

# **Analysing Gender Inequality in Decision Making Positions in the Public Administration of Zambia: A Case of Selected Provinces of Zambia**

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## **Abstract**

Gender inequality is a grave issue that impacts nearly every society, but it is particularly prevalent in African countries. Because of its cultural orientation, which is designed to promote male superiority and female vulnerability, Africa tends to be more affected by this issue. Discrimination and harassment between people or groups of individuals in this case, men and women leads a condition of inequality that contributes to gender inequality (International Labour Organization, 2018). Like all developing countries, Zambia ratified the Vision 2030 accord, which calls for equal representation of men and women in senior management roles within the public sector.

Aiming to analyse gender inequality in the public administration of Zambia, the target population of this Article was selected from various public officials, government departments, ministries and non-governmental organizations with a sample of 300 respondents selected for the thesis. This comprised a review of government ministries, permanent secretaries, directors, senior government officials' government officials serving in the public administration. In addition, 35 senior officials were purposively sampled as key respondents from selected government Ministries (18), non-governmental organisations (12), and Members of Parliament (5). For the respondents, both structured as well as semi-structured questionnaires were employed to acquire qualitative data. In-depth interviews using interview guides were conducted with key respondents. Numerical arithmetical package was used to analyze information, while content examination adopted during analysis of non numeric information deriving from the interviews with key respondents.

The research further notes that parity is having an equal number of men and women working and leading at all levels and sectors of public administration is a crucial element of gender equality in public administration. The representation of women in management roles needs special consideration. It is "a matter of the full enjoyment as social rights, social justice, and necessary condition for the better functioning of a democratic society" to have gender parity in public decision-making. In nations where women make up a large portion of the public administration workforce, women are frequently less likely to rise to positions of management and leadership.

**Results of this research revealed that gender inequality was a serious problem in the public administration in Zambia despite having a clear National Gender Policy framework that was being implemented at the level of government. Especially the case with regard to the occupancy positions of influence in the public administration. To this end, the study results revealed that despite an appreciable number of women having requisite expertise to provide actual results, major gaps in having equal numbers of males and females in decision-making positions of the public administration in Zambia. In addition, the study noted that women faced challenges such as women in decision-making positions not being comfortable to consult on matters for fear of victimization, sexual abuse by male managers and women not supporting fellow women that were in management positions. Ironically, the study revealed that respondents at the lower levels were not aware of this glaring gender inequality, at the national level, with most of them holding the view that there was gender parity in public decision-making positions.**

**In conclusion, the study has noted that despite the ongoing implementing of the National Gender Policy strategies such as the 50/50 threshold in all decision-making positions, the Policy implementation has not reached the intended targets hence women have not progressed in having equal employment opportunities and attaining management positions.**

**Keywords: Employment, Gender inequality, Gender Policy, Equality, stereotype, Decision making position, Imbalances and Public Administration**

## **BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

Gender inequality refers to the unequal treatment and opportunities experienced by individuals based on their gender. It is a pervasive form of inequality that affects societies worldwide, and it intersects with other forms of inequality such as class, race, and sexual orientation (Wood, 2015).

Gender inequality refers to unequal treatment or perceptions of individuals based on their gender. It arises from differences in socially constructed gender roles as well as biologically through chromosomes, brain structure, and hormonal differences (Wood, 2005). WHO define gender as “the socially constructed behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women?”

According to UN, gender is “the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context/ time-specific and changeable. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a women or a man in a given context. In most societies (Kishor, 2006).

Gender stereotyping has been a powerful discourse that has contributed to the historical global issues of women's underrepresentation in management settings (Dunn, 2014; ILO 2016. Despite a number of global declarations it still remained that women in leadership positions were far behind compared to men. Hence, to examine the gender goals outlined by the Beijing Conference in 1995, UNESCO called a World Conference in 1998.

It was discovered that the primary objective of promoting women's advancement into senior leadership roles was not met globally. More than 189 member nations adopted the Millennium Declaration in September 2000 during the Millennium Assembly. The document outlined priorities, including specific and time-bound development targets. By 2015, eight targets were pushed for global fulfillment. Measuring the extent to which more women are assuming leadership roles in public administration was one of the metrics associated with these objectives (UNESCO, 2017). Progression of females' empowerment and balance in management being vital to the growth and development of society as a whole. From a developmental standpoint, developing gender-sensitive policies and democratic governments depend on equal involvement in decision-making structures. As mentioned in the introduction, females continue to encounter a variety of obstacles that impede their ability to advance into senior management roles, particularly public administration (Matoane, 2015).

Globally, while women's employment rates are increasing, significant gender gaps persist in employment, with women earning less than men and holding fewer senior positions, and it will take almost two centuries to achieve equality at the current pace. Thirty years after the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action set out an ambitious agenda for equality, women still face significant barriers in the economy, according to a new International Labour Organization brief (Focus 2030).

