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An examination of participation of rural women in local governance: The Case of Mutasa Rural District.

By

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A Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master of Arts Degree in Development Studies

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my parents, Mr. L. and Mrs. R. Chikovha and my three lovely sisters Rumbidzai, Winnie and Sheila. I say thank you guys for your support and prayers which have taken me this far.

I also dedicate this dissertation to the Mutasa community especially in wards 15 and 20 for the contribution you made during this exercise.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ABSTRACT

This study examines the level and forms of participation of rural women in local governance in Zimbabwe with a focus on Mutasa Rural District in Manicaland Province. The study focused on women's participation in local governance and in decision making structures such as Council, Ward Development Committees (WADCOs), Ward Assemblies, Village Development Committees (VIDCOs), Village Assemblies and Water Point Committees (WPCs). The Liberal Feminist theory was used to guide this study. The liberal feminist movement focuses on eliminating female subordination rooted in customary and legal constraints which blocks women's entrance to and success in the public world (Tong, 1989). This theory applies to this study as there is need to eliminate women's subordination and to enhance women's participation in local governance or public space so that their interests and needs are represented and addressed as those of males.

Mixed research was used in conducting this research. This implies the integrated use of quantitative and qualitative data in carrying out the study. A sample size of 5% was used and stratified random sampling based on sex was used to come up with respondents for quantitative data collection while purposive sampling was used to determine respondents for qualitative data collection. A total of 382 questionnaires were administered, 15 Key Informant interviews carried out and 4 single sex Focus Group Discussions conducted for this study. Two thirds of the respondents were females to allow them to express their views and speak for themselves as this study focuses on women. Findings show that women mostly participate meaningfully in WPCs more than any other development decision making structure in local governance. This is because this decision making structure is found closer to the villages/homes and that it deals with the improvement in the delivery of water of which women are the ones mostly affected by unavailability of water as they are the ones who do domestic chores. Findings also show that women least participate in Council activities and there is the low representation of women in this decision making structure. This is largely attributed to women looking down upon each other, lack of understanding of the benefits of participation, patriarchy as well as well as lack of resources for campaigning particularly those women who would want to be elected into office, for example as Councillors.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

Acronym	Definition
ACPDT	Africa Community Publishing and Development Trust
CCDZ	Centre for Community Development in Zimbabwe
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women
DA	District Administrator
DAW	Division for the Advancement of Women
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
KII	Key Informant Interview
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
RDC	Rural District Council
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UK	United Kingdom
UNHC	United Nations High Commissioner
UN	United nations
VIDCO	Village Development Committee
WADCO	Ward Development Committee
WPC	Water Point Committee
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front
ZimStat	Zimbabwe Statistics

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Chapter 1 : INTRODUCTION

1.0   Introduction

This study sought to examine the participation of women in local governance. Local governance is defined as the formulation and execution of collective action at the local level (Shah and Shah, 2006a). It is the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented at the local level. Evertzen (2001) defines local governance as processes through which stakeholders interact in determining the local developmental agenda and in managing resources to implement these developmental priorities. This study will focus on investigating the level of women's participation decision making structures and how they participate in those structures put in place in Mutasa District to make and implement decisions with regards to the provision of social services. The decision making structures include Rural District Councils (RDCs), Village Development Committees (VIDCOs) and Ward Development Committees (WADCOs) and Water Point Committees (WPCs) among others. It is important to note that participation could also be used to discuss women's representation in the public offices (Justina, 2014). Hence the two terms will be used interchangeably.

Good governance has 7 major characteristics. Participation, legitimacy, transparency, accountability, competence, and respect for law and human rights are the major characteristics of good governance (Edralin, 1997; Schneider, 1999). Participation by both men and women is a cornerstone of good governance. Citizen participation should be practiced to ensure that all citizens take part in community development. Community/ public/ citizen participation is defined as the act of allowing individual citizens within a community to take part in the formulation of

policies and proposals on issues that affect the whole community (Onibokun and Faniran, 1995). At a local level, citizens may engage local authorities in consultations and therefore contribute to decision making on community development, service delivery and the distribution of resources. This study explored women's participation at the local level whereby citizens are supposed to take part in processes with local authorities that lead to decisions on community development and the implementation of these decisions. The levels of meaningful participation of women that will be explored will be grouped as follows;

a) Low level - Women attending development meetings.

b) Medium level- women raising contributions during development meetings; Positions held by women in formal decision making structures like Local Authorities, VIDCOs and WADCOs and informal decision making structures like WPCs and HCs.

c) High level –women initiating actions that improve service delivery for instance the repair of boreholes.

The decision making structures are supposed to formulate district, village and ward development plans and submit to the local authorities who are in turn supposed to initiate development in the districts, villages and wards. The author will examine the formulation processes of such development plans and evaluate whether citizens, including women participate meaningfully. Local authorities are supposed to serve areas of their jurisdiction through addressing priority areas of development outlined in development plans submitted by VIDCOs and WADCOs. The study will examine whether local authorities are adhering to fulfilling the priority areas of development of citizens or they just develop areas without consulting citizens.

Equity and inclusiveness is another characteristic of good governance which this paper will also focus on. This paper seeks to investigate whether women have opportunities to improve or maintain their well-being i.e. having a stake in the provision of social services and do not feel excluded from the mainstream of the society.

1.1   Background to the Study

Women's participation in decision-making both at the local or national levels is important because it serves their interests and is a positive step in fostering good governance and development. Failure to ensure the participation of women and inclusion of their voices in decision-making processes defeats the goal of equality. The participation of women is also central to the development of states where women and men engage in development processes on an equal footing. The interests and concerns of women must be taken into account and it is vital that this group of citizens take part in development processes as active participants rather than passive recipients. Women's equal participation in decision-making is not only a demand for simple justice or democracy but it is also a necessary pre-condition for women's interests to be taken into account (International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics, accessed August, 2015). Hence governance structures which do not promote the equal participation of men and women or their equal enjoyment of benefits from State or non-State interventions are neither inclusive nor democratic as the needs of a particular group of people will not be accounted for. There is thus the need to promote the participation of women in decision-making so that they are also able to represent the needs and interests of other women.

The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is one of the international comprehensive instruments that advocates for the participation of women

indecision-making (CEDAW Article 1). CEDAW also obliges States to refrain from engaging in any act or practice which discriminates against women (CEDAW Article 2d).Section 17 of the Zimbabwean Constitution (Amendment No. 20) obliges the State to promote the full participation of women in all spheres of Zimbabwean society on the basis of equality with men. Section 20 of the Zimbabwean Constitution also provides for the State and all institutions and agencies of government at every level to take reasonable measures including affirmative action programmes to ensure that youths, people between the ages of fifteen and thirty-five years, to have opportunities to associate and to be represented and participate in political, social, economic and other spheres of life. There is thus a need to investigate whether the Constitution and other international frameworks that favour the non-discrimination of women are being implemented at the local government level.

Generally in Zimbabwe, the low levels of women participation and representation in local governance and decision-making is attributed to: patriarchy, culture (women perceived as traditional caregivers and also the perception that women's role is limited to the private sphere and not public), political culture including violence and exclusionary policies and practices that marginalise women as well as the poor economic status of women due t low levels of education and unemployment. Zimbabwe is a patriarchal society and the position of a woman has been subordinated to that of male counterparts. Men occupy a higher status in society and this confine the women to homes. Society in Zimbabwe has tended, over the years, to limit women to productive and reproductive roles which included, among others, child bearing as well as cooking, attending to family needs, caring for the sick and generally being there for the family. The public domain has been reserved for men and culture and patriarchy has further buttressed

this position. The Zimbabwean culture makes women to be subordinate to their male counterparts and this has greatly affected women's development in various spheres of life.

1.2   Statement of the Problem

Women constitute 52% of the Zimbabwean population (ZimStat, 2012:1) but their participation in governance processes/ decision making both at local and national levels still remains low than that of their male counterparts. For instance, only 16% of women are represented in local government and yet they form the largest part of the population (ACPDT and Women's Movement, 2015: 59). Participatory governance is essential for the consolidation and deepening of democratic culture. Good governance is the exercise of authority through institutions that are transparent and accountable, and encourage public participation (Office of the UNHC for Human Rights, 2007). Because of the socially constructed roles that are attributed to women, they often perform the reproductive activities such as child rearing and domestic responsibilities and these roles are mostly performed in the private sphere. This makes women being affected most by the lack of social services such as water, health and sanitation among others (Tolmay and Morna, 2010). Men on the other hand occupy the public sphere and are not aware of the inadequacies in social service delivery. Hence women's participation in decision making at the local level is crucial to ensure that the needs, interests and priorities of both women and men will be taken into account in the development and implementation of policies and programmes at the local level.

1.3   Theoretical Framework

The Liberal Feminist theory was used to guide this study. Liberal Feminism takes the lens of gender and gender equality. Liberal Feminism began in the 18th and 19th centuries. The liberal

feminist movement focuses on eliminating female subordination rooted in customary and legal constraints which blocks women's entrance to and success in the public world (Tong, 1989). This has over the years resulted in the low participation of women in public space or local governance in broader terms. Liberal feminists argue that society holds the false belief that women are, by nature, less intellectually and physically capable than men (Tong, 1989). This theory applies to this study as there is need to eliminate women's subordination and to enhance women's participation in local governance or public space so that their interests and needs are represented and addressed as those of males.

Liberal Feminism is based on the assumption that in order for women to achieve equal status, all stereotyped social roles for men and women have to be abolished (Agassi, 1989). The liberal feminists' theory is of the claim that the abolition of gender segregation of occupational roles is necessary for the achievement of women's equality (Agassi, 1989). Agassi (1989) notes that women's segregated and inferior occupational roles also hinder their acquisition of economic and political power. Hence women should be treated equally so that they also enjoy their rights particularly participation rights which this study is focusing on. Similarly, as long as women are barred from significant political or ritual roles, there is no genuine gender equality (Agassi, 1989). Prominent Liberal Feminist proponents like Harriet Taylor called for women to work outside the household while John Stuart Mill believed that women should be recognized as fully rational and worthy of the same civil liberties and economic opportunities as men (Tong, 1989). Hence the Liberal Feminism theory applies to this study as it stresses relations between males and females and does not allow the discrimination of women.

Liberal Feminists seek equal rights with men and believe individuals should be treated in accordance with their talents and effort etc as opposed to characteristics of their sex (Sociology Central, 2000). They campaign to remove any obstacle, be it political, social, legal or economical, that gets in the way of women having the same opportunities as their male counterpart (Sociology Central, 2000). The Liberal Feminism theory is relevant to this study which seeks to promote the participation of both women and men in local governance in order to achieve inclusive development and gender equality in the broader sense. Women should also be given equal opportunities as men in making decisions that affect their communities.

1.4   Conceptual Framework

This study was carried out under the concept of good governance. Good governance is the exercise of authority through institutions that are transparent and accountable, and encourage public participation (Office of the UNHC for Human Rights, 2007). Good governance promotes citizen participation and does not discriminate on gender and age hence women should not be excluded in participating in local government and service delivery.

1.5   Research Aims and Objectives

1.5.1   Aim

The aim of this study was to interrogate the extent to which women meaningfully participate in local governance in Mutasa District beyond the statistical dimension.

1.5.2 Objectives

- To understand the local governance legal frameworks at the local, regional and international levels (to which Zimbabwe is a signatory) that promotes the participation of women.

- To examine the level and forms of participation of women in local governance in Mutasa District.

- To examine how State and non-State actors are enhancing the participation of women in local governance in Mutasa District.

- To identify challenges to women's participation in local governance in Mutasa District and to recommend possible solutions.

1.6 Research Questions

1. To what extent has Zimbabwe domesticated the regional and international legal frameworks (which it is a signatory to) that promote the participation of women in local governance?

2. What is the level and forms of participation of women in local governance particularly in the provision of social services in Mutasa District?

3. What are State and non-State actors doing to enhance the participation of women in local governance in Mutasa District?

4. What are the challenges that hinder women's participation in local governance in Mutasa District?

1.7 Justification of Study

Women constitute 52% (ZimStat, 2012:1) of the total population of Zimbabwe but their participation in governance processes both local and national levels remains low. The exclusion of this group of the population to participate in local governance indicates that development is not inclusive and in a way does not meet the needs of women as they are not consulted and yet they form the largest part of the population. The study will provide an improved understanding

on the level and forms of women's participation in local governance beyond mere statistics of women's involvement in development decision making structures as well as the barriers to the participation. Mutasa District is a highly patriarchal community and this paper seeks to investigate the level of youth and women's participation in local government and service delivery in such a social environment. It will also inform policy makers on the barriers faced by women in the quest to participate in local governance and strategies of addressing those barriers can be devised and implemented. This will in turn lead to inclusive development which addresses the service delivery challenges of all citizens regardless of sex.

1.8   Limitations of the Study

This study entails interviewing officials such as Council Chief Executive Officer, the District Administrator and other senior Council officials and it can be problematic to gain access. This is because protocols that are followed are sometimes cumbersome and given the limited time for this research, some officials may not be interviewed. In addition, set appointments can be inconveniently cancelled due to reasons unknown to the author. Generally there are challenges associated with conducting research in communities especially at the local level due to mistrust and suspicion. The author overcame this challenge by outlining clearly the objectives of the study and that it is purely academic.

1.9   Delimitation of the study

The research was based in Mutasa district (wards 15 and 20) of the Manicaland Province. Wards 15 and 20 are located in Mutasa Central Constituency which in overall comprises of 12 wards namely 10-17, 19, 20, 24, 27 (Parliament of Zimbabwe, 2011:4). The constituency is rural and

the people survive on subsistence farming and small-scale farming. In terms of population distribution, Mutasa Central Constituency has 59 382 people constituting about 36% of the District's population of 166 646 (Parliament of Zimbabwe, 2011:4). Below is the geographical location of Mutasa district.

