

BREAKING THE GLASS CEILING FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: WOMEN LEADERSHIP IN ZIMBABWE

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to contribute knowledge of how women leadership operate within patriarchal constraints to sustainable economic development in Zimbabwe's private sector. Women participation in leadership is increasingly becoming topical, not just for sustainable development but also given their opportunities for empowerment, expression, agency and emancipation. It appears that women in management are negatively affected by the context of socio-cultural tradition in their operations, and that to succeed they need to overcome barriers of patriarchy. The study explored ways of how this can be done in the business sector and move beyond the glass ceiling. Qualitative research was employed in the form of document analysis whereby documents were interpreted to give meaning and voice around women leadership particularly in the private sector in Zimbabwe. Factors historically affecting women leadership and how they deal with challenges of inequality, patriarchy and discrimination are complex manifesting in different levels of culture, social and institutional, personal identity (macro, meso and micro levels). Women need a paradigm shift that strikes a balance between their managerial business roles and their domestic commitments to effectively break the 'glass-ceiling.' There is very little known in this area except for the public sector whose statistics are not publicly available. The study contributes knowledge and adds value to women in business in Africa, academics, women organisations and policymakers.

Keywords: Patriarchy, Barrier, Sustainable Development, Leadership, Private Sector.

INTRODUCTION

The world over, women represent a larger pool of managerial endowment that is available, but at high levels of managerial positions whether in public administration or business their presence remains rather unnoticeable (Rosener, 2009). It is further argued by Rosener (2009) that today; although women occupy more positions in management they do so at the lower and middle levels. Wirth (2001) observes that in the past few decades some women have been able to attain levels of education equivalent to their male counterparts. Regardless of these educational qualifications, most of the women are still relatively working in jobs that are lowly paying coupled with poor upward mobility prospects (ILO, 2004). Competent and qualified women see through the "glass ceiling" and can tell their ability to achieve what men have achieved, however they are prevented from breaking through by some invisible barricades (Wirth, 2001)

Most of the determining factors for women leadership are located in how the macro-level, meso-level and micro-level individual elements interact among themselves (De Bruin et al., 2007; Henry et al., 2015). The interdependence of such factors is identifiable even as one distinguishes these different levels (De Bruin et al. 2007). How the positioning and specific

context determine the women leadership experience according to Langevang et al. (2015) seems to have been miscalculated (Van-Eerdewijk & Mugadza, 2015). The conclusions made by Fayolle et al. (2015) resonate with conclusions made by De Bruin et al. (2007) who suggest that the present theoretical discourse on women leadership overlooks possible disparities of gender in the private enterprise. This shows the need for balancing the different views on women leadership from diverse contexts. According to Mboko & Smith-Hunter (2009), some of the business tactical conduct could be ascribed to environmental factors. Perhaps, a mixed approach sensitive to the degree of differences in the effect of macro-level, meso-level and micro-level aspects may enable a study of women participation in leadership (ILO, 2009). The factors included in the level of micro-individuals comprise factors such as motivation, identity and individual agency. These influence individual opportunities and capabilities. In this domain, the extended and nucleus family play a significant role as well as some other contacts in the social circles. The account of various levels for analysis as being interrelated suggests that private enterprises are historically or factually (macro-level) and socially or collectively (meso-level) embedded, but also individually negotiated and constructed from a micro-level (Jamali, 2009).