There has been some progress towards gender equality in public administration, one place to start is by gauging extent on how female input public administration overall. The closeness of women's and men's share of public administration to gender parity signals the degree to which public administration is representative of the broader society it serves. Looking at the global average of women's participation in public administration over the years between (2015 – 2020) the percentages stood at 46 percent in 139 countries, Compared to the 2014 global GEPA report, where women averaged 37.6 percent of public administrators in countries (2006–2012), progress towards gender parity around the world is notable. Using any data available in each year also supports this upward trend: women's average share of all public administrators increased from 44 percent in 2010 to 49 percent in 2020. Even considering only the countries included in both the 2014 global GEPA report and in this report, women's participation in public administration still grows over time from 38 percent to 42 percent (Beaman, 2012).

Substantial global variation in women's participation in public administration still remains low and globally, Pakistan and Democratic Republic of the Congo have the lowest share of women in public administration in the world, at 6 percent and 7 percent, respectively. The countries with the most women in public administration are Lithuania, with 77 percent women, and Russian Federation with 73 percent women. Gender imbalance in public administration workforce remains pervasive. Less than one third (32 percent) of countries are at or near gender parity in public administration overall. Globally, it is more common for women to be underrepresented, which occurs in 39 percent of countries. There is a high degree of women's under-representation, or women are nearly excluded from public administration. To the extent that women are underrepresented, public administration is not tapping into the full potential, capacity and creativity of its citizenry. Given that, in many countries, public administration is the single largest employer, women's under-representation in the civil service also undermines their economic security and empowerment, which are influential drivers of sustainable development and economic growth (Alexander, 2018).

On the occasion of International Women's Rights Day, in 2024, Focus, (2030), took a closer look at the state of gender equality around the world (International Labour Organization, 2023).

The international community as a whole committed to achieving gender equality by 2030. However, the many global crises underway are a stark reminder of the urgent need for coordinated action to promote equality worldwide: women and girls are disproportionately affected by armed conflicts, pandemics, climate change and economic crises (International Labour Organization, 2023).

In 2024, no country has achieved gender equality. One in three countries had made no progress since 2015, and the situation of women has even deteriorated in 18 countries, such as Venezuela, Afghanistan and South Africa. At the current rate of progress, it will take any years to achieve gender equality worldwide (International Labour Organization, 2023).

In other words, the feminist struggle will either be international or it will not be. There is need to focus on what's at stake, because women's rights are under threat all over the world. In this context of widespread backlash, France, by becoming the first country to inscribe in its Constitution the guaranteed freedom for women to have recourse to abortion raises the hopes of many feminist movements around the world for the preservation and expansion of sexual and reproductive rights and health (International Labour Organization, 2023).

Despite employment gaps between women and men narrowing from 27.1 to 23.1 percentage points since 1991, women's employment rates remain far below men's, with only 46.4 per cent of working-age women employed in 2024, compared to 69.5 per cent of men. At the current pace of progress, achieving equality in employment rates would take almost two centuries.

While more young women are pursuing education and training, this has not translated into significant labour market gains. Women hold just 30 per cent of managerial positions globally, with only a modest improvement over the past two decade that is according UN Women 2024.

Women continue to be over-represented in low-paid sectors like nursing and childcare, while men dominate fields like transport and mechanics. They also continue to face lower average earnings and fewer paid working hours globally and are over-represented in informal employment in low- and lower-middle-income countries ([UN Women, 2024](#)).

In Africa, while there's progress in some areas, significant gender gaps persist in employment, with women scoring 50.3% in equality across economic, social, and public representation areas, according to the Africa Gender Index 2023 ([UN Women, 2024](#)).

Women in Africa are closer to reaching equality with men today than they were four years ago but the continent is only halfway toward achieving gender parity. That's according to the *Africa Gender Index 2023 Analytical Report* released by the African Development Bank Group and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA, 2024). The findings of the *Africa Gender Index 2023 Analytical Report* show that women in Africa score just 50.3% in equality across economic, social, and public representation areas, which is a slight improvement from the 48% score in 2019 (Economic Commission for Africa, 2024).

The report found a 1.5% increase in women's representation to 24.4% in 2023 compared to the last edition. However, women continue to be underrepresented in parliaments, ministerial positions, and private leadership roles (Economic Commission for Africa, 2024).

The economic area has seen a decline in gender equality. Women's economic parity dropped from 61% in 2019 to 58.2% in 2023. While men and women experienced economic setbacks during the reported period, women were disproportionately adversely affected (Economic Commission for Africa, 2024).

In Zambia, the idea of gender inequality is widely held and is based on ingrained social and cultural norms. Constitution of the nation supports customary law in addition to men's discrimination against women and the general public's ignorance of women's rights is a significant contributing factor to the fixation on gender inequality. However, there have been consistent advancements made in the area of policy toward gender equality (Papers of UN, 2014).

