term equals should not be misunderstood as meaning advocating for similarities with men. Instead, it seeks the notion of equality that is the reason we talk of gender justice hence sometimes equality without

justice is not complete.

The other imperative of Fiorenza's title is to reinterpret the cultural and theological meanings created by feminist and masculinity approach. These are associated with dualistic, heterosexist and essentialist as defined by patriarchal context found in society. Fiorenza's argument is critical as it opens a path on the *ekklesia's* new way of understanding Christian as disciples. These disciples have the same opportunity to build an inclusive community that cares for everyone. Such a community lives a life-giving power through God and seeks justice for every person. Fiorenza gives the analogy of *basileia* that is translated as "Kingdom" or "rule" and /or referring to...the alternative world of justice and well-being intended by the life-giving power of God as reality and vision" (1997:12). Thus, one can say the title of her book "Discipleship of equals" can also be referred to as *basileia* discipleship that envisions for an alternative world of equality, justice and wellness. That new world of equals would only be Jesus Christ inclusive approach to his ministry as good news to the world.

Furthering her idea of "Discipleship of equals" Fiorenza (1997:2), says that all women regardless of their origins and poverty level have equal status and dignity. Hence, they have rights endowed by their creator to equally access the assorted gifts provided for by God's spirit. Therefore, as women meet they bring their different talents and experiences. In that regard every person in this circle enriches the group by their talents and vocations. In short, the concept of discipleship of equals seeks to map a radical democratic vision and reality that works as an alternative to patriarchal structures that have dominated society for decades.

The term Kyriarchal used by Fiorenza refers to women status and others such as class, language, and race to mention just a few which draws a thin line with Zimbabwean context. Zimbabwean women context considered women status on the issue of inclusion in decision-making leadership and respect. The approach to the study of women context needs more than the spirit of propaganda towards

feminist, but comprehensive approach such as of ‘leaving no one behind’ regardless of race, tribe, language, culture, traditions, and gender but inclusive. All these must be applied while living in this world not to opt for an alternative world as referred to by Fiorenza (*Basileia*).

The mother of African women theology Mercy Oduyoye in her book *Jesus Christ* tackled the issue of women status in inclusive terms describing the accomplishments of Christ Jesus as the Savior for humanity. Therefore, it is hard to categorize them as feminists and also when pointing to the relationships of an individual with Christ each has unique and each is a child of God, they are not exactly feminists” (Oduyoye, 2002:167). Yet again, African women theologians are said to engage a perspective by looking at women reality from a theological point of view. Isherwood and McEwan, (2001:35), argue that African women’s first point is the experience of women and men on their dealings with each other in society and institutions. As a source of theology, one needs to do a declaration that demands girls and women’s participation. In doing that it does not mean such people are feminist, rather they are there to persuade communities to accept the reality and give female members. Their theology is however drawn from how they interact or life experience

#### **2.4.5 Perspectives of African and Western Famous Womanist Theologians**

African women, *Religion and Health: Essays in Honor of Mercy Amba Ewudziwa Oduyoye*; is one of the books under review in this study hence has contributions from various women mostly African. According to the book title, the purpose is to highlight” An important work that openly reveals why Oduyoye is viewed as the heroine but not with power. All those who contributed to this volume of essays clearly as per title articulated points of honoring Oduyoye is seen as the icon and mother of African women’s theology which is communal, ecumenical, culturally grounded and encompasses both feminist and womanist thought while at the same time remaining authentically African.

The African women theologian icon Mercy Oduyoye, especially her life history and the tremendous key contributions she did so far. Some of the issues that contributed for her honored title is that she

stood for the rights of African women and formed what is known today as the Circle of Concerns for women doing theology which is key in encouraging women to stand their ground. In the essays presented in this volume, it shows the diversities of women theologian writers as all tapped from Mercy Oduyoye doing, as they refused to be feminists or womanist because they believed that the two approaches had weaknesses. One of the weaknesses is that the approach segregates some ethnics and races.

The writers of this volume raised different notions finding it difficult to name what they were. Furthermore, women had different problems and their problems differ due to their place of origins. However, they had different views that “some circle theologians despite the controversy still chose to bravely want their work called feminist or womanist albeit suffixed or prefixed by the term Africa” (Phiri and Naddah, 2006:2). Giving a close review to the essay they raised imperative notions as already alluded above. However, some essays as per the title have much to say about honoring Mercy whilst some writers decided to narrate their research with little if any reference to her contributions. As an example, writers of part-three and four’s interests or key issues about Oduyoye had already been articulated by earlier writers and therefore they avoided repetitions. On the issue of naming the work of African women, theologians raised in the first part which were also Oduyoye’s basis of contention has a great deal as most writers of this volume commented raising different notions which I think each argument was influenced on where one got her educational orientation and her background. Notwithstanding, African women theologians’ writings as input to the topic under study is vital.

Contributions of Gloria E. Beington as the editor of *Lutheran women in the ordained ministry, 1970-1995*, is another book to be reviewed which is also relevant to this study. The book contributed significantly to women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church America (ELCA), at its celebration of

twenty-five years of female ordination in ELCA and its other churches such as the church of Sweden to mention a few. In this book, women shared achievements in ordination experiences of the ordained women and their impact in the church. They also included experiences and stories of “hope” and “joys” and of their “pains” and “sadness”. Yet again, “some write about the discrimination they encountered because of being women, others about double discrimination they experienced as women of colour”. The book also highlights on challenges and problems that are “gender-neutral”. Stories and experiences of concern by ELCA women on patriarchal dominance and are commonly experienced by many women in various countries around the globe regardless of context. However, African women particularly in Zimbabwe experience more due to the values and norms of the African context.

Dube (2016) also appreciated the CIRCLE of women theologians through their volumes of academic work. However, Dube noted a gap for the inadequate associated with the Western feminist writings perspectives, “especially that the foreign tools are ideologically loaded and that they do not answer particular contextual questions” (Dube, 2016). Hence the CIRCLE theologians research provides another path towards achievement of womanhood. In other words, the author created a new alternative to take. These perspectives are unique because they drive from the real-life issues affecting the African women”, (Dube,2016). Thus, resolving issues from local context are important as one does not ideologies about the issues but are relevant about the situation. Therefore, the writer of this study takes the same Circle theologians’ understanding of writing from her present context and life experiences.

#### **2.4.6 Women theologian contribution on the issue of women inclusion**

Women, church and leadership celebrations and challenges, it is a conference presentation paper on 5-13 December 2006 in Botswana for LUCSA Female Theologian Forum where majority of



participants were ordained female Pastors. Dube M as the theme speaker raised important issues about inclusiveness in church and society leadership. Her opening statement already pointed to none segregation of Jesus ministry and also to the exclusiveness of male mind-set. She starts by saying,

*“This morning I was very glad to leave my bucket of water by the well and come running to this village with the feet of the Samaritan woman like Apostle Mary Magdalene, I came running with news of exceeding joy to renew you with the resurrection message. Apostle Prisca who was travelling through the Roman Empire, planting churches wither husband and Dorcas who was caring for widow out of her means”, (Dube 2006:1)*

This was an uplifting relevant and motivational word to start with. As it was the first conference of such kind to women theologians in the LUCSA region, Dube’s opening words encouraged participants to open up and directed the plenary into stimulating discussion. Hence female pastor’s stories where shared and women would share different experiences they had to overcome. Women from SADC shared their different experience with the church especially on the senior position.

Dube in her address to this conference mentioned that in the story of the Samaritan woman when the male disciples arrived and found Jesus talking to her, they said to themselves “Why does he talk to her what does he want from her”, (Dube 2005:1). Meaning these male disciples did not want Jesus to talk to women. They wanted Christ to talk to men including them only. However, Jesus was inclusive and breaking discrimination and stigma boundaries, He talked to a woman and revealed himself to her saying, “I am the Messiah” (John 4:26). Dube argued “Jesus talks to us women, he revealed himself even to us upon hearing this great news the Samaritan Women understood the revelation and acted upon it”, (Dube, 2006:2). It is very important again to note that the issue of inclusiveness needs to be carefully understood and its revelatory meaning to women at large like to the Samaritan woman. Dube pointed out that Messianic revelation changed Samaritan woman’s

gender role right away. This was proven by the fact that, she left her bucket of water and ran into the village, proclaiming the good news.

*Already she started an evangelism work and converted crowds to Jesus, but even then, resistance persisted. The attempt to side-line a women leadership is observed not just from the male disciples but also from the whole community (Dube, 2006:2).*

Dube pointed to the real-life challenges faced by women leaders in Zimbabwe even today. Women are in leadership not by majority community support but because they are leaders they know and prove that they can lead. Even though Samaritan Women converted the Samaritan community and was witnessed by many, the Samaritan community appreciated the preaching and said that it is not about what they heard but rather the woman led the Samaritans to Christ (John 4:42). The latter statement by John tries to shadow the Samaritan woman's effort if it were not for her, they would not come to Jesus and listened to him. Besides, the male disciples were also coming from the same village empty handed no one followed them to see Jesus, the crowd only came when the women proclaimed to them. The resistance and downplay that we read in John's gospel from the disciples and the wider Samaritan Community towards a woman evangelism, represents different challenges that most women in church and community leaders face. Dube outlined that there is resistance from within the church and from the wider community. There is consistent attempt to side-line and silence women leaders sometimes in excruciatingly painful style, like being told to your face that your work does not matter (Dube 2006:3). Dube as other African women theologian contributed on real and relevant issues to Gender Justice and equality. On this presentation paper she also raised on the issue of creation story. She argued that "unlike all other members of the community, human beings are to be created in God's image, in God's likeness. That is, both women and men are male in God's image" (Dube M 2006:3). She touches on the starting point of women being disregarded

since in many churches women were referred to as secondary people who do not own God's image. She argued by saying the first gift that is given to both women and men is the gift of being leaders. Hence were given dominion meaning power and leadership authority over other living creatures. They were also given property by having dominion over earth creatures such as cattle. This highlighted that it is important for us to understand that the leadership role given to us human beings over the earth, is the leadership of custodianship. Hence custodianship is defined as management role on behalf of someone else. The fact that "Our leadership of custodianship is precisely to maintain the earth and its members good and in perfect interrelationship, therefore, our gift of leadership and having authority over all is a God-given gift given to both women and men", (Dube, 2006:3)

She went on to give illustration by highlighting many verses from Genesis to New Testament especially on Pauline letters and other epistle writing that will be referred to in the froth coming sections and chapters. The researcher will also look at the theological or biblical basis for women to assume leadership in church and community. Where did it go wrong to exclude women in leadership, the social construction of men and women and other?

Susan Rakocky (2006) in her book named "*In Her Name, Women doing theology*", pointed to how difficult it was for African women to engage in issues of women emancipation. Moreover, by using the word "feminist theology, the words call forth a vast range of responses from both women and men in Africa and around the world" she says. The reason was for scarce information concerning women liberation issues and relevance feminist theology. Rakoczy however, argues that due to new challenges of HIV/AIDS that mostly affected Africa and that have, "put the situation of women" at stake African women and Women of Latin America and Asian stated to be heard in the feminist theological forums". She also argues that 21<sup>st</sup> century portrayed a significant engagement of African women and others in feminist dialogue. Besides highlighting on her personal background, Rakoczy

(2006:2) presented the book as the first fruit on her reflecting, teaching, and researching that comes over many years. In her book, she tries to explain the origin, meanings and methods and sources of feminist theology. Yet again, she talks about the inception and work of Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians that heavily support the emergence of women theological voice in Africa.

The book raises various issues and discussions, but her central issue is about women as person and their dignity. She, like other women theologians raised practical issues of women ordination and of women's full participation. The attention to this study is on chapter six of her book where she raises issues of the "church and ministry of women included and excluded". She argues that: "The issue of women's place in the church and their call to ministry is the most contentious in the feminist theology". She further argues that "Each Sunday all around the world women comprise 60%-70% or more of a local congregation gathered to worship. These women are baptized and empowered by the Spirit for ministry, but some are denied", (Rakoczy, 2006:198).

However, the power of kyriarchy and patriarchal nature of the church severely limits the ability of women to exercise their gift for good of the church and community" (Rakoczy, 2006:198). Since women are aware of their God-given rights, giftedness the gap of their alienation increases daily, (2006:199). Rakoczy although her writing is elevation to the concern of the studied theme she falls short of African influence/culture contributions to the exclusion of women in leadership positions. However, Rakoczy's book will be also used as a reference in this study.

The other African women theologian who also contributed to the leadership of Circle of Concerned Women Doing Theology is Kanyoro. Kanyoro (2004) in *Search for a Round Table Gender, Theology and Church Leadership*, highlighted that, "women are---"beast of burden", temptresses, goddesses, incarnations of the ideal feminine or eternal woman, but fully responsible citizens in the society and church, made in the image and likeness of God and therefore God's representatives". Therefore,

working on male attitudes towards promoting women inclusion is very significant.

Chitando, E. (2016) argued that churches in most cases have been fences to people especially women and youths to claim their rights. On the other hand, during the fight against HIV/AIDS, the church challenged oppressive and damaging cultural practice and overcome that typecast. Thus, if the church obligates her to challenge oppressive African settings, positive attitudes may be cultivated.

The book also challenges the church to use its mandate to curb on the social and religious attitudes that prime to silence stigma, repression, and gender injustices. This is again a core issue he raised for the church to act upon and for the church to practice fairness. Chitando's writings are very relevant especially on issues about women and HIV/AIDS as most of his books talk about the subject although in some instances he talked about gender as cross-cutting to all human issues.

The researcher reviews also writings by other different Scholars from Africa and other continents who made some contributions to the studying subject. The writings by Sarah Casey article, "*For You Are All One in Christ (Galatians 3:28)*", on the role of women in the Pauline churches are also considered hence research argument is theologically informed by scriptures. Thus, Paul's letter to the Galatians will be a leading scripture hence the article's argument based. The article demonstrates the fundamental importance of women in Paul's ministry which is contrary to many modern interpreters" that is on the negative side against women inclusion. The paper argues that: "Paul had an inclusive attitude towards women and that was rather extraordinary for his times" (Casey, 2010:5). Although his inclusive attitude was however not maimed in the bible and later Christian churches and as a result has led people to read Paul incorrectly. Hence, it is vital that the church interprets the Bible correctly because, in many instances, people quote the Bible to justify their oppressive actions (Thalen 2003:26).

Henceforth, the same argument was raised by the researcher on women inclusion in church and

community leadership positions. “A close reading of Paul’s undisputed letters reveals seemingly contrasting attitudes towards women. It is clear that women played leadership roles within Paul’s churches”. However, when Paul writes to the Corinthians, he suggests that women should remain silent in the church (1Corinthians14:39). An instance such as this contributes to the ambiguity in modern interpretations of Paul’s position on women’s roles within his churches. “Paul’s differing attitudes relate to the occasional nature of his letters”. The study interrogates even (Genesis1:26ff) creation story and the gospels to see Jesus’ relationships towards women.

Rosemary Radford Reuther cited by Haskins, (2003;101) commented on the creation story mentioned above by maintaining that, the Structure of Christian Anthropology is ambiguous; expressing what today might be called a ‘case of projection. Of which her understanding is that God’s plan in creation was for both women and men to be equal and share responsibility for God’s creation. On her further reflection she argued that “Yet man views woman as a lower projection of himself, not of equal,” (Cheryl, 2003) as per God’s initial plan when He created them. Again, Cheryl in his article highlighted that already this is theological where man supremacy, is taking precedence, “Male projection of females as an incarnation of lower human nature though contrary to the Bible’s assertion that women are created in the image of God, has limited women’s ability to be recognized as equal members of the church.” (Cheryl 2003) This contributes to the male’s dominating church and community leadership positions and hence, “defines women as a lesser class of human being inevitably impacts their opinions as to whether women can be included in Holy Ministry, (Cheryl, and 2003:102) or decision-making.

Mkhwanazi (2015: 180-197) argues about what I call top dressing or glass ceiling type of incorporating women in the ordained ministry. Mkhwanazi points that: “the ministry of the ordination of women within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA) has not fully

integrated women, despite the landmark decision of the MCSA conference of 1972 to have ordained women into the full ministry of the Church” (Volume 41, 2015). MCSA like ELCZ on the issue of women in the ordained ministry’s full participation is a problem hence it is very difficult and hard for ordained women to be elected to the position of Bishops and president of the church. For instance, Mwaniki a women priest in the Anglican church in Kenya argues saying, “my other experience with Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK), which has motivated to write this book, is when I was denied an opportunity to become the first women bishop in ACK in my mother Diocese”, (Mwaniki, 2018: xii). These are mainline churches’ action of glass ceiling type of inclusivity leadership. Like other denominations as Mkhwananzi (2015) highlighted that “Methodist church adopted a Resolution to have women ordained into the ministry of the church, and yet this has not been fully realized in the life of the MCSA”. Mkhwananzi cites Rakoczy in her article who says: “Despite the fact that women form the majority of the people who come to church on Sunday, they form a very small group within minister’s ranks” (Volume 41, 2015). This is the little voice which is absent in high church decision-making boards and that is a struggle in most churches and communities in Zimbabwe if not the whole of Africa.

Mkhwananzi highlighted causes of some of the marginalization of women within the Methodist church such as the as patriarchal and cultural stereotype that are determining the reading and understanding of the biblical texts. “The basis for reflection and for the transformation of the MCSA and its policy on the ministry of the ordained women” Mkhwananzi(2015). This was suggested as the tool for addressing the problem. The other point raised by the writer is the rejection of ordained women ministers by their male counterparts, the African culture’s depreciating view of women and biblical texts that support such stereotypes lead to many women ministers leaving the church after ordination. This is because they do not see themselves receiving any recognition despite studying further. The issue of women in the ordained ministry being rejected and not accepted by the members

and community is borne of contention that contributed to this reach in the ELCZ.

In her book, *Gender, and imago Dei: A Post-colonial African Reading of 1 Corinthians 11:1-16* is another book to be reviewed for this study. Mwaniki (2018: xiii) introduced her book by pointing to her Anglican Church saying, “The gender-inclusive article iv in her church Anglican of Kenya constitution seems to suggest that the church supports gender equality in her governing structure”. She further commended the effort of empowering women and including them in the ordained ministry of the church. Mwaniki in her book shared her experience by saying, “As an ordained woman in this church has shown that women are still marginalized in various areas of the life of the church” (Mwaniki 2018: xiii). Yet again, regardless of her personal experience women clergy in the top leadership position of the church is still significantly minimal. Despite the equality proclaimed in the constitution of ACK, the church has not developed policies regarding cultural prejudices that confine women to their traditional place and status... Referred to 1 Corin 11:1-16 she pointed out that cultural biases against women have been reinforced among other factors by a selective reading of the Biblical texts and other post-Pauline texts traditionally attributed to Paul e.g. 1 Tim. 2:11-12, Eph.5:22-24. The Bible remains authoritative in the ACK as it is to other church communities such as ELCZ. These texts perpetuate the already existing gender-biased patriarchal attitude in the culture. The subordination status of women thus distorts the perception of Imago-Dei (image of God) in the female gender. With increasing intensity, African scholars are calling for gender equality as a justice question that says “How can church and by implication Christian communities in general re-read and re-appropriate biblical text to fulfill the mandate of gender equality? However, Mwaniki with her book brings it as a guiding instrument for African women emancipation for the hermeneutical reading of the Biblical texts which could positively expose God’ desire for gender equality and equity in creating men and women in His image. The book is very recent that it provides current challenges to the study of gender justice work. Hence the book is relevant for lecturers and students in



universities and theological institutions interested in gender and theology. Yet the question under this study is partially relevant to Mwaniki writings, still the issue of informing academia not only the tertiary audience but general learners including churches and communities inclusively is a gap that needs attention. The research under study tries to curb this exclusive requirement gap on gender justice work.

#### **2.4.7 African Women Theologian and Preferable Feminist Term**

As the writer is about concluding this chapter, she briefly highlights on the feminist theories as a way of authenticating the basis argument used in this study and preferred terms. Patriarchal societies have cultures to look down upon women by subjecting them to the roles of home chores, child bearing and regard them as minors and beneficiaries those who cannot produce by receive only. This is because of gendered socialization, resulted in women acceptance as per society expectation to them additionally the role of looking after the family. Mapura (2013), pointed that “the decision-making processes have been left to men”. The coming in of Feminist activities awakening women and started to voice for their rights in churches, workplaces, in politics and demanding space to be in decision making for as (Besson and Marti, 2006). However, with the rise of feminist groups in Britain that These feminists’ groups with time ended up demanded for gender equity, that resulting in the concept of gender equity gaining ground on the African continent (Mapura, 2013), that inform this study.

#### **2.4.8 Feminist Theories**

Feminist theory is an extension of Feminism is the leading movement feminist theory coming from that aims to comprehend the gender inequality landscape by analyzing women’s social roles and lived experience as well as female politics in various fields (Chodorow, 1991:5). Feminist theory aims to understand the nature of inequality and focuses on gender politics, power relations and sexuality in a democracy. Generally, the feminist theory provides a critique of social relation.

Feminist theories are varied and diverse and they All analyze women's experiences of gender subordination,

the roots of women's oppression, how gender inequality is perpetuated, and offer differing remedies for gender inequality (Jones and Budig, 2008).

Feminist has several theories that looking at women's experiences in their various contexts wherever they are. Some of these theories are: Liberal, Women of color Marxist and Socialist, Radical, Social movement theory and also Liberal theories to mention the few that will be also briefly expanded in this study.

Budig and Jones (2008) points to that feminist theories varied and diverse and they all analyze women's experiences of gender subordination, the roots of women's oppression, how gender inequality is perpetuated, and offer differing remedies for gender inequality. In the church and communities, the issue of inequality and injustices among men and women is even more pronounced where decision-making and power are vested in men and women are transferred to servility (Buechler, 2011:27). What Buechler alluded to is increasingly driven by pressure by from different feminist groups that continue demanding on women fully participation and recognition in different programs that affect their day today life. Gaventa (2004'4) argues that "development interventions are only effective if those at whom these interventions are directed and are involved in their planning, implementation and evaluation".

The western women theologians comfortably use the term feminist of which the term focuses on different history depending on their life experiences. There are liberal feminists such as Betty Friedan, Elizabeth Firenza just to mention the few who focus on equal opportunities for both women and men hence they call for lawmaking and church to address all the injustices that cause women's oppression, (Chisale 2019). The group advocates for their substantial value the interconnectedness of everything in the natural world as they are focusing on the independent deprivations Giddens and Griffiths (2006:470).

The write of this study thought will be not fair to leave out the theory of women of color who criticized feminist theories as they turn a blind eye to their experiences of coexisting oppressions. The theory is inclusive of Blacks multicultural and third world feminism groups. The women of color theory focuses are on integrates analyses of gender oppression with systems of inequality based on race, class and sexuality

(Jones and Budig 2008). The group is cross boundary since it advocates for “remedies that focus on the survival of the entire people rather than on solely women” (Mapura 2013, and Jones and Budig, 2008).

The Marxist and Socialist feminists’ theories origin gender imbalance in entrepreneurship. They argue financiers and individual men manipulate women's voluntary reproductive labor within the family. Women are also manipulated as a low-wage and disposable reserve army of labor. Marxist feminists claim patriarchy is produced by capitalism and will end with capitalism’s demise. Socialist feminists claim that patriarchy and capitalism are separate systems of oppression. They call for a transformation of relations within the family through a redistribution of responsibilities, and changes in access to education, healthcare, economic opportunities, and political power, (Jones and Budig, 2008).

Psychoanalytic feminism applies Freudian theories to gender inequality. It seeks to correct the male bias in psychoanalytic theory, producing theories that explore women's experiences with their emotions, bodies and sexuality. Theories argue early childhood experiences shape women's psyches and create differences between men and women. They argue the phallus, a symbol of male power, dominates Western culture. Solutions call for an androgynous society, possibly created through dual parenting.