Zimbabwe's population is made up of nearly 52% of women (ZimStat, 2012) with the potential of being the main players in the country's sustainable economic development. The country is largely a society that is patriarchal where women and men have different societal roles even at home. These societal roles reinforce the cultural and social norms which define the interplay between women and men as well as determining the rights, the power to make decisions and resource allocation. Although the Constitution of Zimbabwe has a provision for a women's quota of 18 % to participate in democratic governance, the level of women participation in positions of decision making has generally not been significant (UNDP, 2010). While there are no available statistics in the private sector for women with executive positions, common knowledge provides that in the private sector the representation of women in leadership is far less in comparison to the public sector, let alone those in executive positions. Traditional practices, economic and vestiges of colonial policies of education have leaned towards supporting men ahead of women. For instance, during the colonial era, the remuneration for women was not at par with that of men doing the same work up until the early years of post-independence. This disparity is due to the view that women may not be as effective as men owing to their roles which are multifaceted (UNDP, 2010). Notwithstanding all the headway made through legal and policy reforms, the 1998 Country Analysis Report produced by the United Nations Development Programme portrayed the nation as a society that is highly unequal with women representation in the private sector's level of decision making quite low particularly two decades after attaining independence (UNDP, 2010). Later, the government began removing those practices and laws that discriminated against women, signed and ratified international conventions or protocols in the region that supported gender equality goals (Baden et al., 1999). In 2008, the Southern African Development Community's (SADC) Gender and Development Index placed Zimbabwe at a threshold of 41% in its ability to achieve targets set concerning women participation in governance issues (SADC, 2008). This improvement is corroborated by the International Labour Organisation's 2015 Global Report on Women in Business and Management (ILO, 2015) whereby Zimbabwe is seen to have had 20.6% women share of management in both the public and the private sectors. However, Zimbabwe's attempts to promote the empowerment of women appear not to be noticeable regardless of its value being acknowledged by the development partners, women organisations and government. Several interventions by development partners and government have been made from independence

including the attempt to establish cooperatives and a women's bank. Even with the increase in gender sensitivity, women have continued to experience hurdles in their desires to scale up the leadership ladder and occupy senior positions of management in various institutions. Given this context, this study explores women leadership in Zimbabwe and issues affecting them in their bid to break through the glass ceiling to enhance sustainable development. This study investigates a new relationship coming from various concepts as a theoretical contribution (Salamzadeh, 2020).

Motivation and Gap Analysis

Globally, the fight for recognition by women can be traced back to the foundation of the various United Nations conventions, laws and treaties as they were introduced to defend and support females. A Commission responsible for the status of women was introduced by the United Nations in 1946. The United Nations proposed various social, political and economic measures to deal with the main causes and potential consequences of discrimination that females experienced worldwide. By 1967, the United Nations adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women commonly known as the CEDAW (CEDAW, 1997). The preamble of CEDAW suggests that discrimination against women still exists. Article 1 of the Convention defines discrimination as any restriction, exclusive or distinction predicated on sex basis between women and men in terms of fundamental freedoms and human rights in the cultural, social, economic and political spheres. In the region, SADC launched the Protocol on Gender and Development Articles together with Protocols on the African Charter on Women Rights both meant to promote females because since the colonial era women have been subordinated and not well recognised. At a national level, after independence, Zimbabwe realised the significance of both women and men contribution to the socio-economic development in every sector (Chabaya et al., 2009). Gender equality is provided for in section 17 of the national Constitution with the whole Ministry of Women Affairs created to address gender imbalances and the welfare of women. Dube (2011) contends that promoting equal opportunities is critical for stimulating productivity to achieve economic prosperity. Thus, women participation in leadership should not be given lip-service only but to be pragmatic.

Country	Women proportion in percentage (%)
Zimbabwe	16.0
Angola	15.4
Lesotho	12.0
Tanzania	22.3
Mauritius	17.14
South Africa	32.8
Namibia	25.0
Mozambique	32.2
Malawi	14.4
Bostwana	15.9

Source: Adapted from Benson (2016).

The statistics presented by Saddy (2005) on the SADC structures of parliament revealed that the 30% target of women representation in decision-making and politics by SADC member states is yet to be realised by most countries. This target was adopted at the 1997 Declaration on

Gender and Development by Heads of States and Governments and meant to have been accomplished in 2005. Table 1 provides details of the proportion of women in parliamentary leadership as of 2005 adapted from SADC September Summit Report of 2006. As shown in Table 1 below, the alluded 30% target was only met by Mozambique and South Africa while the rest missed it although Namibia was almost to the target.

As illustrated in Table 1 above only two member states of the SADC countries managed to reach the set target of 30% women representation in the period 1997- 2005, almost 10 years down the line. If this disparity is quite glaring and high in the public domain to which Zimbabwe ranks 5th from the bottom (Table 1), chances are that this disparity could be much higher in the private sector.