Efforts to improve the implementation of the gender policy as a department was not recognized as (Ministry of Gender) until in 2012 under the patriotic front government. After the 2021, general elections, Ministry of Gender changed to a (Gender Division) under the office of the President, the Permanent Secretary was appointed to lead the Division and reporting direct to the President. The restructuring is still going on to suite the new dawn government's agenda, following organizational reforms in the (Eighth National Development Plan (8NDP) 2022-2026).

The participation of women in politics, the Presidential running mate played an important part in the government's management from 2016 to 2021 and also in the current government. When compared to neighboring nations, however, the total participation of women is rather low, with the percentage of female members of local assemblies and parliament being as low as 6.3% and 11.5%, respectively (United Nations Development Programmes, 2017). This has continued with coming of the new government following the August 2021 elections. Although the Vice President is still a female, but Female parliamentarians are still very few.

In the World Economic Forum's 2015 Worldwide Gender Gap Index, Zambia was rated 116th out of 145 nations. Zambia is ranked 102nd in the world for political empowerment, a measure of women's engagement in politics. Zambia is ranked 135th out of 187 nations in the UNDP's human development report's Gender Equality Index, indicating that the country has a relatively low position when it comes to women's empowerment in 2016. One of the primary causes of these outcomes is the low involvement rate of women in management.

Women made up 11.5% of Members of Parliament (MPs) and 6.3% of local council members elected in the general election of 2021, which is still far short of the 50% target set by the Community for the Development of Southern Africa (SADC). According to reports, Zambia will have 13% of female Members of Parliament (MPs) in 2021, placing it 11th out of the SADC nations that were included in the survey. According to [www.parliament.gov.zm](http://www.parliament.gov.zm), the United Party for National Development pledged to provide women 30% of their seats; however, this promise has not been fulfilled.

In light of the above, the Zambian government adopted the National Gender Policy in early 2000 and was later updated in 2015. The goal is to guarantee that women and men, girls and boys, and those with disabilities have equal access to and distribution of national resources. Among these laws are the



National Gender Policy, the Gender Equity and Equality Act No. 22 of 2015, and the 2016 Zambian Constitution. It is a strategy to incorporate men's and women's concerns and experiences as a crucial component of designing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating policies and programs in all political, economic, and social domains in order to stop gender inequality from persisting (National Gender Policy, 2016).

In Zambia, there is a serious problem with the distribution of men and women in positions of decision-making. Women still encounter several obstacles when trying to access and participate in decision-making processes, even in the face of all the efforts made to advance gender equality and women's empowerment (Matoane, 2015).

One of the main areas where gender inequality persists is politics. Women in Zambia are significantly underrepresented in political positions, such as national and local levels. Despite making up almost 51% of the population, women occupy less than 14% seats of the National Assembly. Likewise, female's representation in local government is also limited, with only around 15% of councilors being women. This lack of gender balance undermines ability of women influence policy, decision-making processes that affect their lives (JICA, 2012).

Socio-cultural norms and stereotypes have influence on gender gap in decision-making positions. Traditional gender roles and expectations often prioritize men's involvement in politics and decision-making, while women are expected to fulfill domestic and caregiving roles. This creates a dynamic where women's political aspirations are discouraged or overlooked in favor of male candidates. Discrimination, gender bias, and negative perceptions of women's leadership abilities also pose significant challenges for women who strive to pursue political careers (JICA, 2012).

Another factor that perpetuates gender inequality in decision-making positions is limited education and economic opportunities for women. Inadequate quality education, particularly in rural areas, hampers females' capability to attain the necessary skills and qualifications needed for leadership positions. Gender gaps in employment and income levels further limit women's economic empowerment, making it difficult for them to engage in politics or decision-making roles (JICA, 2012).

Gender inequality in decision-making positions needs multi-faceted style. It involves creating an enabling environment that promotes gender equality, changing societal attitudes towards women's leadership, and implementing policies that support women's political empowerment. Some strategies that have been implemented in Zambia include adoption gender quotas, training programs for women in leadership, bringing to light issues about females's rights, and encouraging women's participation in political parties (Matoane, 2015).

Efforts to address gender inequality addressing decision-making positions in Zambia have yielded positive results but remain an ongoing challenge. Recognizing significance of women's perspectives and participation in decision-making processes is crucial for achieving more inclusive and effective governance in the country (Matoane, 2015).

Demonstration of females in positions of management in the public administration in Zambia is a significant concern. While there have been efforts to help working on gender inequality and promote gender mainstreaming, there remains a substantial gender gap in leadership positions (Longwe, 2014).