On the other hand, there is also another group known as radical feminist such as the figure of Mary Daly (1978) very radical, who is very exclusive and is for pure women emancipation. She argued that throughout history patriarchy has sought to oppress women therefore was against patriarchy system per se. Radical feminism claims women's oppression originates in sexuality. They argue women's bodies are controlled through violence, objectification, and social institutions such as medicine and religion. Radical feminists see sexism as the oldest and most pervasive form of oppression; they argue that the eradication of patriarchy and compulsory heterosexuality are key to ending gender oppression, (Jones and Budig, 2008). In continuing reflect on feminist theories they have criticized the liberals, accuse them of having effectively barred women and others from direct participation in civil society activities and operations. This backs feminist theory with the Social Movement theory (Price-Chalita, 2009). Then Social Movement theory seeks to clarify why social

conscriptio arises in the way it avails.

Chisale (2017:25) reiterates that, the weakness of radical feminists is that at extreme level they do not want to be associated with men, they believe men are the enemies who control women's reproductive roles thereby causing women's oppression and suffering: hence radical feminists treat women as universally oppressed and passive. An advocate of radical feminist argues that men are enemy, and marriage is an system that does not empower women. Within this paradigm marriage is portrayed as a trap to protect patriarchy.

As a result of the above thinking of radical feminists, the writer of this study chooses to not employ the term feminism instead will use Womanism or womanist when referring to women theologians and those fighting for the emancipation of women such as Mercy Amba Oduyoye, Isabel Phiri, Musa Dube, just to mention the few and those already mentioned above such as Elizabeth Fiorenza and others. Hence the writer of this study used 'African feminists' and 'African women' continuously because some African women such as Emecheta (1975, 1988 and Oduyoye 1985) and many African women who subscribe to feminist idea prefer to be called African women rather than feminists because they do not want to be associated with some of the strong radical ideas of feminism, (Chisale 2017). The feminist term clearly refused by Emecheta in her conference speech quoted in Mikell 1997:335 saying, I have never called myself a feminist, now if you choose to call me a feminist that is your business: but I don't subscribe to the feminist idea that says all men are brutal and repressive and we must reject them. Some of these men are my brothers and fathers and sons. Am I to reject them? (Chisale, 2017). The argument as per some African women theologians such as Kasomp and Maseno quoted by Chisale (2017) distanced themselves and others in women's circles said the term is stigmatized. Hinga (2002: 79-86) argues that each group of feminist theologian respond as per their context since (there is no such thing as a generic women's experience to which a generic feminist theology would respond as its subject matter". Hence some argued that "sexism is not an issue in Africa and added that men and women are aware of their place. That means the argument left the writer of this study of using the term African Women Theologian or Womanist.

## **2.5 Conclusion**

In the church and society leadership positions in Africa show that there are still gaps which need to be attended to. The gender roles differences are making African women not to be recognized in high leadership positions in institutions: church and society. In church from the various discussions above it was clearly highlighted that women are not allowed /accepted to contribute to high decision making /meeting in religious and societal rituals, because they are considered to be weak people and of low spirit to perform those duties. Hence, they are below men's governance, this was emphasized by early church leaders as per some views are given in this chapter. The need for pastoral Care and Counselling to the caregiver to be specific was also discussed in this chapter as a way of empowering and building female pastors resilient to confidently do their work.

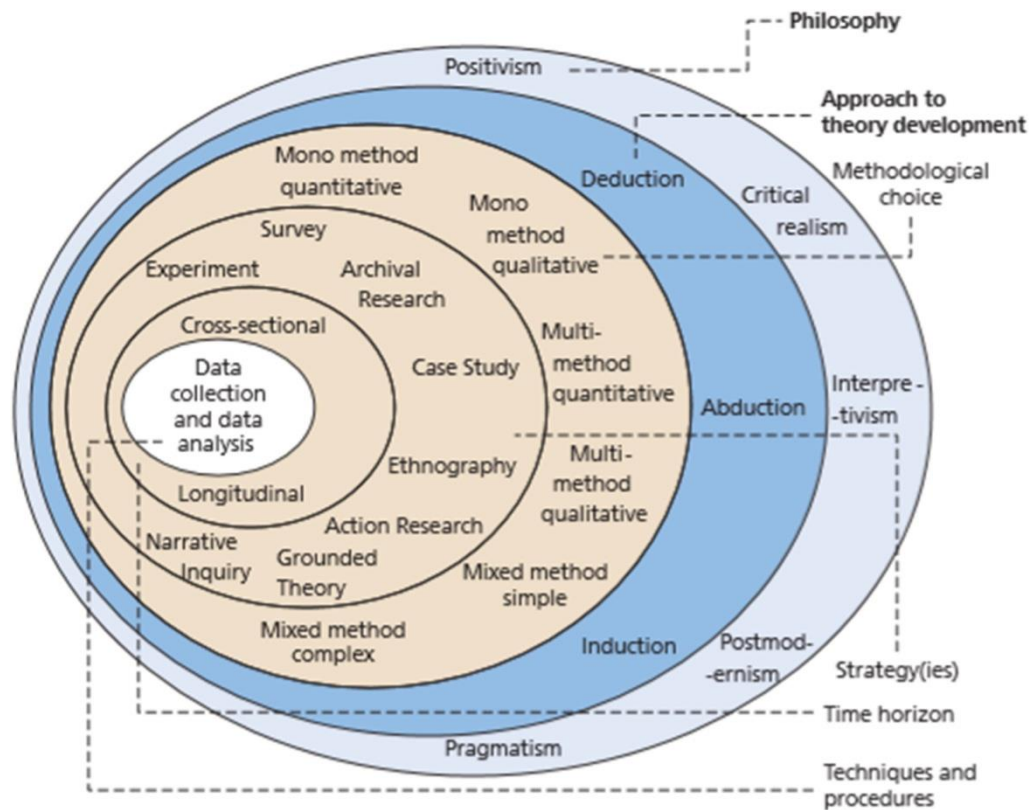
Yet again from the discussion of the Womanists and African women theologians such as Elizabeth Fiorenza and Mercy Oduyoye, it shows that the discrimination and oppression that African women are experiencing within the church results not only from the teachings, preaching and interpretation of the Bible but also from African tradition and cultural practices of which some of these are harmful and infringe female rights. As a result of these, the writers suggest the "discipleship of equals" by Florence and "Partnership of both men and women" by Oduyoye they all argued for sharing space in the leadership position for both men and women. The discussion about feminist theories remind the reader the write is aware of these and why she did talk every time referring to the term feminist. The following chapter 3 is where the writer discusses the methodology and its design including all processes of selecting fieldwork participants and data collection and any other work relevant to the work of this chapter.

## **CHAPTER THREE:**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

The previous chapter was engaging about the literature review for this study and also gave more attention to the theoretical framework by two writers African women theologian and womanist Mercy Oduyoye “Partnership between women and men” and Elizabeth Fiorenza “Discipleship of Equals”. The gender inequality among ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe as a pastoral paradigm on women oppression is the main reason why this study was carried out. To undertake this endeavor, an appropriate methodology to drive and direct the study has been created. Hence, research methodology chapter presented the research paradigm that underpins this study. Likewise, the chapter discusses the research population, sampling techniques and sample size. Furthermore, the chapter discusses the procedures for data collection, the justification for using them and the approach to data analysis. It further covers the reliability, validity and triangulation of the results, ethical issues and the limitations of the study. Saunders et al (2019) noted that the research follows special order that is in an onion opinioned step. This chapter is here to explain the combinations from philosophical, approach, methodological choice, strategies, time horizon; techniques and procedures as shown by fig 3.1.



Source: Saunders et al (2019)

The research onion suggests that strategies can include action research, experimental research, interviews, surveys, case study research or a systematic literature review. The strategy is chosen based on the data required for the research and the purpose of the study (Saunders et al., 2019). The methodology and design discussed in this chapter is answered the mentioned research questions. The application of the methods should be in tandem with the expectations of the said questions listed below.

1. To trace historical development of gender issues in ELCZ from 1987 to 2019.
2. To investigate gender functions and roles of women in the ELCZ today.
3. To explore what the ELCZ is doing in promoting gender justice and equality.
4. To develop a contextual gender justice pastoral care and therapy model for inclusion, which would develop and be implemented to deal with the exclusion

and domination of women?

### **3.1 Ontology and epistemology**

Creswell (2009:74) noted that paradigms are basic belief systems which are generally based on ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions. For Saunders (2015) he prefers ontology and epistemology as major techniques of thinking about research philosophy. Cohen et al (2011) emphasizes the uniqueness of social realities. For them these are constructed and interpreted differently by different people. The major assumptions considered in viewing social realities are based on ontology and epistemology. Cohen et al (2011) further argues social realities are also affected by covert and overt assumptions. The study deals with gender issues which are part and parcel of human behaviour and feelings created as part of social realities of a community. Hence, the issue of a philosophy that helps to reach out to the bottom of that intrinsic behaviour is of paramount.

#### **3.1.1 The Ontological assumptions**

Kim (2010:5) defines ontology as a set of beliefs about what exists or what is real. While Saunders defines ontology as a philosophical approach worried with the kind of reality. Ontology carries both objectivism and subjectivism. Ontology<sup>2</sup> is concerned with the phenomena in its state as defined by the social world. Ontology asks for the nature and essence carried by the investigated element. The study interrogated whether the social reality in this case gender inequality is an outward, self-regulating, and factually for the individual. Ontological is exclusion of female pastors in senior positions in ELCZ based on deliberate constructed social beliefs. The philosophy has the capacity to help to give answers on whether exclusion of female pastors is a subjective experience created from human thinking in church (Sikes, 2004).

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<sup>2</sup>In philosophy, ontology refers to the part of metaphysics that deals with thinking about the nature of things as they are.



The view of an external and objective design carries the realistic ontology assumption that is influenced by outside dimensions of the society. Ontological philosophy is also socially created and the understanding to the subject regarded a 'nominalist' assumption (Cohen et al. 2011). This study adopted a nominalist assumption of the ontology. This study is aimed to gain understanding of gender inequality that has caused female pastors in ELCZ not to gain opportunities to occupy senior positions in the church thirty (30) years after the first ordination of female Lutheran pastors was done. The assumption is that the societal realism is a product of the human thinking and consciousness. Hence, methodology pursued an interpretive and the constructivist method. Constructivist is worried with how individuals look at creation and develop hypothesis of it through the attained awareness. The current study is strengthened by the postulation that shared reality concerning gender inequality in ELCZ is communal constructed and led by various realities amongst people that are based on their own thinking more than what the bible says. Saunders et al (2019:110) concluded that, ontology helped us to understand the resistance like of allowing female pastors to occupy senior positions in church as a common happening whenever organisational change takes place. Ontology seeks to address the benefits and problematic aspects of change in an organization. While Thomas and Hardy (2011:23) asserts that ontological assumptions direct the discussion on how resistance to transformation can best be appreciated to benefit organizations, as opposed to ways to eradicate resistance. Remenyi *et al.* (1998:35) stresses that there is need to find out the specifics and understand fully the truth or perhaps a reality.

### **3.1.2 Epistemological assumptions**

The second assumption that the study used is epistemology. Epistemology assumption is all about how one communicates the acquired knowledge to those around him (Saunders et al, 2019; 111; Burrell and Morgan 2016:46). In this regard how do people in church communicate their knowledge about gender inequalities, how do they communicate inclusion and exclusion of female pastors from

senior positions in ELCZ. The term epistemology is derived from two Greek terms episteme and logos that refers to knowledge and speech respectively. The philosophy looks at the scope and nature and limitations carried out in a group of knowledge. Epistemology goes much deeper analyzed how society or individuals get to know what they know. The assumption is that the way how knowledge is delivered to someone determines their behaviour or reaction towards someone. It is what we know and how we know that determines our behaviour action and assumption of certain phenomenon in our midst.

The researcher looked at this perhaps as the basis of female pastors' exclusion from senior posts of the church, because of what people know and how they got to know that. Furthermore, epistemology evaluates connection between the investigator and what is being investigated. In this study the researcher is a female pastor in ELCZ, what is it that she knows and how she knows that is the question of the study. Research is a procedure that originates with having motives to enquire on something, and then set out to acquire the much-needed answers. That is precise, what led the writer of this study to research on female exclusion from senior leadership positions in ELCZ.

Constructionist views all knowledge, significance, and genuineness as a dependent upon those human practices is constructed and interacts within their realm and communicated in their social context. This study viewed that knowledge and meaning about gender inequality in ELCZ was external created and do not represent the individual discovered discourses and thinking. The epistemology argues that female pastors' exclusion from senior positions in the church is a created behaviour. Participants in this study constructed meanings about the phenomena understudy. The result of constructed knowledge is that female pastors are excluded from senior positions and the church appears not to be concerned about it. Therefore, the main objective was helped to conclude whether or not participants approved the phenomenon through multiple clarifications. In this study knowledge was understood using the parameters created by Oduyoye's theory on "partnership of

both women and men” and Fiorenza Concept of “Discipleship of Equals”. In that regard the methodology set in motion that created knowledge was what driven inequality, poor gender parity and exclusion of female pastors in ELCZ.

### **3.1.3 Interpretivism**

The understandings of subjective meanings of participants were based on the interpretive paradigm. Interpretive claims that people are different from other created beings as they have the ability to create meanings out of everything they get in conduct with (Saunders et al, 2019). Interpretivists therefore study these meanings. Hence, Interpretivists subscribe to “reality” as something that can be shaped by researcher and the research participants. This is achieved through the process of their interaction (Wahyuni, 2012; Mack, 2010; Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). This study as indicated in the epistemology the researcher is a female pastor in ELCZ, she has that understanding and ability to build reality together with the participants. Interpretivism does not believe in objectivity but in subjectivity because the researcher acquired data from research participants through the process of interviews. Saunders et al (2019:149) asserts that

*“...As different people of different cultural backgrounds, under different circumstances and at different times make different meanings, and so create and experience different social realities, interpretivists are critical of the positivist attempts to discover definite, universal ‘laws’ that apply to everybody. Rather they believe that rich insights into humanity are lost if such complexity is reduced entirely to a series of law-like generalizations”.*

The Interpretivism paradigm is associated with qualitative method and hence interviews will be carried out with the pastors, deans, bishops, and community leaders. Mack (2010) argues that researchers that believe in interpretivism paradigm depend on understanding, discovering, and providing clarifications on “social reality” by working as a team in other words the researcher is

going to work hand in glove with the participants to produce the social reality. Ontologically, Interpretivist does not believe to the dogma of generalizing conclusions. There are other special dynamics of this study that cannot be generalized hence the need to have an in-depth understanding of the social realities found in the church.

The interpretivist paradigm was chosen for several reasons one of it is its ability that was employed phenomenological approach in data collection. Interpretive researchers in collecting data it collected what was important to the investigated members. Different constituents of interpretive place a little different weight as has been done to phenomenologists, who study existence, concentrates on participants' experience; that were, the participants' reminiscences and explanations of those experiences.

Phenomenology means the study of occurrences yet again, phenomena were anticipated could happen, circumstances, involvements, or theories. Thus, the understudied phenomena researched situations and experiences of female pastors' exclusion in church's senior leadership position. Creek et. al., (2008:43) add that the chief purpose of a research design is to produce the best data that is adequate to the study. The phenomenological process a qualitative approach that assumed reality as generally created by individual. Phenomenological research did not necessarily provide a definitive explanation; but raised awareness and increased insights about the phenomena", (Creek et al 2008:44). In this study the insight is about female pastors' exclusion from senior leadership post in the church. Grbich, (2007:84) defined the phenomenology as an approach that attempts to:

*...Understand the hidden meanings and the essence of experience together with how participants make sense of these. Essences are objects that do not necessarily exist in time and space like facts do but can be known through essential or imaginative intuition involving interaction between researcher and respondents or between*

*researcher and texts.*

The phenomenology approach of research has been able to open immense possibilities for the majority of the researcher as described below in this section. Using phenomenology approach in the sense of bracketing biases avoided possibilities of misinterpreting and prejudices the phenomena. The phenomenology approach in this empirical research guided this researcher to produce novelty staff. As:

*It did not primarily concern with explaining the causes of things but tried, instead, described how things are experienced firsthand by those involved. The phenomenological investigations of something like „homelessness, for instance, would focus on the experience of being homeless. It tries to understand homelessness from those who are themselves homeless and tries to describe how they see things, how they understand the situation, how they interpret events, (Denscombe1998:118).*

The research as has already been mentioned in the introductory part that the study focuses on the exclusion of women in high decision-making leadership positions in the church (ELCZ). Applied the phenomenological approach, the researcher was ultimately connected with the phenomenon being researched. Thus, the approach is experiential and qualitative. The researcher might have preconceived information about the subject; it will be an opportunity to verify whether her knowledge or experience of women exclusion corresponds with what is on the ground. This confirmed by notwithstanding, Cox, (1995:28), states that the researcher should be mindful from the beginning that “epoche” can occur only within bounds because the observer plays an active role in phenomenological descriptions. The problems which might have across in the process of researching are that although the observer tries to suspend all prior judgments, this may be unbearable since each

researcher brought with his/her cultural, understandings that were in part hidden to his/her mind.

Qualitative researchers are worried about the meaning attached by people on issues around them. The idea is to understand people as from their frames of reference. This is what qualitative research is all about to understand phenomena from its environment (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Qualitative researchers sympathize and identify with the people they study in order to understand how those people see things. A method that aids in this is “bracketing” the assumptions of everyday life. This does not involve denying the existence of the world or even doubting it. Bracketing the researcher’s attitude toward the world and allowing the opening of a clearer vision needs someone who set aside pre-conceptions and pre-suppositions. Thus, what the researcher already knows about the ELCZ female pastors and their treatment when it comes to leadership posts.

### **3.2 Research approaches**

Researchers choose one of these three research approaches namely quantitative research, qualitative research, and mixed research. The option to use one of the three approaches is dependent on the problem statement of the study. In that regard the study adopted qualitative study approach. Therefore, this study would use qualitative study which has its origins in social science and is anxious with understanding why someone acts in a certain way. The research is all about female pastors’ exclusion and the researcher would want to know why church is excluding others, given the fact that, its gospel is all about equality of people in church. The historical links of qualitative research was critical to this study as its special capacity (Warren & Karner, 2010:2). Besides, it has a variety of purposes that range from the wish to change some aspects of society. Denzin and Lincoln (1994:2) states that qualitative,

*...study things in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of, interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Qualitative research involves the studied*

*use and collection of a variety of empirical materials such as case studies, personal experience, introspective, life story, interview, observation...that describe...moments and meanings in individuals' lives. Accordingly, qualitative research deploys a wide range of interconnected methods (Denzin, & Lincoln, 1994:2).*

The reason why the study chose qualitative research approach was because of its goal that not measured but comprehended and examined the understandings of the contributors of this research. It aimed to discover and open the unseen meanings that people employed in created meaning to their experience. Its parting plug researched the real people in mind, (Mushoriwa, 2009). In qualitative research, participants recognized as co-researchers, and this was very significant since it helped with the ethical consideration. With qualitative research participants owned not only the project but also research results as they would be used to develop the researched community or church as per this study. This, therefore, would call for the informed consent with participants and they did this voluntarily and would be free to withdrawn if one thought otherwise fortunately no one withdrawn. Qualitative research approach helped the study to reach the inner core of the feelings and sentiments of female pastors. Hence, this would provoke some feelings for participants to share their views about the subject of women exclusion in senior leadership. Their response served to resolve and give answer to the key researched problem.

### **3.3 Research design**

This study adopted the case study as the research design. A research design connected the empirical data to research questions and its conclusions (Yin; 2003). This is the reason why Cooper and Schindler (2010) views research design as a master plan. It a framework that helped to outline the methods and procedures that were used for data collection and analyses of the same data. In other words, research design served as guide book to the study. In support Kothari (2004) views research

design was an instrument figured out how the data was collected, managed, and analyzed in order to produce the desired results. Consequently, in this study the case study worked as the detailed plan of how the study was done.

A good case study does not only forestall and stipulated the apparently innumerable decisions associated with developing and carried out data. The collected, processed and analyzed of data was what the case study as the research design of this study worked out for the best decisions taken as conclusions to the study (Yin 2003). Research design was the logic behind the links to data and conclusions of a study. While on the other hand, Amin (2005) notes that the research design is the key factor on the reason why research was done. A good research design is one which gives the researcher confidence in the solidity of the conclusions drawn from the data. As said above the study chose to use case study as the leading research design.

### **3.3.1 Case Study**

This study adopted a case study research design<sup>3</sup>. Saunders et al. (2009) and Robson, (2002) pointed out that a case study is good in investigating contemporary phenomena that society seek to have answers on unbecoming behaviors. Yin (2003) emphasized the importance of context just like Saunders et al (2009) and Robson, (2002) agrees by also using the term life context. Accordingly,

<sup>2</sup>Case study helped to give some sense of boundaries of the context and phenomenon being studied which in most cases not clearly demarcated. The adopted case study approach enabled the study to

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<sup>2</sup> <sup>3</sup>Case study used to this research was for the one of ELCZ pioneer female clergy who faced extreme challenges at her first deployment after ordination. She was refused to enter parish center premises by the parish council members. The pastor, her children and property spent three days stayed and slept at the open and that period the weather was drizzling. The truck used transported her was a hired one it dropped the load and left. The situation was rescued by now retired Bishop J S Moyo by then he was a Church Christian educationalist. And helped by one community family who felt for the children and offered them space to put up on the third day. The then Christian educationalist called the ELCZ to come and handled this problem, The whole drama was organised by other male leaders who were against female ordination.



gain rich understanding of the church politics around female pastors on senior leadership positions. Furthermore, the study asked questions such ‘why’ female pastors are being excluded, and the ‘what’ and ‘how’ questions. What caused female pastors to be excluded, how were female pastors excluded? For these reasons the case study strategy was found to be the best design for this study. Case study allows data collection techniques that can be used in combination, this study used interviews, observation, documentary analysis and semi-structured questionnaire to collect data. Consequently, case study allowed the use of triangulation as multiple sources of data. Triangulation helped to answer and probe further silent positions which were not identified by the other strategy. In other words, the strategies used for data collection complemented each other on their weaknesses and strength.

### **3.3 Research Population**

A population is the aggregated collection of elements that one needs to study and create some inferences. Bhattacharjee’s (2012) definition of population as based on what one needs to study, characteristics of elements to be considered in the population list. In this study population defined as the clergy of ELCZ these are 10 female pastors and criteria used for selection was as per their seniority, field experiences. The study chose 6 Male pastors as per variety of their age and years of ordination. The reason was to get wider views on the discussed subject. Additionally, 6 Bishops 3 in active service and 3 retired, 6 Deans (2 females) 3 in active service and 3 retired this was done in order to get wider range of leadership experiences for the management and episcopal views of the subject under study. One Bishop responded to structured questions was the one who was in active service as the head Bishop of the ELCZ during inception of Women ordination. The ELCZ exists in the community where there is also leadership of which some of these community leaders are its

members. Therefore, the writer just selected three community leaders that include a Member of Parliament, Ward Councilor, and traditional leader (3) to add their voices on the subject since clergy pastoral care extended to surrounding communities. Member of Parliament as public figure and influential figure in the researched community must contribute to the study; this is the same scenario with the Ward Councilor. In order to amplify the voice of women among majority male, the researcher selected 8 other female pastors to participate in the focus group discussion on the same researched subject. The total research participants were 39. Whereas the sample frame for this study has 123 individuals. It was amongst this sample frame that some were selected to participate using the purposively sampling method.

### **3.4 Sample Size**

The ELCZ has three dioceses lead by a bishop each and two deans per diocese. Interviews were done in the three Dioceses, meaning that 12 participants per Diocese except for the central Diocese where the 3 community leaders were added since that is the place where the research case study scenario happened. Thus, the total interview informants were 39. From the beginning the researcher had rough idea who and how many people were to be participated in the study. Taylor et al, (2014:108) explains; “How many interviews subjects do I need? The answer is simply “interview as many subject necessary to find what you need to know”.