While there has been an increase of women in the labour force, their distribution numerically in levels of leadership remains below expectation in comparison to men (Halford & Leonard, 2001). As opined by Wirth (2001) the job market continues to be highly discriminatory both vertically concerning levels of hierarchy and horizontally for occupations irrespective of the progress made by women in catching up with males educationally. This is confirmed by Turley as cited by Carter & Silva (2010) who reveal that the Master of Business Administration graduates above 4 100 who completed their studies in the period 1996 to 2007 were not in executive company positions. There are fewer females than males who get elevated to high executive positions as organisational leaders even though at a slow pace. A gap exists between the small women proportion whose jobs are well paying and secure, and that of the women in the majority who remain in low and less-skilled positions, sometimes not permanently. Following more than a decade-long period of aggressive attempts to provide women with some leadership opportunities, inequity has remained deep-seated. This could be attributed to the stereotyping of gender holding the conviction that women and men have managerial styles that are different and that men have better styles of management suitable for corporate merit. This perception has been a worrisome obstacle to women growth in leadership as argued by Northcraft and Gutek in Boserup (1989).

In Zimbabwe, the study by Madzara (2011) in the industry of tourism and hospitality reveals that about 90% of the workforce is women operating as launderers, house-keepers, waitress and dry-cleaners. While statistics are not available for these specific jobs in Zimbabwe it is believed and observed that in general women tend to take up these jobs substantially than men, with the executive positions filled more by men than women. This is illustrated in Table 2 below which reveals gender disparity in senior management from three of Zimbabwe's leading hotels.

Position	No. of Males	No. of Females	% of Female
Directors/CEOs	7	4	0.88
General Managers	21	5	1.1
Senior Managers	119	76	16.78
Front Office Managers	143	78	17.21
Total	290	163	35.98

Source: Adapted from Madzara (2011)

Table 2 above shows the leadership employment variance between women and men where the number of women in managerial position increases as a leadership role and decision-

making decreases. This scenario is likely to be the same in most of Zimbabwe's business sector outside public service and government. Similarly, a study in the banking sector on women in Zimbabwe reveals some challenges which women in leadership face (Chuma & Ncube, 2010). The leadership question and challenges of gender negatively impacting women leadership participation in the private sector in Zimbabwe has not yet received significant attention compared to the public sector. This study investigates a new relationship coming from various concepts as a theoretical contribution (Salamzadeh, 2020).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Participation by women at senior levels today in business remains far away from where it has to be according to Radovic Markovic et al. (2016) in a cross-national study which revealed the inadequacy of women qualified to occupy leadership positions. In general, leadership is understood as the capability of influencing the behaviour of groups of people or individuals (Armstrong, 2008; Bass, 1990; Carless, 1998; Fletcher, 2004; McFarland, 1979). According to Bland (1998), gender is a term understood generally as referring to values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviours that are considered by a given society as appropriate for women and men. What is germane to this study on Zimbabwe's women in leadership is the interplay between gender and leadership to break the glass ceiling for sustainable development. Morrison & Van-Velsor (1987) define the glass ceiling as;

“a barrier to entry into top-level management positions-based on attitudinal or organizational bias-simply because they are women rather than because they cannot handle jobs at higher levels”.

Radovic Markovic et al. (2013) assert that in the past 40 years, female leaders have appeared putting a mark in the world of business. Yet workforce inequality has led to gaps of salaries and promotion challenges. The literature review explores the concepts of the glass ceiling, gender and leadership.