Based on 2020 World Bank data, women hold just approximately 35 percent of senior and middle management posts in Zambia's public administration. This suggests that women are notably underrepresented in positions of authority and decision-making. The reasons behind this gender disparity in management positions in the public administration are complex and multifaceted. Some of the factors contributing to this include cultural norms, societal expectations, limited to education and training, unconscious biases, and discriminatory practices (World Bank, 2020).

Zambia has implemented initiatives encouraging gender equality and empowers women in leadership positions. For example, the government formulated the National Gender Policy, which aims increasing females' involvement and representation in decision-making bodies, including the public administration (World Bank, 2020).

The government has established organizations such as Ministry of Gender and the Zambia National Women's Lobby Group, which advocate for empowering females, gender equality, and increased participation in decision-making processes. However, despite these efforts, the progress in achieving gender parity in management positions in the public administration has been slow. To further manage this issue, it is crucial to continue implementing policies that promote gender equality, provide equal education and training opportunities for women, and challenge discriminatory practices and biases (World Bank, 2020).

Promoting a more inclusive and diverse public administration not only improves gender equality but also enhances decision-making processes, governance, and overall development of the country. Moreover, it is essential to recognize the numerous benefits that come with having balance in positions of management in the public administration. This diversity of thought can lead to more comprehensive and effective policy development, better representation of diverse needs and interests, and improved governance outcomes (World Bank, 2020).

Having more women in management positions also serves as a powerful symbol of progress and balance in society. It challenges traditional gender roles and stereotypes, demonstrating that women are equally capable and deserving of leadership roles. This can inspire and encourage future generations of women to pursue careers in public administration and other traditionally male-dominated fields. (World Bank, 2020).

The gender gap in management positions, it is crucial to focus on several key areas. This will enable women to acquire the skills and qualifications necessary for advancement in their careers. All can be achieved through awareness campaigns, advocacy, and education that challenge stereotypes and promote gender equality. Furthermore, creating supportive policies and programs within the public administration can help reduce the barriers women face. This includes measures such as mentorship programs, flexible work arrangements, and policies that promote work-life balance (World Bank, 2020).

It is crucial to continue monitoring and measuring progress to ensure accountability. Regular data collection and reporting on gender representation in management positions can help identify areas for improvement, track progress, and inform targeted interventions. Achieving gender equality in decision-making roles requires a comprehensive approach that addresses structural barriers, cultural norms, and biases. By promoting and empowering women in leadership positions, Zambia can create a more inclusive, equitable, and effective public administration (World Bank, 2020).

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The year, 2013 saw more women being appointed to various positions of decisions making positions at various quasi government institutions such as Energy Regulation Board and the Independent Broadcasting Authority. This can be attested by the Seventh National Development Strategic Plan of vision 2030 which states, “leave no one behind” meaning in whatever is being done with regards to decision making positions no one should be left out.

However, despite all those efforts Zambia is far from getting rid of the disparities in gender roles as can be observed by statistics in most higher positions and women are still very vulnerable and experience physical, psychological and sexual violence that far exceeds any traditionally acceptable.

Despite the fact that, women have made significant strides in employment and decision making, there is still a wide gap when it comes to the number of women and men in that regard. Therefore, participation of women in employment is increasingly being placed at the heart of the continental and regional agenda both in terms of policy and practice (NGP, 2018).

Women still face imbalances in participation at decision making level in the Public Service and are given lower positions which do not have much influence in decision making which goes against the Gender Policy Vision 2030 that calls for 50% representation of both male and female in decision-making positions.

Bg Hence, this study to analysis Gender inequality in positions of influence in the public service.

## **RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The general aim of the study is to analyse the factors that may help to explain gender inequality in public administration in Zambia especially with regard to the occupancy of decision-making positions.

### **Specific Objectives**

1. To identify the measures put in place to reduce gender inequality in public administration in Zambia
2. To evaluate the progress made in reducing gender inequality in public administration in Zambia.
3. To examine reasons that account for gender inequality in decision-making positions in public administration of Zambia.
4. To determine challenges women face in decision-making positions in public administration in Zambia.

### **Research Questions**

1. What measures have been put in place to reduce gender inequality in public administration in Zambia?
2. What progress has been made in reducing gender inequality in public administration in Zambia?
3. What are the reasons of less females in management positions in public administration in Zambia?
4. What obstacles do women in Zambian public administration face when they hold positions of decision-making authority?



## THE RATIONALE /JUSTIFICATION OF THE RESEARCH

This research is important for policy recommendations and information for future research because it is aimed at analyzing the Gender inequality in Public Administration then come up with an evaluation results that can help to address gender inequality that exist especially in decision making positions.

It is also important in that gender equality issues are intrinsically linked to sustainable development goals, therefore it is necessary to bring this to the realization of human rights for all.