Taylor et al (2014: 108) suggests that the sample size in qualitative research should be determined towards the last part of the research and not at the beginning. Theoretical sampling framework employed as a monitor for selected people for interviews (Taylor et al, 2014). The theoretical sampling considered unimportant the number of cases studied. What was noteworthy was the potentiality of each case helped the researcher developed theoretical insights into the area of social life under study. The study in addition employed snowballing as the study had only identified the

total population and the sample size that determined by the research interviews. After interviewing 39 informants the study felt it has reached the saturation point. At saturation point additional interviews yielded no genuine new insights, it was now repetition hence the study stopped the interviews. The informants were selected using purposive sampling methods. Pre-determined criterion was that someone must have been an ordained minister in the church, is a female pastor who was subjected to abuse, the proximity to some known cases such as Chambwira case and where one was involved in the debate of women ordination in ELCZ. Yet again, the selection criterion was determined by one's leadership position in the researched church or community. Purposive sampling method was a non-probability method hence the sample size was determined by data saturation more than numbers of participants. The qualitative research favors the non-probability sampling whereby generation of representative sample is not the most important thing as what it is in quantitative research (Cooper & Schlindler, 2014). Adding on the above selection criteria the study settled for purposive sampling method out of other sampling methods such snowball, judgmental and convenience that are for non-probability. The researcher selected participants subjectively for their exceptional features and experiences. Such features and unique varied from being church leaders who are Bishops, Pastors, laity, and community leaders. For church leadership participants were selected based on their period in the service such as 10 years and above of leadership inclusive of the current leaders such as bishops and deans and laity. The clergy group were purposively selected either based on sex and period when one was ordained especially for female pastors as the researcher wanted to be inclusive in terms of year of ordination. While in probability sampling traditionally, involve large sample size to create confidence in data collected, the non-probability depends on data saturation that meets the objectives and problem of the study. This study used the saturation of data to determine its sample size.

### **3.5 Sampling Procedure**

Durrein and Painters (2006:49), define sampling as a process of picking participants from an entire population. The selection involved decisions on who and why participated, what were the settings, which events, what behaviors observed for one to solicit for data, since the study adopted qualitative research methods. Sampling in this study, refers to representatives of certain groups of people whom investigation focused and targeted to drawn conclusion on. The writer of this study selected the contributors depending on the observant determination of the study problem. Sampling picked haphazardly or non-randomly, precisely the sampling suitably haphazardly and purposively chosen (Durren, 2006:50). Hennink et. al, (1973:48) regardless of being old information the writer's point still valued for today researchers, he pointed out that, "participant in qualitative research is chosen because they have particular characteristics or experiences that can contribute to a greater understanding of the phenomenon studied. Identifying people with specific characteristics or experiences require a non-random approach to participants' recruitment".

Number of participants was determined by the nature of the investigated area. Again, it was also determined by researcher's access to a bigger number of participants and research resources. Number of participants is determined by the nature of the investigated area. Yet again, it was also determined by researcher's access to a bigger number of participants and research resources. Participants were selected focused on that the projected goal and objectives of the research area are explored. The clergy, community leadership category is made up of male and female; hence the researcher was very gender sensitive. Yet again, the contributions of women in dealing with community problems are imperative. Hence, for a long time women voices on such crucial contributions were deprived heard.

The researcher was aware of the differences between research interviews and pastoral care in these situations. The research tried to retain the interview stance and recommended to the participant that

more formal pastoral care is available. This has been done in avoidance of mixing up of issues and ending up collected irrelevant data. The pastoral caregiver would also be conscious of the need to refer persons who become too difficult for the caregiver to handle.

### **3.6 Data Collection Techniques**

The study used the following techniques for data collection; these were selected to fulfill the qualitative research approach.

#### **3.6.1 Interviews**

Saunders et al (2009) defines interview as a focused dialogue or conversation between people. An interview is a tête-à-tête between people with a definite reason to obtain some critical information from someone (Cohen and Manion 2000:30). The discussion was based on a clear purpose which led by the objectives and questions of the research. This study carried out interviews based on four objectives of this study which helped created necessary questions. While Sathya (2015) looks at interview in terms of a process linked to primary data collection Saunders et al (2009) believes it is purpose based. Sathya (2015) argues that interviews are a methodical gathering of primary facts through open ended questions. The researcher meticulously listened to and record down the replies given by the candidate. Through interviews the phenomena allowed to express itself fully as follow up questions be proffered in situations where adequate or more understanding sorted for. These Interviews allowed one to draw a list of questions, but the researcher has laxity on sequencing questions. The laxity will be used on open ended and semi-structures interviews. The semi-structured questions were used for following up interviews where questions easily modified as per the flow of the conversation and for focus group. One major advantage of focus group interviews they provided meaning to non-verbal responses.

### **3.6.2 In-depth interviews**

According to Saunders et al (2009; 2019) in-depth interviews can be called unstructured interviews. Qualitative interviews are done using unstructured interviews that are characterized by an non standardized and semi-structured questionnaire. An in-depth interview is a technique that involves conducting intensive interviews with individuals and small focus groups. These helped the respondents to deepen their response beyond limits on the perspective of a particular situation (Stephens, 2009:19). In this study the researcher used this method in interviewing key informants who were included the first group of female pastors who experienced denial to access to parish premise and locked outside for three days and faced opposition from members of the church in different parishes. The whole drama was pre-arranged by male evangelist and some church leadership as they mobilized Christians to refuse entrance to the pastor because she was a female. This happened in 1990. Secondly, the approach was also used to interview the individual senior church leaders who ushered in female ordination process; this group included a retired bishop and three retired deans. Unstructured interviews are associated with the absence of a predetermined list of questions to work through during the dialoguing with a participant. These as mentioned above on interview preprocess semi-structured and unstructured are used to solicit data by researcher tried to clear dark corners of questions and simplified them for better under-stable by informants.

The interviewee is provided with the laxity to reflect on issues unreservedly. This is usually called the non-directive interaction between peoples. Hence, the key informants were given freelance to walk the interviewer through the steps, pains, joys and sorrows of the journey that the female pastors went through. This type of interview is usually called an informant interview since it is the interviewee's perceptions that guide the conduct of the interview (Taylor et al 2014).

As the study collected data through interviews, the researcher considered what Mouton (2001:89)

says that “if the interviewer is employed by a highly influential organisation that is known for the equality of its research, it is likely that respondents will be more highly motivated to answer questions seriously and authentically.” In this regard, the researcher concurs with Mouton’s view, but in this case, the study same as the community benefit from the results since the result will help to improve women situation in the church. This was explained to them before the research engagement so that if there is need to ask questions for clarification even during or after the data collection process are open to doing so.

### **3.6.3 Semi-structured interviews**

In semi-structured interviews the researcher created questionnaire based on research questions. The questionnaire has a list of themes and questions to be covered. The questionnaire had a place to fill in the ideas from the interviews. As the respondent was giving her/his ideas the interviewer would write on the questionnaire. In semi-structured interviews the researcher can decide to omit some questions depending on the context. In this regard the question that was asking about the Chabwira parish experience was selectively asked, basing on the proximity of the person to the incident during the time it took place. This was used to interview the pastors, other deans and bishops and community leaders. The approach has some advantages since it allowed the researcher to provide some additional questions as was deemed necessary by the flow of the dialogue. Questions of this study were organised in a way which is “social desirability” where-by respondents tried to give answers that make themselves appear well-adjusted, unprejudiced, rational, open-minded, and democratic, (Mouton,2001:90). So finally, how many people did you interview?

### **3.6.4 Challenges for interviews**

A number of scheduled meetings or appointments flopped since most selected research informants had busy office schedules such as pastors, deans and bishops are always eventful with church duties.

The same issue with the community leaders, hence some as PM and councilor are politicians, they do not stay at one place. To mitigate this challenge the researcher sent structured questions via emails; and did follow ups through WhatsApp and zoom to be specific. The mitigated strategy used has advantages of being accurate, record data and make follow ups.

### **3.6.5 Observation**

This study also chose to use observation as a way for collecting data. The study used participant observation method, the observation was used before interviews were done and in some instances was used simultaneously with interviews. Participant observations was used to get data, ideas and meanings as the researcher observed and participated in church elections for the dean and bishop for all Dioceses. Since participant observation can affect people's usual order of activities and routines, the researcher had to adopt an unobtrusive character and avoid interfering with participants' everyday activities. Due to interrogation, qualitative observation has the capacity to threaten other people's privacy and confidentiality, so the researcher had to take all necessary steps to mitigate the risk by creating a welcoming social interface, and allowed participants to be at ease through achieving feeling of acceptance

### **3.6.6 Focus Group**

A focus group is a group of people for an interview for research and usually they range from 6 to 10 participants and for this research participants were 8 all-female. Taylor et al (2014) suggests that focus groups should sit for 90 minutes to 180 minutes. The facilitator of this focus group used group dynamics philosophies in guiding the discussion of the session and it took 120 minutes. This was due to the time limits for the scheduled zoom meeting. The idea is to increase exchanged thoughts, feelings, and experiences on researched subject topic. In this regard the researcher managed to have a group of 8 female pastors into a whatsapp focus group. The 8 female pastors were additional from



the first group participating on the Semi-structured questionnaires these were added to increase voices of researched group. Questions for the senior leadership (Bishops and Deans) were different from other clergy. The focus group was put together to explore how and why Church people make decisions that clearly exclude female pastors from other senior leadership posts. A key character of FG discussions is that participants must be of the same sex although different backgrounds and experiences this is the reason why the researcher used female pastors' group only to avoid unnecessarily debates. However, the idea is for the focus group to reveal the range of issues rather than consensus although disagreement amongst group members solicited more data for the study.

### **3.6.7 Challenges of focus groups**

One danger of group discussions is that it can lead to insincere agreement in which some members leave everything to the outspoken members of the group. To manage this the researcher asked each member at most to contribute at least once at a time until if the moderator saw it fit to ask for more contributions after all members had contributed.

### **3.7 Data analysis and presentation**

Data analysis and presentation are critical part of every study. The idea of data analysis is to model available data to determine useful and non-useful information for drawing conclusions (Babbie and Mouton, 2004:421). The process of data analysis calls for a Systematic and applications of rightful tools that analysed and presented the data. This was done through used of statically and logical techniques to give meanings to the collected data. Data analysis, included breaking up the data into controllable themes, patterns, trends and relationship.

The action helped to understand and organize collected data into various commonalities of concepts. The in-depth nature of interviewing also suggested certain lines of interpretation hoping that several participants that responded were not just for the cause of women exclusion and experiences of

exclusion but responded to the view of changed praxis of Christians in this context and the possible development of an inclusive model. The type of questions was as non-threatening as possible that caused respondents to be reluctant to answer. (Mouton,2002), says, “It has been possibly empirical to demonstrate that the more interesting the respondent finds the topic the more highly motivated for them to respond”. Thus, the topic is an encouraging one and was tried to found ways on how inclusive process can be developed. Hence, it is the researcher who necessitates the cross-examined experience and tasks adequately expressed, adequately rewarded and adequately pleasant achieved and maintained the necessary respondent motivation (Mouton, 2002).

### **3.8 Triangulation research**

The concept of triangulation of data collection help store move biases on the side of the researcher (Babbie and Mouton, 2004:275). The point raised by Babbie, and Mouton is vital even for this study; hence the same understanding that is implied by the researcher. Tried and got comprehensive information of what is experienced by women in these institutions; triangulation methodology of data collection was employed. This was by checking whether information given on the questionnaire was supported by the information given through in-depth interviews or disproven. To achieve the mentioned methodology, which is triangulation, the researcher interviewed 39 informants were contacted including one focus group of 8 female pastors as per information discussed above.

The purpose of the triangulation as per this study was to engage different ways that increased data collected. The researcher used an inclusive approach to the clergy group, MP and other participants with access to internet facilities. They received their questionnaires through e-mails. This was done for records keeping and for easy tracking them including keeping dates of when were they sent and to who. It also shows the mail received and those not read.

### **3.9 Data dependability**

Reliability of data for this study was a problem since most of the participants who were involved; the majority of them was public figures the likes of Bishops, Deans, laity and community leadership and is learned ones. Therefore, dependability of data is promising. Henceforth, “Respondent tends to be hesitant to volunteer information on sensitive problems (Mouton J.2001). The relevant people to be affected by the above statement are ordinary Christians and community members as they would fear for stigmatization but at this exercise they were not involved in this study. Hence, informants were from clergy and 3 laity who were also public figures. Their fears were also mitigated as the study used anonymity approach to reduce the unwillingness of participants to provide critical or sensitive information. Besides, rather than a face-to-face interview, the researcher used postal questionnaires or telephonic for some clarifications.

### **3.10 Ethical consideration**

The researcher respected Pseudonyms for the Clergy and Community leaders’ participants who chose to be anonymously that they propose for their obscurity. Some participants would want to choose their pseudonyms so that when they read the report, they will be able to identify them (Litoselliti, 2003:52). That would be taken into consideration in this study. King, and Horrocks, (2010:12), pointed out that, in qualitative research, interviews are often but by no means always, a face-to-face verbal interchange where the researcher attempts to obtain information or expressions of opinion from a certain person or group of people.

#### **3.11.1 Limitation**

There are also some limitations to be recognised in the above ethical considerations research design, in the long run, participants using pseudonyms that would be difficult to locate their contributions in this study. The other weakness could be of getting unauthentic data due to the close relationship of

the researcher and participants. There would be biases in answering questions in favour of the researcher. Therefore, to mitigate the above limitation participants have the right to insist that their names will not be recorded anywhere and that no one, apart from the researcher and identified members of the research team, will know about their answers they will be given a code number or a pseudonym and will be referred to in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings. No person will know the purpose of the code except the researcher and the participant. Some interviews were done virtual, and participants received questionnaires and completed alone so the informants will be free and independent. Data will be reviewed and confirmed as a way of mitigating above limitations.

### **3.12 Conclusion**

The above-discussed research methodology and research design that described, approaches and steps that would be taken for this study are meant to guide the process of collecting data and information that would lead to a relevant conclusion. The under-discussed methodology and design specified areas of research, which are the research participants and how they were selected. The phenomenological process as an approach was chosen for this study as it built on a qualitative approach which assumes that reality is generally constructed through individual or combined definitions of the situation. Therefore, all steps involved in this research design explained what is involved on the process such as, data techniques, data analysis, and data dependability. Moving forward to the next chapter, which is chapter four, the writer presenting the empirical data collected through various steps discussed in the just concluded chapter.

## **CHAPTER FOUR:**

### **DATA PRESENTATION**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

The previous chapter described the research methodology adopted in this study. The current chapter provides the empirical report on data gathered from ELCZ pastors and community leaders. It further highlights some of the major findings. This chapter further explores the issues of gender inequality among ministers in the ELCZ with a pastoral paradigm on women oppression that has seen females excluded from top leadership positions (pastors and community leaders) in church today after over 30 years of landmark women's ordination. The data presentation is organized in agreement with the study's research questions, which are:

- (a) What was the understanding of gender roles in ELCZ from 1980 to 2019?
- (b) What challenges are faced by current few female leaders in ELCZ and how does it affect other potential female leaders from participating in senior leadership positions of the church?
- (c) What is the ELCZ doing in promoting gender justice and equality that empowers women for top leadership (pastors and community leaders) in its ranks?
- (d) What is the best contextual model that ELCZ can use to demystify the myths around gender and stop domineering of women by men in its ranks and file?

The study collected qualitative data and is the type of data to be presented in this chapter. The data was collected using in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). The qualitative approach helped to explain, confirm, and provide detailed information on the data solicited from participants. This created themes as per the findings and were used to present and analyze data. The study ensured both data validity and reliability through collecting data using well-crafted data

collection instruments (interviews and focus group discussions). Data was not graded according to gender because both male and female were in agreement on their views of issues.

The interviews and focus group discussion directed by semi structured questions were the primary tools for data gathering from 39 participants. The collected data from the respondents was presented using inductive method thus, extracting common themes from data presented by informants in agreement with research questions. Hence some questions were therefore split into more sub-headings to cater for the themes created by the respondents. Data was presented as per the themes formulated by the matrixes and tables that arose during the discussions. The graphs and tables were created through the use of Microsoft Excel and Word packages. The study chose respondents that had information on the subject and those that were willing to participate in this study in order to increase the response rate of the study.

#### **4.1 Response rate**

A total number of 39 participants were served with a semi structured questionnaire having 23 participants, while 6 were interviewed using an interview guide and 10 women pastors participated in a focus group. From a target of 39 respondents, only 35 respondents successfully participated in this study, giving a response rate of 89.00%. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) in their study recommend that such levels of responses that are above 50% are sufficient and representative for reporting. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) explain that 50% of response rate is considered satisfactory for analysis and reporting, while 60% is good for reporting and analysis, and anything above 70% is considered excellent. Accordingly, this study's response rate was excellent and adequate to validate the reliability for reporting and making binding conclusions about the phenomenon under study.

#### **4.2 Understanding of gender issues in ELCZ from 1980**

The study went out to find the gender understanding of the ELCZ from 1980. The period was picked

due to the fact that Zimbabwe got its independence and started to engage and ratify laws and agreements that emancipate communities. At same time the ELCZ was given an opportunity to reflect on its gender since there have been some key LWF conferences like ELCA virtual convention for women and Triennial convention 2021-Women of the ELCA that speak strongly about gender parity issues amongst member churches. The study was informed that when issues of gender started in the ELCZ it was miscued as a war between men and women, were women wanted to unseat men illegal. This misunderstanding amongst the Christian community labelled gender issues to be secular and unorthodox to Christianity. In fact, most people in church linked the topic to the Beijing conference and find it more feministic and radical. Existing literature states that,

*Bishop S M Dube argued that between 1980-2010 issues of gender in ELCZ were bracketed in the veins of the cultural patriarchal society. As such, women were treated as second class citizens, their rights were not recognized, let alone their voice. The church and society were so stereotyped to the extent that both women and men supported the status quo of viewing women as subsidiaries of men.*

It further developed resistance from men and other women who felt the issue was going to increase divorces and squabbles in marriages. Women and men were basically fighting over their rights, women fought for their place for ordination as pastors in ELCZ. Lutheran church during the period was mainly influenced by the views of their cultural and national outlook on women positions in different organizations and companies. Primary data from a focus group of women; pastors indicated that “women were mainly part of servers of their male counterparts” especially the clergy. They would be expected to do all duties that had to do with church but not in pastoral capacity.

Data gathered from semi structured questionnaire, interviews and focus group show that ELCZ understood women in church as sweepers, preparing Holy Communion, dressing alter and pulpit, Sunday school teachers and other duties of low levels. Additionally, in the two focus groups agreed

that women in church were seen with the same eye as that one from secular and tradition and cultural view. For instance, one woman pastor whose husband was also a minister in the church said that she is facing a stiff resistance from their spouse to join the ministry. Also, she stated that the husband stood his ground and said that he married a wife not a pastor, hence, the husband made it clear that even if she becomes a pastor she was supposed to serve while doing wife chores as expected by the family and church. Other women also stated that women were viewed as parcels and property of men, as their pathways of participation are controlled by men in church. Such circumstances left many women not desiring to join the holy ministry in fear of marriage breakups.

#### **4.2.1 Women not fit to be ordained**

The first black/African bishop of the ELCZ, The Rt Rev J.C Shiri testified that it was a tussle to convince church that women can also be pastors. The understanding was that only male members can be pastors. In his published book 'Inside the ELCZ' (2004:42), he noted that ELCZ followed the Swedish traditions which were brought by missionaries who came to Zimbabwe. These missionaries came from the conservative part of the church of Sweden. For these missionaries' ordination of women was unacceptable (Shiri, 2004:42)

*Bishop Shiri noted that ordination of women remained unacceptable even for the church of Sweden and since ELCZ was part of it we followed their tradition in many ways until we decided locally that it was not theologically sound to deny ordination to women members of the church.*

In support of his views one female pastor referred to Bishop J.C. Shiri's (2004:42) book that issues of ordination for women called for unfortunates' statements like:

*If you want to ordain women wait until I am dead ...if you ordain women, your church will not be blessed...and others.*



From 1980 to 2019; these were uttered by both laity and clergy participants concluded that such statements were a genuine understanding and feeling of ELCZ church members about ordination of women. Through their expressions, they felt this was sin par excellent. In an interview with Bishop J.C Shiri introducing female ordination something that missionaries did not practice was seen as an anathema. The standard of any interpretation was based on what missionaries did; and that is, disregarding and denying the participation of women in their missionary work. Shiri (2004:43) relate the issue of women leadership and ordination to the fact that from the beginning ELCZ women were not allowed to preach. He argued that one-time women in church would be forced to invite even drunkard male teacher to preach to them, this scenario left women angry and complaining. In some instances, women would opt to sing hymns and left for home because they were not allowed to preach (Shiri, 2004:43). He traced the issue to the 7<sup>th</sup> Budapest LWF assembly in 1984 thus where a major climb was noticed, and women were allowed to be ordained. The same meeting decided that 40% women representation should be achieved in all decision-making boards of the church members of LWF. In response the ELCZ assembly ratified the 7<sup>th</sup> Budapest LWF decision and allowed women to preach, but the church failed to decide that women should be ordained. Outside the assembly the administration decided that effective preaching can only take place and done by a fully trained Christian. It then resolved to recruit female pastors, and these were also sent to United Theological College. For Shiri part of the argument perpetuating total disregard of women's abilities and capabilities is that, if women were not ordained during missionary times, it is therefore unacceptable to do so now. However, this argument shows a deep-rooted patriarchal dominance over women and sexist denial of partnership between men and women in the Christian ministry (Oduyoye 2001). It was noted that since then women were regarded as second-class to men. This is evident from the preference where male youths, were always the leaders and girls would be secretaries, choir members, cooking and sewing programs in other terms women were just supporters of men in church.

This formed a pedagogical planetary where boys are socialised taught values, sanctity, ethics, responsibility and what it takes to be a respectable man in the society. This mindset affected the church as it is part of the society. According to Bishop Shiri male pastors when they heard him proposing the ordination of women, they did not publicly resist the proposal, but they were pinning their hope of refusal on church assembly where they thought it was to be vehemently rejected by lay persons. From Interviewee 1, it was also observed that denial and rejection of women ordination also included other women who were refusing that since they thought women were not fit for the job. However, Interviewee 3 stated that issues such as monthly menstruation and Holy Communion were raised, where women were allowed to officiate holy sacrament when on her periods? As pointed out by Mwaliki (2018) that an unveiled pastor was viewed as immoral, hence as pioneer female pastors in ELCZ were expected to put on head scarf when preaching. 90% female participants of this study indicated that fellow women would cover their heads whenever they are to be in the pulpit for preaching the word of God. The focus group findings show that the action by congregants was influenced by both biblical writings like Pauline scripture and cultural traditional beliefs that demands that women should not speak in church and cover their heads. From the focus group, a woman dean attested that most church members felt that it was unbiblical for female pastors to serve in church.

#### **4.2.2 Men and women are not partners in God's Vineyard**

Ministry was understood to be looking down upon women and a holy place for few selected men. In other words, the church ministry was designed as male in pulpit and females in pews as supporters of men in ministry. The issue of viewing ministry as a partnership between men and women was not a cause of concern to ELCZ members. From the total respondents that participated in this study majority of them argued that the ministry is a partnership between men and women. One member of the focus group argued that ministry is a partnership between men and women like it was in the

Garden of Eden. God saw that it was not possible for man to embark on God's ministry alone but needed women to complement each other. They argued that, that portion needs to be re-interpreted to show the need of women pastors in our church. Bishop SM Dube concurred that ELCZ should understand pastoral work as a ministry of partnership for both men and women.

### **4.3 Gender functions and roles of women in ELCZ and biblical view of women**

This section of the research looked at six questions that sought to understand areas where women are excluded, and factors used to exclude women in top leadership against the biblical view of women and current effort in redefining women's place, roles, and functions in ELCZ.