Figure 1 : Map of Manicaland Province showing the geographical location of Mutasa District
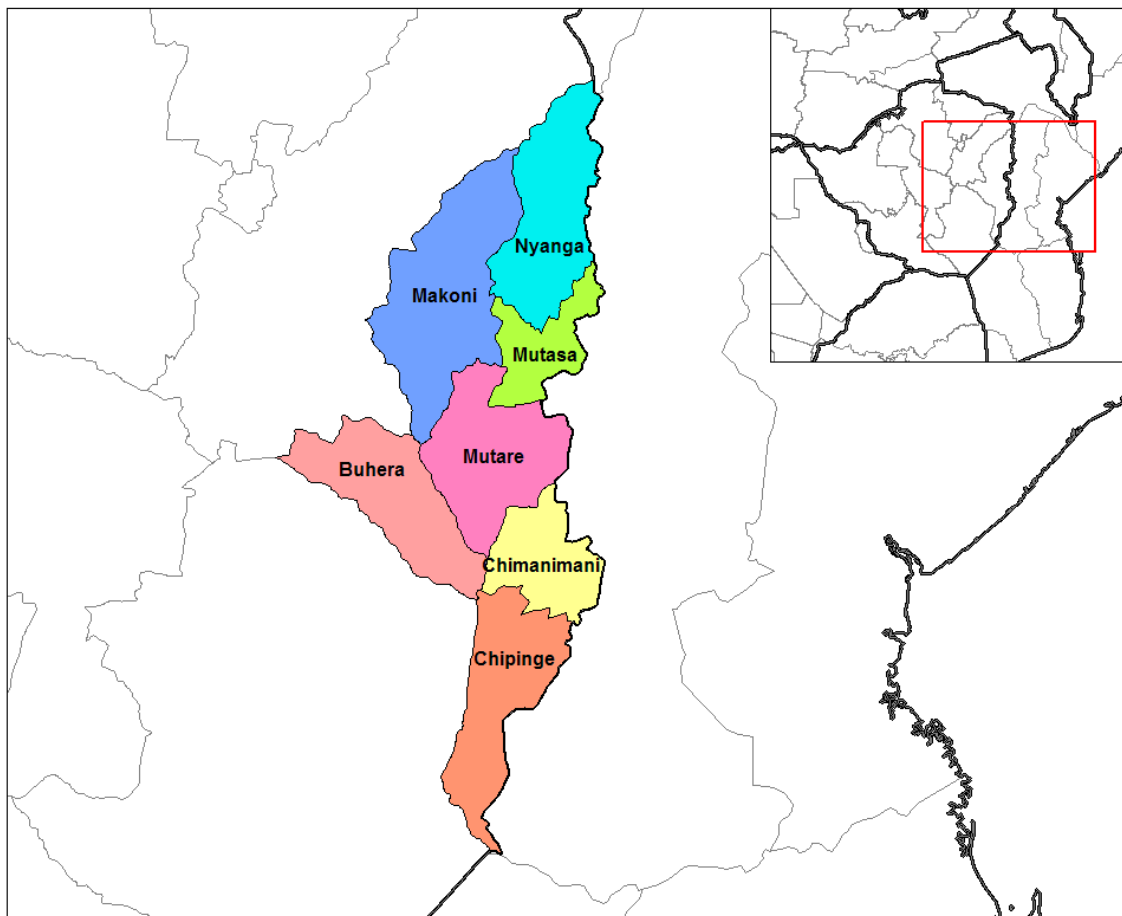
Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Manicaland_districts.png

1.10 Structure of Dissertation

The dissertation will be made up of subsequent chapters and the argument will be advanced with each and every chapter. It will have the following structure:

- Chapter 1: Introduction

- Chapter 2: Literature Review

- Chapter 3: Methodology

- Chapter 4: Findings and discussions of data collected

- Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

1.11 Conclusion

This chapter gives an introduction to this study on the meaningful participation of rural women in local governance. Local governance has been defined as processes through which stakeholders interact in determining the local developmental agenda and in managing resources to implement these developmental priorities. Community/ public/ citizen participation has been defined as the act of allowing individual citizens within a community to take part in the formulation of policies and proposals on issues that affect the whole community. Participation by both men and women is a cornerstone of good governance. Citizen participation should be practiced to ensure that all citizens take part in community development. A background to the study has also been outlined whereby it has come out that Zimbabwe is a patriarchal society and the position of a woman has been subordinate to that of their male counterparts. Society in Zimbabwe has tended, over the years, to limit women to productive and reproductive roles which included, among others, child bearing as well as cooking, attending to family needs, caring for the sick and generally being there for the family. This has resulted in the low participation of women in the public space and yet women constitute the largest percentage of the population. This study will be carried out in Mutasa District wards 15 and 20. The study will be framed in the Gender and Development theory which focuses on addressing discrimination against women and gender inequality in the

context of gender relations. Both men and women need to complement each other so as to achieve inclusive development. The concept of participation as a component of good government will also be central to this study. This chapter concludes by outlining the structure of the dissertation with the first chapter introducing the study, second chapter reviewing existing literature on the participation of women in local governance and outlining how this study will add to knowledge, the third chapter will describe the methodology that will be adopted in carrying out this study, the fourth chapter will present the findings and the fifth and final chapter will give an overall conclusion of the study and proffer recommendations that can be adopted to increase the participation of women in local governance.

Chapter 2 : LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0   Introduction

There is a large body of literature on women's participation in local governance but much of it focuses on the political side, that is, women's participation in political decision-making structures. Dube (2012) notes that women's participation in decision making takes a number of forms: it may be political decision making where women are elected or appointed as officials; it may be in the business and corporate sector- small to medium enterprises and household economies. While this paper is focusing on the meaningful participation of women in local governance, the author has gone a step further into examining the meaningful participation of women not only in decision making structures that are linked to politics, for instance local authorities, but to those decision making structures that bring development at the local level.

This Chapter thus reviews literature that exists on the participation of women in local governance and spells clearly how this research has contribute to knowledge. Literature on the legal frameworks at the local, regional and international levels (which Zimbabwe is a signatory) that promote the participation of women in local governance; the level and forms of participation of women in local governance; the strategies implemented by State and non-State actors to enhance the participation of women in local governance; challenges to women's participation in local governance will be discussed in this chapter.

2.1 Legal frameworks at the local, regional and international levels (which Zimbabwe is a signatory) that promotes the participation of women in Local Governance

In this section of my dissertation, I explore literature on the legal frameworks at the regional and international levels that support women's participation in local governance that Zimbabwe is signatory to. The section will also look at how Zimbabwe has domesticated these frameworks. The Chapter 4 on findings will outline the extent to which Zimbabwe is implementing these frameworks in order to enhance women's participation in local governance.

Despite the primacy given to gender in debates about the structures and processes of democracy, there has been very little analysis of gender and local government (Cole and Parnell, 2000; Robinson, 1995). The ways in which women can access power and resources at the local level and their lived experiences of citizenship are still poorly understood. There is thus need to fill this gap and investigate further on gender and local governance i.e. how women participate in local governance in order to bring social development. The focus of this section is on how local government delivers social services and how it relates to communities, if the needs and interests of women are incorporated into local government agendas and if previously disadvantaged women are able to participate fully in community development. Hence this study seeks to add to knowledge on the area of gender and local governance particularly in the Mutasa District of Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe has signed a couple of legal instruments at the national, regional and international levels which provides for the rights of women to participate in governance matters. The Beijing Platform of Action states that:

> "Without the active participation of women and the incorporation of women's perspectives at all levels of decision making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved."

This is in line with the theme of this paper to investigate the levels of participation and how women participate in decision making structures that deal with development particularly the provision of social services. Article 9 of the Protocol to the African Charter on People's Rights on the rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol) provides that States must:

1. Take specific positive action to promote participative governance.

2. Women are equal partners with men at all levels of development and implementation of State policies and development programmes.

In addition, Article 13 of SADC Gender Protocol requires States to change discriminatory attitudes and norms of decision making. Since the focus of this paper is on women's participation in decision making and implementation of decisions that has something to do with development particularly the provision of social services, there is need to investigate the extent to which such international and regional instruments have been domesticated and are being implemented to promote the participation of rural women in development. Much literature has been written on women's participation in political decision making structures but this paper seeks to add knowledge to women participation in development decision making structures particularly in Mutasa District.

The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) advocates for the participation of women in decision making. CEDAW defines discrimination as

any distinct, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect of impairing or nullifying the recognition of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field on basis of equality of men and women. CEDAW obliges the State to implement its provisions including the enshrinement in the Constitution of the principle of equality between men and women, and the adoption of national legislation protecting the equal rights of men and women. CEDAW provides for the women's right to participate in decision making on an equal footing with men in relation to policy formulation, holding public office among others.

The Zimbabwean Constitution under Section 2.9 on National Objectives provides for gender equality in decision making structures. Section 17 (1) (a) of the Zimbabwean Constitution provides for the State to promote the full participation of women in all spheres of Zimbabwean society on the basis of equality with men. There is need to investigate the extent to which these provisions in the Constitution are being implemented and bringing change to the participation of women in local governance. This study seeks to look beyond realizing equality in decision making structures at the local level but seeks to investigate the quality of participation of women in those structures. This is so because numbers alone do not necessarily translate into participation. There is need to investigate if women are meaningfully participating in development decision making structures or they are just occupying those positions for the sake of achieving equality in development decision making structures.

Adherence to the above mentioned protocols and declarations has proved to be challenging due to lack of strategies for domesticating the legal instruments. There is also a challenge in relation to the implementation of the Constitution which has domesticated some of the provisions of these regional and international legal frameworks on equality. This has resulted in the under-

representation of women in all areas of decision making. For instance in local authorities by the

year 2010, only 18.8% of women occupied this decision making structure. This is a small figure

given that women constitute about 52% of the total population of the country. Zimbabwe is not

the only Southern African country with the least representation of women in local government.

The table below shows a list of Southern African countries with the percentage of women's

representation reached by the year 2010.

Table 1: Gender and Politics in Southern Africa

Country	% Women local government
Angola	Unknown
Botswana	19.3%
DRC	Unknown
Lesotho	58.0%
Madagascar	6.0%
Malawi	No elected officials
Mauritius	6.4%
Mozambique	35.6%
Namibia	41.8%
Seychelles	No elected officials
South Africa	39.7%
Swaziland	17.9%
Tanzania	34.2%
Zambia	6.6%
Zimbabwe	18.8%
Regional Average	**23.9%**

Source: IPU and GL, November 2010

The table above shows that Zimbabwe is rated 7th in Southern Africa in terms of women's

representation in local authorities both urban and rural councils. This is below the regional

average of 23.9%. There is thus need to explore strategies that can enhance women's

participation and representation at the local government level and these strategies to be more

effective should be suggested by women. Hence this study will present solutions coming from

women that can be implemented to increase their participation and representation at the local

government level so that their needs and interests are also met and fulfilled. The limited

representation of women in politics at the local level entails that the Councils will be male dominated hence the development decision making process will least likely to address the service delivery needs of women. Hence women need to participate and also be elected as Councillors at the local level so that they fully participate in full Council meetings and play key roles in representing the interests of other women when formulating policy at the local level.

2.2 Levels and forms of women's participation in local governance

In this section, the author unpacks literature on levels and forms of women's participation in local governance across the world. The author will also indicate how this study will contribute to the already existing body of literature on women's participation in local governance.

Haidari (2014) carried out a research on women's participation in local governance in Tanzania. Haidari (2014) looked at the different dynamics of pastoral and non-pastoral Tanzania women's participation in local governance and the effects thereof. Understanding the effects of women's participation in governance enables us to gauge whether numerical change in itself brings about substantive changes in the setting of agendas, changes in priorities, decisions on different domains and changes in service delivery (Haidari, 2014). While Haidari (2014) focused on women's participation in pastoral and non-pastoral communities, this study will focus on investigating the quality and level of participation of women in wards headed by male and by female Councillors to see the varying degree of the level of participation of women in wards headed by Councillors of different sexes. The study will widen its lenses beyond statistics of women involved in decision making and to investigate the quality and level of their participation and its effects in bringing social development particularly with regards to social service delivery.

There is thus the need to look at the Mutasa women's participation in governance beyond the numerical dimension.

In contrast to Haidari's (2014) views that women's participation should go beyond mere statistics and should be qualitative, Evertzen (2001) postulates that much difference will not be realized if a few women are represented in politics. A study carried out by the UN Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) (2000) argues that a critical mass of women allows female politicians to bring different values to public life. However, there is need to also highlight that women are not a homogeneous group. They have varied interests, values and approaches and this in a way disrupts the formation of a critical mass. Hence the mere representation of women in decision making structures cannot guarantee change. This study will examine whether a critical mass of women brings a difference or the qualitative participation of women. This will be contextualized to the situation in Mutasa RDC.

Participation is a development approach which recognizes the need to involve disadvantaged segments of the population in the design and implementation of policies concerning their well-being (Mostafizur, 2006). The development discourse has also been focusing on strengthening women's participation in all spheres of life. There is need for the active participation of women at the decision making level in society for development to be fully achieved. Norman Uphoff (Mostafizur, 2006) identified four main kinds of participation which are as follows:

a) Participation in decision making in identifying problems, formulating alternative planning activities, allocating resources etc;

b) Participation in implementation in carrying out activities, managing and operating programs;

c) Participation in economic, social, political or other benefits individually or collectively; and

d) Participation in evaluation of the activity and its outcomes for feedback purposes.

This clearly indicates the various ways in which women can meaningfully participate in local governance and this paper will examine the forms of participation of women in Mutasa Rural District in order to bring development in the area.

A qualitative study was carried out in the UK to understand the participation of youths in local government; the youths including females. Various definitions of participation were stated by youths. Some young people had a very broad view of participation and saw it as including passive action such as simply taking an interest or '*being part of the local community'* (Molloy et al, 2002). For some young people participation was simply expressing a view as might be done through signing a petition or writing a letter to the local authority. A more exceptional definition was with local activism, one young person saw participation as being primarily about '*workers for the community putting forward ideas'* (Molloy et al, 2002). Action that was ongoing, such as becoming a councillor, was viewed to be one of the highest forms of participation (Molloy et al, 2002). The various definitions propounded by youths in the study carried out by Molloy et al will be useful in carrying out this study. The findings from Molloy et al can be summarised as follows: participation varies from attending development meetings, raising contributions during development meetings, attending full council meetings, positions held by youths in development decision making structures. The author will use the above stated forms of participation to determine the level of participation and how young women participate in local governance. The author will contextualise this literature to see if it applies to the Zimbabwean context particularly in Mutasa District.

In addition, the qualitative study carried out in the UK identified barriers to participation in local government. These include lack of understanding about local government, lack of interest leading to no perceived need to get involved, low awareness of how to participate, 'No one ever listens to young people (including young women) among others (Molloy et al, 2002). Haidari (2014) unearthed some barriers to women's participation in governance. Haidari's (2014) findings show that non-pastoral women of Tanzania consider participation in public protest as unethical and as something they would not consider doing. Haidari (2014) also concluded that pastoral women, unlike their male counterparts, do not participate in vying for leadership positions in governance and those few that vie for positions do not succeed as they faced several restrictions from pastoral men. These findings will be useful in this study as such challenges will be further explored to see if they are also affecting the participation of women in local governance in the target area under study.