## SIGNIFICANT OF THE STUDY

1. The significant of the study is directly to benefit Zambia by drawing attention to the gender inequality issues in public administration and by accelerating efforts to achieve Vision 2030, which calls for achieving 50/50 female representation in decision making positions aiming to close this gap.
2. The study first determined most effective way to achieve gender equality in Zambia.
3. It also examined gender disparities in Zambia's public administration to highlight the shortcomings of previous attempts to assurance that men and women officials are equally represented in positions of decision-making.

## EXPLANATION OF OPERATIONAL TERMS

1. **Gender inequality** refers to unequal treatment or perceptions of individuals based on their gender.
2. **Gender Policy** it is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
3. **Decision making position** is a responsibility given to an employee who makes challenging decisions that impact the organizational operations.
4. **Employment** the state of having paid job
5. **Gender imbalance** this is the proportion of males to females in a given population.
6. **Public service** is a service intended to serve all members of a community

## DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study was carried out in public service in the following provinces: Luapula; Central, Copperbelt and Northern. The primary focus of the study was on gender inequality in Zambian public administration. Senior and lower level public service officers were among those who received the questionnaires.

On the other hand, information was gathered from Lusaka for the in-depth interviews with important stakeholders, which included female lawmakers, representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other senior government officials from six (6) chosen ministries.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The Longwe, S. Open Lecture – Zambia Open University (2014) revealed that, the percentage of women in higher levels of decision making in Zambia compared from early years to nowadays at administration level is moving at a very slow pace. She made mention of the position of the permanent secretary which

in 1985 was at 5 percent and rose in 2011 by only 12 percent. In 1964 there was no woman in the position of director of government in the ministries, but by 2011 there was 23 percent representation.

Understanding that, while gender equity aims to level the playing field so as to achieve gender transformation and gender equality, women's empowerment is a process that lays the groundwork for achieving gender equality. Gender equity and women's empowerment are therefore essential to achieving balance equality, given the above explanation of the complex relationships between gender equality and these issues (Daily Telegraph, 2015).

Globally, women are under-represented in leadership (Stelter, 2002). Research done by the European Commission (2010, p. 3) reports that “today only one out of ten board members of the largest companies listed on the national stock exchange of European Union (EU) Member States is a woman and progress has been slow in recent years.

Despite these efforts, there are still challenges and political threats faced by women in decision-making positions in Zambia. One of the key challenges is the persistence of traditional gender roles and stereotypes, which often limit women's access to political power (Mukuka, 2013).

Zambia has implemented several measures to increase women's representation in decision-making roles. For instance, the government has introduced legal frameworks such as the Electoral Act and the Gender Equity and Equality Act, which aim to promote women's political participation and representation. These laws mandate that political parties ensure a certain percentage of women's representation in their party structures and candidate lists (Mukuka, 2013).

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **Inequality Theory**

Disparity theory try to make some kind of biological differences that are sufficient and necessary to persistently cause inequality between sexes and puts men at a commanding and dominant position.

### **Women in Leadership Theory**

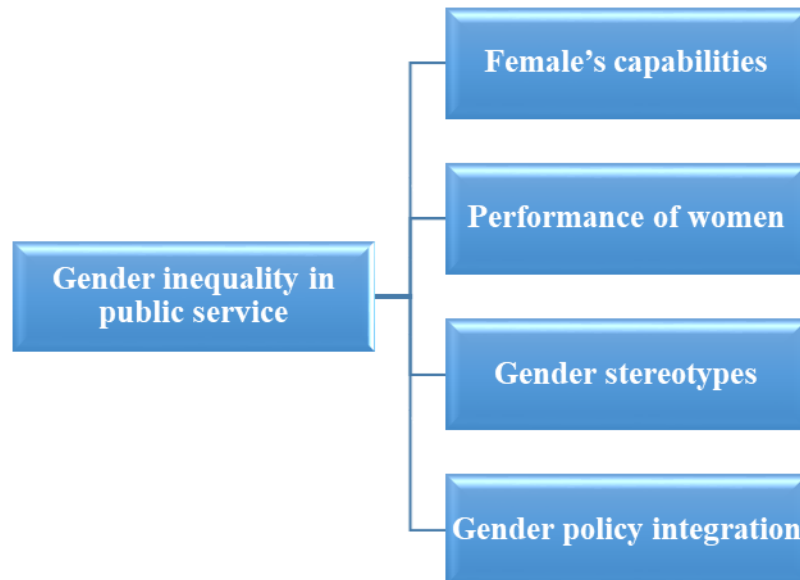
Leadership is acknowledged by Algozzine, Yselldyke and Campbell (1994) as a key variable associated with effective schooling and the establishing of women policies.

**Personal Factors Theory.** In an attempt to explain why there aren't enough women in senior management positions in the public and private sectors, feminists present three major theories

**Structural or Institutional Factors Theory.** The perspective that women's disadvantageous position in the organizational structure low numbers, little power, and restricted access to resources defines and shapes their behavior and positions is supported by the structural or institutional factors paradigm.