Leadership

Zinyemba (2016) observes that there are several leadership definitions although basically, leadership implies influencing some individuals to work and achieve goals beyond common levels. This definition applies especially to leadership which happens in organizations. It is seen as a process whereby individuals are inspired to do their very best and achieve the desired goal. This includes making people move in the right direction by inspiring them into achieving organisational and their own goals. This suggests that leadership has to harmonise task needs, group needs and individual needs while team spirit is maintained. New leadership models such as communal and transformational leadership describe the leadership concept as a social process where interaction and interpersonal relationships in an enterprise are pivotal to leadership which is effective (Carless, 1998; Fletcher, 2004). These new models include emotional intelligence for effective leadership (Mayer et al., 2008). Emotional intelligence could be described as the ability to use, understand, perceive and to be able to manage emotions (Zinyemba, 2016). All these are traits that are usually identified with females. This thinking has provoked the discourse into the contemporary practices of management to which feminisation of management is encouraged (Priola, 2004). The feminisation of management is about spreading the qualities, values and

meanings that are associated culturally with females advocating cooperative and open relationships, caring and nurturing as well as sensitivity to interpersonal issues in organisations (Priola, 2004).

The contribution to the organisational success by the style of management due to women has been hailed as positive (Bullough, 2008). For effective organisational leadership, Nwobodo (2009) contends that leadership comprises a task-oriented approach which is masculine and the relationship-oriented approach which is feminine. This argument's import is that women have to include in their feminine approach the masculine orientation and vice-versa. However, the feminisation of the management approach has had its challenges (Barker, 2000; Bass & AVALIO, 1994; Collinson & Hearn, 1994). Others have argued that women in leadership only have to follow what men in leadership do if they are to succeed (Collinson & Hearn, 1994). The differences in the leadership issue between women and men pivots around the selection equity of the rightful candidate in possession of the requisite qualities and skills that ensure the success and effectiveness of an organisation (Barker, 2000).

Styles of Leadership

The strategies' discourse for dealing with gender and leadership challenges faced by women in management could be enhanced by a review of common and key styles of leadership which include communal, transformational and appreciative styles of leadership (Bass 1990, Lewis et al., 2006; Luthans & AVALIO 2003). Perhaps to enhance effectiveness women could learn from the appreciative leadership style because here leaders can decipher meaning, connect and see what is best and good for people and their environment. In appreciative leadership, there is a willingness by leaders to transform how they define and perceive issues (Lewis et al., 2006). This appreciative leadership resonates well with authentic leadership (Luthans & AVALIO, 2003), where leaders are portrayed as reliable, real, veritable, trustworthy and genuine. Thus, appreciative leadership echoes the feminisation management philosophy. Transformational leadership is one style that is deemed to be very visible since a leader associated with this style continues to look for ideas that seek to achieve the organisation's vision and mission. The communal leadership style calls for compassion, sensitivity and empathy. For Bass (1990), transformational leadership is about inspiring followers and influencing them to aim high. Behaviours that are people-oriented like employee motivation, expressing of emotions, employee development and needs analysis constitute what is expected for effective leadership and characteristic of feminine attributes (Priola, 2004). This is corroborated by the inclusive model of leadership which underscores the essence of the feminine leadership perspective regarding leadership more as a partnership and social process than the application of power and authority over others as argued by Alimo-Metcalf & Alban-Metcalf (2005). These feminine attributes which display warmth without self-interest are valuable in the trends of modern leadership like servant leadership and authentic leadership (AVALIO et al., 2009).

Leadership and Culture

Issues of culture affect women in leadership and gender (Hofstede, 1980). Issues that have been identified according to Hofstede subsume collectivism versus individualism, power distance, femininity versus masculinity, and concerns for short-term versus long-term emphasis. Power distance in this case refers to the level to which members of institutions and organisation who believes that they are not very powerful consent that power is unevenly distributed; hence

they behave and make their demands accordingly (Zinyemba, 2016). As a result, countries which are less developed in Africa, Latin America and Asia have a power distance that is higher than Germanic and Anglo countries according to Hofstede (1980). Societies that are individualistic place emphasis more on individual rights and achievements than they do on collective identification. Culture has been defined as shared values, motives, identities, beliefs, meanings or interpretations of important events emanating from common and collective experiences transferred through generations (Globe, 2004). The study by Globe (2004) reveals that cultures with a masculine orientation value assertiveness, competitiveness, power, ambition and materialism. The Hofstede (1980) finding reveals that variations in the values of a culture are shown by the level of women participation in positions of leadership and that this is influenced by the international reform initiatives for improving the status of women.