This study focuses on the meaningful participation of rural women in local governance decision making structures such as local authorities, WADCOs, Ward Assemblies, VIDCOs, Village Assemblies and WPCs. Rural District Council is a type of a local authority which is further divided into wards for the purposes of electing Councillors (Evertzen, 2001). Chairpersons of the Rural District Councils (RDCs) are selected from amongst the Councillors. RDCs provide social services such as health and education, construction of infrastructure such as dams, roads and sewerage works (Evertzen, 2001). This decision making structure formulates policy at the local level. If women are not represented as Councilors, this thereby means the development needs of women are least likely to be taken into account. On the other hand, women may be represented in this decision making structure yet their voices are not heard. There is thus the need for the meaningful/quality participation of women beyond mere statistics. This study will examine the

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quality of participation of female Councillors that were elected in Mutasa Rural District to see if they are representing the needs, priorities and interests of other women at large when policy is being formulated or during full Council meetings.

Smith (2008) notes that WADCOs have emerged as a key institutional mechanism intended to contribute towards bringing about people-centred, participatory and democratic local governance. WADCOs supplement the role of elected Councillors by creating a bridge between communities and the political and administrative structures of municipalities/ rural councils. This study will unveil how effective these WADCOs are, whether they are useful conduits for community involvement in local governance and the extent to which they promote the participation of women in development. Smith (2008) propounds that WADCOs provide an important channel for citizens to have their voices heard at local level and this is in the South African context. The author will contextualize and examine whether this claim also applies to the Zimbabwean context particularly in Mutasa District. There is also need to examine the functionality of WADCOs because if they are not functional, it also means there is no/limited participation of women in such structures of local governance. By functionality the author will look at the leadership of the structures to see if women are represented and participate meaningfully, whether resolutions and actions taken on resolutions also address the needs of women among others. Since Ward Councillors are the chairpersons of WADCOs who got elected on political party tickets, possibilities are high that they can manipulate deliberations and decisions to reflect the mandate of the political party they represent rather than the real needs and aspirations of the community. There is thus need to examine whether these WADCOs are serving their purpose of increasing the participation of local residents, women included, in decision-making, as they are a direct and unique link with the council as well as representing the

local ward and not politically aligned (Smith, 2008).The aim of the study is to uncover good practices where they exist and this will be a learning platform for other WADCOs and RDCs across Zimbabwe and the world at large.

Hora (2014) carried out a study to assess factors that affect women's participation in leadership and Decision making in public institutions. The study population of the research paper was all permanent employees which currently exist in a total of 23 public institutions of Bedele Town Administration in Ethiopia. The sample size of the study was a total of 357 people and of this number, 227 were male and 130 were female employees working in public institution of the town. The results of Hora's (2014) shows that 71 (68.93%) of the total respondents confirm that women were not fairly represented in leadership and decision making positions while the rest 32 (31.07%) of them said women are adequately represented in leadership and public decision making positions. From this data, it can be clearly seen (understood) that the majority of sample respondents viewed that women are not fairly represented in public leadership and their participation in public decision making area is low.

In addition, Hora's (2014) study concluded that the major factors that has hindered women from leadership and public decision making are: lack of adequate education, absence of enabling environment, patriarchically rooted (male dominated) socio-cultural attitudes(outlooks), lack of sufficient work experiences required to hold the position, absence of confidence (negative attitude) of women to hold public leadership by themselves and negative attitude of men towards women to hold public leadership. The methodology used by Hora (2014) is biased. Since the study was focusing on the assessment of factors that affect women's participation in leadership and decision making in public institutions, the respondents were supposed to be largely females

and not males so that women speak for themselves. More females were supposed to be interviewed so that they narrate their experience unlike more males who will in a way tend to give biased responses. This study will ensure that about two thirds of the respondents are females from Mutasa District as the study focuses on women. This gives an opportunity for women to speak for themselves and solutions to overcome barriers to women's participation should come from these women so that they take ownership of the whole process and are able to implement the solutions.

2.3   Challenges hindering participation of women in local governance

This section outlines the challenges hindering women's participation in local governance in Zimbabwe. According to *The Financial Gazette* (date10/2013), the challenges that hindered women's political participation during the June 2013 elections and these include:

- Women were either told that they were too young to stand in the 2013 elections or their Curriculum Vitaes mysteriously disappeared.
- The primary elections for both the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) and ZANU-PF were characterized by controversial disqualification of candidates, impositions of candidates, poor logistics, lack of information, shortage of ballot papers, attempts to run away with ballot boxes, delayed announcement of results and allegations of rigging.
- Men using women to fight female candidates
- Women discriminated because of the introduction of the quota system hence male candidates were more preferred during the primary elections.
- Women lacked resources to campaign during the primary elections.

These challenges can be said to have resulted in the low representation of women in local authorities (low percentage of female elected Councillors). This paper will contextualize the challenges specifically to Mutasa District as well as to identify the challenges hindering women's participation in other development decision making structures such as WADCOs, VIDCOs and WPCs particularly in the District under study.

2.4   Conclusion

The foregoing discussion has managed to review literature on women's participation in local governance. The international legal frameworks that Zimbabwe is signatory to which promote the participation of women have been outlined and how Zimbabwe has domesticated these instruments. Chapter 4 on findings will give detailed analysis on the implementation of the provisions of given by these instruments and the extent it is enhancing the participation of women in local governance. Literature on the forms and levels of participation of women in local governance in other parts of the world as well as efforts by State and non-State actors to enhance the participation of women have also been reviewed in this Chapter and the author will further examine the extent to which these efforts are enhancing the participation of women in Mutasa District.

Chapter 3 : METHODOLOGY

3.0   Introduction

This chapter discusses the research methods that were used in examining the meaningful participation of rural women in local governance. Bryman (2004) defines a research method as a technique for collecting data. Mixed research was used in conducting this research. Mixed methods of data collection strategies are those that are explicitly designed to combine elements of one method with the other, in either a sequential or a simultaneous manner (Axinn and Pearce, 2006). This implies the integrated use of quantitative and qualitative data in carrying out the study. This methodology is chosen as it provides a better understanding of a research problem or issue than either research approach alone. The chapter outlines the research instruments, sample and sampling procedure, population of the study, ethical considerations, closing with a summary.

3.1   Research Design

This study focused on a case study of Mutasa District and two wards of Mutasa Central Constituency, i.e. wards 15 and 20 were randomly selected; one with a female Councillor and the other with a male Councillor so as to distinguish the level of women's participation in wards led by different sexes and to see if the leadership has a bearing on women's participation in governance.

3.2   Population and Sample of the study

3.2.1 Sampling

Sampling involves the selection of a number of study units from a define study population (Phrasisombath, 2009). It is the process of obtaining information about an entire population by examining only a part of it. Sampling is different from a census whereby all units of the population are examined. Sampling selects a fraction of the population in such a way that it represents the whole population. Sampling has been chosen as a process of gathering information due to a number of reasons which include but not limited to the following: it is cheaper than the census method as a few units/numbers are selected to represent the whole population; it is economical i.e. it is convenient to interview a certain part of the population (a sample) which is chosen in an appropriate way so that conclusions for the whole population can be obtained; the magnitude of operations is small in case of sampling and so data collection and analysis can be carried out accurately and efficiently (Barreiroand Albandoz, 2001).For qualitative data collection, non-probability sapling was used particularly purposive sampling. The author selected the sample arbitrarily which they considered important for the research. Stakeholders like Councillors, traditional leaders, Chairpersons of development decision making structures like WADCOs, VIDCOs and WPCs were selected as interviewees. These are leaders in communities and representatives of the population.

For quantitative data collection, probability sampling was used particularly stratified random sampling according to sex. Probability sampling is the one in which each sample has the same probability of being chosen. The sample is representative under probability sampling

(Barreiroand Albandoz, 2001). Community women and men had an opportunity to be randomly selected for this study.

3.2.2 Population size

The population size of Mutasa ward 15 is 3 307 and of ward 20 is 4 325 (ZimStat, 2012: 22). A sample size of 5% was used to determine the number of participants to be interviewed. This means that 167 participants were selected in ward 15 while 217 were selected in ward 20. Of these participants, two-thirds were women as the author felt women had to speak for themselves as the study focuses on women's participation in local governance. Participants were selected using stratified random sampling.

3.3   Research Instruments

Silverman (2001) outlines four main techniques for data collection which are: Observation, Analyzing text and documents, interviews and Recording and transcribing. The author relied on the use of interviews to obtain data that will guide to get appropriate answers for the research questions. The data collection tools/instruments were designed in such a way that they collect both qualitative and quantitative data. Questionnaires, Key Informant Interview (KII) guides as well as Focus Group Discussion (FGD) guides were the tools used. FGDs and KIIs were self-administered to ensure that recipients provide relevant information to the asked questions. Document and text analyzing/review was also be used in this study.

See Appendix 1 for the research instruments

3.3.1 Questionnaires

Questionnaires were administered to both males and females and were used to collect quantitative data. In ward 15 of Mutasa, questionnaires were administered to166 respondents while 217 questionnaires were administered in ward making a total of 382 respondents.

3.3.2 Key Informant Interview (KII) Guides

KIIs were conducted on purposively selected key respondents like local leaders such as traditional leaders, Council Officials, District Administrator, Councillors and development decision making structures' (WADCOs, VIDCOs and WPCS, RDC) Chairpersons. A total of 15 respondents were interviewed. KIIs were used to elicit information that is often difficult to obtain through the quantitative method.

3.3.3 Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guides

A focus group is a small group of six to ten people led through an open discussion by a moderator (Eliot & Associates, 2005). Focus Group Discussions for single sex comprising ten people were carried out to exploit the views of both men and women on how and the level of women's meaningful participation in local governance. The groups were large enough to generate rich discussions and at the same time not very large such that some participants were left out. This also ensured balanced responses on women's meaningful participation in local governance. Two FGD were conducted per ward making a total of 4 FGDs conducted for the purposes of this study. FGDs were also used to elicit information that is often difficult to obtain through the quantitative method.

3.3.4 Document review

This involved critically looking at some relevant written materials as well as credible internet materials that were available for the area of research for example Council minutes, and NGO

annual reports or brochures/fliers among others. The researcher managed to get comprehensive information in the materials provided and this assisted in the research to a greater extent.

3.4   Ethical Considerations

Resnik (2011) defines ethics as norms for conduct that distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. These are a code of practice that guide or direct the manner in which a research process should be conducted. This study is a sensitive especially if it is carried out in communities in which patriarchy is still deep rooted whereby women's and youth's rights are violated as well as where negative cultural practices which hinder women and youth's participation are practised. There is thus need for ethical considerations to safeguard participants from being labeled as traitors of culture. The author will abide by the following ethical considerations throughout the research to avoid any clashes with the participants:

- Informed consent of participants needs to be obtained including assurance that participation is voluntary and not forced with the opportunity to withdraw from the research

- Information carried out during this research will be for academic use only

- Confidentiality of the accessed information will be maintained.

- The participants who will take part in the research will be kept anonymous.

- All work used in the research will be acknowledged.

- Data will be interpreted honestly without distortion agreeable

3.5   Conclusion

This Chapter has managed to outline the methodology used in carrying out this study. A sample size of 5% was used and a total of 382 respondents completed quantitative questionnaires. Both primary and secondary data sources were used during this study. Data collection instruments used includes KII, FGDs, questionnaires (primary sources) and document review (secondary sources). The KII were administered to 15 people, 4 FGDs for single sex were carried out and document review was also used to come up with this study. The data was entered and analyzed using software packages namely SPSS for quantitative data and Microsoft Excel for qualitative data.

Chapter 4 : FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS OF DATA COLLECTED

4.0   Introduction

This Chapter analyses and discusses findings from the field. The findings are obtained from document review as well as questionnaires, Key Informant Interviews and Focus Group Discussions administered in Mutasa Central wards 15 and 20. The Chapter gives an outline of how data was analyzed and the software used to analyze both quantitative and qualitative data. Graphs will be used to present the analyzed data and discussions will be generated from those graphs. The Chapter will end with a conclusion which summarizes all the discussions made in the Chapter.

4.1   Data Analysis

Data analysis was done both quantitatively and qualitatively. Microsoft Excel package was used for qualitative data entry and recurring themes emerging from the objectives were used as a basis for analysis. Quantitative data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).The analysis was done by running frequencies, means and ranges to mention a few. Once the data was entered using Microsoft Excel and SPSS, the author was able to generate graphs, tables as well as measuring variables under investigation. This helped the researcher in establishing meaning out of the processed data through trend analysis as well as drawing conclusions to the study.

4.2   Report on Findings

In ward 15 of Mutasa Central, 167 questionnaires for men and women were administered and in ward 20, 217 participants completed the questionnaires. The questionnaires were distributed by the author and participants had to fill them on their own. The questionnaires were written in simplified English and participants were allowed to complete them either in English or vernacular i.e. Shona which is the first language in Mutasa Central.

It is important to note at this point that respondents in both wards 15 and 20 of Mutasa treated WADCOs and Ward Assemblies as the same, and this also applied to VIDCOs and Village Assemblies. The respondents argued that WADCOs are chaired by the Councillor while the committee members consist of all village heads of the ward together with their Secretaries. These are the same people that also sit in Ward Assemblies hence the respondents could not clearly differentiate the two decision making structures. In addition, respondents also noted that Village Assemblies are chaired by village heads just like VIDCOs hence the data provided for village assemblies was the same as that provided for VIDCOs. Respondents were interchangeably using the term WADCOs and VIDCOs to also mean Ward Assemblies and Village Assemblies respectively.

4.2.1 Age of respondents

The majority of respondents were females i.e. constituted two-thirds of the total respondents in all wards. Figure 2 below shows that in Mutasa ward 20 the majority of women who participated in this study (42.75%) were aged between 31-45 years. From the FGDs administered it came out that this group of the population is the one which is most active in local governance issues. In

Mutasa ward 15, more females between the ages of 18-65 participated in the study as these are the ages that most women actively participate in community development. This is illustrated in figure 3 below. Fewer female respondents than males were aged above 65 years. Reasons given for such a low turn-out during FGDs were that with age women lose interest in occupying public space and concentrate more on domestic affairs than men.