#### **4.3.1 Exclusion of women from leadership roles in ELCZ**

According to a bigger part of the respondents, women exclusion from top leadership has been a thorn in the flesh for centuries in different organizations and churches. It increased its momentum in the 1980s and became a consideration for many organizations including churches. This study also discovered that it took years for ELCZ to find a proper YEA to women inclusion in top leadership. Despite the agreement that women can also be part of top leadership (pastors and community leaders), the research found out that there is a vicious circle that still exists that excludes women pastors in ELCZ to occupy top leadership posts. This concur with Mapuranga (2014) that church space is dominated by men while female members are occupying inferior or are just followers. Primary data gathered point out to some unchartered circumstances where women were excluded from leadership in ELCZ in unclear situations. The results indicate that majority of respondents indicated that there were circumstances that women were denied leadership posts on the basis of being women; while a small part of respondents disagreed that no such circumstances in ELCZ were ever witnessed. Ironically all respondents agreed that for years (1903-1990) ELCZ had no female leaders (pastorate). They indicated that the tradition was inherited from missionaries who came to

Zimbabwe. Who were from a conservative Swedish community and had no women pastors. Women from Sweden came as part of ancillary workforce, either as pastor's wife, nurse, or teacher. This was the same structure that ELCZ took, and women were viewed as such to their counterpart.

#### **4.3.2.1 Women's lack of confidence**

From all the responses gathered, a further analysis was done to check on each response basing on gender, and the study noted that majority of men who participated in this study thought that women were excluded from leadership because they lack confidence in themselves. While majority of women thought differently that woman need to be empowered for them to gain confidence. One woman pastor pointed out that it is a deliberate move of how socialization and culture has taught society including church to make women more comfortable in roles such as cooking and childbearing. They queried that if women are said to be confident in other areas what stops them to be confident in pursuing and voting each other in ELCZ's senior leadership? In other words the two sides agree that women lack confidence but for women the problem is ELCZ has no program to empower women and prepare them for top leadership posts. Women also complained that it is/was men who refused women in ELCZ ordination for no apparent reasons.

#### **4.3.2.2 Church institution leadership**

Participants in the interviews and focus group noted a serious gap in appointment of women as church institution leaders. Hence, majority of women complained that since 1903 to date there has never been a Lutheran woman priest to be the Bible school principal or recommended to be United Theological College principal and even to be a bishop of this church. They recognized that since 1990 the church has done very little to empower women to get ready for such powerful posts. Women viewed this as a deliberate move by men in top leadership to deny women an opportunity to express their capability in leadership. However, men denied the claim and cited that it was natural for men

to always in higher positions.

#### **4.3.2.3 Education and employee development for women**

ELCZ has a policy that after a pastor serves his/her bond/contract they are allowed to go for further education as a way to develop the employee academically. Since, 1990 when ELCZ ordained its first female pastors it took over 16 years to have the first woman to get herself a doctoral qualification. Currently, 30 years down the lane, only 3 female pastors are holders of doctoral qualifications. In fact, the other two were recently qualified otherwise it was only one woman out of over 30 women pastors in this church with doctorate qualifications. In that view 65% of participants complained that there is not a deliberate program to educate women pastors, for them to gain the so much required competences. From the interviews the respondents cited that “Is there a deliberate policy and plan to educate men?” If not, then this is not discrimination as the failure to educate applies to both sexes. From the focus group women cited that ELCZ should consider if there are any educated female pastors and male pastors who got their doctorates through the support of the church. Chances are high that they educated themselves and if so then this is not discrimination from the church, instead it is pure failure to do capacity building by the church. The respondents generally indicated that ELCZ has been reluctant to provide educational development to female pastors especially to doctoral level. Since majority were diploma holders, followed by first degree holders, master holders, and only a very small number were PHD holders. However, it was not clear if the situation was a gender segregation based, or that female pastors feel satisfied with their basic qualification of a diploma, degree or master’s level and not motivated to develop themselves further to a doctoral qualification.

#### **4.3.2.4 Church leadership (General Secretary, Dean and Bishop Posts)**

The most powerful posts in ELCZ structure are its general secretary, Dean and Bishop. These three posts are traditional since the inception of ELCZ (1903) and have been dominated by male pastors.

Both male and female participants agreed that ELCZ has excluded women in these three posts (general secretary, Dean and Bishop) for years. In spite of the fact that there are elected and hired based on the qualification; these elections and interviews were viewed by participants as discriminatory as they leave out women whether they qualify or not. The respondents indicated that; from 1903 three women got the opportunity to be deans but neither a bishop nor a general secretary. One participant from focus group quizzed if ELCZ is in support of women “*sei vafundisi vechidzimai vasingaitiwo madean nema bishop*” (why are female pastors not voted to be deans and bishops) currently the status of men and women in top leadership is as follows:

Participants highlighted that empowerment is a wide-ranging idea that needs to be unpacked as one sought to explain its multi-faceted ideological concepts. Since empowerment is multi-dimensional and multi-layered the church needs some skill and will power to implement it for the benefit of women. Women's empowerment was defined by one dean as a practice that gives women both at church and community level greater share to control resources. Women empowerment should be a whole package with material, human intellectual like knowledge, information, ideas and financial resources, and control of decision-making. One church leader argued that empowerment means raising someone from a position of imposed helplessness to one of power and dignity. Participants felt the church was not sincere and not “walking the talk” when it comes to gender equality. The increased participation of women in church programs must be supported with access to every stream and vein of the organization.

#### **4.4. Factors causing women not to be in top leadership structure of the church**

This section looked at factors that are infringing women in getting into top leadership posts. Participants answered using historical and current trends in ELCZ. Patriarchal and cultural factors

led with majority of participants pointing to it as leading factors causing women to suffer insubordination. Participants noted that ELCZ inherited a conservative tradition from its Swedish missionaries. That tradition worked well with the African (Zimbabwean) culture and customs that relegated and limited women to house and childbearing chores. The results show that women in church also carried the societal view of women that view them as inferior beings. While participants noted that majority of ELCZ were women, who are supported by church statistics that puts women at 61% against 39% men (ELCZ National Report, 2018); but due to cultural tradition women at home they are led by men, hence they continue the trend even at church. However, few participants argued that the exclusion of women is nothing but just men's dominance, jealous, power hungry, fear of challenge from women and a feeling of men that women are assets that they possess and pay for through lobola. In addition, participants pointed out that socialization of the African culture and tradition has caused men even in church to believe that they are superior to women, and women see themselves as subjects of men.

#### **4.4.1 Theological problems on women inclusion in ELCZ's top leadership**

The study revealed that most arguments against inclusion of women in pastoral leadership or ministry were hinged on un-theological sounds debates of misinterpreting biblical texts. Scriptures were misinterpreted to suit the agenda of men to exclude women from ministerial and top leadership. A bigger percentage of respondents indicated that in church people felt that ordination of women was un-scriptural and un-cultural. They were a lot of debates around the scriptures where apostle Paul directs that woman should not speak in church but should enquire from their husbands at home. According to 1Corinthian 14v34-35 'let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says. And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands as home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church. Furthermore, Paul's writing in 1 Tim2:11 says 'let woman learn in silence with all submission. And

I do not permit a woman to teach and to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. For Adam was formed first, then Eve'. The debate should not start on the negative of women position but as Dean B Shumba suggested that the starting point of the debate should be the experiences of women and men on their interfaces with society and each other, as a foundation that new theology could be created. Such an approach eradicates the dilemma and danger of adopting a feministic approach in understanding the said two biblical texts. A more comprehensive theology should be drawn from how men and women interact and how their life experiences are all about.

#### **4.4.2 The Imago Dei concept and women leadership**

While in Genesis 1:26 puts it crystal clear that God created humanity in his image and that he gave them a dominion to rule over all creation on earth. Meaning God planned from the beginning was for women and men to work in partnership and equal ground. It is a mystery up to date how this plan of God was reduced to ashes by human beings, when they reduced women to their toy. Participants indicated that male and female pastors were both created in the image of God, 90% of participants argued that since there is no difference as given by the theology of ImagoDei, there should be no segregation of male or female in pastoral ministry in ELCZ. Instead ELCZ should try to teach and preach on the positive side of women in leadership. According to Adumenika (2017) even Jesus had to include women in key ministry functions. As if that was not enough; Paul also included women as his co-preachers in the gospel ministry. This he wrote to Galatians that there is no more Jew or Gentile or men or women otherwise everyone was now the same according to the theology of *ImagoDei*.

Accordingly, majority of participants argued that God created all Men in his image. The *Imago Dei* is not for men only but for both men and women. They further pointed out that when Paul speaks about the gifts that God gave to people for the edification of saints, does not say men as in sex were



called to these ministries. But the scripture is inclusive that each member of the church whether woman or man were called for a specific ministry in church for the edification of saints. It was clear that people in church just felt it was something in their DNA that women should not be considered for holy ministry. They noted that ELCZ has passed that level although there are still some areas that need to be dealt with. The women participants indicated that there is a glass ceiling that have been set by men in ELCZ, that need to be broken down so that women can fully realize their capacity by able to dominate top leadership, not through but through merit and performance. The glass ceiling is what one bishop said “*Dzikatungamirirwanehadzi dzinowira mudziva nemusoro*” (*A cow will lead the head into destruction as compared when the head is led by a bull or oxen*) for Jesus had no women disciples. So, men in ELCZ believe that women leadership will lead the denomination into destruction as compared when it was led by a man. Hence, the conclusion is that women cannot lead the church.

#### **4.4.3 Individual Factors contributing to ELCZ female pastors’ exclusion from top leadership**

The study finds out that factors that influence exclusion of female pastors in senior leadership of ELCZ through carrying out face-to-face interviews with pastors, deans, bishops, and community leaders. The participants highlighted that female exclusion from senior leadership positions in ELCZ encompassed individual aspects, organizational dynamics, and societal factors. Individual factors for female pastors included (i) female pastors lack confidence to challenge for top leadership (ii) female pastors’ satisfaction with the status quo, (iii) female’s lack of interest in leadership due to cultural biases. The themes raised are presented in table below; when the interviewer probed for reasons why women pastors were not able to occupy top leadership posts in ELCZ.

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Subthemes</b>	<b>Reasons</b>	<b>Description</b>
Lack of confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Low educational qualification against male pastors.</li> <li>ii. Socialization belief.</li> <li>iii. Church's view of female pastors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. very satisfied: family with current qualifications</li> <li>ii. Males are leaders and servers.</li> <li>iii. Poor environment</li> </ul>	<p>Female pastors were perceived happier to general clergy than leaders.</p> <p>Dissatisfied but hindered by</p>
		And lack of confidence	Jealous husbands
Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Ability and inability to perform.</li> <li>ii. Precedence of a women in top leadership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Women not empowered to lead</li> <li>ii. No women so far has set a precedence in top leadership</li> </ul>	<p>Women can perform better than men but community and church are biased.</p>

Lack of interest in leadership due to cultural biases.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Socialization beliefs</li> <li>ii. Electoral systems in church.</li> <li>iii. Other women’s view of female pastors as leaders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Women are always property of men</li> <li>ii. because leadership is time consuming and stressful</li> <li>iii. women are emotional cant lead</li> </ul>	Women are frustrated by both males and females during elections.
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Source: Field data

Female pastors were said to be lacking in individual confidence; this emerged during interviews and discussions. One male pastor participant pointed out that,

*“The common enemy of females causing them to be rejected for top posts in church is dearth of confidence. A number of female pastors are suffering from deficiency of confidence to wrestle the challenges of deanship/bishopric despite that as members we see that female pastors have potential to be leaders of this church”.*

This assertion was disputed by majority of female and male participants respectively. They believed that lack of confidence is equally a problem for men. However, men are helped by society to takeover leadership even when they are showing signs of lack of confidence. A closer look showed that it is a perceived conclusion about women’s take of leadership roles in church. Hence, women are excluded from leadership because of such perception. Furthermore, the study noted that performance was a key issue, but most women and men disputed the premises as they have evidence of women pastor excelling in their parishes. At the same time, they argued that even men known of poor performance have been elected to top leadership. To them the performance argument is not related to leadership rather gender is when it comes to top leadership posts. One participant argued that

*“It is necessary to include women in top leadership position in the church because they can perform just as well as men in terms of education. We have women who have also attained the highest level of education. If given equal opportunities, they can even perform even better”*

The third individual factor raised was that women lack interest in leadership, and they are satisfied with current status quo. The study found out that women have high interest in top leadership but electoral systems in the church are the ones used to inflict a no interest from women. One women pastor argued that:

*“It is true that in some instances women are marginalized and discriminated and hence loose interest. Reference is positions of Deans and Bishops. There is no gender balance, we have 3 bishops all male 6 deans (one female) women are not equally represented. I strongly feel that the problem is not the ELCZ and the community but the women themselves. This church’s membership said to be approximately 70% are women. With that figure women can virtually win every election in this church. As women we are failing to uplift one another for no apparent reasons. The corrective measure is to educate each other as women on the need to increase our participation in senior leadership of the church”.*

The other respondent participant argued in support of the above statement by saying:

*It will be a miracle for men in church to reluctantly give away power to female pastors. It is therefore time for all women in this church to grab the opportunity of numbers and push for women leadership in church.*

The notion that individual problems are associated with non-representation of women in senior leadership in church is not very true. Most participants and those in FGD pointed out that it is a

perception of community and church towards women pastors. For instance, educational levels of a candidate do not determine one's potential to win. There are cases where men with certificate in theology either became deans or bishops against those holding degrees. Women are willing to take top leadership roles at merit not on silver platter. Women are prepared for any challenges associated with those posts in church, both at local and international levels.

#### **4.5.2 Performance and gender**

There was a clear cry that women cannot perform pastoral duties effectively. Under the research question on current efforts the researcher went on to find out if performance was based on a pastor's gender. Participants accepted that performance and gender were not related in any way. The researcher observed that majority of respondents agreed that female pastors have also performed far better than their counterparts. While some are failing to perform due to their inability. They also appreciated that there is an improved mutual recognition and harmony of women by their counterparts. Pastors also raised the problem of special favors to women who always want to be deployed in town, mission stations or near their husbands, while men are flexible and can be deployed either in town or in rural areas. In that regard male pastors felt that instead of equal pay, equal opportunities, and equal deployment, ELCZ is favoring women in its stationing. Most remote parishes are served by male pastors only, and women are reserved for urban and other better parishes.

#### **4.5.3 Gender justice campaigns**

It was paramount for the study to find out if pastors were both male and female were prepared to tackle the problem of gender injustice both in church and society.

Majority of participants pointed out that they were ready to confront gender injustice both in church and society. Majority of participants indicated that they were already advocating for change of

constitution with an amendment that brings in a zebra system where deanship and bishopric should be elected in the balance of male and female. They showed that they no longer want the first and past scenario. They also appreciated that women were competent but due to the current system and behaviors of people that is influenced by patriarch beliefs it is not recognizing the ability in women pastors when it comes to top leadership posts. Ministers who participated in the study are prepared to go out and reinterpret further the scriptures that appear to be endorsing various oppressions to women.

Participants showed that fighting gender justice was possible. Currently, most people are registered in the gender justice desk. Hence, 80% of participants indicated that they are one way or the other part of campaigning teams in the church. People felt that the awareness campaigns should be repackaged according to correct hermeneutical interpretations of biblical understanding on the role of women in church. Furthermore, participants noted that there is need for the campaign to challenge ELCZ leadership to revise the church constitution to categorical put in place the 50% sharing of senior leadership positions.

#### **4.5.4 Male pastors' attitude towards female leadership**

While the study appreciated current efforts by ELCZ to teach and raise awareness on gender injustice in community and church. Female pastors felt that their counterparts are not 'walking the talk'. They felt male pastors preach what they are not leaving up to. Hence, women participants complained for more education and awareness of their male counterparts on the importance of embracing women as leaders. One former female dean said one male pastor during the campaign period leading to her election was heard de-campaigning her derogatively saying "*handitungamirigwi ne pitikoti*" (I cannot be led by women). Such is a proof that while male pastors seem not to have a problem with sharing pastoral positions with female pastors, they are not yet ready to be led on supervisory level by women. Through this study it shows that a lot must be done for the church to consider females in leadership. One male pastor responded to the question, *In your discussion on women inclusion in the ordained ministry has there been serious*

*arguments against the subject and what issues raised against and issues for?* His response was;

*Women are cowards, women could not resist challenges within the ministry, women should remain in the home not to move up and down, women should bear children.*

Response portrays bitterness in partnership of both women and men in this ministry. It also pointed to cultural attitude towards women. Fiorenza (1993), argued that the issue of women inferiority complex is not by creation but is man-made aiming to deprive their God given talents.

The participants observed that the training system of pastors from United Theological, Bible school and refresher courses in the ELCZ still suffer from a kwashiorkor situation that does not fully appreciate the roles of women pastors as leaders. Hence majority of respondents advocated for a deliberate creation of modules on gender and theology at ELCZ's training institution to help empower female pastors and further help male pastors to appreciate the presence of female pastors as leaders. Women argued that if women of the bible times were able to do exploit what is the difference with ELCZ women today. One participant argued that "*tisuvana Miriam vanhasi*" (we are the Miriams of today). ELCZ should enact laws and regulations that are inclusive and give a definite percentage of leadership posts to women in the church. Unlike currently, the quarter system is skewed in favor of male persons in the church. For instance, all other posts in the deanery and diocesan and church council are contested without the view of women and men sharing equal opportunities. So, most posts in councils are occupied by males; a close look on the constitution only two posts a clearly for women out of a possible 23 posts in church council, Which are one women representing women in a diocese and one out of other posts of non-portfolios persons which is supposed to be a women. There has been an advocacy to deal with the psychology of mind and inferiority complex to have women standing in solidarity. This is obviously a cultural practice that has been brought into the church. ELCZ needs to further interrogate these cultural practices and demythologize all anti women leadership sayings and connotations.

#### **4.5 Current efforts by ELCZ in promoting women**

In some instances, like the case of Chabwira Parish a section of men declared that if the new woman pastor was to remain their minister in charge, they were to leave the church. One male member was quoted “*Ini handitungamirirwi nekupihwa chirayiro ne dhirezi, handidi pitcoat government, saka ndavakutobuda kereke yacho*” (I cannot accept to be led and receive holy communion officiated by a female pastor referred to as address and under garment. I cannot be under a women’s government, and I do not want to be in anyone women leadership, hence, I am leaving the church). The study did not deeply interrogate further to statistical find out the percentage of men left the church because of the ordination of women as pastors in ELCZ. Participants noted that in parishes where women were leading as pastors, their parishes started very low just like it is common in most parishes when there is pastoral leadership change. It was noted that some men withdrew their support to vent their anger and disapproval of women pastors in their parish. It was noted that it later changed for the best and a lot of improvement in the parish was noted, through evangelism efforts, building of chapels and financial performance.

Participants felt that the church was in dire need of a women leadership who in most cases brings motherly touch. Motherly touch was pointed as a key virtue for women; naturally they are lovely and has that extra motherly touch in dealing with other people. They believed this virtue will help to soothe bruised members of the church. While the few participants felt that women were cowards, cannot face challenges associated with the ministry hence women should bear children and remain stuck at home. A community leader argued that:

*“Women were better leaders than men. In my community women are less alcoholic as compared to men, they are always sober hence they can lead with distinctions as compared to male members”*



When participants were asked about challenges that were encountered in trying to implement the decision to ordain women as pastors in ELCZ, few respondents indicated that there were no problems, followed by those that said it was moderately faced problems and others who indicated that there are ever problems in parishes. When participants were asked why such response the majority believed that ELCZ did not do enough in preparing parishes that were to receive female pastors. For instance, the Chabwira case a dean would have had arranged a meeting with Parish council that will include the local retired Evangelist to prepare the landing of the new pastor. This could have been also used as a platform to introduce the minister. This measure could have been taken since ordination of women was associated with controversies in ELCZ. The response of parishes is not squarely blamed on members, but it should be shared with church leaders since little was done to prepare the arrival of a new minister and in this situation a woman.

The researcher went on to check on what efforts the church is doing to ease the acceptance of women in church as ordained ministry. It was unanimously agreed that a continued teaching and dialogue with parishioner are needed. The church had to apply a new hermeneutics interpretation of the concerned scriptures. Secondly, it applied contextual bible studies to address this gap. Of late the church has also adopted Gender Justice Program that is also promoting position of women in both society and church. Amongst the participants 80% appreciated what the gender justice program is doing to emancipate the position of women in church. While 20% felt gender justice has not done enough to distance itself from feminist theology. The 80% includes Bishops and Deans, when they answered questions about church plans to address issue of women inclusion their response.

Specific question: (*What measures did you take as a church leader to resolve this situation?*) *The person should be a hard worker when given an assignment e.g., presenting any topic, well researched, doing projects full of commitment well behaviour aimed to leave a development in the parish.*

While the expectation by ELCZ leaders is to be considered, one may want to know how many men leaders

acquired all these requirements for them to be in those positions where they are. Fiorenza (1997), when referring to her notion of “Disciples of Equals”, argued that all people are equal regardless of their status they all deserve respect, recognition, and dignity. Hence, they have rights endowed by their creator to equally have access to practice the assorted gifts provided for by God.

#### **4.5.1 Constitutionalism and gender inequality**

After a protracted journey did not produce the required results on women representation in leadership the church went out to amend its constitution. The new constitution brought new sections that are in favor of women. Such section as at Deanery Council 21.1.6 “one representative each from youth, LLSF, Witness and Women...” At Diocesan council 26.1.9 Six lay persons, one of whom... at least two others shall be women”. While at Church Council 32.1.5 Five other persons shall include youths, men and women. That states it clearly that a women should be elected to councils. This new ELCZ constitution of 2005 created quarter systems where certain posts are reserved for women only. Participants were able to recognize this endeavor and encourage female to participate especial through joining holy ministry. While it is commendable that ELCZ has decisively tried to introduce equal representation for men and women in senior leadership; the constitution was viewed by female pastors as still lacking in categorically clear in defining thresholds of representation. For instance, female participants felt since there are six posts for deanship in the church where each diocese is having two such posts the constitution should clearly put a 50-50 representation of deans. In such the church should be organised and have 3 female deans and 3 male deans at each given term. The current situation which is the same as it has been since 2006 when the new constitution was implemented is that 5 posts are occupied by male while 1 is female occupied.

#### **4.5.2 The ELCZ Gender policy**

The ELCZ has taken a lead in fight against gender injustice by creating a desk on gender justice

programs in the church. It went further to craft its own gender justice policy, in sync with LWF, UN and Zimbabwean laws in area of Gender justice. ELCZ has become an active participant in the issues of gender justice in the country. The policy is based on the following objectives:

- a) *To produce a biblical interpretation on gender this will eliminate inferiority complex amongst women.*
- b) *To include women in decision making processes of the church by moving towards a 50% participation by women in councils, boards and committees.*
- c) *To empower women and men with leadership skills so as to develop leadership capabilities of both with a view of making women equally qualified for all leadership positions in the church.*
- d) *To reduce gender-based violence in the church and society.*

While members of the church appreciated the desk and its policy document, they felt it has not done much to break the male-dominance in the church; they feel Gender issues in the church have not practical adopted the policy to its daily function. For instance, the second objective which encourages the church to start to move towards a 50% women participation has not been adhered to. While others felt that efforts to empower both male and female members with leadership skills is good. But the church needs to do more in making it practical in daily life by implementing programs towards a 50% participation of female members in the church.

#### **4.6 A possible model of contextual gender justice pastoral is and therapy model for inclusion**

The research also interrogated the issue of seclusion, majority of the participants accepted that exclusion of women or any person based on whatever criterion is un-biblical and not right. God's

love is for all hence every person has an equal potential to be a leader in church or society. While ELCZ has an inclusive constitution, but it still must be spruced up for it to increase women participation in decision making boards. As was observed the current highest administrative decision board is heavily dominated by men who are against the spirit and letter of the church's constitution. The introduction of gender justice policy should be the steppingstone towards a more inclusive constitution. The policy should help to influence the constitutional making and reflect the possible route to take in women emancipation.