The Zimbabwean authorities have been receptive to these regional and international initiatives to a certain extent. It has been revealed by research that countries that are more developed tend to have more women in leadership positions be it in politics or business (Bullough, 2008). Therefore, a country's economic development is related to cultural changes that pave the way to some accommodative, participatory and rational values. Bullough (2008) illustrates that in a social order which has a minimum woman representation in the business leadership, the roles for such women tend to be more traditional and in the main playing submissive or supportive roles of household and caregiving responsibilities.

The glass ceiling is not easily broken when gender bias and stereotypes are highly extreme. Culture is a critical factor in how women perceive family life and work balance (Thein, Austen, Currie & Lewin, 2010). For instance, a comparative study between American and Chinese women (Thein, et al, 2010) shows that in China losing family time to work-related issues is considered to be self-sacrifice just for the sake of the family's benefit though in America losing family life to work is viewed as an inability to take care of the family. The same study reveals that for Chinese women, long hours of work would not be much of a problem as it is for women in America. The study shows that in Hong Kong and Singapore, a salaried job was viewed as very significant in money generation as required to meet material and financial obligations for a family unit. The culture and high standard of living in these societies that give priority to material acquisition as being a measure of success clarify why indeed work is viewed as a responsibility for the family without conflicting with women's prerogatives of the family. The Globe (2004) asserts that notwithstanding the modernisation and industrialisation influence, there exist strong values and cultural norms which are enduring. However, since culture is dynamic, strong customary values frequently exist together with values of modernity. This has a knock-on effect on women in leadership and the challenges of breaking the glass ceiling in Zimbabwe's business sector.

Leadership and Gender

Sex role implies whether an individual life is a female or male role, whereas gender role implies how an individual life that particular role (Bland, 1998). The dynamics related to gender normally project women to feel incompetent and devalued, and what they say about gender is often at variance with what they do about it (Martin, 2006). In terms of gender and leadership challenges faced by women in positions of management in Zimbabwe's private sector, one is compelled to review the glass ceiling concept which describes barriers met in an attempt to get up the ladder (Morrison & Van-Velsor, 1987).

The Concept of the Glass Ceiling

In the 1970s the term glass ceiling was coined in the United States describing the invisible barricades, created by organisational and attitudinal prejudices, which obstruct women from gaining access to positions of senior executives (Brush, 1999). It is a term used when referring to some barriers which are invisible militating against the opportunities of women. These barriers tend to hamper women acceleration and movement into levels of management. This is a phenomenon that has generated substantial academic interest in research (Zinyemba, 2016). The world over, women remain clustered in types of work that are mostly precarious such that it is still elusive to break through the glass ceiling (Morrison & Van-Velsor, 1987). Whether the occurrence of a glass ceiling is in politics or the workplace, essentially it is a manifestation of economic and social gender inequality.

The success of parity in education and society's attitudinal changes about men's and women's roles has assumed somehow that females have to move up the ladder of their career quickly. But this has not proved to be easily achievable because the predominance of males in executive positions has perpetuated the glass ceiling effect. This has left women devoid of the corporate experience mix and rightful matrix necessary for senior management positions (Morrison & Van-Velsor, 1987). The ILO (2014) reveals that the representation of women in the workforce is 40% globally and these have gradually been scaling up the bureaucratic organisational ladder. However, their management share of positions hardly exceeds 20% and that as more positions of seniority come by; the gender gap becomes more conspicuous (ILO, 2014). What is illustrated by the glass-ceiling is that in the absence of any impartial reason disallowing women to rise into the top executive it is men who raise.