Figure 2: Age of respondents, disaggregated by sex, from Mutasa ward 20
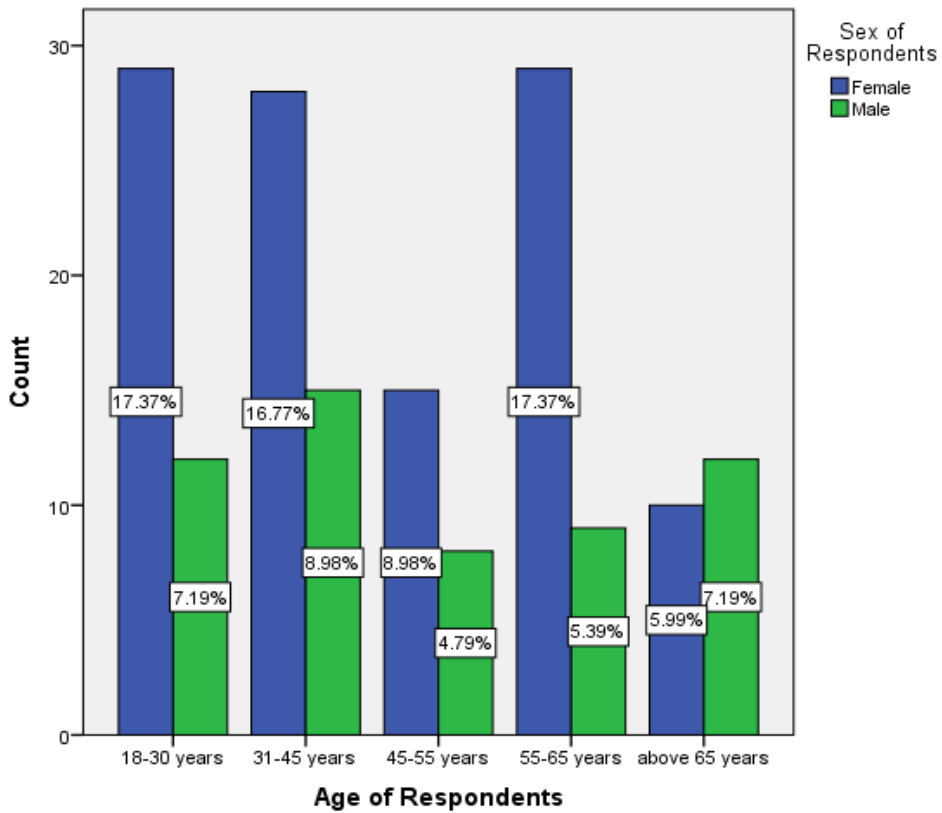
4.2.2 Satisfaction levels on women's participation in local governance

The questionnaires administered contained a question which asked the satisfaction levels on women's participation in local governance among respondents. Results show that respondents are moderately satisfied with women's participation in local governance. In Mutasa ward 15, of the respondents who answered that they are satisfied with women's participation in local governance, 51.50% were females while 28.14% were males as shown in figure 4 below. Women gave reasons as to why they are satisfied in their participation in local governance and they stated that women are now vying for public office in development decision making structures like WADCOs and WPCs as compared to previously whereby women were comfortable with male leadership. However, the women expressed concern that even though women are now vying for leadership positions in development decision making structures, the

level is still low and that there is need for robust awareness raising and empowerment for women for them to understand the importance of taking leadership positions in local governance. These issues were raised by women during an FGD conducted in Mutasa ward 15.

Figure 4: satisfaction levels on women's participation in local governance, Mutasa ward 15
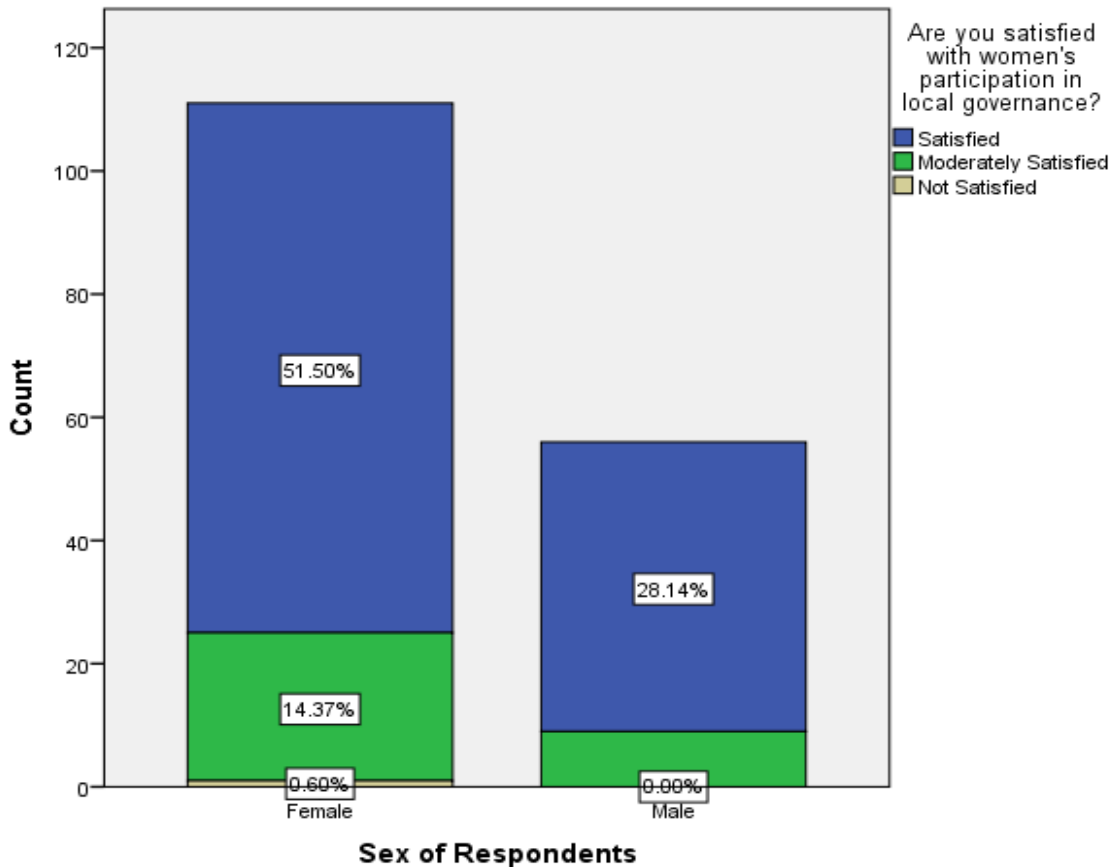
In Mutasa ward 20, the majority of respondents stated that they are moderately satisfied with women's participation in local governance. Figure 5 below shows that 55.09% of respondents with 37.50% females and 17.59% males are moderately satisfied with women's participation in local governance. Females justified their response during FGDs conducted stating that women are hesitating to take up leadership positions in decision making and if there are any who vie for such posts, fellow women discourage/ demotivate them. Males pointed that there still exist men

who discourage their wives from taking up influential positions in community decision making structures and this results in a few women occupying leadership positions. This shows that patriarchy still plays a role in limiting the participation of women in local governance. There is thus need for awareness raising in the communities so that men appreciate women's role in development and that both males and females' participation is crucial for inclusive development to be achieved. Both males and females should complement each other so that their different developmental needs are raised and addressed by decision making structures like VIDCOs and WADCOs that have the mandate of overseeing community development both at the village and ward levels respectively.

Figure 5: Satisfaction levels on women's participation in local governance, Mutasa ward 20
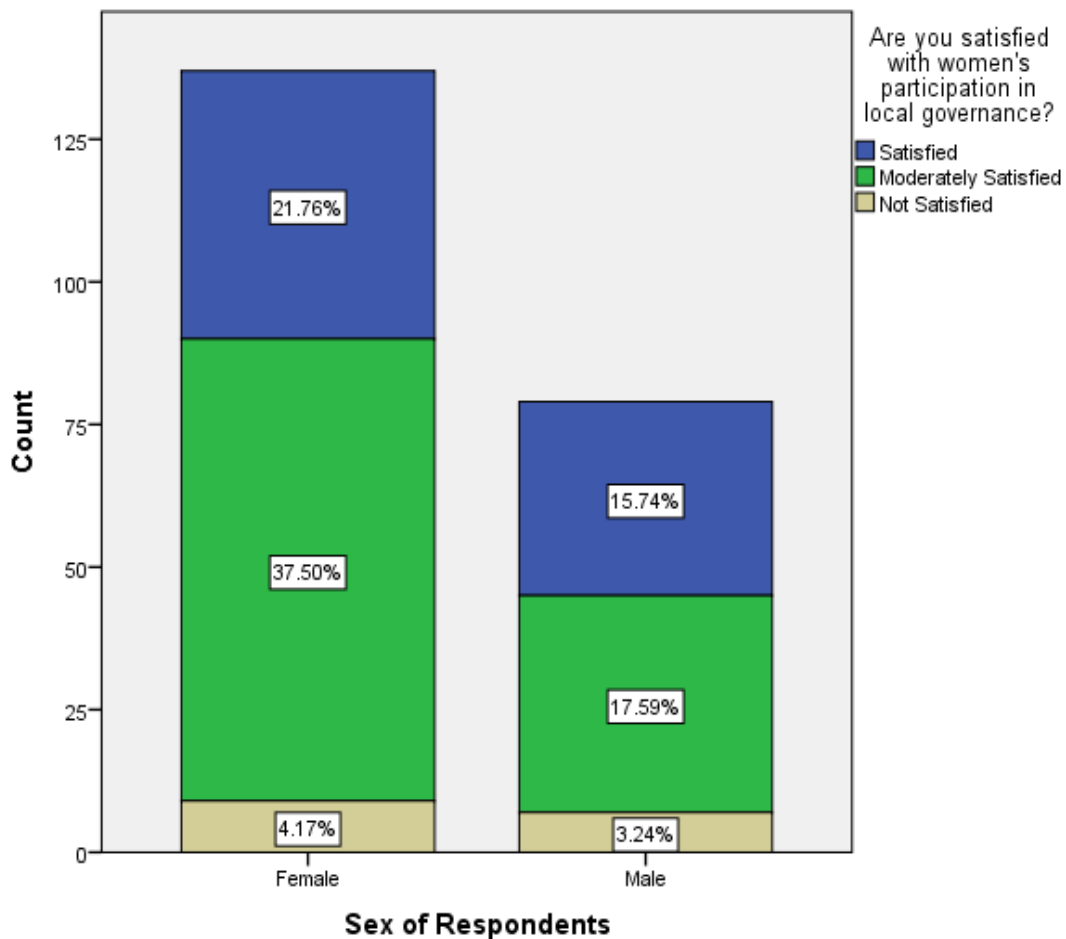
4.2.3 Awareness levels on women's rights to participate in local governance

The author also sought views on the awareness levels on women's rights to participate in local governance. For women to meaningfully participate in local governance, they should be aware of their participation rights. For instance Section 17 (1) (a) of the Zimbabwean Constitution provides for the State to promote the full participation of women in all spheres of the Zimbabwean society on the basis of equality with men. The Constitution promotes equality between women and men thus women should equally participate in local governance with men.

In Mutasa ward 15, of the total number of respondents who admitted that women are aware of their rights to participate in local governance, 66.87% were females while 33.13% were males as indicated by figure 6 below. The greatest percentage came from the women themselves and this clearly indicates that they are aware of their participation rights. What needs to be done is for the women to put into practice the knowledge. Knowing of their participation rights is actually the first step to women's meaningful participation in local governance. Both males and other females who actively participate in governance should be tasked to encourage the rest of the women in the communities to participate in governance. The participation comes in various forms and taking up leadership positions in decision making structures, attending and raising contributions during development meetings called for by development decision making structures are some forms of participation that women should be encouraged to exercise.

In Mutasa ward 20, 63.55% of respondents who admitted that women are aware of their rights to participate in local governance are the females themselves while 36.45% are males. The figure 7 below gives a clear graphical analysis of the statistics. From the two wards, the highest

percentage of respondents who admitted that women are aware of their rights to participate in local governance are the women themselves. Women spoke out on their own that they are aware of their participation rights though from the single sex FGDs conducted in the two wards, both males and females expressed concern that women's participation is still limited.

Figure 6: Awareness levels on women's rights to participate in local governance, Mutasa ward 15
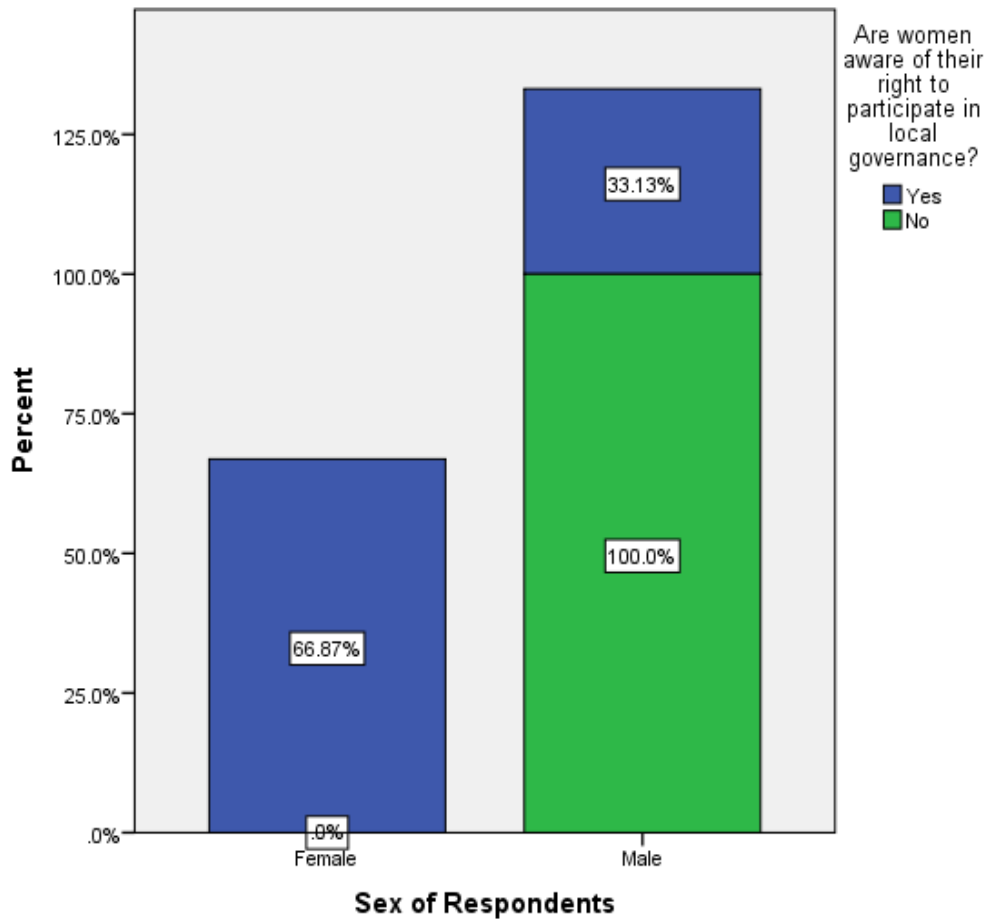
The author solicited views on how women's participation can be enhanced and various ways were propounded during FGDs that were conducted. The FGDs were carried out in a way that women are able to express themselves freely without the fear of men thus single sex FGDs were carried out. Women in ward 15 stated that there is room for learning hence awareness

programmes should continue to be carried out and gradually women's participation in governance will increase. The men in ward 15 Mutasa during an FGD expressed their views that women should not look down upon each other and should learn to encourage each other to participate in governance even through attending development meetings and voting for each other to occupy leadership positions in decision making structures that promote development.