Women can be given any posts like other people what is critical is not gender but the brains that one exhibit. The study observed a gap that women need to support each other and drop the inferiority complex mentality. Given the current statistics of ELCZ in terms of male and female, women have the potential to vote each other and win election against all odds. Women are many and they hold a majority membership. One bishop highlighted that there were still some problems in terms of acceptance of women pastors since there are still some parishes who categorically request the bishop and deans to deploy a male pastor in their parishes. This is a sign that such parishes are still having problems of acceptance of women ministry in the church. When he was asked the question of how many such parishes, he indicated that few parishes usually send their reps informal to present such requests. The bishop indicated that their decision of who is deployed where is never based on gender despite such request.

#### **4.6.1 Gender biases in operations.**

Participants indicated that there are gender biases in recommending and appointing of pastors to top leadership posts against female pastors. The data from the questionnaire shows that majority of pastors think that there is gender bias against few who thought there was no bias. The interview with Bishops agreed also with pastors that under representation of women pastors are due to gender bias

that is executed silently as people canvas for votes during elections. This has left female pastors outside the senior leadership posts in church. The use of secret canvassing for support has hit hard on female pastors in ELCZ as they have silently been left out without much explanation.

#### **4.6.1.1 Recruitment of ELCZ pastors**

The study observed that there is a serious undermining of women candidates to ministry. According ELCZ records at their college of theology (UTC); since 1990 to date, it has registered 77 male students against 29 female students for training as pastors. ELCZ has been sending female students at a small rate against that for male students that is far above the threshold of its gender policy of 50-50.

#### **4.7 Community's response to gender issues**

The study asked the community to give their comments on women's subordination to men or their husbands. One participant viewed that the issue is based on the bible and argued that the bible puts it clear that women should submit to their husbands, however, there is need to guard against abuse. The response had a warning that communities while observing the subordination of women they should not use it to abuse women. While the other participants supported the above view, he said women should not overrule their husbands since this will cause disharmony in households. Hence, spouses should consult each other. This is very clear the two agrees that they support what we can call 'soft' subordination thus without to achieve harmony. Women don't have any chance of being above their husbands or men in any given time. A women participant said on the issue:

*While it's true that I must submit myself to my husband, I also believe and expect my husband to give me full love and respect. I should not fear him as my husband. He should take his position as the head of the family and give me my leadership position too. Men should allow us as their spouses to participate in decision making platform*

*for the betterment of the family. He should learn to share responsibilities.*

Another comment to take note of was given by a woman was that most women subordinate to their husbands because they feel that it is their culture to do so. This resonant with the views of both men and women who commented on this question that from biblical and cultural point of view women should subordinates to their husbands. One thing to take note women added the love component to their subordination as a demand and reason for them to be assistants to their husbands. In general, both women and men saw women as assistants, minor, and subsidiary to men.

The study further asked if the participants had leadership position in their community. The first women indicated she was a headmistress in one of the community schools; the second one was leading church as a lay minister in the community and gives spiritual services in the absence of pastors the third said she was a community leader in Matsilela village and appreciated but mostly by women groups. Due to its Shangani culture in the area, she could not be village head but was given an inferior leadership post.

Community was further asked to give their views on any need for women to be leaders in church or community. Participants agreed that women were also people knowledgeable to be leaders and are gifted as their men counterpart. They further recognized that communities were said to be now preferring women leadership to men's leadership. One participant pointed out that women were good leaders because they exhibit sober conscience always since they are non-alcoholic unlike men. While the other respondent argued that:

*Women are good leaders than when men are leaders, many a time issues that concerns women are not considered because they are being despised, discriminated, and taken for granted, so it is important for female members of the church to take leadership positions.*

*This will encourage the discussion of women agenda to be always part of the planning and*

*implementation of various programs in church and community.*

Participants further poured more praises of ability and potentiality of women to be leaders when the MP of Chikombedzi area said that:

*Women must be permitted to occupy the senior leadership positions in church as it is in the world of politics. Many of them are capable their ability will cause churches and communities to benefit tremendously from their talent.*

Most of the participants praised and appreciated the capabilities of women in leadership posts. Participants though seemingly praising leadership of women, but they appear to be like speculating on something that is difficult to happen and not possible. The study sought to find if participants had ever had an experience of female leadership, the school head agreed that he had worked with women in leadership and appreciate that their leadership not different from that offered by men. One male councilor who is a teacher and also a headmaster in one community said that:

*...I have served under a female leader who oversees all schools in our district. I like the way she administers education programs which are quite good and effective in our schools.*

One participant accepted that women were also part and parcel of his leaders in the community; he gave an example of his chief:

*. our community is led by a female chief by the name chief Mathe., she governs her community better than other male chiefs.*

While The MP in chikombedzi argued that as an individual he agrees and appreciate that women can be leaders but his community (Shangani) culture, is a taboo hence, even women have accepted and preferred men to be their leaders, so community does not see the importance and ability of female leadership. What is referred by the MP above is taken as if women are ignorant when it comes to

leadership positions. Hence, Gundlhanga argued that Capitalism from its early stage and through the Victoria Age expressed a patriarchal notion as only male imperialists worshipped and honored. While Chinyava(1974) also adding, Women appear to have occupied back seats, they are total not ignorant or weak but were purposely not mentioned, Patriarchal societies have cultures to look down upon women by subjecting them to the roles of home chores, child bearing and regard them as minors and beneficiaries those who cannot produce by receive only. This because of gendered socialization, it resulted in women accepting society expectations and additionally the role of looking after the family. Mapura ( 2013), pointed that “the decision-making processes have been left to men”. The coming in of Feminist activities awakened women and they started to voice for their rights not only in workplaces, politics but also in churches, where they demand space to be in decision making foras (Besson and Marti, 2006).

The study followed up with a question if men were comfortable to take orders from female leaders? Men argued that orders from a leader should always be followed whether from a male or female leader; hence they have no problem at all to follow these orders.

The study further asked participants if there was a need to train More women as clergy? Participants indicated that since women were also fully human, they should be equal with men and given the opportunity to train as pastors and they even suggested that more women should be trained as pastors because they have been lagging behind. The church should improve gender equity and equality by training more female pastors. They further argued that women should not only be trained but also be elected in senior leadership positions. A female pastor is believed will be able to explain all the challenges and possibilities of other women in ministry and protect their rights. Participants argued that in 21<sup>st</sup> century there is no discomfort unless if women leaders are affected by the inferiority complex. In contrast to all other praises one respondent felt that women want to be felt when in



position, and they do not deal with their subnets directly instead they assign other workers in case of disputes or mishaps, because they don't have the stamina to fight in the dungeon.

The study further sought to get views of women if they have ambition to be leaders. Women positively confirmed that they now have ambition to be leaders of both their churches and communities. This was so because of the gender programs and advocates for equal opportunities, I have been quickened to be interested to be a leader because as women I have been given an opportunity to participate in my community programs as a leader. One church woman argued that she now aspires to take leadership posts so that she knows the status of her church and craft the dossier to treat and help it out of the problems.

The study further asked for participants' opinion on those churches who have not yet accepted the ordination of women. Participants felt that modern church should move forward and embrace women as leaders who should be at par with men. Some said denying ordination of women is an ancient attitude which should not be tolerated. Some felt such churches should be liberated and workshops should be done to help them see the light. Some said they should re-read their bible to get a better understanding of women leadership in church.

Participants went further to identify demerits and merits of having women in top leadership positions.

- Women can understand problems of other people better than men.
- Women can face challenges due to their nature as women and mothers at the same time and have every big role in the community.
- They will help to defend the children, girls and other women from abuse by men.
- Women are believed to be less corruption like men. Men has higher propensity to

corruption as compared to women.

While demerits were:

- Failure to be supported by their communities since most communities and organizations are strongly influenced by patriarchal understanding.
- Women they do not respect and support each other so confusion will ensue the company.
- Women have physiological and biological constraints that deter them to ne always strong, and duty bound through and through.

Participants further gave suggestions to those people who do not accept female leadership. One argued that female have few enemies as compared to men. This is so because women were said to have less propensity to corruption. The other participants argued that this world is made up of men and women therefore possess different talents and we should tap into these talents for the benefits of the church and community. A women participant used the argument that is educational based and said education is power the Prophet Hosea says my people parish because of lack of knowledge more workshops should be done coupled with advocacy on gender justice and women empowerment and apply different principles in socialization of children to address gender problems in future of our communities.

#### **4.8 Conclusion of the chapter**

This chapter presented data as gathered from the participants through a thematic approach. The chapter discussed exclusion of female pastors in ELCZ through historical background; it revealed that the church viewed women as helpers of their husbands or men in church. However, the study showed a change of stance where the church accepted female ordination and eventually, acceptance of women into competing for senior positions in the church. While female ordination

was accepted with pomp and fun achieving senior leadership for the same group of people remains a nightmare and a pie in the air. The study also noted that there are factors that have been used as inhibitors to female pastors' progress. Women were seen as less human who lacks the qualities of the imago Dei. Their counterpart (male pastors) viewed women as a people without capacity to lead them. Female pastors in ELCZ are like many other women in community that they exist at the edges of society. That has limited their voice on decision making forums in the church. Gender inequality has been fueled by the absence of female pastors' voice in the corridors of power and leadership. The outcome has contributed to the invisibility of females as public players and establishes a negation to their rights on equal participation in church programs. The political train is one tool that is used to exclude women from senior leaderships. However, the study noted in the process that there are several successes that are attributed to female leadership. ELCZ has since adopted a number of efforts to promote an increased participation of women, through constitutionalism and advocacy for women empowerment in church and community. The study noted that female pastors in ELCZ continue to carry a disproportionately high burden of exclusion and marginalization. Female pastors in ELCZ remains trapped in the cycle of political, religious, economic, and social processes that lives them excluded and segregated. The next chapter looks at the findings in relationship with theory and literature review on gender justice and women in leadership in ELCZ. The main theories to be used in the chapter are Elizabeth Fiorenza's: "discipleship of equals" and Mercy Amba Oduyoye Christian ministry as a partnership of both women and men. In support of that church fathers' views are to be considered as a way to confirm or disconfirm the findings of this study.

## CHAPTER FIVE:

### GENDER JUSTICE AND WOMEN LEADERSHIP IN ELCZ

#### 5.0 Introduction

The previous chapter presented the research findings in the light of the main research questions. Hence, the present chapter critically discusses the findings in relation to relevant theories raised in this study (the “Partnership of both men and women” by Oduyoye and Concept of “Discipleship of Equals” by Fiorenza) as the main theories of this study and the literature related. This chapter also draws its conclusions from previous studies, views (African women views, church fathers’ views and Martin Luther’s view), writings and the conceptual framework in relation to the findings of this study on gender justice and women leadership in the ELCZ. The study was meant to investigate the gender inequality among ministers in Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe (ELCZ): A pastoral feminist critique of the exclusion of female clergy from the top/senior leadership of the ELCZ. The major purpose was to find out the reasons why female pastors in ELCZ are excluded from top leadership. However, the findings of this study indicate that although the ELCZ opened the space for women to the ordained ministries in 1987, women still experience strong forms of exclusion in some decision-making positions, power and control continues to be in the hands of men. This finding proves that inclusion of women to the ordained ministry is not the achieved goal for women inclusion to leadership. Rather, it is a step into leadership but not really occupying senior leadership space. Additionally, the participants of this study claim that the inclusion attitude that is existing in the ELCZ seemed to be exaggerated since greater number of research participants pointed in unison that the acceptance of women in ordained ministry is of glass ceiling. In reality men are congesting the leadership space in the church. This was witnessed in the data presented that several participants referred to the scenario of a female pastor who was faced with serious challenges of being refused entry to the parish premises by lay church leaders including some male evangelists, the scenario case study was given in chapter 3. The female pastor spent three nights sleeping outside with her children, reason being she was a woman.

Five major areas will be addressed in this chapter:

- (1) The understanding of gender roles in ELCZ from 1980 to 2019
- (2) Challenges faced by current female leaders in ELCZ and how do they deter other potential female leaders from participating in top/senior leadership positions in the church
- (3) Promotion of gender justice and equality by ELCZ that empowers women for top leadership
- (4) The perceptions of members of the community on female leaders and how this influence female exclusion from in senior leadership positions in community and church.
- (5) Vision of human justice, dignity, equality, and salvation for all

The questions that surfaced from all five questions are summarized in a pastoral model at the end of this chapter.

### **5.1 Understanding of gender issues in ELCZ between 1980 to date**

The understanding of gender issues in ELCZ between 1980 to 2015 showed that women were seen as, a feministic movement, women not fit to be pastors, men and women are not partners in God's vineyard and women are cultural unaccepted as leaders in church. The study agrees with Loreen et al (2011) that the subject of women exclusion or regarding women involvement in leadership, in general, was discussed since 1980 and became a major consideration since then to date but still with no clear understanding amongst many communities and organizations in the world. Women were treated as helpers of their husbands or men in ELCZ; this can be traced back to the age of missionaries. Wives of missionaries were not allowed to vote until 1937. Though this decision was made it did not apply to African women. Pastors' wives in ELCZ have never been given voting powers considering that their work is as important as their husbands.

Soderstrom noted that missionaries' wives remained occupied with wives and mothers' chores in the

community. It is interesting to note that these wives were granted voting powers but were not given opportunity to be in senior leadership. It is therefore noted that communities and churches are under intense pressure from cultural background belief. This has impacted their understanding of gender and participation of women in senior positions in church. As a result, Machingura and Nyakuhwa observed that such understanding within the period has compelled most women to believe that a cultured woman is the one who cannot voice for anything but submissive to men or husbands. The study found that ELCZ understood gender issues in the same way the society viewed women, which was unprogressive and full of pigeonhole. This understanding dragged the status of women into mud as they then considered to be second class citizens. Furthermore, the study found out that ELCZ's understanding was that women were not fit to be pastors. To such a point that some men in church saw it better to quit the church because the church had passed a law to allow female ordination.

However, the church had a paradigm shift when it allowed female ordination in 1987. The new understanding towards women was in harmony with the CEDAW (1979) report that encouraged organizations and nations to take necessary measures to remove all types of discrimination against women and girls, the measures included to review laws, regulations, customs, and practices which perpetuate discrimination against women. The study found out that although understanding of gender issues was previously negative, however, it was softened later to a point that it improved and led to change of practices, theology, laws, and regulations of the church. Although the study noted a softened stance by the church as an institution, it continued to observe that individual clergy and laity were still not happy with the decision.

The study agreed with the Tanzanian study on female teachers who also faced the same scenario that even though the government and ministry as an institution had changed its stance on women inclusion. It emerged that female teachers were hindered by their spouses, community and family

from developing their careers and get promoted. This study proved this by the attitude of both laity and clergy towards female pastor who faced stiff resistance from the parish and was denied entrance into the parsonage.

The study revealed that although female pastors have proved critics by excelling very well in their parishes. However, they still face exclusion from senior positions in the church. As noted in previous studies that countless brilliant women who possibly will develop their careers to highest levels but face a glass ceiling created by their husbands and appointing officers (Haonga.2013). Similar remark was made by Dines (1993:30) that most married women's career and profession

Development is hanged on the grace and favor of their husbands and community around them. In general, the findings of this study and previous observations are in agreement that the church is the epicenter of gender injustice.

The exclusion of females' pastors in church leadership in ELCZ is strongly associated with gender justice stereotype and perceptions given by the society. According, to Dimmock and Walker (2006) points that leadership in many societies is a culturally bound practice, hence, it then denies female of any leadership posts. Martin Luther the reformer's wife was an educated nun but was not allowed to enjoy the white-collar job as she was taken as a standard of a pastor's wife. It is therefore, believed that the attitude of ELCZ was/is originated from the tradition that was set by the founder of the denomination Martin Luther. The study also found out that female pastor faced a serious resistance from her husband who said, *"I married this woman to do home chores not a pastor"*.

The study agreed with Chitando, E. (2016) that churches in most cases have been fences to people especially women and youths to claim their rights. Women in ELCZ appear to have less access to senior post opportunities than their counter parts. Consequently, women are regarded as home and family career while male pastors were perceived as having a right to leadership posts in ELCZ. The

traditional and Judaeo-Christian tradition values and norms that the church inherited along with the Christianity, is the major source of conclusion of men towards women leadership. The ELCZ is trapped in this dilemma where the bible is believed to value women in church and community than what patriarchal systems have displayed. However, there are those portions of the bible like Ephesians 5:24-25 that instructs women to be under the service of men. While Proverbs 31; 11-18 and 1 Corinthians 11:9 bring a hierarchy system that starts from God to man with woman being at the bottom foot of the ladder (Moyo; 2018:265). The literal interpretation of the aforesaid scriptures has left female members in churches including ELCZ at the mess of male dominance.

### **5.1.1 Feministic movement**

The study revealed that ELCZ understood gender issues as a feministic movement that has come to dislodge male pastors from their positions. This is contrary to real views of African feminist or womanist theologians, they distanced themselves from some theories that dehumanized men that referred by Oduyoye (1993), as partners in the Lord's work. Chisale (2017), argued that, African theologian dissociated themselves from some feminists because they do not to be involved to some strong radical ideas of feminism. Hence, Emecheta declared publicly on her conference address that she does not ascribes to feminist idea that say all men are to be rejected while some of them are our fathers, brothers, and children (Milall 1997). Thus, for ELCZ denied female clergy access to leadership on basis of associated women with feminist movement is based on uninformed perceptions. Theories, of this study are clearly pointed to the togetherness of both women and men, leaving no-one behind. The study revealed that the church became agitated about women as pastors. Earlier studies by Mwaniki (2018) a priest in Anglican Churchin Kenya testified that she was denied an opportunity to become the first women bishop in ACK, because she was a women. Siwila in the book edited by Moyo (2018:247) adds that, "Most churches adopted and come up with gender justice policies that are male dominant" Siwila refers to the situation where gender is this "thing" that has



come to disturb the standing order; however, it needs to be included in the church agenda in order to maintain the status quo”.

In other words, churches wanted just to register and to be considered as gender justice champions while nothing is happening on the ground. For ELCZ it has been smartly and secretively denying women to be in most senior positions through the canning systems of elections and campaigns. Any attempt by women to raise their voice is always viewed as feministic movement. This is also buttressed by Siwila in Moyo (2018:243) that “some societies find it problematic to be associated with the notion of gender especially when gender is seen through the lens of women” This is notwithstanding the fact that the subject of gender has become the buzz word in both academic and public life. The study concluded that the ELCZ is not yet ready to encompass women to full leadership participation.

Numerous tendencies of denial especial from clergy and prominent laity members have been observed that closes doors to female pastor’s leadership. It is not yet to embrace gender sensitive leadership concept that are life affirming notwithstanding that the church has gender justice policy. It is clear that, discrimination of female pastors in ELCZ is hinged in the patriarchal status quo that typifies the Zimbabwean community in general. In Zimbabwe such as after a child is born people can ask the question ‘munhui’ implying the sexual category of the child? When it is a girl some would say ‘hapana munhu’ (thus the child is not considered a human being); when a boy has born they would say ‘kwave nemunhu’ (thus we now have a human being). This is the reason perhaps when a family continues to have a girl child in the first stage the woman will be forced to continue bearing a child until a boy child is found. A boy child is viewed as the ‘real’ human being. It is clear that from birth a girl child is viewed as a second-class human being without leadership acceptance within the family.

According to Chitando and Mateveke (2012:43) the boy child is cherished as he guarantees that family lineage and homestead is served from greatest existential threat. The shona proverb ‘chakafukidza dzimba matenga’ (implying that the secrets of the home need remain untold) the proverb was or is intended to silence women from abusive acts of men. This approach of understanding has been transmitted from Shona cultural beliefs and brought into the church. Female members of the church are with the opinion that they cannot voice their ill treatment and exclusion from senior leadership because secrets of the home remain unheard in the public domain.

### **5.1.2 Women not fit to be pastors/leaders in church**

The study found out that ELCZ understood women as not fit to be pastors and worse off to occupy senior leadership posts in the church. The research was informed by key informants that resistance was too enormous that it led to some congregation threatening pastors, denying female pastors access to parsonage, male members threatening to leave the church, some making it known that they were not going to support the church. This same cry is also witnessed by one female pastor that her deployment into a parish led to one male elder to move to another parish. The elder felt it was not right to be under the authority of women. Earlier research discovered that women like in Tanzania were discouraged from being leaders in education systems. According to Onsongo (2004) these obstacles are the consequence of outdated beliefs about women and leadership. The unfitting of women to leadership was also found to be the common understanding in ELCZ were based in a cultural perspective more than from a theological perspective. According to research patriarchal society, classify females as inferior and being supposed to take low posts, implying that they are incapable and unfit to occupy senior posts in any organization. Theory of the “Discipleship of Equals” implies to bring in the necessity of inclusivity and working together in this ministry. The unfitness of women to senior leadership positions has nothing to do with the ability of women qualifying for the work, but gender stereotype. This was revealed during this research where some

participants pointed that: *handitungamirirwi ne petticoat government*, meaning women cannot lead and their leadership is referred as under garments leadership and cannot be considered for leadership position. These findings also leave us with a gap that needs the ELCZ to revisit its teaching about the inclusive image of God.

### **5.1.3 Men and women are not partners in God's vineyard**

The study further found that ELCZ did not view pastoral ministry as a partnership between men and women. While Oduyoye (1994) laments that God after creating them male and female empowered them to rule over the world. By denying female pastors the senior position in the church is enough to confirm that men and women are not considered partners in God's vineyard? The fact that the ELCZ constitution has relegated female participation to AOB mentality is another testimony that female pastors are not partners with their counterparts. Again, the constitution of the church places female participation as an appendix or an afterthought issue is a critical factor to confirm that female pastors in ELCZ are living at the edge of the society. While there is an increased number of ordained female pastors in ELCZ, however men continue to occupy positions of strategic importance while women continue to work in supportive roles. In essence the ELCZ is missing out on the motherly gift of leadership that women can bring into their leadership role to church. Currently the exclusion of female pastors from senior leadership in ELCZ is based on gender connotations and not on the aptitude or incompetence to lead.

### **5.1.4 Gender justice and women leadership in ELCZ**

ELCZ understood women from a patriarchal and cultural perspective. While religiously they viewed women from a historical perspective of the church. Prior studies showed that the missionary period saw no women being ordained or trained as ministers in church (Shiri, 2003). All female missionaries who came to Zimbabwe from Sweden were either, pastors' wives, nurses, teachers, or other minor

church duties. Hence, both cultural and church history agreed that a woman could not be a pastor or a leader in the church. The highest leadership post a woman could take was to be an elder as a secretary in a congregation, or any other committee.

Literature review confirms the understanding of church about women as a link from writers such as Aquinas who concur with Aristotle teaching who concluded that women when they think they think evil, and were made out of a crooked rib which is focused in the opposing direction from the man (Kasomo,2010:129). In other words, the presents of women in any society brings evil and crookedness as they are a product of corruption, thus they cannot be considered into leadership. This also linked to the missionaries who were conservative due to their Swedish background. According to Shiri (2003:42) ordination of women was an anathema for the Swedish missionaries including in Sweden too. The most significant to this idea was the testimony given by Bishop Shiri that males in Sweden (Gothenburg) one day in their responses praised their bishop for refusing to ordain female candidates (Shiri,2003:42). The Lutheran church in Zimbabwe was heavily influenced by this notion too. In his book Shiri pointed out that the same attitude in Sweden was witnessed in Zimbabwe. One African Christian (ELCZ Member) argued that if you want to ordain women why you cannot wait until I am dead, this was clear that the member was determined to see that women are not ordained. This was the same attitude that women pastors faced in different parishes as they faced resistant to their ordination functions. Furthermore, the study revealed that the church is not yet ready to vote in a female pastor into senior positions in the church. Most women in senior posts in church are occupying ceremonial posts that have less executive powers. This is in agreement with a study in Malawi that political women were found to be allocated constituencies where a party is assured of not winning. In a study carried out in CCZ women were found to be segregated

from senior leadership posts (Machingura and Nyakuhwa, 2015). The Lutheran literature helps to give the other source of such behavior amongst the ELCZ; it shows that the thinking was spear-headed by the Swedish conservative missionaries who established Lutheran church in Zimbabwe.