This is a result of inherent discriminatory processes and structures that exist in both society and organisations. Women who are competent and qualified look through the glass ceiling and see what they can do, but the invisible barriers prevent them from making a breakthrough all because they are women (Morrison & Van-Velsor, 1987). According to Adler (1994) and Priola (2004), studies have shown that one of the criteria for determining the position of an employee in any place of work is gender while contending that, there is a tendency of giving women less control, autonomy and authority than men. As a result, promotional prospects for women greatly differ from those of males who have similar status and education. It was observed that, in 2004, males in the United Kingdom constituted 63% of the staff in academia and they occupied very senior managerial and academic positions (Adler, 1994). World-wide women who managed universities constituted only 7% of (Priola, 2004). Women are entangled in a double bind as opposed to leadership as a gender role (Oakley, 2000). In this case, the bind occurs if an act of feminine is linked to incompetence, and if an act of competence is linked to traits of masculinity which if assumed by women the conclusion is that to be competent the person ought to be unfeminine. Belle (2002) observes that only 2% of board members in the United States of America were women because women tended to prioritise 'family career' while men prioritised their working career. In this study Belle (2002) reveals that women face problems of trying to reconcile their family life with a career. Gartzia & Marloes (2012) conclude that motherhood has a significant impact on women's opportunities in terms of career progression and partly explains the gender disparity in executive positions. Women are also prevented from getting top posts due to the struggle they make to be recognised as being serious in the business world which is dominated by men and work-life balancing (Rapacioli, 2012).

The Zimbabwean Situation for Women

The glass ceiling effect due to economic and socio-cultural factors on women leadership in business is not only a particular issue to Zimbabwe alone. Dejene (2007) notes that 84% of women in sub-Sahara Africa were informally employed in comparison to men who were 63% in the same sector. Due to an increase in modernisation, gender roles in Zimbabwe have had to be more flexible such that most women are progressively working out of their homes. Based on the last national census Zimbabwe's population is estimated to be 12 973 808 of which 52% are women (ZimStat, 2012). Being a patriarchal society implies that the traditional culture expects a woman to leave her family and joins the matrimonial family and home after marriage. This puts a woman in a precarious position if she has to prioritise her employment ahead of matrimonial issues such as childbearing and maternal care. Customarily, the participation by women in activities out of their homes was not valued but at most discouraged. Women were regarded more as minors despite their age and ineligible to own property. Before independence, their (women) formal access to employment was confined to the teaching and nursing professions. Post-independence, the situation changed when reforms to improve the status of women were introduced as highlighted below.

- Equal Pay Regulation Act of 1980: In the period before independence, the remuneration for women was less than what was paid to men doing the same work even with the same experience and qualifications. This was repealed by the Equal Pay Regulation Act of 1980.
- Immovable Property (Prevention of discrimination) Act of 1982: Up until 1982 women were ineligible to own property while husbands could wilfully dispose of immovable property. The Prevention of Discrimination Act of 1982 illegalised discrimination in immovable property disposal based on sex grounds.
- Legal Age of Majority Act 1982: This Act made men and women equal before the law by empowering women to make independent decisions without seeking approval from their guardians or husbands once they became 18 years old.
- Matrimonial Causes Act 1985: This law legalised and recognised the contribution of women to the family and home by enabling them to claim part of the assets acquired when divorce becomes inevitable.
- The 14th Amendment to Section 23 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe in 1996 (the Bill of Rights) prohibited discrimination of all forms predicated on gender and sex.
- Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 1997): Zimbabwe observes this convention which prohibits women discrimination, restriction and exclusion based on sex whose effect is to nullify and impair the enjoyment, exercise or recognition of women rights (ZWLA, 2010).
- SADC Protocol on Gender and Development: Zimbabwe is a signatory to the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development whose Article 5 provides that a member country upholds measures of affirmative action for women and eradicate any barrier that prevents them from meaningfully participating in all facets of life (ZWLA, 2010).
- National Gender Policy (2002): The policy provides a framework and guidelines for sectoral activities of the economy and society. In 1996, the government of Zimbabwe created the Ministry of Women Affairs and Community Development meant to oversee all programmes of gender in various ministries.

These reforms mentioned above have improved women leadership representation, especially in Zimbabwean politics. In 2005 for instance, women representation in parliament was 34 out of 150 members. The representation dropped to 17.9% in 2012 after a 13%-20% increase at the beginning of the 2009 Global Political Agreement (GPA) according to UNFPA (2011).