Figure 7: Awareness levels on women's rights to participate in local governance, Mutasa ward 20
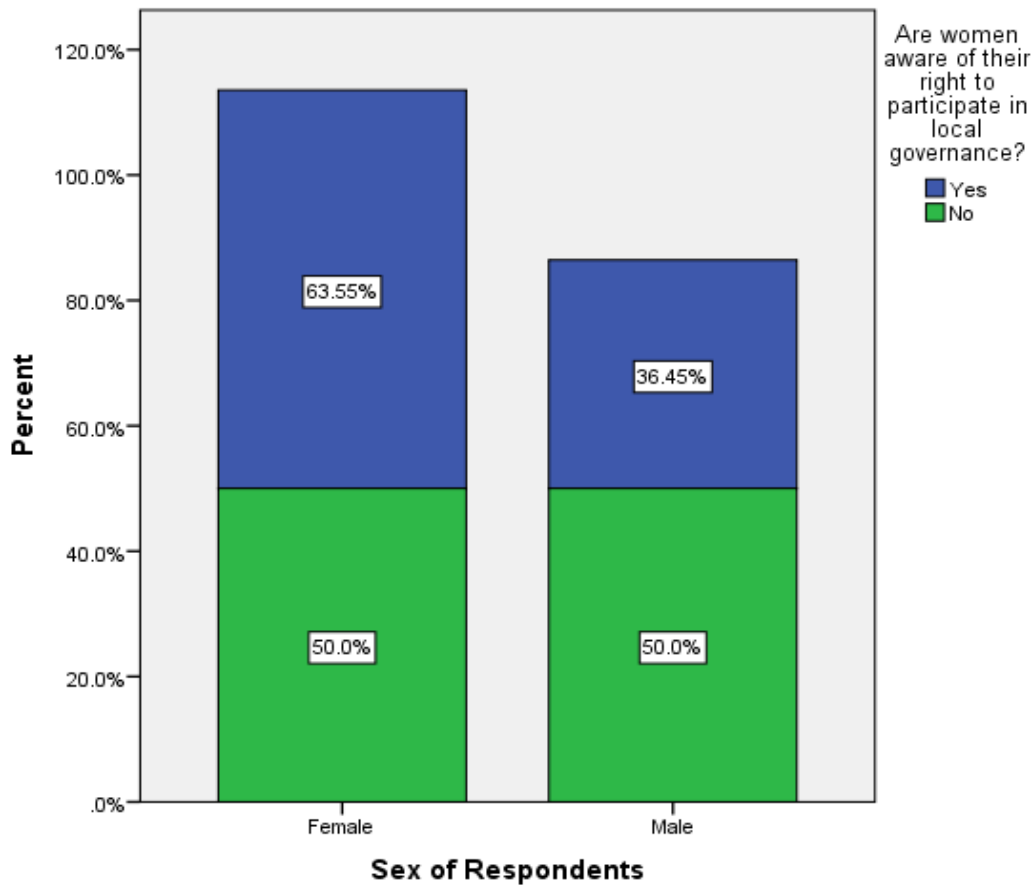
4.2.4 Awareness levels among women on decision making structures that promote development

There was need for the author to also explicit information on the awareness levels of women on decision making structures that promote development at the local level. This is important in that if women are aware of the local decision making structures that promote development, they can

then participate in these structures. Table 2 below shows that out of the total of 217 respondents in ward 20 Mutasa, 214 responded positively that women are aware of decision making structures that promote development. Figure 8 below goes on to give the percentage of those who admitted to women being aware of decision making structures that promote development and the statistics are disaggregated by sex; 64.02% are women while 53.98% are males. The greatest percentage came from the females themselves meaning they were able to speak for themselves on their knowledge decision making structures that promote development.

Figure 8: Awareness levels on decision making structures that promote development, Mutasa ward 20
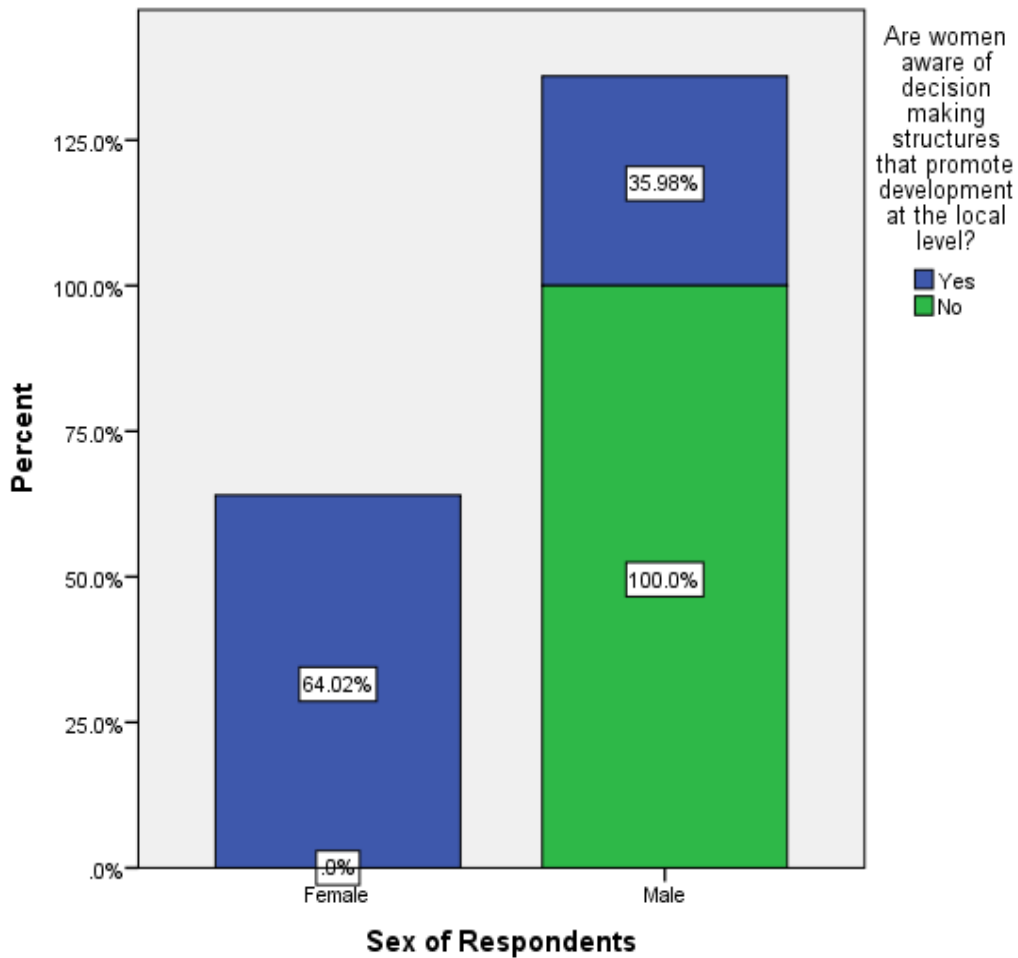
Table 2: Awareness levels on decision making structures that promote development, Mutasa ward 20

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Yes	214	98.6	99.1	99.1
Valid	No	2	.9	.9	100.0
	Total	216	99.5	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.5		
Total		217	100.0		

In ward 15, the highest percentage of those who agreed that women are aware of decision making structures that promote development are women and the percentage is 67.27 while 32.73 of males agreed that women have the knowledge of these decision making structures. This is illustrated in Figure 9 below. Table 3 below shows that out of the 167 total respondents in Mutasa ward 15, 165 agreed to the notion that women are aware of decision making structures that promote development.

Figure 9: Awareness levels on decision making structures that promote development, Mutasa ward 15
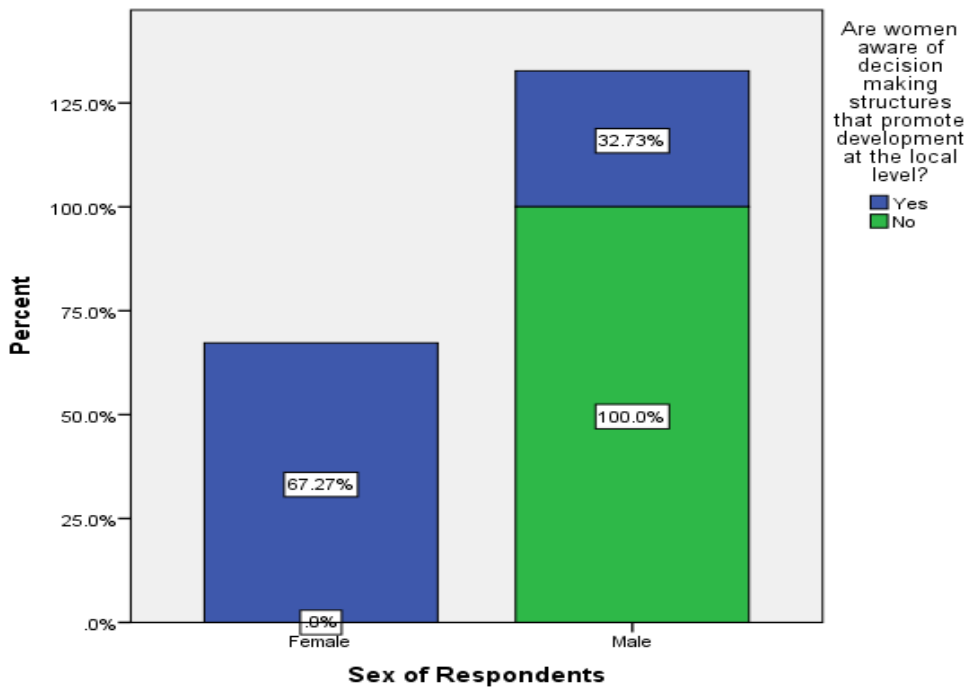
Table 3: Awareness levels on decision making structures that promote development, Mutasa ward 15

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	165	98.2	98.8	98.8
	No	2	1.2	1.2	100.0
	Total	167	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		168	100.0		

This knowledge is important as it helps understand where women are lagging behind in participation in local governance. The research has concluded that women are knowledgeable of such decision making structures hence there is need to further explore why women's participation is low and yet they are aware of their rights to participate in local governance as well as aware of decision making structures that promote development. This leads to the next discussion on women stating the decision making structures that promote development that they know as well as to explore the level and form of participation in those structures.

4.2.5 Outlining decision making structures that promote development in Mutasa

The majority of respondents in both wards were able to name the decision making structures that promote development at the local level. In both wards, more than 50% of the responses were able to mention more than three of the following structures: WADCOs, VIDCOs, WPCs and Health Committees. This shows that there are high knowledge levels among men and women in the two wards of development structures under local governance. Figures 10 and 11 below give a clearer picture of the statistics.

However, in ward 15, there were respondents who failed to outline decision making structures that promote development. These respondents were mentioning Non-Governmental Organisation as decision making structures and yet these are only agents that promote development. Figure 11 above shows that 12.61% of female respondents failed to outline decision making structures that promote development while 23.21% were males. This shows a knowledge gap among community members of decision making structures that promote development and agents of development at the community level. There is thus need for awareness raising distinguishing the two so that women are able to meaningfully participate in local governance or specifically policy

formulation at the local level/ decision making that affect community development through partaking in activities conducted by these decision making structures. This distinction is crucial so that women are not misled thinking that participating in NGO activities is enough in promoting inclusive development. There is need for these NGOs to actually empower and educate women so that they have access to such information and that they are not left out in decision making that affect community development.

4.2.6 Women's representation in decision making structures that promote development

This section discusses women's representation in decision making structures that promote development. Women's representation in decision making is a form of participation in local governance. This is crucial in that those women who are elected or appointed into leadership will represent the views and needs of fellow women. The following is a synopsis of women's representation in the various decision making structures at the local level:

- **Council/ Rural District Council**

From the single sex FGD s conducted, there were mixed feelings on the representation of women in Council. The men in ward 15 expressed that there was a gender balance in Council leadership while women expressed that there are more males than females in Council leadership. The questionnaires administered showed that the Council Chairperson and Secretary are both males while the Vice Chairperson and Treasurer are females. It is true that women's representation at the local government level is low and statistics show that in Zimbabwe, only 16% of women are represented in local government (ACPDT and Women's Movement, 2015: 59).

At the national level during the 2013 elections, women's representation in the Zimbabwean Parliament shot up from 19% to 34% (The Herald, August 2013). This rise was necessitated by the quota system whereby 60 seats were reserved for women in Parliament. However, there was a heavy reliance on the quota system as there was a drop in the number of elected women to Parliament. Unfortunately the quota system did not extend to local government. There is thus need for the government to extend the quota system to the local government level so that the representation of women at this level of government is increased. Councillors who sit in the Council are elected and if fewer women are elected this means the needs of women are least likely to be represented hence the need for the quota system to be extended to this level of government.

Various reasons were given as to why women are least represented in Council. The females during an FGD conducted in ward 15 Mutasa noted that women are enemies of themselves. The women pointed that women constitute the greatest percentage of the population and had there been enough support for each other, more women would be elected into office. Hence there was a call on women to support each other through voting those who vie for leadership positions into office.