## **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The conceptual framework of gender inequality in the public service is covered in this section of the study, along with strategies for addressing the issues by ensuring that mainstreaming is carried out across the board. It contextualizes the mainstreaming strategy within the accomplishments of gender equality.



## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

### Philosophical Underpinning

**Positivists** contend that phenomena should be isolated and that observations should be repeatable. Predictions can be made on the basis of the previously observed and explained realities and their inter-relationships.

**Interpretivists** contend that only through the subjective interpretation of and intervention in reality can that reality be fully understood.

**Ontological Position.** Helped the researcher to be as objective as possible with regard to the discourse relating to the study topic. In effect, this position reflects the researcher's appreciation of the many and varying explanations that may be responsible for the study's research problem.

**Axiological Position.** The recognition of this position was very critical to the study given that all sections of the thesis document needed to reflect the researcher's value attached there in.

### Research Design

The study applied a descriptive survey design to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. It was appropriate as it described the state of affairs as they existed.

**Study Population and Sample** The study population was government officials in selected towns in Luapula Province, Central Province, Copperbelt Province, Northern Province and Lusaka Province. The study also focused on Members of Parliament, Female Members of Parliament, Provincial Ministers, Permanent Secretaries and Senior Department Directors, the National Assembly of Zambia, and the African Women Leadership Network.

The second category of participants involved representatives of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) namely: Women in Law and Development-Zambia (WILDAF-ZAMBIA), Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (CSPR), Women for Change, and NGOCC.

### **Sample Size**

This study used a sample size of 300 respondents from NGOs, MPs, PS, senior government officers and also lower positions officers from the public service in the five (5) selected provinces of Central, Luapula, Northern, Copperbelt and Lusaka Provinces.; due to their geographical location data collection was easier to collect because these provinces are next to each other.

### **Sampling Procedure**

The study used a simple random sampling method and purposive sampling method. This was made possible due to the availability of the sampling frame which was obtained from the provincial administrations. Purposive sampling method was used on PS, MPs, women in management positions and positions of influence to give their view on gender inequality in the public service.

Simple random sampling procedure was used on respondents in the public service.

### **Data Collection**

The study collected both fresh and already used before sources of data.

**Questionnaire:** The questionnaires were hand delivered to the respondents, who in turn self-administered them.

**Interview Guide:** Interview guides were used to collect data from some key respondents in selected government ministries, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and members of parliament.

### **Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments**

The researcher tested the validity of the questionnaire by doing a pilot study which was conducted in the ministries of agriculture and local government which had been selected for study. The results of the pilot study test were analyzed for clarity, consistency, accuracy and relevance using hypothesis testing independent variables to the dependent variable. Changes were made to the research instruments by reconstruction or removal of the unclear or irrelevant items.

### **Data Analysis Methods**

During the analysis of descriptive data, the researcher used frequencies, standard deviations and means. The study also used Pearson's correlation to determine any relationship between independent and dependent variables.

This study used Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) to do data analysis after sorting and coding of the raw data and findings presented in form of Tables and Figures.

Data collected from important stakeholders or respondents who were interviewed using interview guides was analyzed using content analysis. Data from the interview guides was coded manually and presented in the form of themes.

### **Ethical Considerations**

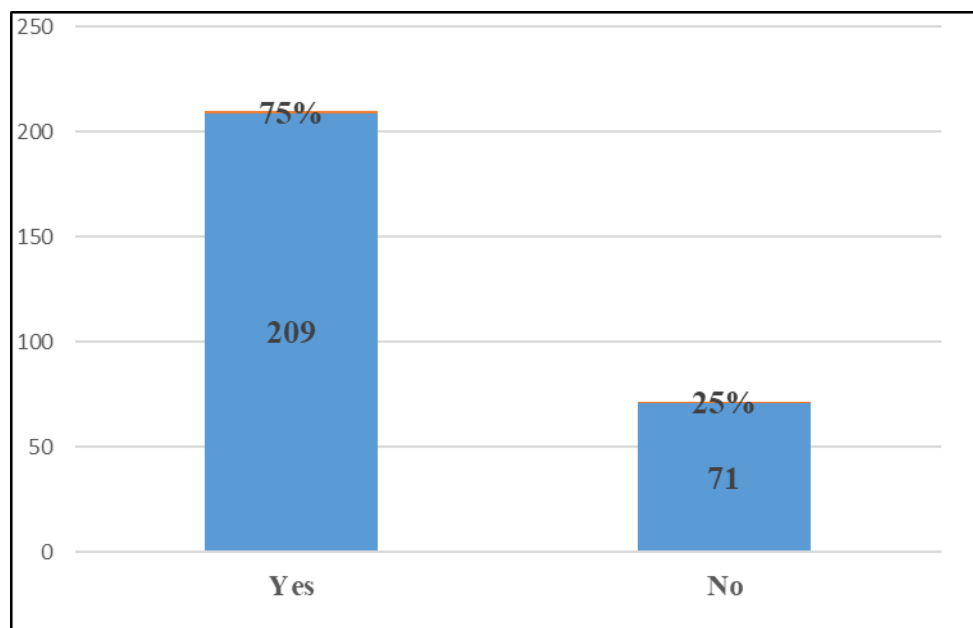
Information obtained from respondents was solely for the purposes of the study. During the study, permission was sought from provincial administration and participating government agencies where data was collected. The study considered sensitivity of the issues under investigation and data collection, therefore, was structured in such a way that respondents were not required to provide their personal details.