Hence, during the missionary era, the matter of ordaining women was unthinkable in the ELCZ. One leading Swedish scholar actually said, 'If you ordain women your church will not be blessed (Shiri, 2003:42). This is confirmed by the decisions that in 1931 the church send its first black male pastor for training and was ordained in 1937 (JB Hove) at Masase Mission. From that time until 1990 holy ministry has been associated with male figures. The study agrees with the historical perspective that has left senior church leadership dominated by male leadership since the church's inception. The study discovered that it was in 1990 that the first two female pastors thus Revds Chipo Mtombeni and Chiropafadzo Moyo, but still there was a vicious resistance from the church members.

## **5.2. Challenges faced by current female leaders in ELCZ and how do they deter other potential female leaders from participating in top/senior leadership positions in the church**

### **5.2.1 Church as a fertile ground or maintaining patriarchy ruling**

Siwila in Moyo (2018:266) concluded that the church has however become a place for the combination of patriarchal structures and biblical norms brought by missionaries and colonials. Gundlhangwa (1998), argues her point of leadership inclusive of men and women in Africa in late nineteenth century as changed the Shona solid relations. Capitalism from its early stages and through the Victorian Age expressed introduced a patriarchal notion as only male imperialists are worshipped and honored even at this 21<sup>st</sup> century. This is against the reality that a church like ELCZ has put together a powerful gender justice policy that is implemented by a stand-alone desk. ELCZ is one of the pacesetters on gender justice programs by churches in Zimbabwe. The leadership style of

mounting clergy wives to lead women groups as way of perpetrating male leadership position in the church that mentioned by Chisale (2020) points to ELCSA leadership structure is also happening in the ELCZ women leadership. All women council structures are being led by clergy wives from congregation to national. At congregation and parish, it is pastor's wife who chairs the council, at Deanery is the Dean's wife, at Diocese is Diocese a Bishop's wife up the national is the Presiding Bishop's wife (ELCZ Women/Manyano Constitution). This is organized in a way that conserves male leadership space for their husband in order to control every group in the church.

Whereas on the contrary, when the Dean or pastor is a female spouses have no specific role to do in the church later in the church structures. Unlike male clergy spouses their duties/roles are constitutional and are written in black and white. The researcher of this study once be appointed Diocesan women group pastor, she was like middle person between women and Bishop no taking decision. Bishop was/is the only one making decision at those level not even women themselves. What she experienced at that time that is where she realized the reason why female clergy can't be on top leadership of position hence all decision has to be taken by male clergy only. The researcher was at Diocesan level which is a higher position, but she could not made any decision but a parish pastor could do that without any problematic.

The above action and treatment to women leadership by male clergy fulfilled the findings of this research which says,

*if you want to ordain women wait until I am dead ...if you ordain women your church will not be blessed... and others.*

The sentiments were voiced by both laity and clergy members who determined the real position, genuine understanding and feeling of ELCZ women leadership. Whereas the church is complete when it includes women to fully participation in God's ministry. Women should take part in crucial

and calming the attitude in which all will flourish as God regulates us to do. Women must be incorporated in the documentation of what is good news for community development. Unfortunately, current trends women stories are about misery and discrimination that is harmful to the progress of the community (Oduyoye, 2001). The reality of equal in leadership is part of Fiorenza notion of “Discipleship of Equals” type that seeks to open space for both women and men to practice human caregiver to congregants. However, as per the findings, the study found out that due to the fact that ministry was never presented as a partnership between men and women roles were never viewed as the thing to be considered. Rather women in pastorate were viewed as people without same roles as their counterparts. Women in ministry are still considered as helpers of their husbands.

### **5.3 Promotion of gender justice and equality by ELCZ that empowers women for top leadership**

#### **5.3.1 Current efforts by ELCZ in promoting women**

The study finds that since 1987 when ELCZ changed its theological understanding and decided to ordain women. The denominations have been trying its best to promote women in church. Their first port of call was theological reinterpretation and allowed women to be ordained pastors, deacons and compete for senior posts in the church. However, they have not been much improvement when women compete with male pastors for senior posts like dean and bishop. There appear to be some conspiracy by the voting members to silently exclude female pastors from these positions. While the constitution has been mandated and tries to increase women participation, but it appears it gives women second class positions in the deanery, diocese, and church council. Secondly, the study found out that the church has since introduced a lot of constitutional changes in its 2013 plebiscite. It is possible to have one woman as a denary council member, diocesan council, or in Church council. In section 25 (b) it remotely state that there shall be women elected to deanery, diocesan, and church councils. The constitution is flawed as it says nothing for parishes and congregations’ elections.

Furthermore, the constitution is not clear on percentage of women in these committees. It only recommends female representation as if it is an AOB issue. It is more flawed when it comes to most senior posts like deanship and bishopric. The constitution is total silent about women presentation in these posts. A secretive lobbying is done in the dark to encourage members not to vote women into top leadership of the church. The corrupt act starts at nomination level where the pastor of a constituency sits as an electoral college.

Female pastors with master's and PhDs were never voted despite the fact that they were highly educated amongst the lists. Furthermore, the constitution also lacks on giving a direction on recruitment of pastors, in most cases it was observed that male students are always the majority despite that at times same number of applicants are observed from female and male. It appears there is a gender insensitive during recruitment exercise.

The study also discovered that the church has since introduced a gender justice desk. The desk's objective is to promote women and girls in church programs. The most positive is that male pastors have joined the program participating in it as they encourage other male members of the church to have a different view of women. The study further found out that while gender programs are being rolled out there is not much to influence change of ELCZ constitution to promote female pastors to be in senior posts. The program is just cosmetically appreciated by the church but not much change has been witnessed. One would have wanted a situation where the program and policy on gender push for a review of the church to clearly state percentages of female representation. Currently, the church has even failed to adopt the 7<sup>th</sup> Budapest LWF A assembly resolution of having 40% leadership representation of women. The study observed that out of six deans only one is female, the gender desk could have campaigned for a 50-50 in terms of deans to increase female pastors' chance into senior positions.



### **5.3.2 Current strategies to promote inclusion of women by Churches.**

There are current strategies that churches have adopted to address exclusion of female pastors. For instance, in United Methodist Church, they adopted a 50-50 sharing of senior leadership. Waylen, (2008:23) concluded that, constitutional reforms are momentous occasion towards the realization of women's participation in key leadership positions within organizations. Maphosa, Tshuma and Ncube (2015) noted that Zimbabwean government has signed, and ratified various instruments as influenced by regional and international community on gender equality. In turn churches have adopted and created constitutions that address inclusion of female members of their denominations. Machingura (2015) noted same scenario in most churches that though they have adopted and engraved new policies in their books, little has been done to advance the prominence of women especially in areas of leadership. Most churches have crafted policies and sensitization on need to include women in leadership. Madu (2014:123) appreciated that women constitute over 50% of the world's population, but their role remains insignificant in senior leadership. Despite the presence of all these good international and national policies, churches remain lagging in empowering and women participation in senior leadership. Article two (2) and twenty-one (21) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) clearly states that every individual has a right to participate in decision making of his/her country regardless of their gender (United Nations, 2015). This was introduced as a strategy to escalate participation of women in decision making boards of organizations and nations. The regional board thus SADC also created a gender protocol as per article 12:1 that encouraged member states to adopt a 50% threshold participation of women in decision making positions (SADC,2008). As a nation Zimbabwean's constitution of 2013 made it clear that women must benefit on equal opportunities as their counterpart in all domains of life. The Zimbabwean situation puts it at 41% threshold of achieving set targets as per the SADC Gender and Development Index. Morna et al (2014) observed that perceptions of the citizens in Zimbabwe is at 61% when it comes to their view about their government's commitment to gender in governance. Report on women and power (2016) indicated that most women faced with a pleated trudged hurdle to power. Their

trudged is based on scary obstacles not only to earning access to decision-making positions and processes but also to influence other women to support each other in times of need. This has made many women in different societies and organization to fail to go up the social and leadership ladder.

According to Mapuranga (2014) he observed that in AICs men dominated the religious space of these churches while women were left to occupy less important spheres or just take the position of being followers. However, women have started to salvage their lost power irrespective of male dominance which is a positive attitude through sensitization programmes. Women in AIC are lobbying their organizations to recognize the need for women leadership. Jones (2000) identifies five methods of subjugation that women in religious institutions are subjected to. Women in church are limited as they are exploited, marginalized, powerless, cultural imperialism and suffer violence from male dominance. It has been reported that in 2013 more church denominations were debating on the ways that can be used to promote participation of women in senior leadership of the organization in comparison with the 2007 status (Finca,2013). Madu (2014:213) is dismayed that:

*“Despite women’s resourcefulness, their worth has consistently been downplayed and demeaned in the theories, symbols, rituals, religious practices and structures of the society”*

However, the church pews remained largely occupied by women more than men. In that regard most minute services are largely done by women, such activities as church service and healing tasks while men’s organization are preoccupied by senior leadership roles. In addition to their claimed supremacy men take liability for spirituality of both women and men in church. While expectation was for the two organizations to work together in fighting the cancerous gender-based violence, most gender activities are being done by women organizations. Regardless, of the high numbers of women in church a large fraction of senior leadership is occupied by male ministers. In that regard male ministers are the majority in the clergy, and they dominate the clergy leadership. Throughout the world including whether first or third world, it has been noted that female members of the society are excessively burdened by high weight of poverty. Hoare and

Gell (2009) argue that women experience poverty due to deprivation and marginalization, due to this lameness those in poverty have no power to influence social processes as they lack leadership roles. Consequently, women remain trapped in a cycle of poverty for their entire life on earth. The most painful thing is that the status is inherited by the next generation of women members of our society.

#### **5.4 The perceptions of members of the community on female leaders and how this influence female exclusion from in senior leadership positions in community and church.**

##### **5.0.1 Community's response to gender issues**

The community surrounding ELCZ also weighed in with some important views on gender justice in communities. The study found out that communities were different, in other community is led by a female chief while in another community women are viewed like property and children. The observation is in agreement with Mwaniki (2018) who highlighted the exploits of Kenyan female leader Wangu WaMakeri who was credited by missionaries as 'a woman of great vigor, authority, dignity and obeyed on account of her ability...' While in other communities Sorderstrom (1984:44) noted that African tradition dictates that a woman remains a girl as long as she does not have a husband and children and it is not acceptable that a girl should teach. He further noted that according to missionary letters women were considered shy and reticent, tardy, and reserved. This continues to explain the position of women in church today.

They have been socializing to believe that they can only stand behind their husband and influence from there. The old adage goes 'behind every successful man there is a woman'. It is clear that most women have been socialized and are content to stand behind other men than their own. Previous studies by Gudhlanga noted that Shona women had power and were respected by their communities, and an example of Mbuya Nehanda the spirit medium that played a significant role in the history of Zimbabwe. She led the Shona uprising of 1896-1897 against the white settlers (Gundhlanga, 1998:

16, Ranger, 1967:2009). Mwaniki (2015) posits that in most communities' women leadership and headship are as capable as men; hence leadership qualities are human qualities and not male qualities or cultural constructions. This was observed by the study that in some communities' women still attract respects and lead their communities with all due diligence required.

### **5.1 Vision of human justice, dignity, equality, and salvation for all**

Therefore, to conclude this chapter the presenter brings some concepts from Fiorenza's theory when she explains the distinctiveness of her work as reconstructive reformist type that draws its theological power from Christian traditions of the 'Basileia' meaning the vision of God's alternative world. The hope of this vision is not to cause division in the church or the community but targeting the inclusiveness which is gender justice. The vision also calls for transformation as principal issue to come into play as the church and community need transformation and empowerment. These would prepare the two institutions to understand and appreciate the change for inclusivity leadership.

Fiorenze pointed out that to fight for theory of "Discipleship of equals" without first demystified traditional understanding of men as first-class citizenship leaders, decision makers, and heads of families, providers, and protectors. They were normally respected and never questioned for any action. According to Fiorenza, this would be fighting a loose fight, since men will adopt defensive stance and loose the valueless of "equality", justice, human dignity, and salvation for all. Instead, the combining of both concepts: "Discipleship of Equals" and Basileia would be helpful. These concepts are very powerful for the transformed community/church that would accept change and let justice take place. She further said; such a vision can be objectified and stated only in a space where women attain full spiritual autonomy power self-determination and liberation. Meaning that the concept needs a hermeneutical of suspicion approach as a total a tool whereby biblical texts are given "new" and unique meaning. Furthermore, it takes as an action that raises church and community awareness in order for both men and women to take into consideration the negative cultural sexual roles and

attitude son misleading biblical texts.

## **5.2 Gender roles and biblical view of women in ELCZ**

The bible is clear that male and female were created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27). While Galatians 3:28 states that there is now no distinction neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is not male and female for you all one in Christ Jesus. Furthermore, the bible has examples of female leadership as judges, kings and prophets and leaders of new churches. The study was in agreement with previous studies that women were seen as having family and child bearing roles. If they come to church, their role was only to support their husbands or male counterparts. According to Thomas Aquinas women have not much space to play in church since he declared that the Image of God was found in Man and not in Women (Aquinas, 1964:61). Accordingly, women were half human, for Aquinas he used the term incompleteness of God given humanity. Perhaps this is there a son the study was informed that women can't lead because they go for menstruation and male respondents felt someone can't lead in that status. Secondly, key informants indicated that they were asked to put on their duke when in the pulpit and giving or whenever leading the church. Women's roles were likened to that of Martin Luther's wife which was to bear children and look after them, and always make sure that their homes were in good shape.

Wiesner (1987) traced the treatment of women during the reformation era and concluded that the reformers saw women as less marginally important for men. Reformers ignored the intellectual and political history of women, thereby stripping away women's ability to lead the church and community. Women today have been living in the shadow of their counterparts, to the detriment of church development. This is the same situation that ELCZ is finding itself as female pastors continue to live in the peripheral to male counterparts.

### **5.3 Considering Reinterpretations of Gender equality and justice**

Some of the key terms for this dissertation were gender equality and gender justice supported by gender disparity between male and female. According to the definition given in this study and findings it shows that there are still gaps. However, the technicalities of understanding of such terms as gender equity, equality and balance is there in the clergy, but the application party of gender equality and gender justice is where the problem is. There is still high stereotype attitude towards female members in the ELCZ. In agreement with Brody (2009) who suggested that there is need to identify obstacles to gender justice, gender equality and gender balance in institutional culture is paramount in providing avenues for change.

ELCZ should take note and find a willing transformative agenda towards its policies and rules for it to achieve gender equality and balance in the church top leadership. Therefore, it is important to enable clear, shared understandings around the need for gender equality across the governance structures of the church from local congregations, parishes, deaneries, diocesan, and national level. These understandings need to go beyond instrumentalist arguments about women's capacity to lead or contribution towards the success of the church. Women's rights must be reinforced particularly those of female pastors who have been sidelined from senior leadership of the church just due to their sex more than what they can offer. Marginalization is a recipe for disaster and a seed for degrading and stereotyping of both clergy and laity female members of the church. This has highly degrading women status which misleads men and women including Christians in the ELCZ Chabwira community and other discriminated female pastors to be some objects of male pastors.

By gender justice and equality, one expects the zebra like practice which is of 50/50 participation or implementation of what the ELCZ Gender Justice Policy which says: "adopt 50% participation by women in councils, Boards and Committees to enhance their involvement in decision making"

(ELCZ Gender Justice Policy, 2015; 8). This is supported by Country's National New Constitution of 2013, on chapter 3 section 51: Right to Human Dignity and 56: Equality and Non-discrimination, the National Gender Policy, Lutheran World Federation Gender Justice Policy. Yet again, in some context however, the scripture uses an inclusive language that delegates equal power and authority to both Adam and Eve (Genesis 1:28). The LWF (2013:24) noted that the ELCZ gender justice approach brings balanced power relations. Through gender justice, they can eradicate propensities denying women to be church senior leadership. Women should be allowed to enjoy the privileges that go together with being equally created by God. Female pastors are faced with such challenges and struggling thereof to remove these obstacles to better their leadership chances in church.

Hence the church's constitution should align with the Church Gender Justice Policy in spirit and letter, meaning both documents should agree in their implementation guiding directions. Notwithstanding, the current position of the church constitution is hazy it does not specify on the inclusion of women. Instead, the statement about women inclusion is there as sort of appending of all those composed required members.

It says in 26.1.10 which is the last statement on the required composition: There shall be other four lay persons that will include one woman, (ELCZ Constitution, 2013; 30). Meaning to say women in the ELCZ women are counted as other not as underlining members. Whereas on the membership side, women are the majority church members with 75%, the findings show that gender revealed that gender as human characteristic linked to culture and to each sex has influence women space in top leadership positions in both church and society, Haralabos and Holborn (2004). In these traits men socialised to be masculinity whereas women oriented to be feminine which that became community beliefs for men and women and the church adopted the same belief and practice. In other words, the

belief became ‘gender stereotypes or gender ‘socialisation’. Elaine, (2013; 37) refers to gender as socially fabricated differences that are attributed with being female or male. It further describes the social interactions between genders in public and private platforms. Society uses gender as the yardstick to determine the dos and don’ts amongst women and men of a concerned community.

People were made to believe on some these Elaine mentioned that refers to women as of less value and object of subservient. Manion and Walter (1996), pointed that gender is the distinctive parameters that society uses to define how they interact and socialise. The sex leads a community to organise, think and function and order family roles between male and female members of the society. These are miss-influencing communities’ understandings that undermining women space. Thus, “gender can also be understood as traits, roles and behaviors that separate women from men. Always this distinctiveness is not biologically constructed but are socially and culturally created by a society to fulfill their naïve and greed agendas (Gita Sen, 2002). This understanding of gender has still to be defined and explained to people such that the illusion in most communities and church can be cleared. To clear the myth of those thinking that conflicts with God’s plans for being male and female the table below explains the differences.

<b>SEX</b>	<b>GENDER</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is in born</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begins at birth when sex known</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is biological in nature</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is cultural and social constructed</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is a permanent nature that does not change over time, if born a male or a female you are that sex for life.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Differ and depend on cultures setup.</li> </ul> <p>Each society gives its meaning as per their norms and values. These are not permanent</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Male pregnant, female become pregnant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Divides people according to per their sex on how they behave, their roles and duties that also differ as per society by</li> </ul>
	<p>society, clan by clan and individual by individual.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Female breast-feeding male cannot</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is learnt as one grows up</li> </ul>

The difference between the sex and gender pointed that; everything that is being constructed could always be deconstructed and make them into good and positive for all people. Gender if misunderstood and taken negatively it causes havoc as mentioned by respondents; that it destroys marriages. The table above shows that if considers gender reinterpretations and deconstructions of some myths attached to cultures against women space about their roles in families, communities and churches; this improves women life in public space and development.

Gender roles are responsibilities that female and male perform as per given task. Gender equality refers to equal opportunities and rights, meaning the valuing of 4+4 have the same value of 8. Gender equality is about equal valuing of men and women as per their roles as created by God. Most communities think that the subject of gender equality refers to the absence of discrimination and bias only. Gender equality encompasses and seeks to restore the original God created dignity for both

man and woman. The dignity that Eve and Adam enjoyed in the Garden of Eden is the one that the subject of gender justice seeks to restore. Whatever we are fighting today is a constructed thread over centuries by different societies. The mistakes of the past have brought wounds and pains to female members of our society. In that regard women have been blocked to reach their capacity and take leadership roles in church and society. This study aims to help church understand and regard female pastors as people who are gifted and should be allowed to perform their God given talent and abilities.

Gender equity is a process of showing accomplishments through which gender equality is reached. Gender equity refers to rational treatment of humanity regardless of their sex, creed, colour, age or profession. The objective is to restore every human being's created respect and position before God and man. Creation of two sexes was not a mistake for God. Hence, women were created not as a mistake but for a purpose. If one feels men were created in God's image the same reference should also be given to women. Gender justice ensures fairness is available to restitution for historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men operating on the same level. ELCZ if taken its gender justice program seriously as a way to improve women space by considering revision of the church constitution aligned with its gender justice police50/50 participation will be achieved.

#### **5.4 Conclusion**

This chapter the presented and discussed the critical findings in relation to relevant theories raised in this study (the Partnership of men and women by Oduyoye and Concept of "Discipleship of Equals" by Fiorenza) as the main theories of this study and the literature related. It also looked at other studies such as of Martin Luther. It also discussed the view that there is a need to reinterpretation of key terms in the light of ELCZ.

## **CHAPTER SIX:**

### **TOWARDS A CONTEXTUAL MODEL OF PASTORAL CARE WITH FEMALE PASTORS FACING EXCLUSION FROM SENIOR LEADERSHIP POSTS IN ELCZ**

#### **6.0 Introduction**

The previous chapter presented data and theories on gender justice and women leadership that informed this study. This chapter provides a pastoral paradigm on women oppression in ELCZ. It focuses on integrating core issues that have been used as factors to deny female pastors to ascend into senior positions of leadership in ELCZ. The model was built using identified blocks that have been identified in this study. The ELCZ's senior leadership and pastoral ministry have been dominated by male pastors that have overlooked the significance of female pastors in the church. This resonates with Chisale (2014) who noted that pastoral ministry was controlled by male ministers who in turn ignore gender issues in pastoral duties. Chisale's study noted that the concept of gender was understood in its cultural and social created differences. The society attributes traits and values to sexes. These traits create attitudes and behaviours of a society towards the meaning of gender justice in that society (Chisale & Moyo, 2011:72). While this study noted that concept of gender is driven by religiously and traditionally constructed beliefs between female and male pastors.

The data collected for this study perceived that exclusion of female pastors in ELCZ was due to religiously and traditionally understanding of people. This is influenced, by male dominance in holy ministry. The patriarchal strategy to have women pastors remain subjected under the leadership of males has caused senior leadership in ELCZ to remain a pie in the sky for female pastors.

Although the biblical teachings are clear that male and female cannot be differentiated anymore, Greek or Jew everyone is equal before God. The ELCZ leadership fails to embrace this biblical teaching one quality of men and women in Christian ministry. The major issue raised in the study

was the view that both male and female members of the church felt female pastors could not be leaders in the church. ELCZ held the argument that, the biblical instruction was not applicable to female leadership. The church is perceived to be associating female leadership with curse. Female ordination and leadership were seen as a vehicle bringing curse to the church. Furthermore, a section of male members was even prepared to leave the church due to female ordination and subsequently leadership. It should be noted that the study did not get evidence of male members of the church who left the church due to the decision and implementation of women ordination as pastors. They regarded the women ordination as an act of abomination that contaminated the church liturgy and the basis of this, could not participate but sought to leave. The evidence of this study noted with dismay that such threats was made by religious people. The study made it sure that it presents the factors denying female leadership in church.

## **6.1 Presenting the ELCZ Understanding of a Religious**

### **6.1.1 Traditional Gendered Pastoral Ministry Model through Theoretical Framework**

The narrative presentation helps to further understand the model of religious-traditional gendered pastoral ministry. The model was constructed out of the consideration of theories, and views of gender from historical bases of the study. ELCZ proved that pastoral leadership was not for female pastors through such statements as, “leaving the church if female ordination is allowed”. Leadership in ELCZ has no place for women, since one bishop confessed that members were clear in saying *mombe dzika tungamirirwa nehadzi dzinorasika*<sup>3</sup>, and other male pastors saying *hatidi*

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<sup>3</sup> It's a Shona language, that degrading women leadership which kills their characters considered women.