There are no known available figures of women leadership and representation in the private or business sector

METHODOLOGY

Document analysis was used as a qualitative research method whereby the researcher interprets documents to give meaning and voice around the area being researched (Bowen, 2009). According to Bowen (2009), it is a low-cost method of obtaining empirical data in a process that is nonreactive and unobtrusive. Documents are produced as social facts in ways that are organised socially then used and shared (Atkinson & Coffey, 2004). Documentary material which is collected include; manuals, background papers, brochures and books, journals and diaries, memoranda, charts and maps, newspapers, program scripts from television and radio, survey data, organisational reports among others. In this study, most of the documents were retrieved from the internet, collected from institutional files, libraries, newspaper and historical archives. Document analysis as a qualitative research method applies particularly to intensive studies or case studies generating rich single descriptions of a phenomenon (Stake, 1995; Yin, 1994). Although document analysis has been used mainly to complement other methods of research, it has been also employed as a research method that stands alone (Bowen, 2009). The process of data analysis was iterative combining thematic analysis and content analysis elements. This means that content-coding into some themes that were similar to how interview or focus group transcripts are usually analysed (Bowen, 2009).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings from this study reflect what has been branded as leadership qualities and generic behaviours such as warmth, integrity, enthusiasm, toughness and confidence (Adair, 1984). Toughness confirms that there remain some masculine qualities that have remained prevalent in management practices and organisations (Collinson & Hearn, 1994). Among the barriers of breaking through the glass ceiling are issues that stemmed from motherhood and childbearing (McKinsey, 2011). For gender bias, stereotyping and prejudice Martin (2006) argued that if men at work refer to women as girls, they infantilise women calling into question authority and competence. It is indeed a manifestation of gender and culture that pose some challenges for women in leadership. In Zimbabwe's Ndebele and Shona traditional cultures young ones (girls or boys) are expected to get instructions from elders. Although seniority is highly regarded, the tradition is that women are least expected to give instructions and make decisions. For these reasons, this study reveals that some senior positions in the mining industry (private sector) are quietly and deliberately reserved for men. Balancing work-life is another challenge faced by women in breaking the glass ceiling as supported by Rapaciolli (2012). Women face challenges of meeting home and work expectations. Women are not quite comfortable in the way they fulfil their responsibilities and roles and as a manager at work, wife and mother due to long working hours, night shifts and sometimes overtime required in the private sector. While they are happy with their contributions to the staff meetings, they get disheartened when they are not taken seriously by colleagues of the other sex. Those women who have been successful attributed their success to spousal and family support, professionalism, having requisite educational qualifications, hard work and commitment, self-confidence and adaptability. In order to manage work-related gender and leadership challenges the following strategies need to be employed; assertiveness, good time management and professionalism,

hardworking, obtaining professional and educational qualifications, effective interpersonal and communication skills.

Assertiveness should be associated with being fair and firm, results-oriented against resistance to one's leadership and accepting constructive criticism. Professionalism should go along with not being emotional, dressing properly, focussing more on performance than individuals, addressing individual concerns, and striving for an excellent performance. It is necessary to keep abreast with trends and developments in one's area of specialisation obtained from study tours and the internet, in-service training and continuous self-improvement. Effective management of time should be seen through timely submission of reports, development of work plans, creativity and innovation. Women in leadership have to work hard through; showing commitment to work, being thorough and satisfy the employer, always striving for the best even under difficult conditions, being disciplined and available when needed. Women in leadership are expected to have effective interpersonal and communication skills. This implies that they have to speak with confidence, have clarity of thought, being consultative, collaborative, less confrontational, approachable, open-mindedness and being good listeners.

Concerning gender theories and leadership, there is an evolving pattern towards feminisation of management characterised by the ability to manage people, multi-task, communicate, care and support staff. This includes a relationship with staff that goes beyond their work but develops them to move along their career path. These attributes are also essential for appreciative leadership and transformational leadership. Women have to employ domestic workers and empower their children with life skills like preparation of meals and driving. This strategy has been used effectively by some women in leaderships (Thein et al., 2010).

Strategies for Breaking the Glass Ceiling

For sustainable development, shattering the glass ceiling can be done using one or more of the strategies which are briefly discussed below.