## DATA PRESENTATION

### Whether Zambia has Adequate Strategies for Addressing Gender Inequality in Government Institutions

Figure 1. below showed whether Zambia has adequate strategies for addressing gender inequality in government institutions, majority of the respondents (75%) agreed that Zambia had adequate strategies for addressing gender inequality in government institutions and (25%) indicated disagreed that Zambia does not have adequate strategies for addressing gender inequality in government institutions.

The findings demonstrated that the respondents were aware that the National Gender Policy, which has been in place since 2000, has effective strategies in place for addressing gender inequality in government institutions. Following the gender policy's adoption and execution, a number of women have held positions of decision-making and achieved some success. The findings are shown in figure



Zambia does have a gender policy in place and has been used to implement strategies in gender equality in decision making positions. Despite having a clear gender policy most ministries staffing levels are not fairly being practiced with regards to decision making in the public administration.

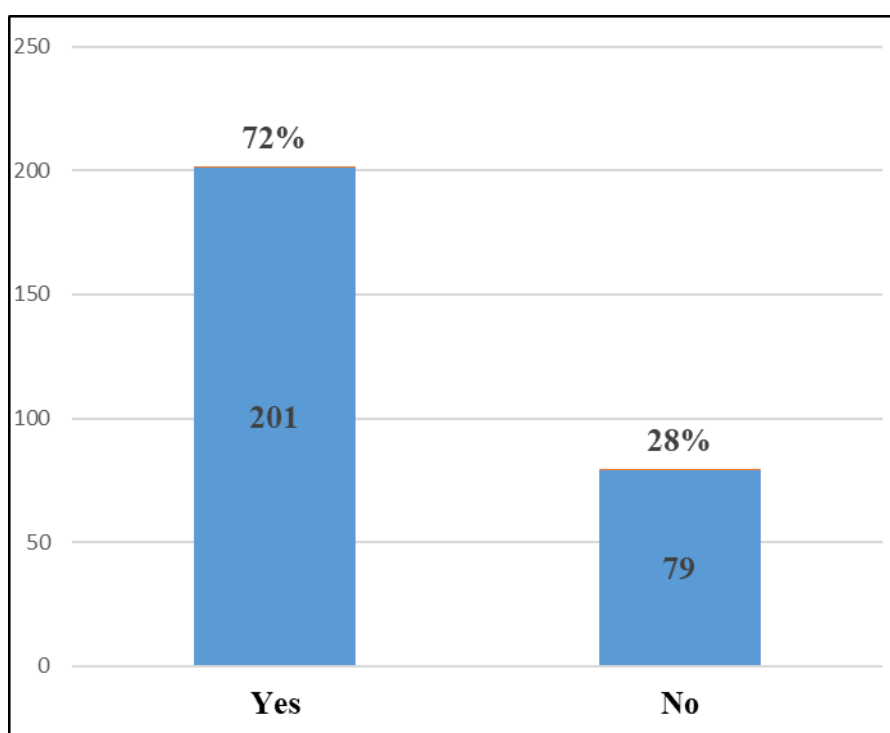
### Whether Women Serving in Public Institutions and Decision-Making Positions Still Face Challenges

Figure .2.: showed whether women serving in public institutions and decision-making positions still face challenges, majority of the respondents (72%) agreed that women serving in public institutions and decision-making positions still face challenges and (28%) disagreed that women serving in public institutions and decision-making positions still face challenges.



From the findings on the results, it was observed that women in decision-making positions still face challenges and these challenges have negatively affected women's progress in decision making positions.

**Other section of respondents** indicated that women in the public service lack role models and dominance of leadership in males. Gender inequality laws and policies have not fully been implemented despite being in existence, with most women there is inadequate energy to overcome technical challenges, women lack adequate information or knowledge on how to coordinate the organization more especially on leadership management, and women lack of recognition by subordinates when given a management position.