*petikoti government muchechi muno<sup>4</sup>, chechi akatungamirirwa nomukadzi inotukwa”<sup>5</sup>*. All these sentiments hipped on denouncing and demonizing against women leadership positions in the church on that matter. The basis for these views were based on the historical perspective of the church coupled with the traditional belief towards Women leadership as presented by literature of this study.

### **6.1.2 Religious-Traditional gendered and Church fathers’ views on women leadership**

The model contrasts with the church fathers’ views of women leadership. Mwaniki (2018) concluded that church fathers’ views relegated women as lacking in the image of God. In essence, they perceive women as beings who lack full humanity and run short of Imago Dei. The current model seeks to clarify this misnomer by confirming that women have full divine image. It seeks to reverse the idea of church fathers that viewed women as having no identity of God. Human dignity is an inherent gift with full dignity from God. That dignity resides in and with God in his loving act as the creator of humanity. Mouton, Kapuma, Hansen and Togom (2015) concluded that human dignity is a divine creation received from our God. This, therefore, implies that both male and female’s dignity is based on the Trinitarian rationale (cf, Børresen 1995; Dreyer 2007; Fiorenza 1983). This was transported to current members of church who thought negative about women leadership. They associated women leadership with curse to the church, as misleading the church, and that most men will leave the church if female are accepted as senior leaders. Although Martin Luther, the reformer, spoke highly about the priesthood of believers, it was not in tandem with practical implementation of the doctrine. For instance, despite that his wife was a former nun trained in theology; she was never given an opportunity to be the minister in the new dispensation outside Roman Catholic.

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<sup>4</sup> A Shona language describes women leadership as women under garments ware type of leadership.

<sup>5</sup> Another Shona language castigates women leadership if allowed brings curses in the church.

In principle Martin Luther laid the doctrinal, tradition and practices of the Lutheran movement that has its off shoots in Zimbabwe. He taught that married women's roles were for them to be home keepers, managing the affairs of their households and leave all other things to their husbands to take care of them (Luther lectures on Genesis 3:11 in Luther's works). His views were in line with Plato and Aristotle that women were child-bearers and housekeepers. Women become producers and managers of the economic life of a household, while men will take care of those issues beyond households and difficult tasks in the community. While women were believed to be managers of successful households' economic life but at the same time were relegated from being taking public leadership in society.

This echoes with Wood (2017) that women were oppressed, marginalized, and dominated by male counterparts in various occupation and social life. The theory that was built in this instance was that men are superior and stronger. Men were believed to have a superior rationality than women hence men were created by God to dominate the world that includes women. Subsequently, church fathers used religion to undermine women roles and leadership capabilities. For instance, Aristotle's teachings assumes that the male individuals were the normative expression of the human species and the female is not only secondary and auxiliary to the male but lacks full human status in physical strength, moral self-control and mental capacity.

The lesser 'nature' thus confirms the female's subjugation to the male as her 'natural' place in the universe. Since women were lesser human and not capable of reasoning, their dream should be to die and return on earth again as men and attain full humanity. Instead of the church to be a liberating community for women it became the aggressor. The church became a silent abuser of women. This subjugation of female to male persons is what the study expressed as members believed that a rue leadership is associated with male pastors. Statements such as *mombe dzikatungamirirwa nehadzi*

*dzinorasika* (loosely translated women leadership will lead the church astray). The view is both found from religious and historical foundations of the church. By going through the stages of the religious-historical gendered model the idea is to unravel all these thick layered traditions that have been imbedded in the conscience of Lutheran members in Zimbabwe. The above highlighted arguments about status of women should however provoke women mindset to pull together than pulling each other down, not supporting fellow women candidates, but rather they should be propelled to work together and use their majority to unseat men in senior leadership of the church and society. The study noted that church fathers inherited philosophers' discrimination against women leadership and handed it over down the corridors of church and periods of life of the institution.

The million-dollar question that one asks as the debate rages on is that, is ELCZ not still attached to Augustine's stance on women/men and the Imago Dei? Augustine accepted that equality is on spirituality level, but he rejects equality on physical level. Augustine cited in Clarke (1993:33) argues that man possesses the image of God is due to God who deliberately stamped him as a special favor. The image is carried in the basket of authority as such women must appreciate that gifting from God. As a result, men are subjected to no one, while women are subjected to him..." (Gen. 3:16). This resonates to Thomas Aquinas' argument for the distinction of the two sexes [men and women] and he state, "...the distinction of the sexes indicates the difference between woman and man" (Borresen1995:171).

Aquinas argues that the manner in which a female body was created shows that it was made for subordination. In Thomas Aquinas's thought, man's domination over woman is based on the primacy of the male sex, in the sense that it is considered as more perfect. Martin Luther also retained and transmitted the traditional view that women by their nature were inferior beings and less rational to men (see Karant-Nunn & Wiesner-Hanks 2003: 15). For most of the church fathers, "femaleness was

equated as a bodylines and maleness with reason” (Dreyer 2007: 1502). This suggest that men possess the virtues of rationalities as the rulers of women, and that women only possesses the virtues of irrationality as ruled. This is exactly what the ELCZ patriarchy holds.

Therefore, man is in the ‘image of God’ since he has no other human being above him, just as God has no superior but rules over everything. The woman is subjected to man; hence, she is designated as the glory of man and subjected to man (Clark 1993:35-36). The position by church father Augustine does not only denigrate women but appraises men supremacy and authority. The views of ELCZ are in synch with both Aristotle and echoed by Tertullian when he says women are the devil’s gateway, the unsealed of the tree, they are the first forsakes of the divine law; they are the one who persuaded him whom the Devil was not brave enough to approach; they are lightly crushed the image of God the man Adam; because of their punishment, that is death, even the Son of God had to die (Forester Church, 1975:90). He scandalized women when he concluded that women should cover their heads and their figure with ashes and sack cloth because of their weaknesses.

These are the ideas that this study sought to expose and give an answer on how to deal with them. It is argued that the gender-biased view of church fathers constructed the problem of masculinity and femininity in the ancient worldview which was cascaded to current era. The religious-traditional model seeks to unpack the teachings and instill a correct view of female pastors’ leadership in every level of the church. As indicated before that gender is a sensitive issue, it is paramount to note at this juncture that dealing with it should be multi-faceted. Policies can be in place, but these can fail to holistically address the pandemic. The problem of gender should be addressed at a personal level before it goes to institutions. It is personal beliefs that are built into behaviors and ideologies.

### **6.1.3 The religious and traditional model in perspective of African views**

In relationship to Elizabeth Fiorenza and Mercy Amba Oduyoye’s belief that both male and female



were called by God into ministry through baptism and that they can use their charisma to serve the church. ELCZ should acknowledge that both male and female must share and participate in the life of the church, its mission and ministry at all levels without prejudice and segregation. The theory, ‘disciples of equals’ based on the understanding that God calls both women and men by the benefit of their baptism. Subsequently, both male and female pastors were called by God to be into leadership of ELCZ. Unfortunately, ELCZ’s historical background and traditional belief has influenced the exclusion of female pastors from top leadership. The model noted that exclusion of female pastors is due to a fully understanding of the theory of disciples of equal, even the doctrinal belief of priesthood of believers that ELCZ subscribes to is equally violated.

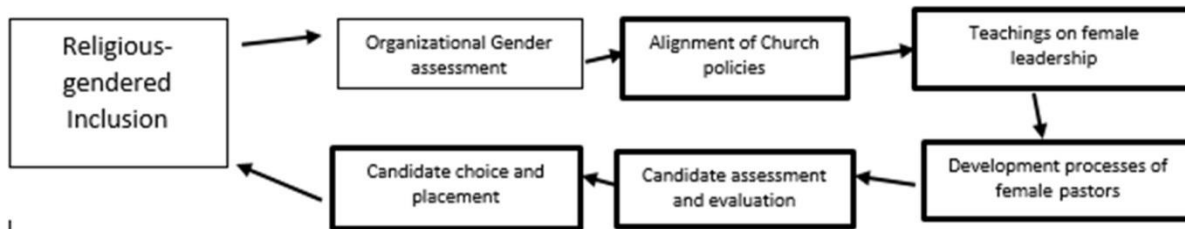
For ELCZ female pastors’ exclusion should not be found in them considering that Reformation led by Martin Luther sponsored inclusivity of both genders through the teachings of Priesthood of all believers. But the current scenario shows that exclusion of female pastors from top leadership is rampant. While female pastors testified and showed some evidence that they are capable to lead the church, however, lay women who are the majority believes their colleagues lack what it takes for them to occupy top leadership in the church. Use of religious and traditional understanding to exclude female pastors from top leadership is widespread in ELCZ. A reconstruction of the meaning of Priesthood of all believers and that God calls both men and women through baptism seek to be reinvented. The redefining of these concepts will help to better female pastors’ status and inclusion in senior posts in ELCZ.

The ELCZ defeated the hurdle for female ordination, and it is the time to deal with the giant Elephant in the room that excludes others from senior leadership in church. Fiorenza noted the plight and day-to-day struggles of women in church for inclusion in Christian ministry, that is, through ordination or those who still encounter endless problems within the ordained ministry such as acceptance and

occupying top leadership.

The model proposes six steps that ELCZ can follow in its effort to include female pastors in top leadership of the church. The interview and questionnaires indicated that there was exclusion of female pastors based on historical, religious, cultural and stereotypes that works against women to occupy senior leadership in ELCZ. Common procedure to be elected to a senior leadership is that first stage pastors within the diocese or deanery meet and recommend five pastors. The second stage is that of diocesan assembly or deanery assembly receives the five names from pastors and shortlist two names from the five names given to them. The final stage is either the diocesan or national church assembly elects one person either a dean or bishop respectively from the two short listed named. The system was condemned as encouraging discrimination and exclusion of female pastors.

First, male pastors out numbers of female pastors in the church, in most cases male pastors will prefer a male pastor leader. Hence, probability of female pastors to be in top five is always limited. Secondly, the current statue does not give clear direction on how female can equal participate. Instead, it only says the meeting shall nominate five pastors, two pastors for the post of a dean or bishop. Even when the list includes all men no one raises eyebrows about that situation. Always for several times female pastors are eliminated at deanery or diocese for dean or bishop posts. Consequently, male candidate always enjoys the participation in the final stage that will give male pastors an unfair advantage over female pastors. As indicated by one female pastor that there is no fairness in recommending, appointing, and electing of senior officers in the ELCZ. For it has gone for years without people raising the required concern. The 2005 constitution was crafted by mostly male lawyers and pastors who showed little but inadequate sympathy to including greater participation of women especially female pastors. While the constitution addresses special seats for laywomen, it runs short on giving the same privileges to female pastors. In other words female pastors in ELCZ are counted as lay women more than as equal ministers like their male counterpart.



- The first step is Organizational gender assessment; the ELCZ should assess its current gender representation in top leadership posts. This should include seeking to understand the perception of members of the church on the subject. Furthermore, there should try to identify possible hindrance for female inclusion in top leadership of the church.
- The second step is alignment of church policies; one hindrance noted in the study was lack of appropriate policies to address inclusion of female pastors in top leadership. Current policies should be scrutinized to check on their ability to fully address gender disparities. Hence, adequate, and deliberate policies should be put in place to help address the pandemic of exclusion.
- The third step is teaching on the inclusion of female pastors in senior leadership of the church. This should be done in response to the results of the first step and second step.

The stage should include issues of biblical view of gender, policies, and demystifying gender stereo type issues. At this stage the objective should be to convince the minds and perception of church members about female leadership in church. The glass ceiling type of gender policy, its lack of implementation and leadership is a critical issue that was raised by the participants. Hence, this stage should scrutinize at close range all available policies and align according to international standards such as LWF.

- The fourth stage involves the development of female pastors towards leadership capabilities. Women leadership skills should be developed as they are put into the pipeline of leadership succession. The ELCZ should have a deliberate program to develop female

pastors towards senior leadership posts. The study found out that there was no deliberate development of female pastors in areas of church leadership. It further noted that only 1 out of 3 female pastors were holders of a master and PhD degrees respectively.

- Candidate assessment and evaluation is the fifth stage where the church can put in place a committee that assess capability and skills in individual female pastors and recommend them for specific posts within the church structure.
- Candidate choice and placement is the final stage where a specific female pastor(s) is chosen to take up a post within the organization. The basis of the choice and placement should be informed by the assessment and evaluation results.

The model seeks to encourage the church to take suitable procedures to eradicate perception against women by any person in the church. Such undertaking should look at how church as an organization or enterprises deliberately look at its legislation, policies, and procedure to achieve gender justice. As per CEDAW Article 2:5 and 6 encourages organizations to remove laws, customs and practices that discriminate against women at every level of life. Consequently, avoidance of such activities will translate to an increased participation of female pastors in top leadership posts in churches like ELCZ. Adding to the (CEDAW), Economic and Social Council (December 2020) pointed that:

Women continue to experience multiple intersecting discriminations and are denied equal opportunity with men to participate in decisions affecting their lives-from public to private spheres and from high-level government decision-making to households. Many existing institutional structures and cultural barriers are inherently gender biased, prohibit gender equality, deny women's rights, and must be critically examined and radically transformed.

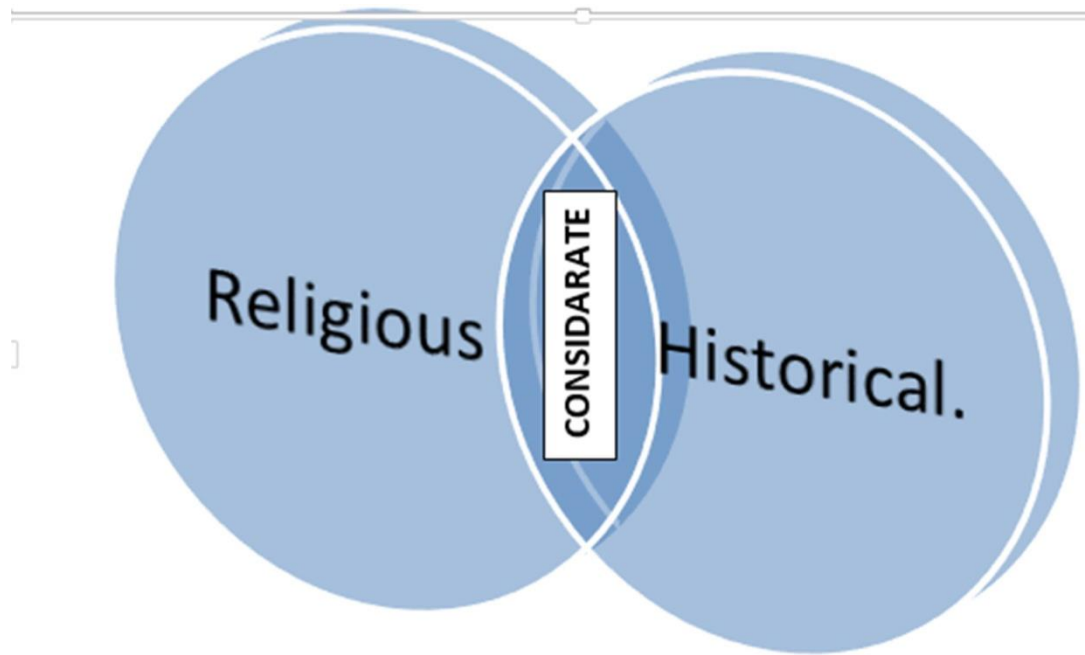
The issue of women exclusion in high leadership positions is a thorn in the flesh of both women and those who advocate for equality between men and women in society and in leadership. Therefore

religious and historical gendered, supplement each other on different ways as they lived discriminating women in the community or church. A religious-gendered pastoral model should be sensitive to religious and historical practices that are essential in making inclusion of female pastors in senior leadership a success or a failure. Religious-gendered pastoral model acknowledges that a church denomination should understand the place and role of female pastors in senior leadership of the church.

Exclusion of women based on gender in church is rampant, but it is also dynamic in its manifestation. It manifests itself through elections where the first past posts are declared the winner. This method has technical excluded female pastors in ELCZ from senior leadership posts for a long time. According to key informants a canning system of campaigns is used to deny women from senior positions in the church. The ELCZ policy on gender clearly states that discrimination of women and girls is unacceptable; and that the policy aims to bring awareness to ELCZ and its communities on gender justice.

## **6.2 Characteristic of religious-historical gendered model**

The model is propelled by two most powerful forces which are religion and history. The two components are independent premises but however they can be viewed as intertwined. Put it in a vein diagram there are aspects however that are intertwined or found in both sides. Such issues include patriarchal challenges, dominance of men over women, religious misuse of scriptures to undermine women leadership, use of historical traditions to deny women leadership, cultural persuasion to deny women their seat on senior leadership post of organization.



In all essence religious thinking and historical background of a community is the seedbed of exclusion of women from senior leadership positions in society. The church is trapped by its religious thinking and historical background that then causes it to be a center where women emancipation remains a pie in the sky. Women face the reality of glass ceiling in church as men and church community choose which scripture and history to listen to that eliminate women from what belongs to them.

### **6.3 Religion-historical gendered and women leadership**

Religion and women leadership have always been a problematic area. Chisale (2014) and Oduyoye, (2006) opined that religion is associated with sensitive feelings; therefore, there is need to handle it with care. It becomes more sensitive when it is coupled with leadership of women. Both religion and historical patterns relegated female leadership into dustbins from time immemorial. In principle gender justice is always a thorn in the flesh for most organizations and communities. The desire to meet equality and balanced power relations in senior church positions between women and men remains miles away to achieve in ELCZ. However, it is hoped that the proposed stages for

transformation in the previous section above, will help the church to realize the need for change. The reaction of ELCZ towards female leadership in most cases reflects the deep-rooted feelings driven by religious and historical background of people. It is difficult to eliminate the history and religious systems of people toward their understanding of female leadership; however, it is not impossible. What would make this a possible reality first, is solidarity among women.

#### **6.4 Pastoral Care as Considerate function that interface with Gender Justice Perspectives of women inclusion**

Religious leaders have a significant role in constructing bridges between faith and human social life, endorsing transformative procedures of communal and cultural values, norms and beliefs that eliminate oppression of women and make them feel acceptable within their community and organizations. To endeavor the suggested pastoral care as a considerate function that interface with gender justice perspectives of women inclusion, the study refers to pastoral care definition as proffered by Clebsch & Jackle (1967:4) in Lartey (2003:23) which says:

*...Pastoral Care is that activity, undertaken especially by representative Christian persons, directed towards elimination and relief of sin and sorrow and the presentation of all people perfect in Christ to God.*

While his definition and others are profound in defining the acts of pastoral care for it concerns three aspects which are elimination of sin, eliminates sorrow, and presentation of individuals to their God in a perfect state. The million-dollar question is can the church real eliminate sin and sorrow in humanity? Considering gender injustice and inequality being experienced by female pastors, is the church able to categorize it as sin and a vehicle that brings sorrow to women in church today. Are male counterparts available to accept that they are in error when they exclude female pastors in senior church leadership? According to Clinebell (1979:17-18) cited in Lartey (2003:22) define pastoral

care as.

*...Pastoral care and counselling involve the utilization by persons in ministry of one-to-one or small group relationships to enable healing empowerment and growth to take place within individuals and their relationships... Pastoral care is the broad, inclusive ministry of mutual healing and growth within the congregation and its community, through the lifecycle.*

For Clinebell care and counselling carries the weight of being inclusivity of mutual healing and growth within a society. This is the point where this study brings in the additional pastoral care of being considerate as a function of interfacing gender injustice and inclusion of female pastors in senior positions within ELCZ. The term considerate denotes thoughtfulness, understanding, kind and sympathetic to one another. One can't enable total healing in the absence of understanding and thoughtfulness about the situation. The concept of pastoral care makes sense when there is sharing and togetherness which Pembrokes (2003:17), describes as participation, discovering depth of meaning through togetherness as the relationships expressed by the preposition 'with' that is eminently inter-subjective and meaningful (Pembrokes 2002:14). Pembrokes' view of participation as the considerate to meaning -making is awakening the pastoral care and counselling implementer to be involving or inclusive. Hence, "true participation is described as a self-commitment to full immerse for the church into caregivers' in this case women situation (Pembrokes 2002:14), so that they could be able to perform their given tasks.

This study therefore has confidence in that, the absence of considerate among the helping acts packaged of pastoral care leaves a void that has led to some negligence of female pastors in churches when it comes to senior leadership positions.



It is more intriguing when Mwaura, (1994:63) pointed that; pastoral care encompasses concern of personal and communal wellness of God's community. That agrees with Biblical text in Leviticus (19:33-34), the text highlights that pastoral care is a ministry that is provided merely not by ordained pastors but by Christian community at large, therefore, leadership is not confirmed to men only. Mel Ming, (March21,2012) pointed that pastoral care in women ministry consists of helping acts by representative person directed towards the healing, sustain, guiding reconciling and nurturing of persons whose troubles and concerns arise in the context of doing, interactions and ultimate means and concerns.

Etymological, pastoral care originates from the teachings and organisations of the Christian education. Pastoral care has a Latin root, 'pascere' (to feed) and gives the best interpretation of a good shepherd metaphor. Hence, pastoral care defines the spiritually and morally sustenance of aflock (Ming, March 2012). Female pastors, due to historical and religious influence on women exclusion in ministerial church leadership, need to offer pastoral care and counselling and to consider women in leadership. Among the five critical pastoral care functions if read and implemented together with considerate will indeed bring total healing, guidance, sustainable leadership, and reconciliation and nurturing of all people in leadership discourse in-spite of their gender.

For instance, healing aims to overcome some perennials predicaments by restoring the person to wholeness and by leading them to self-belief as against to self-inferiority complex. In reality the Chabwira parish pastor and other female pastors today in ELCZ are hurt, weary and lost confident and self-esteem caused by exclusion behaviors by both church leadership and members of the ELCZ.As pastoral care has been defined as an act that seeks to increase inclusivity of a society, in case of Chabwira and other instances the ELCZ leadership has knowingly or unknowingly failed to provide the required pastoral care and counselling. Such as pastoral care and counselling would have

reduced the reactions done by parishioners and the community at large who rejected female pastor as something not Biblical. Thus, concerned pastors need healing and restoration of their wellness and dignity. Moyo (2015) argues that the church has a mandate to heal society from any form of iniquity sickness. Moyo (2015: xxiii) further noted that the church needs to heal itself and society from social iniquities such as gender is parities that are common in our society today.

As a suggested gender justice pastoral care function of this study model, consideration viewed as the function that causes and moves the contracting party to enter into an agreement by thoughtfulness of other groups with respect and love. This allowing other people chance to act and giving possibility of moving forward. Rogers cited by Lartey (2003:85) convinced that no matter how deprived the early experience of a human person, she had within her a potential and a drive to fulfill her potential. In other words that person should be given a space to perform and present her ability of doing the work. Thus, the church as the leading institution in pastoral care should be inclusively considerate. The reason why the write of this study suggested considerate as gender justice pastoral care function is because of the position of women in most societies has always been assumed to be subordinate and honor the position of men (Moyo,2018:247).

Further reasons are that were known throughout the history and traditions of the church that, “There is some form of imbalance of leadership authority between women and men”, (Moyo, 2018:247). Gender injustices that had been there for a longtime, has assassinated women characters to not to be considered into top leadership positions. This was taken as if a woman failed to achieve something is described as a failure, but if a men did the same and failed is considered as a mistake that can be corrected in future and not a failure. Gender justice consideration to pastoral caregiver, it is high time they should consider and deal with perceptions of seeing women as threat to church purity, church leadership, and church doctrine as had already mentioned in the research findings of this study, where

one Bishop said allowing women to lead the churches open spaces for the destruction of the church and distort its teaching traditions.

Which is sync with what was observed in this way of thinking is perpetrating men's superiority against women inferiority which from literature consideration of this study pointed to the early church fathers such as Tertullian, Augustine of Hippo, and other who had negative perceptions against women. Thus, ELCZ as a protestant church seems to maintain Augustine's stance in his view of being created in the image of God that was discussed earlier on in this study.