Pitching

Pitching implies that one takes his/her ideas and toss them with the intent of getting somebody to assist move the ideas forward instead of just throwing them anyhow hoping a target will be hit. To break the glass ceiling, Lichtenberg (2005) advises on what should be done by women arguing that they are likely to get more of their expectations by exhibiting much of who they are. Lichtenberg contends that when women pitch themselves like girls, they utilise their persuasion and biological power of influence to obtain the support of what they need, comfortably requesting for it. In this case, a pitch is something that is more or less than the use of one's skills, persuasion powers and influences to obtain support and have people do what one wants to be done. Women can pitch for development opportunities and visibility. If a woman pitches like a girl as argued by Lichtenberg (2005) she naturally influences access to what she wants more so from a man. In a typical business environment, one can pitch a potential client to open a new business account, or an existing account holder to get more sales. In the same context, one can pitch his/her subordinates into following him/her.

Awareness-raising

This is concerned with the development of a network for women leadership in the private sector or the same industry. So that they raise awareness over collective issues affecting them.

The network enables women to exchange notes, experience sharing, celebrating successes and how to overcome challenges. The forum could be used by seniors for mentoring juniors and those aspiring to be in leadership positions. In Zimbabwe, examples of similar existing organisations include the Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe (WCoZ), Zimbabwe Women Resource Centre and Network and the Women's Trust. The networks could be linked to social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook and Twitter.

Developing self-confidence

To be self-confident means standing up to one's belief, being assertive and bold, speaking with conviction, willingness to face challenges and communicating effectively. Women should not shy away from taking responsibilities if opportunities come by.

Hard-working

To earn respect, women in leadership have to continuously work hard and prove their worth so that their status is not diminished or become questionable for any executive position. It is not enough to acquire the necessary professional and academic qualifications without complementary hardworking. The private sector working time requires extra time to boost profitability knocking off after the last customer is served and departed.

Self-motivation

Women in management should appreciate their values, who they are and understand their goals. They have to be determined and motivated to achieve set targets. Self-awareness is critical for self-motivation. This enables women leaders to be wary of how others, particularly male counterparts at work view them in terms of their weaknesses and strengths.

Managing time

Women in leadership must be able to balance family life and work-life through good management of time. To achieve this, they have to be disciplined and work according to scheduled plans. They should teach their children life skills like driving and cooking then reduce the workload identified with women. Being able to strike the balance will prove to the corporate world that indeed women can be good executive leaders.

CONCLUSION

The barriers faced when trying to break the glass ceiling are located on both sides of the demand-supply equation. On the supply side, women on their part are unable to assume top leadership positions due to constraints upon them derived from parenting and motherhood or preconceptions that they are not liable to take certain responsibilities. To the equation's demand-side several barriers exist precluding them from breaking the glass ceiling. Those in top management are in most cases men such that appointments and promotions are biased against women aspiring to get senior positions. The major problem stems from leadership stereotyping where leaders that are effective are viewed as tough and shrewd and that women are believed to be soft and weak. Women in leadership in the private sector appear to be dissatisfied by the way in which they are expected to take up multiple roles of being a manager at work, wife and mother

at home. This stems from what culture and gender role expects from them. The main challenges faced by women in the private sector include; how to balance work life with family life, management of time, enduring long hours at work (for example, night work shifts, stereotyping and prejudices by males, being undermined by male workmates). Motherhood and parenting present as a huge career advancement barrier for women in leadership and yet in the private sector mentoring is uncommon. Most of the women in leadership, model their conduct following both or one of their parents. However, the two main factors contributing to women success beyond the glass ceiling in Zimbabwe's private sector is the acquisition of requisite professional and educational credentials. Strategies that can be employed to shatter the glass ceiling include; pitching, awareness-raising, developing self-confidence, hardworking, self-motivation, good management of time

Further Research

This research is probably one of its kinds looking at how to break the glass ceiling by women in leadership in Zimbabwe across the private sector in general. The question remains unexplored concerning industry-specific areas. While this study did not also focus on women leadership in the public sector, further studies could be focussed on specific areas in the public sector such as the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education or Ministry of Health and Child Welfare where most women are employed.

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