There was alarming response from the questionnaires administered in Mutasa ward 20 as respondents showed lack of knowledge of the composition of Council leadership. Almost all respondents left that section blank showing lack of knowledge of the composition of this decision making structure. This also shows limited interaction between the Mutasa RDC with citizens hence there is need to increase citizen participation in the RDC for instance through citizens, women included, attending full Council meetings so that they have depth knowledge of their local authority.

- **Ward Development Committee (WADCO)**

The WADCO of ward 15 is gender balanced; the Chairperson who is also the Councillor of the ward is male, vice chairperson is female, secretary is female, treasurer is male and there are two female committee members. This information was obtained from the FGDs for males conducted in the ward. The females during the FGD also acknowledged gender balance in the WADCO. This clearly shows an equal representation of both males and females in the WADCO of ward 15. In ward 20, results from the FGDs conducted show that the Chairperson of WADCO who is also the councilor of the ward is female while the vice chairperson is male, the Secretary and Treasurer are both females while the committee members are both males and females. This again shows a gender balance in this development decision making structure.

However, there is concern that women may be represented in decision making structures but quality/meaningful participation lacks. Hence the next sections will discuss the level of meaningful participation of women in these structures regardless of them being represented. There is a danger that women may occupy top leadership positions in these committees but the few men in the committees become dominant. Hence this notion will be further explored to actually get to know the level of participation of women in local governance beyond statistics.

- **Village Development Committee (VIDCO)**

VIDCOs are mainly male dominated hence the representation of women is limited. In ward 15, the villages of Duri, Manyau, Zinyembe, Chipangara and Chinzourea male dominated as shown by the figure 12 below. This is because this office is viewed culturally as a male domain.
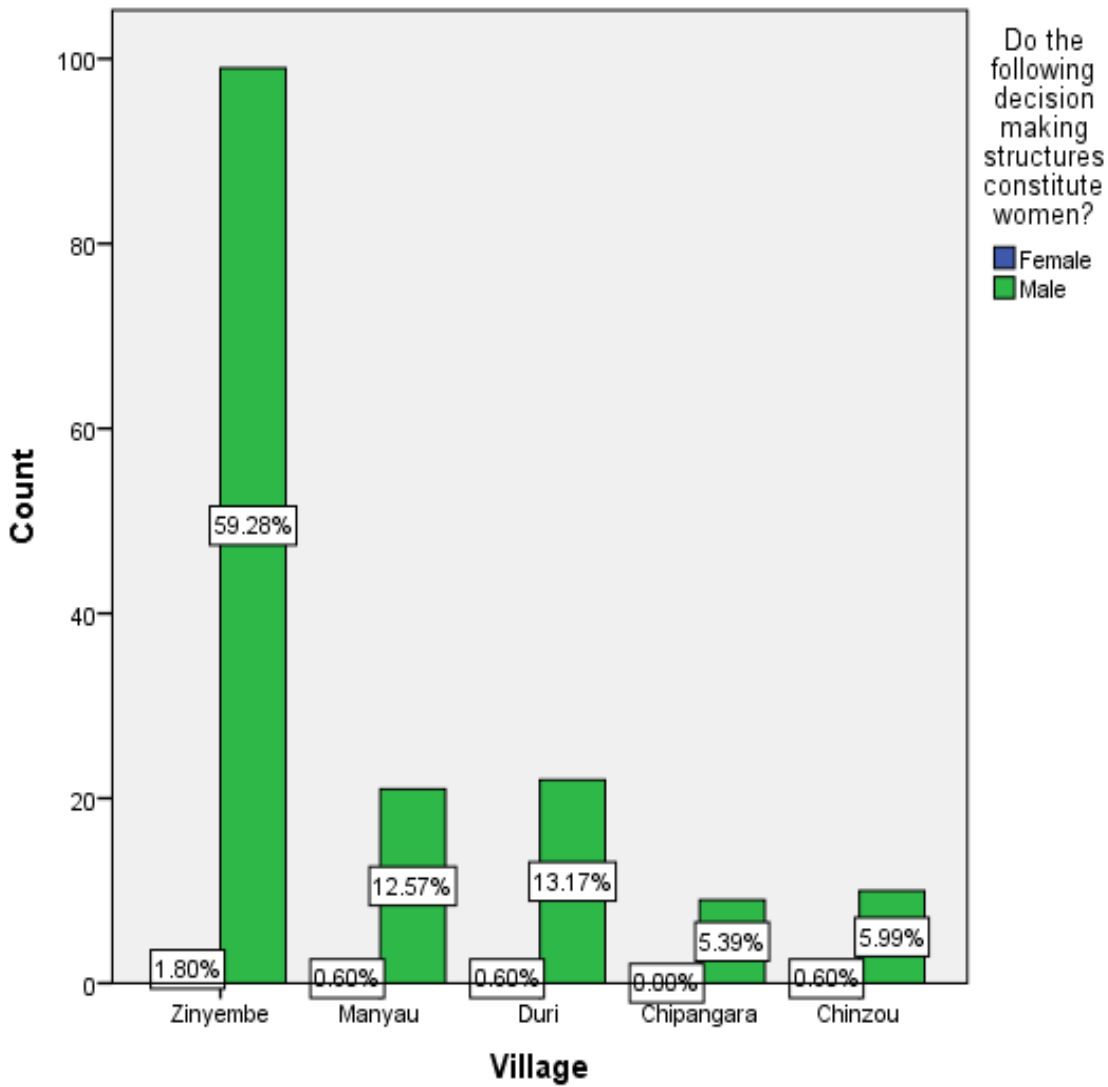
In ward 15, the case of Ziteya and Musewe villages is different as these VIDCOs have a higher female representation with Musewe having a female VIDCO chairperson who is also the village head. The other villages which got an opportunity to participate in this study which include Charumuka, Chimuriwo, Nyambayo, Chimbadzwa, Matendezvo and Jarai are male dominated as shown in figure 13 below.
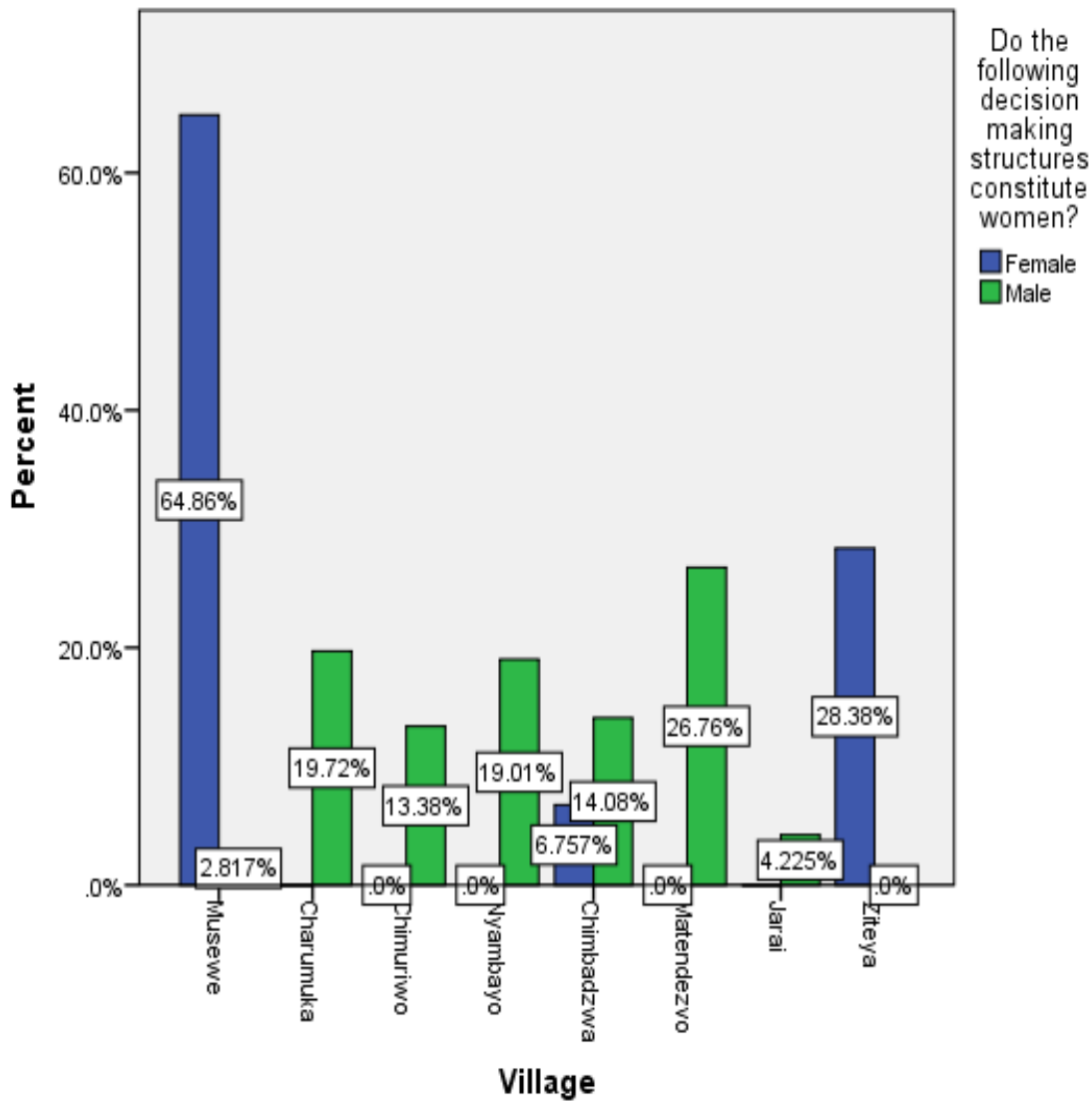
There is a possibility to increase women's representation in both the Council and WADCOs as these positions are obtained through an election. The case of VIDCO is different as VIDCOs are headed by village heads who are appointed basing on which bloodline one belongs to and normally males from such households are appointed. Tradition restricts this office to the males though in some villages like Musewe village in Mutasa ward 20 there is a female village head. There is need to demystify this belief that only males can become village heads and this can be achieved through awareness raising that women are as equal citizens as males. Changing attitude

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of people to accept female village heads may take long to yield positive results but with robust awareness raising on such matters the whole process can yield results in a short period.

- **Water Point Committees (WPCs)**

From the two wards, women's representation in WPCs is high with women occupying top positions such as being chairpersons of these committees. These WPCs are responsible for making sure that boreholes are functioning hence the high involvement of females in this decision making structure as women are the ones who face the day to day challenge of accessing water. Zinyembe village of ward 15 has the highest representation of women in WPCs the ward with a percentage of 57.23 followed by Duri (12.65%), Chinzou (6.63%) and Chipangara (4.22%).
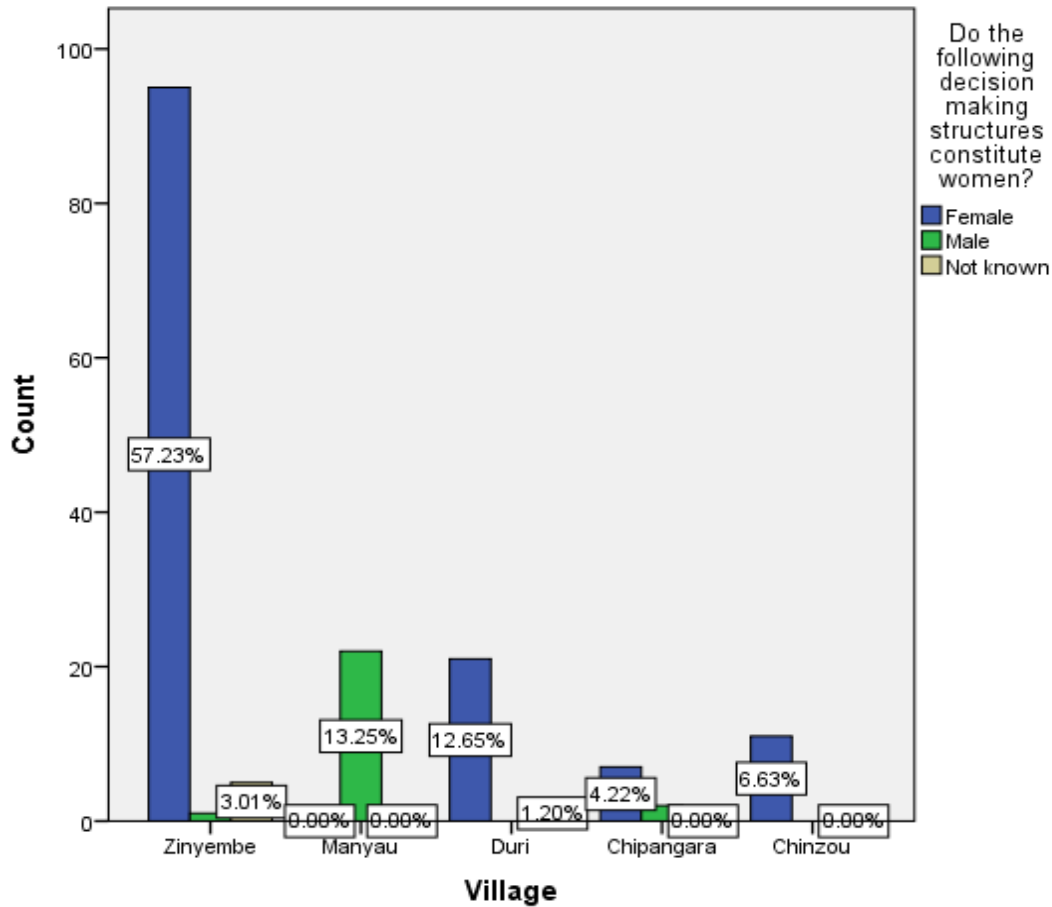
Just like ward 15, ward 20 has the highest representation of women in the WPCs. The percentage

of male representation is fairly high as well showing that there is inclusivity. Both males and

females are complementing each other for the betterment of the community as well as improved

service delivery particularly the provision of water. The village of Nyambayo has the highest

representation of women in WPC with a percentage of 54.84 followed by Musewe (above 35%)

and then Jarai with 9.68%. Ziteya, Nyambayo and Musewevillages have respondents who

showed lack of knowledge on the composition of the WPC in those areas. There is need to

disseminate information to all villagers on the composition of WPC in case that boreholes are not

functioning so that leaders can be informed in time and people can have safe and portable

drinking water. The figure below gives a summary of the statistics of women's representation in WPCs of ward 20 in Mutasa.