The following hypothesis was tested:

*H02*: There is no relationship between imbalances in participation and gender inequality in the public service

*H1*: There is relationship between imbalances in participation and gender inequality in the public service

Using bivariate analysis – Pearson's, the following are the results

## Relationship between Imbalances in Participation and Gender Inequality

		Gender inequality	Imbalances in participation
	Pearson Correlation	1	0.420 <sup>**</sup>
Gender inequality	P-value		0.008

	N	280	280
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Association is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

### Correlation Coefficient

The results as tabulated in table showing a positive relationship ( $r=0.420$ ) between Imbalances in participation and gender inequality. At 1% level, the  $H_{02}$ : “There is a relationship Imbalances in participation and gender inequality” was rejected,  $p=0.008$  ( $p=0.008 < 0.01$ ). Therefore, there is a significant relationship between imbalances in participation and gender inequality.

### Relationship between Gender Policy Integration and Gender Inequality

The following hypothesis was tested:

$H_{03}$ : There is no significant relationship between gender policy integration and gender inequality

$H_{11}$ : There is relationship between gender policy integration and gender inequality

Using bivariate analysis – Pearson’s, the following are the results

			Gender inequality	
				Gender policy integration
	Pearson Correlation		1	-0.098
Gender inequality	Sig. (2-tailed)			0.547
	N		280	280

Source: Author field data, 2020

### Correlation Coefficient

The results as tabulated in table indicates that there is a negative relationship ( $r=-0.098$ ) between gender policy integration and gender inequality. However, the relationship was not statistically significant at 5% level ( $p=0.547, > 0.01$ ).

Therefore, fails to reject the  $H_{03}$  and  $H_{11}$  was accepted, there was a relationship between Gender policy integration and Gender inequality but not scientifically significant.

### Discussion of Findings

1. The study revealed that the government had implemented policies that promoted equal representation of men and women in important decision-making roles within the public sector, with the goal of expediting the implementation of the gender policy.
2. On the strategies to address gender disparities of females in management positions in Zambia, respondents suggested that there was a need to speed up the 50/50 threshold in decision-making positions.

3. When looking at the number of women that had been selected to stand as Members of Parliament by their respective Political Parties in the August 2021 general elections, in Zambia, it was clear that only a few women would eventually be appointed in decision-making positions of the next cabinet after the elections since the adoptions of candidates was male-dominated. These are factors that improve women's competitiveness in politics in Zambia (ibid.). The findings of this study amongst female members of parliament also talked about the importance of confidence and highlighted to being denied opportunities to achieve their goals in politics.
4. Findings of this study concerning the enabling circumstances for women's political participation were consistent with other studies. According to Moser and Scheiner (2012), on a general level, not only in Zambia, the strength of women's movements and gender quotas affect women's possibilities to get elected (Moser & Scheiner 2013).
5. The respondents indicated that a number of measures were implored to ensure government is held accountable in the implementation of the gender policy:
6. The NGOs usually engage the head of state with regards to the appointment of women in various public offices and cabinet.
7. It was revealed that the NGOs recently wrote to the Republic President, His Excellence Hakainde Hichilema, to declare their disappointment on the small number of women that had been appointed as cabinet and provincial ministers.

## CONCLUSION

### Measures in place to reduce gender inequality in public administration

- i) The study established that there were some measures to address gender inequality in the public administration which were being implemented through the National Gender Policy and Seventh Nation Development Plan such as the appointment of women in decision making positions.
- ii) The study also concluded that Zambia was still very behind in reducing gender inequality in the public administration because little was being done to lessen the gap between male and female despite having enough policies on gender inequality which were developed by government in partnership with various NGOs to promote gender equality.

### Progress made in reducing gender inequality in public administration

In this study, it was concluded that the public administration had adopted gender equality focused frameworks despite the fact that gender policy integration was still predominantly biased towards women in public administration.

### Reasons of gender inequality in the public administration

- i) In this study it was concluded that gender policy **integration** in the public administration and **level of experience** were the reasons of gender inequality in the public administration.

### Challenges women face in public administration

- i) The study established that challenges faced by women in the public administration were associated with the **slow implementation** of 50%/50% representation threshold of both men and women in decision making positions.
- ii) The **lack of support** and **clear roadmap** of various policies on gender inequality frustrated women in the public administration.
- iii) Other challenges included women not supporting fellow women in decision making positions, sexual harassment and gender stereotypes from males who think they cannot deliver or deserve to be in certain positions.

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### Recommendations based on the findings and conclusions

- i) Continuous education and awareness on Gender equality
- ii) Speed up the 50/50 threshold in decision making positions by making deliberate
- iii) Strengthen the law against sexual harassment, discrimination and Gender violence
- iv) Creation of a monitoring system in the implementation of Gender Policy strategies.
- v) Campaign for legal reforms on Women Participation in Zambia
- vi) Ongoing Investment in Capacity-Building and Networking for Women Leadership

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