ELCZ has turned 117 years since its inception in 1903 in Zimbabwe, this is twenty first century the church should move with time, pastoral theology must play a pivotal role for the church to consider women's fully participation in high leadership position of the church. The study perceives religious and historical interplay as the basis cause of realization or non-existence of women pastors in the pastoral care. Whereas the implementation of pastoral care become successful with the involvement of women as caregivers; Phiri and Haddad (2003), argued that; the church should also critically revisit the androcentric understandings of the Bible since these understandings have contributed to the perpetuation of the view that the female is inferior, and that the latter is God-ordained. This called us to look back to this study theory of "Disciples of Equals" where Fiorenza explains critical on the *ekklesia's* new way of understanding Christian as disciples, where these disciples have the same opportunity to build an inclusive community that cares for everyone. Such a community lives a life-giving power through God and seeking justice for every person. Fiorenza gives the analogy of *basileia* translated as referring to the alternative world of justice and well-being intended by the life-giving power of God as reality and vision" (1997:12). Thus, one can say "Discipleship of equals" refers to as *basileia* discipleship that envisions for an alternative world of equality, justice, considerate and wellness. That new world of equals would only be Jesus Christ inclusive approach to his ministry as good news to the world.

The way of thinking “women-unfriendly” Bible women judgmental should be substituted by considering space for women and men in God’s church ministry and community. On the other side Phiri and Haddad suggested that; “the church membership needs to be re-educated to undo the problematic education received from the traditional male leadership and its teachings” (Phiri and Haddad, 2003, 125). Hence, education should be geared towards women empowerment and could entail the following expect: the redefinition and transformation of the African culture in a way that will be life-giving to all members, both women and men Phiri and Haddad 2003:125). This concept by the two Phiri and Haddad is relevant to the two theories of this study “Ministry as partnership of both men and women” and “Discipleship of Equals”. If the church as the pastoral caregiver could be considerate women as important player in God’s ministry as they are the majority in many churches. Pastoral care giver such as Christian community must be considerate, whether is a cry or contributions. Regardless that, some domination groups in the society suppress or insurrection, or turnouts which are the suppression of evidence even if they are aware of the truth. Whereas Clinebell (1979) although had not use pastoral care considerate as one of functions in his list, he points that; human potentials approach to the helping process that defines the goal. That is facilitating the maximum development of a person’s potentialities, at each life stage, in ways that bestow to the growth of others as well and to the development of a society in which all persons will have an opportunity to use their full potentialities (17-18).

One of our church Bishops gave a speech at his retirement farewell day he reiterated said; “This world is a stage where everyone should be given an opportunity to be on the ground and play” Although, he was referring to his end of term of office, I took it as also meaning that even women should be given the opportunity to play the role of top leadership position.

#### **6.4.1 Considerate for empowerment**

Moyo (2015:58) observed that pastoral care as a model encompasses empowerment. Empowerment signifies something good, something valuable and something helpful to a society. When consideration is used as a function in gender issues its empowerment will be thoughtful and understanding of priorities more than exclusion of another person(s). Empowerment implies not weaknesses but rather some pre-existing strength upon which one builds...the task of pastoral care is the drawing out and building up of the unnoticed strengths and resources within and around people and communities, (Jack Messenger, 2004). Yet again, Empowerment according to Jack, refers principally to Gods hearing power (*dynamism*) with people for participation in God's assignment. God empowers distinct Christians and the whole church through the leading of the Holy-Spirit and contributing of spiritual gifts compulsory to carry out the holistic work of the church. That is the church paralleling God in the world and sharing his love equal. The last part highlighted by Jack is vital for considerate for empowerment. Jack, 2004, 35-36) pointed that:

The Holy Spirit empowers the church to resist misusing power as 'power over' others and to walk in the way of Christ, where power is shared with all. In the church, every baptised believer is endowed with a special gift for mission, for mutual up-building and encouragement. Whether they are being male or female, lay or clergy, young or old, all their gifts are to be developed, appreciated, and availed. If we are concerned to promote the good life through pastoral practice, it therefore follows that we should be Bringing a moral perspective to bear on pastoral practice thus involves more than thinking about the who has power or on professional basis of the pastoral relationship or the content of pastoral discussions. Pastoral practice, informed by a vision of the good life, that should inevitably involve critical reflection considerate on the social context in which that practice takes place and be inclusive (Kotze and Kotze 2001).

This type of inclusive and considerate church could nurture and par witness of God's of unconditional love. Every individual talent would be recognised regardless of sex; hidden gifts would be availed and developed for the benefit of God's work/Church. It is the view of this study that a proper consideration should be put in place to deliberately empower female pastors in ELCZ as they seek to occupy senior positions within the church. The previous chapters clearly showed that very few female pastors have been academically empowered, as most of them are still diploma in theology holders. Empowerment entails the adoption of educational and dialogical methods in facilitating the achievements of their goals. It will be a disaster if churches like ELCZ do not consider, considerate as a function of gender injustice as it interfaces with faith, historical background and religious beliefs.

#### **6.4.2 Considerate as healing model**

Considerate should be viewed as a therapy. The Greek word *therapeo*, brings in the concept of healing. Therapy therefore presupposes that something of has gone wrong and caused improper functioning of an organism. In this case the body, the soul and the spirit of female pastors has been injured they need a therapy. Moyo (2015:55) argues that some malfunctioning has or is occurring in the smooth and proper running of things. The task of ELCZ today is to eliminate all forms of illness, sin and sickness that have encroached the church to a point that it has remained deviant from recognising female pastors as disciples and ministers with full rights to occupy senior position in the church. While acceptance of ordination of female members as pastors was a great decision for ELCZ, it is with great sorry that the church thought it has arrived, while the truth is that the 'march is still on' for female and women at large to achieve their fully rights and image in church leadership.

Hence, these researchers argued that most intersectional issues form the experiences of women in the church such as of being castigated by the community running to the church and it also closed its doors. Whereas the church is supposed play a pivotal role of providing "a true asylum and a regular setting for group therapy and an objective mediator between perceptions of experience of black people and

the messages of the wider social system” (Gilkes, 1980, p. 31). This is expressed by a culturally specific group of psychology of black religious practices with the aim of expressing their pastoral care in unique practices, that is therapeutic. Gilkes also pointed that the therapeutic act offers four purposes: (1) “the articulation of suffering”; meaning the church must be pro-active on issues of human suffering and apply healing remedies. (2) location of persecutors; meaning church as means of caregiver to its members and community should be considerate of both the victim and persecutor for pastoral care. (3) provision of asylum for “acting out”; and provide protect (4) validation of experiences. She also offers the alternative way that improves self-esteem and role continuity ...” Where religious practices heal mental health suffering (Gilkes 1980:31). Women in the ELCZ seek all 4 therapeutic action applied hence, there unhealed wounds they got as they were excluded from senior positions in the church in various ways. The church should consider healing processes that will stitch together the deep wounds and lasting hurts that women have suffered over years. These have been caused by men’s greed for power and have in the process prejudiced and discriminated female pastors in ELCZ from participating in decision making positions (Jack, 2004). Whereas Ramsay referred the church as the center of pastoral care; they argued that pastoral theology incorporates biblical and religious resources to update a faithful use of secular psychological understanding. The interactive sciences are unified into the practice of care in ways that preserve the integrity of a particular theological or biblical perspective” (Ramsay, 2004).

## **6.5 Conclusion**

The chapter presented the gender-religious historical model that presented steps for ELCZ for it to address the exclusion of female pastors from senior leadership. The suggested gender justice pastoral care model comes as a way of to do away with the gender justice discrepancies prevailing in the church. The model sought to propose procedures that ELCZ should follow in analyzing their current gender status and how they can address it. This was drawn in pursue of the need to eradicate exclusion of female pastors in ELCZ from senior post. Therefore as the write is about to concludes this study in the next chapter she hope reader would take care of the suggested model and apply.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN:**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **7.0 Introduction**

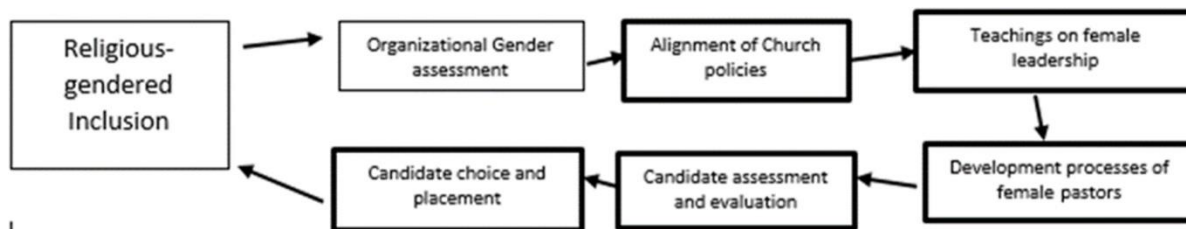
Chapter seven presents the summary, recommendations, theoretical implication and possible areas for further studies. These are presented following the order of the findings and objectives of this study. In addition, the chapter provides policy suggestions and research implications, recommendations, and suggestions for further studies.

#### **7.1 The findings and conclusions of the study**

The research's main objective was to explore the reasons for the exclusion of female pastors from occupying senior leadership posts in ELCZ. This has resulted in a serious inequality gap amongst female and male pastors in the ELCZ. The study has revealed that both female and male pastors were aware that there is exclusion of female pastors in senior positions in ELCZ. A total of 36 participants took part in this research.

Female pastors in ELCZ are disadvantaged and disempowered by the patriarchal systems in the church and community. Consequently, they are struggling to grow in leadership due to unending patriarchal obstacles on their pathways. The historical-religious gendered model of pastoral care that was developed from this study can be applied to church denominations especially those in the same scenario with the context of ELCZ. Its main argument is for the church and community to be considerate. The model uses six steps of investigating the current status and development of female pastors in church: as shown in diagram below.





Therefore, the church should understand its historical perspective and religious believes then be considerate about the situation of female pastors. As they seek to address status of female pastors in ELCZ. The study concluded that while ELCZ has allowed female ordination and accepted all LWF policies on gender justice. However, the denomination has not been able to eliminate fully the problem of exclusion of women from senior leadership in church. Participation of female pastors in church leadership is cosmetic. In reality historical and religiously the church continues to exclude female pastors from senior leadership in the church today.

The study further concluded that ELCZ viewed women as part and parcel of men’s property. Female pastors who were married also to pastors indicated that their husbands would look at them as a housewife who is meant for household chores. In the presence of their husbands, they would find it difficult to exercise their pastoral duties.

The study concluded that the challenges faced by female pastors in parishes are due to male dominated leadership and which is also connect to the sociological constructs of gender dynamics in societies. For instance, the first female pastors were denied access to patronages and some pastoral activities based on the biological makeup. In some instances, they were ordered to put on certain dressing during church services. Furthermore, some female pastors were even told not to preach or teach sacraments when they are on their menstruation period. Female pastors were thrown to the deep end with or without the support of male leadership. Parishes picked the patriarchal stance and denied female pastors to exercise their pastoral duties. The church did not adequately support female

pastors in introducing them into parishes as they were sent and fought their way in alone. The study noted that the leading persecutors of female pastors were other women in the church and few other men. This was clear that when people are socialised into something it is difficult for them to accept a new freedom. Instead of women in ELCZ to celebrate their victory, they rather went out to persecute and support exclusion of other women in church. The trend has continued even when election times comes as women members of the church clandestinely get into ' *silent exclusion/conspiracies strategy*' with men to exclude female pastors out of top leadership of the church.

The study noted that there is a '*silent exclusion/conspiracies strategy*' against female pastors when it comes to voting and appointing of pastors to senior leadership posts in church. The '*silent exclusion/conspiracies*' has seen qualified female pastors losing votes or were overlooked for certain senior posts appointments through unclear circumstances. Surprisingly, male pastors with lower qualification as compared to female pastors however find their way up into senior positions. This goes against the doctrine of meritocracy as for female pastors no one to consider their capability and ability. This is the reason why male pastors with or without certain attributes can be voted or appointed ahead of female pastors.

The study established that the ELCZ has however become a place for the combination of patriarchal structures and biblical norms brought by missionaries that excludes female pastors from senior leadership. This is against the reality that ELCZ have put together a powerful gender justice policy that is implemented by a stand-alone desk. Female pastors in ELCZ remains excluded from senior posts through a technicality called elections. ELCZ female pastors are on the edges of society and due to their absence from senior leadership it has left them with limited influence in decision making processes of the church.

The study noted that even the church has associated female pastors with evil and misfortunes. Sentiments that if female pastors were to be leaders the church will be cursed were revealed in this study. Such were the findings that cause this study to conclude that patriarchal tendencies are always showing its ugly face in ELCZ. Although biblical teachings are clear that human beings were recreated in the image of God both male and female.

The study settled that there is lack of female pastors' empowerment from academically and skills soon after their ordination. As the statistics showed that most female pastors were still holders of diploma certificate seven years after completion of such level. The study concludes that the desire of male pastors to further their academically qualifications is that they see opportunities ahead of them in church that comes by acquiring higher qualifications. While female pastors don't see such due to the current '*silent exclusion/conspiracies*' on appointment and voting systems in church.

The study established that there is a serious disregarding and lip service on observation of gender justice in ELCZ. This study helped to uncover the fact that church appears to be the worst culprit when it comes to gender justice.

The study noted that ELCZ ratified all LWF decisions on gender equality. However, the study concluded that the implementation of these decisions is weak and absurd. As a result female pastorate in church still remains an eye sows.

The study therefore concluded that it is only through a considerate pastoral approach that can help to reverse all the ill experiences of female pastors today in ELCZ.

## **7.2 Policy Suggestions, Practice, and Implications**

The study concludes that the exclusion of female pastors in senior leadership positions in ELCZ is caused by multiple factors, from historical and religious thinking. Some of these various issues

include among other, the question of policy implantation. Hence, to achieve female participation in senior positions in ELCZ, the study makes some policy recommendations to the policy making boards of the church.

- **Review of ELCZ Constitution**

All other policies revolve around the main constitution of an organization. In relation to the policy implications, the current gender practice and theoretical underpinnings and policy encourages on-segregation of women in church leadership. However, the study concluded that the ELCZ's constitution of 2013 has a cosmetic approach on the subject of gender justice in top leadership. It puts women inclusion in leadership as an appendix, for instance, at deanery, diocese, and national boards. The constitution is silent about participation of female members only to indicate as an appendix of other members of these boards. Such members do not hold significant portfolios rather they are members without portfolios. At deanery council members level 21.1.6 says:

*'Chairperson each from the Youth, LLSF, Witness, Women and other such organs or committees as may be deemed necessary to ensure adequate and equitable representation of all interested parties' (ELCZ Constitution: Section 21; Para 21.6).*

The section 21.1.1 up to 21.1.5 states those who should be elected without mentioning sharing of these top five posts. In 21.1.6 like in many instances women are included in others who constitute the deanery council. Key words in the paragraph that looks down upon women are 'other such organs'; 'may be deemed necessary'. This may mean a deanery council can decide after seeing it not necessary not to elect these four individuals of which one is a woman.

Diocesan council, Section 26 stipulates that there shall be diocesan council of interest is paragraph 26.1.9 that says:

*Six lay persons, one of whom shall be knowledgeable in law and another in accounts.*

*Of the remaining four, one shall be a youth and at least two others shall be women*

*(ELCZ Constitution: Section26; Para26.1.10).*

Again, this constitution group women with youths and helps to explain the patriarchal nurture and influence of the ELCZ. Women are counted on the remaining seats that are non-essential to the diocesan council.

This is the same tone even at church council the highest administrative board of the church it says ‘five other people.... these people shall include representatives of the men, women and youth organizations’ (ELCZ Constitution; Section32.1.5).

Let us note that these referred to subsections are for the general Christians and pastors. Specific paragraphs that will see female pastors becoming Deans, Bishops and General Secretary are not there. The only paragraph found in the constitution says, the Deanery or diocesan pastors shall meet to short list five names of pastors who are eligible for the post of the Deanor Bishop (ELCZ Constitution 67.2.1&69.3.1). It is categorical silent of the gender of these pastors to be shortlisted. These sections are silent on inclusion of female pastors in senior leadership of the church. Due to such adverse gaps there is need to revise the ELCZ constitution to address these gaps.

There is need to review the ELCZ constitution and push it to stipulate gender balance in elections/appointments for senior leadership in the church. The current constitution is cosmetic in promoting gender balances; female leadership is mentioned in sections such as 21.1.6; 26.1.9and 32.1.5 as an appendix. The justification is that a suggestion for a constitution and policies that are considerate to gender equality will improve the outcome of these elections as it will allow participation of women in senior leadership of the church.

- **Full implementation of LWF**

Herewith, after observation that ELCZ has adopted LWF principles of gender justice, the study recommends that ELCZ adopt and fully implement all necessary commitments in its endeavor to achieve gender equality. The spirit to empower all women and girls in church and allow them to enjoy their human rights and fundamental freedom will be a developmental issue more than a mere right.

- **Policy election and appointment**

ELCZ is recommended to undertake comprehensive reform to eliminate laws, policies, regulations and conspiracies that excludes women from senior leadership. ELCZ should develop policies that appreciate qualifications of female pastors and allow them to participate in decision making platforms. The ELCZ should introduce quarter system between male and female pastors in senior positions. There should be equal representation amongst the senior positions in church at a 50/50percentage.

- **Policy on recruitment of student pastors**

The study noted that presents of policy weaknesses, culture, socialization, norms and values, very few women are in senior leadership positions as compared to men. This can be as a result of weak recruitment policy of students' pastors. Always male students are the majority and at times it will be an all men show. This then reduces the opportunity of female pastors to be voted into senior positions. Therefore, the study recommends that equal number of students between female and male should be recruited and sent to college for pastoral training.

- **Sensitization of ELCZ members on gender equality importance**

ELCZ should put much emphasis on their members to recognize the need for gender equality when electing members to leadership of the church. The current program on gender is donor sponsored; hence, buy-in of members is depended on the donation. There is still a gap on acceptance of female

members as leaders of the church. It has been observed that most members in church academically appear to be conscious of gender injustice but do not sufficiently value the involvement of female pastors in senior leadership in church. The study therefore recommends for a sensitization program to be embedded in church lectionary to help mainstreaming gender teachings in the ELCZ. The attitudes and resentments of members of the church towards women should be stopped. Church members should, however, embrace female pastors' leadership and inspire female pastors to further their education as a way to sharpen their leadership skills.

- **Empowerment of pastors**

The study recommends that ELCZ should create an empowerment vehicle that provides a targeted support to female pastors. Special scholarships and grants can be created and sourced and granted to female pastors as a way to further sharpen their skills and capacities. This will enable them to be able to compete with their counterparts for senior posts that may require specialized skills. A special quarter system is recommended that female pastors are given first preference to international scholarships and bursaries such as ELCA, LWF and LUCSA. By this effort the church will help in building confidence of female pastors rather than destroying them

### **7.3 Contribution and theoretical implications of the study**

The study's findings are important as they contribute to increased knowledge, as there is a dearth of leadership research in church, particularly which deals with female pastors' exclusion from senior leadership in church. The study was influenced by the writings of Oduyoye's and Fiorenza. The two theories have been tested in ELCZ where they also helped to expose the hegemonic patriarchal character of excluding female pastors from senior leadership in church. The study revealed that some men threatened leadership with moving out of church if women were to be ordained. Some compared leadership of women with that of cattle by saying 'a cow cannot lead a head of cattle for it will not

lead others to a drinking water source'. Therefore, the current study's findings complement the prevailing literature and further provide understanding on how women are excluded from senior leadership in church and society. The study tested both the limitations and strengths of existing theories on gender made a case for their contextualized reading in the light of religious institutions.

#### **7.4 Recommendations for further research**

- This study researched on female pastors without looking at their marital status and how they are treated on leadership. Hence, further studies are suggested that looks at how single/divorced/widowed female pastors are perceived and treated when it comes to senior leadership in ELCZ.
- This study was delimited to ELCZ only a further studies suggestion is proposed to include other protestant church denomination that have missionary background. To find if the same treatment on female pastor sexist in other churches.
- This study used a qualitative methodology approach which is limited as saturation of data was achieved after some few interviews. Further studies can be done using a mixed approach that will enable qualitative and quantitative approaches to support each other on areas of weaknesses.

#### **7.5 Conclusion**

This chapter looked at the findings of the study, and in the same vein drew conclusions based on the findings. It further provided the recommendations centered on the findings and conclusions to the study, implications to theories were raised and further areas of possible studies were indicated. These were observed through limitations of this study.



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Vol. 5(8), pp. 261-270, December 2013 DOI: 10.5897/JASD2013.0245 ISSN 2141 -2189 ©2013 Academic Journals <http://www.academicjournals.org/JASD> Journal of African Studies and Development Full Length Research Paper The feminist discourse and the development of a civic virtue in Zimbabwe: *Case of Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA)* Jephias Mapuva Bindura University of Science Education, Faculty of Science Education, Department of Geography (Development Studies), P.O. Box 1020, Bindura, Zimbabwe. Accepted 22 October 2013

**APPENDICIES**

**Appendix 1**

**SEMI-STRUCTUREDINTERVIEWS-Church Leadership**

This survey exclusively prepared for scientific purposes in the framework for the Doctorate research at the University of South Africa (UNISA), Department of Practical Theology and Philosophy. The research is oriented towards **Gender inequality among ministers in the Evangelical** Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe (ELCZ): A Pastoral Paradigm on Women Oppression. The expectation ist hat your experience will contribute to the best source of the solution gender inequality among ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe. We kindly require you to freely respond to this survey.

We assure you that your answers will be strictly kept anonymous. Therefore, your name and your address do not have to be written on this survey.

Please write the response that corresponds with your opinion by filling in the empty space  
(.....)

**Section A: Background**

- a.) Gender.....
- b.) Age.....
- c.) Position.....
- d.) Marital Status.....
- e.) If married how many children do you have.....
- f.) Are you living with them.....



**Section B:**

**A1)** Have there been any situations where women were excluded in leaders or not to be in a leadership position in your church?

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**A2)** (Explain)

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**2b.)** What measures did you take as a Church leader to resolve this situation? Explain.

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**2c.)** According to your observations as church leader does there a good working relationship between male and female pastors

Yes/No.....

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**2d.)** Are you ready as a Church leader to confront this issue of leadership inclusion in church and community?

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Can you briefly give highlights on the case experienced by one of the female pastor who was refused to enter parsonage on her first deployment, because was a female at one of Mberengwa parishies.

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## Appendix2

### SEMI-STRUCTUREDINTERVIEWS-Communities

The expectation is that your experience will contribute as the best source of the solution gender inequality among ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe. We kindly require you to freely respond to this survey.

We assure you that your answers will be strictly kept anonymous. Therefore, your name and your address do not have to be written on this survey.

Please write the response that corresponds with your opinion by filling in the empty space (.....)

- 1. What is your comment on *the issue of women subordination to men/ their husband?***
  
- 2. What position do you have in the community or in the church or both in community and church?**
  
- 3. Do you see any need for women to be leaders of the church or society and perform the same duties/roles as men? (If yes or no give reasons).**
  
- 4. Have you ever experienced leadership of a female compared to that of a male (You may explain your answer).**
  
- 5. Do you see any need to train women clergy when you are a cleric? (You**

**may elaborate)**

- 6. What would be your greatest discomfort when women take-up a leadership position in the community?(You may clarify your answer)**
- 7. Do you have any interest for Church leadership position?(You may explain why)**
- 8. Is it comfortable for you to take orders from woman leader at utmost?(You may explain further)**
- 9. What would be your opinion for those churches who do not accept women in the ordained ministries? (May you elaborate?)**
- 10. What would be the advantages and disadvantage for including women in high leadership positions?(Explain)**

**Advantages**

**Disadvantages**

**11. What suggestions do you want to contribute to those people who do not accept women leaders?**

**12. (You may list and briefly explain the suggestions).**

*Thank you*