Figure 15: Composition of WPCs in Ward 20
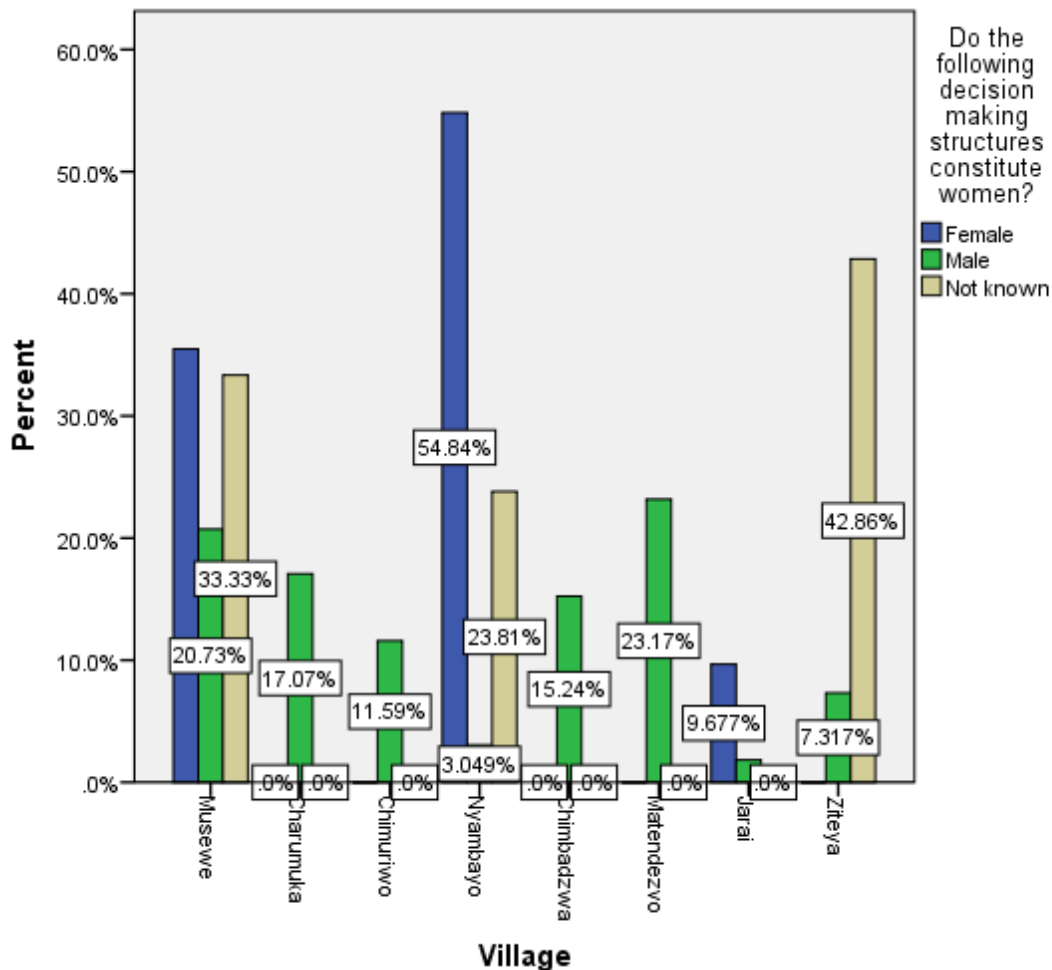
4.2.7 Levels of women's participation in development decision-making structures

Section 4.2.6 discussed one form of women's participation which is the position that women hold in decision making structures. It has come out clearly that women are mostly represented in WPCs followed by WADCOs, Council and lastly VIDCOs. This section now looks at other forms of participation of women in decision making structures at the local level. These include women attending development meetings, women raising contributions during development

meetings, positions women hold in development decision making structures as well as initiating community actions that bring development. The levels of participation will be analyzed within the following decision making structures at the local level: Council, WADCO, VIDCO and WPC. The levels of participation will be grouped as follows:

a) Low level - Women attending development meetings.

b) Medium level- women raising contributions during development meetings; Positions held by women in formal decision making structures like Local Authorities, VIDCOs and WADCOs and informal decision making structures like WPCs and HCs.

c) High level –women initiating actions that improve service delivery for instance the repair of boreholes.

- **WADCO**

In ward 20, respondents indicated on the questionnaires that women participate in WADCO through attending meetings, raising contribution during development meetings, raising contributions during development meetings, holding positions in decision making structures that promote development as well as initiating community actions that bring development. The figure 16 below shows that of the respondents who stated that women participate in more than three of the above mentioned forms of participation, 63.43% are women while 36.57 are males. Women expressed their views during FGDs conducted that women attend meetings called for by WADCO and they make contributions with regards to improvement in service delivery for instance the repair of boreholes as women are mostly affected by shortage of water as they are the ones who perform household chores. Thus women make contributions on issues that affect them and at the end of the day the development needs of women are put into consideration. Men

during FGDs exclaimed that women hold leadership positions in WADCO though this was still limited and needed to be strengthened.

Figure 16: Women's participation in WADCO, ward 20
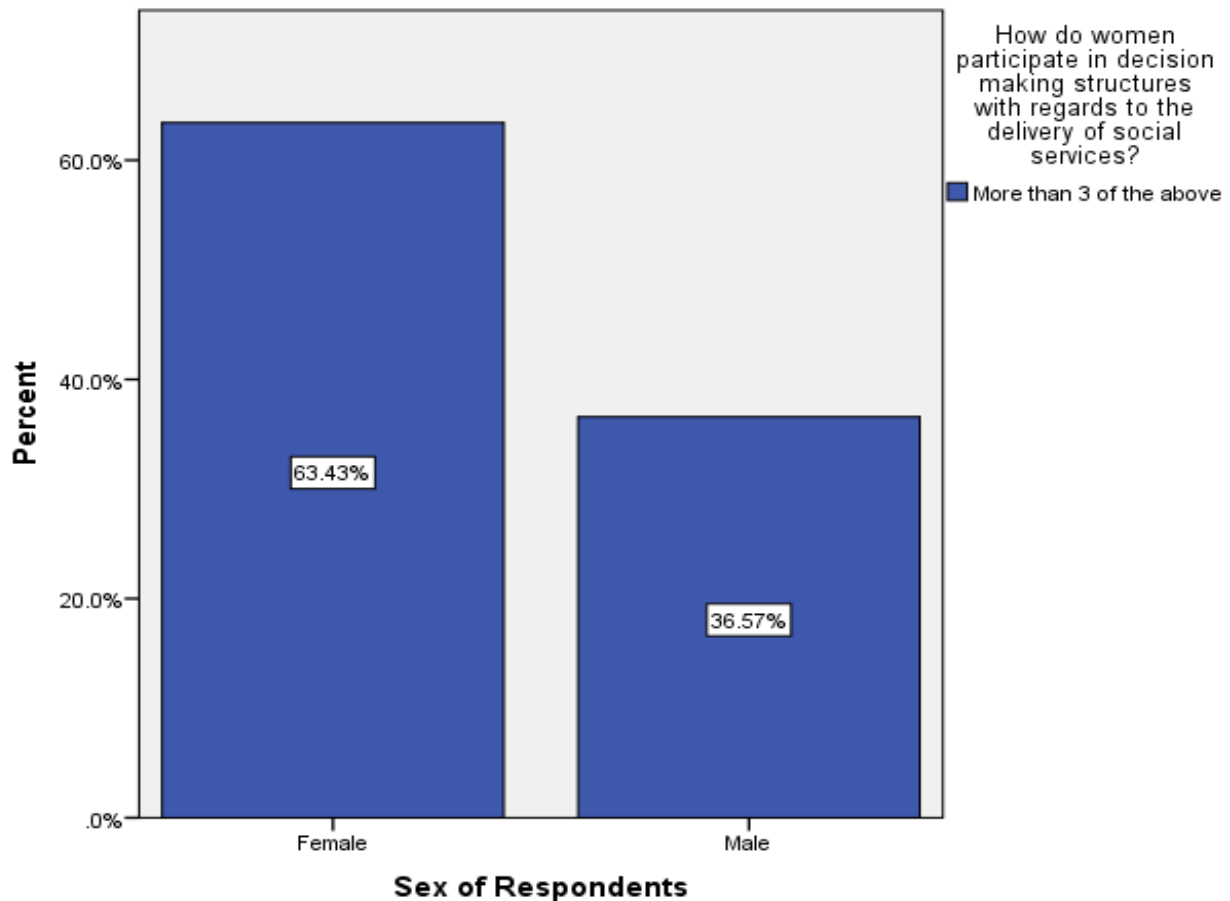
The figure 17 below also shows the level of participation of women in WADCO of ward 15 and most respondents noted on the questionnaires that women participate in more than the following forms of participation i.e. attending meetings, raising contributions, holding leadership positions as well as initiating actions that improve service delivery. From the questionnaires administered, the greatest percentage came from the women themselves making a total of 64.67% while men were 32.34%. This shows that women were able to indicate on their own that they participate in local governance. The FGDs conducted in the ward for both males and females conclude that women mostly raise issues that affect their day to day lives like water, health and education of

children. These issues were also raised by the WADCO Chairperson who was interviewed during this study. This shows meaningful participation of women beyond just holding positions in decision making structures.

Figure 17: Women's participation in WADCO, Ward 15
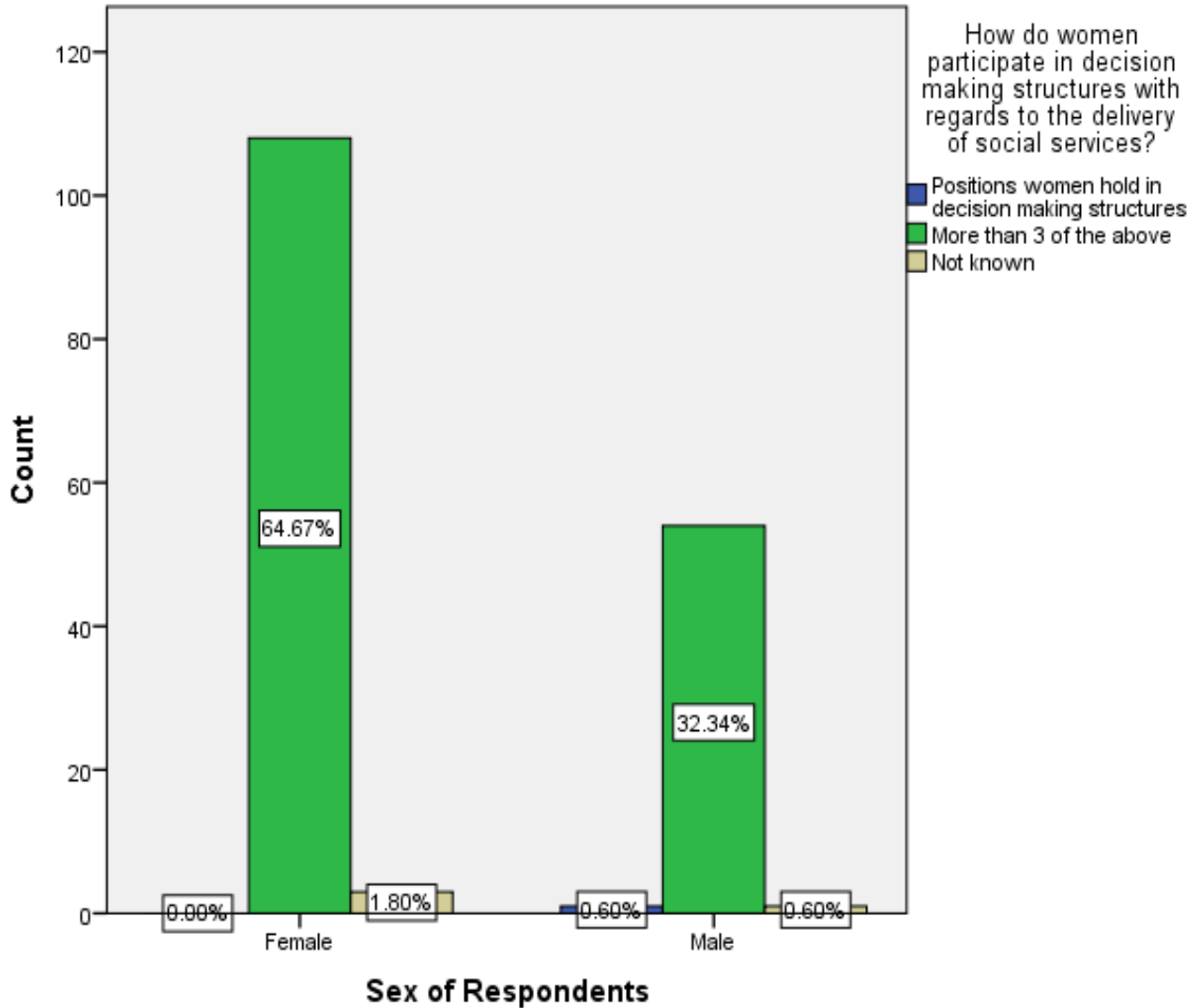
WADCOs are the ones that come up with ward development plans and these will be taken to Council for implementation. It is important to investigate how these development plans are made and whether women participate in the making of these plans. If women are left out in coming up with these plans this means their development needs will not be taken into consideration and

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when the Council implements these plans, the development will be not inclusive of the needs of both males and females. From the informant interviews carried out with Councillors, it came out clearly that Councillors call for consultative meetings with communities and discusses the priority areas of the people with regards to development and the plans are then drafted. This process was confirmed by men and women during FGDs which were conducted and in ward 15 women confirmed that they participate in these meetings and make contributions on women's specific needs. In ward 20, both males and females agreed that WADCO consultative meetings allow both sexes to speak on their development priority areas and these are encompassed in the ward development plans.

- **VIDCO**

Though in both wards the number of women holding positions in VIDCOs is limited, respondents in both wards indicated that there is quality participation of women during meetings called for by this development committee. From the FGDs carried out in ward 20, women indicated that mostly women are the ones who identify developments needs in the communities and these are shared during meetings called for by VIDCOs and action is taken for instance the clearing of bushes along roads among others. This shows the highest level of participation by women in VIDCOs even though few women occupy leadership positions in this development committee. Figures 18 and 19 below clearly indicate the percentages of those who are of the view that women meaningfully participate in local governance decision making structures particularly VIDCO.

Figure 18: Women's participation in VIDCOs, ward 15

How do women participate in decision making structures with regards to the delivery of social services?

- Initiating community actions
- More than 3 of the above
- Not known

Count

64.67%

32.34%

0.00% 1.80% 0.60% 0.60%

Female   Male

Sex of Respondents
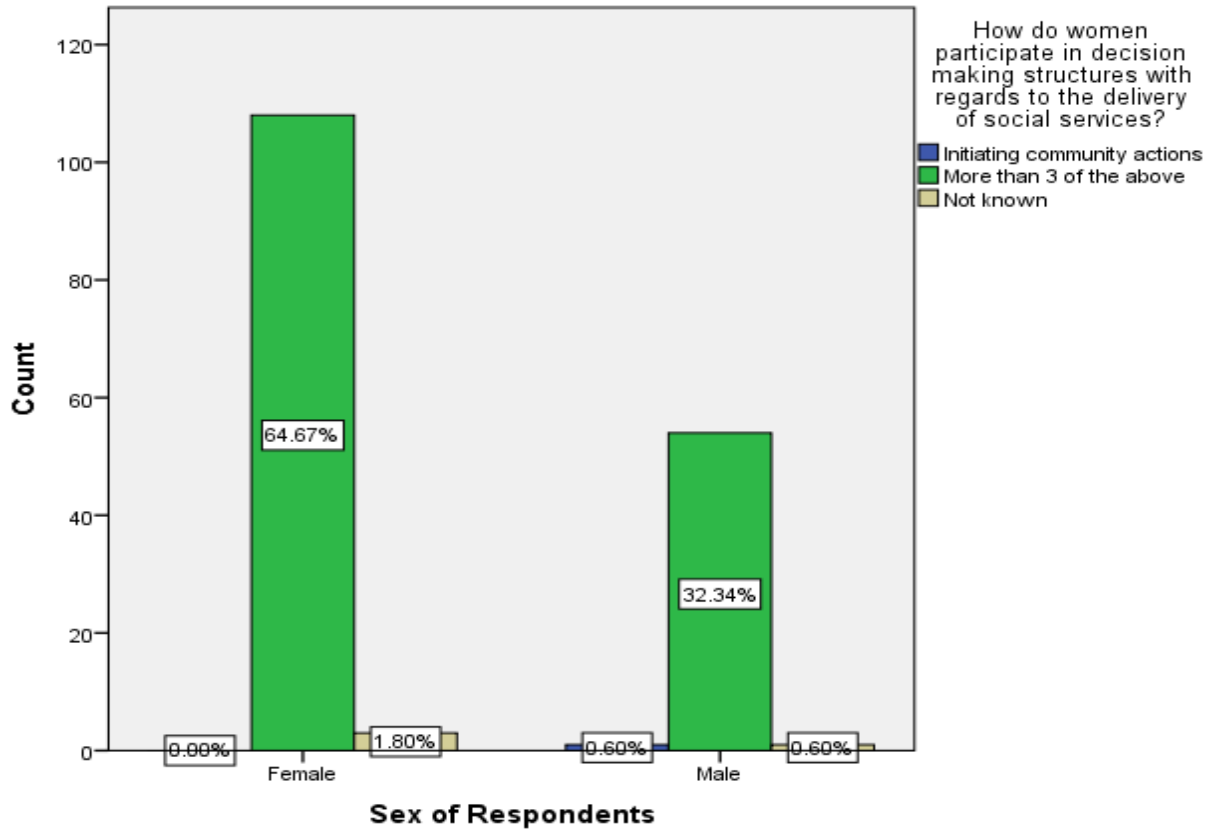
Figure 19: Women's participation in VIDCOs, ward 20

How do women participate in decision making structures with regards to the delivery of social services?

- More than 3 of the above

Percent

63.43%

36.57%

Female   Male

Sex of Respondents
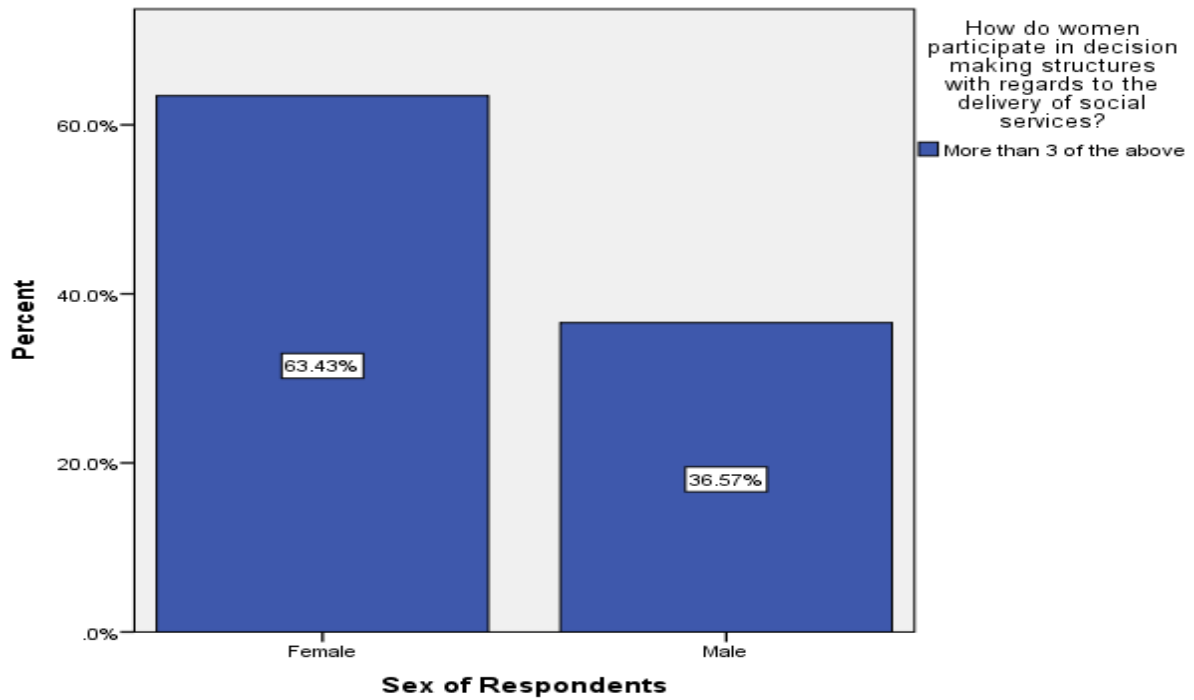
One of the village heads interviewed in ward 15 indicated that women are working closely with men at the village level to bring development hence development is inclusive and addressing the service delivery needs of both males and females as these two groups of the population work together. This also indicates that meaningful participation goes beyond numbers. There may be a greater representation of women in decision making structures but the women will be passive but in this case even though women are least represented they are still taking action and making contributions so that their development needs are addressed.

- **Council**

The author also solicited views from respondents on the level of meaningful participation of women in Council. Men and women who completed the questionnaires showed lack of knowledge on how women participate in Council. This shows that men and women in this ward do not attend full Council meetings which are open to ordinary citizens. It is during these meetings that citizens get to know of how representative their ward Councillors are at Council for instance if Councillors raise community concerns with regards to development particularly service delivery at Council so that these are addressed. The figure below shows that both males and females in ward 20 are not aware of how women participate in Council. However, the ward Councillor was interviewed and stated that female Councillors raise key development issues and challenges being faced in the wards during full Council meetings particularly those issues that affect women for instance the availability of water and health services.

Figure 20: Women's participation in Council; response from ward 20
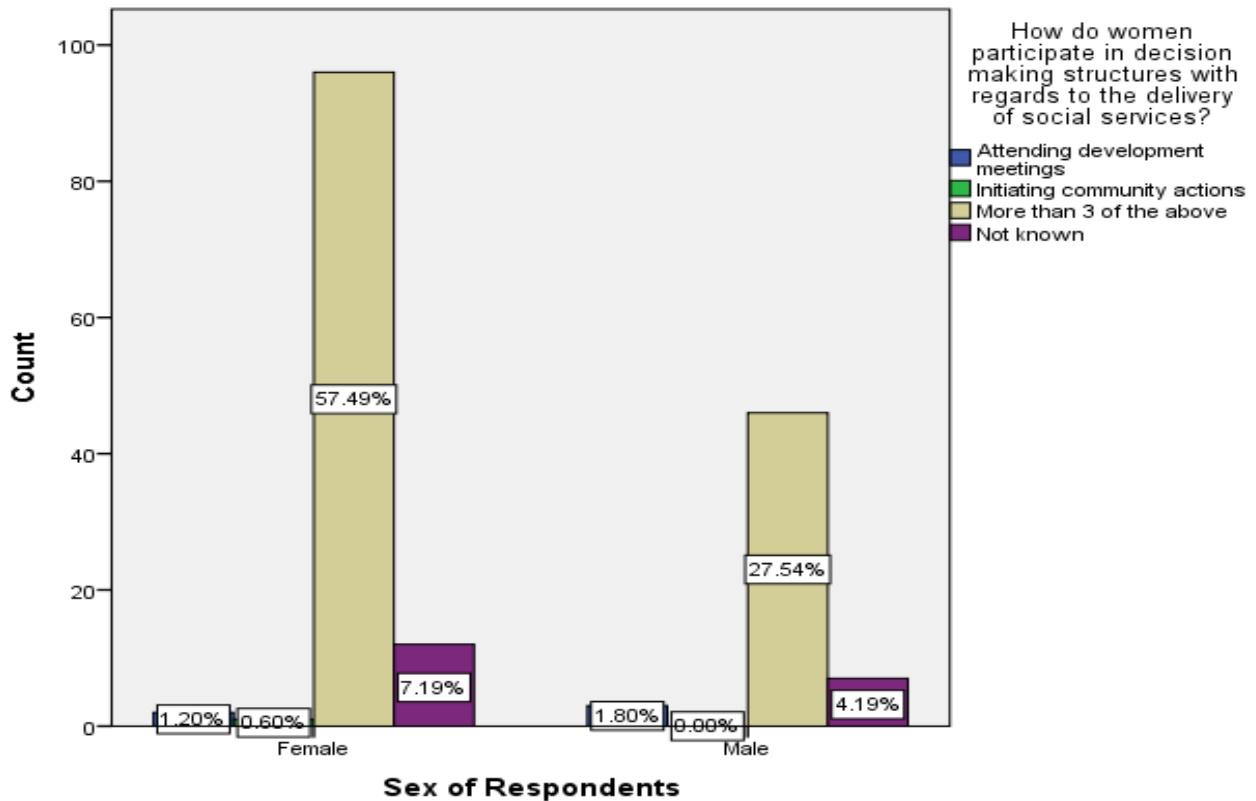
The case of ward 15 id slightly different from that of ward 20 as respondents showed knowledge on how women participate in Council. The figure 21 above shows that 57.49% of female respondents agree that women participate in Council either through attending full Council meetings, raising contributions during Council meetings (the case of female Councillors) as well as taking action in addressing the service delivery challenges of communities. 27.54% of males also agreed to this notion.

- **WPC**

In overall, women's meaningful participation is high in WPCs in both wards. From the FGSs conducted in ward 20, females responded that there was an increase in the number of women occupying positions in WCs than in any other development decision making structures. The males were of the same view citing reasons that water is a resource that affect the day to day

activities of women hence women meaningfully participate during meetings called for by the WPCs through raising contributions, taking leadership positions and initiating actions like rehabilitating boreholes so that people have access to portable and clean water. Figures 22 and 23 below gives a summary of women's participation in WPCs and the greatest percentage came from the women themselves that they do participate in this development decision making structure.

Figure 22: Women's participation in WPCs, ward 15
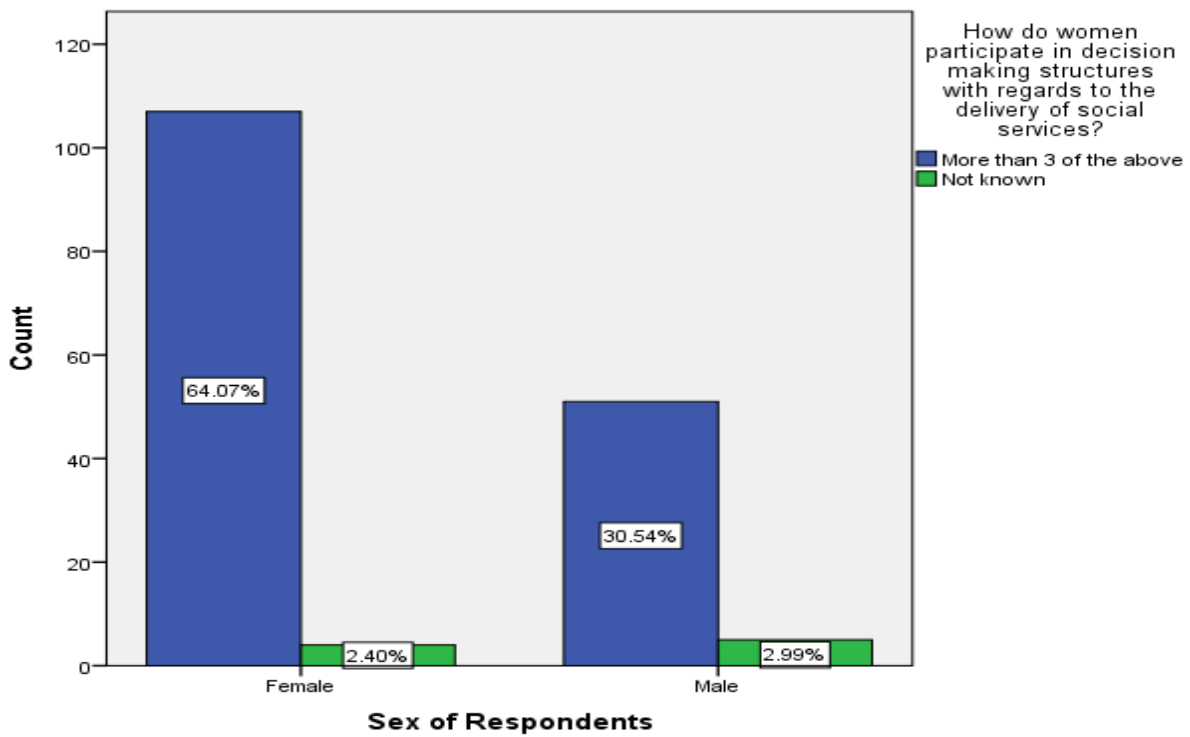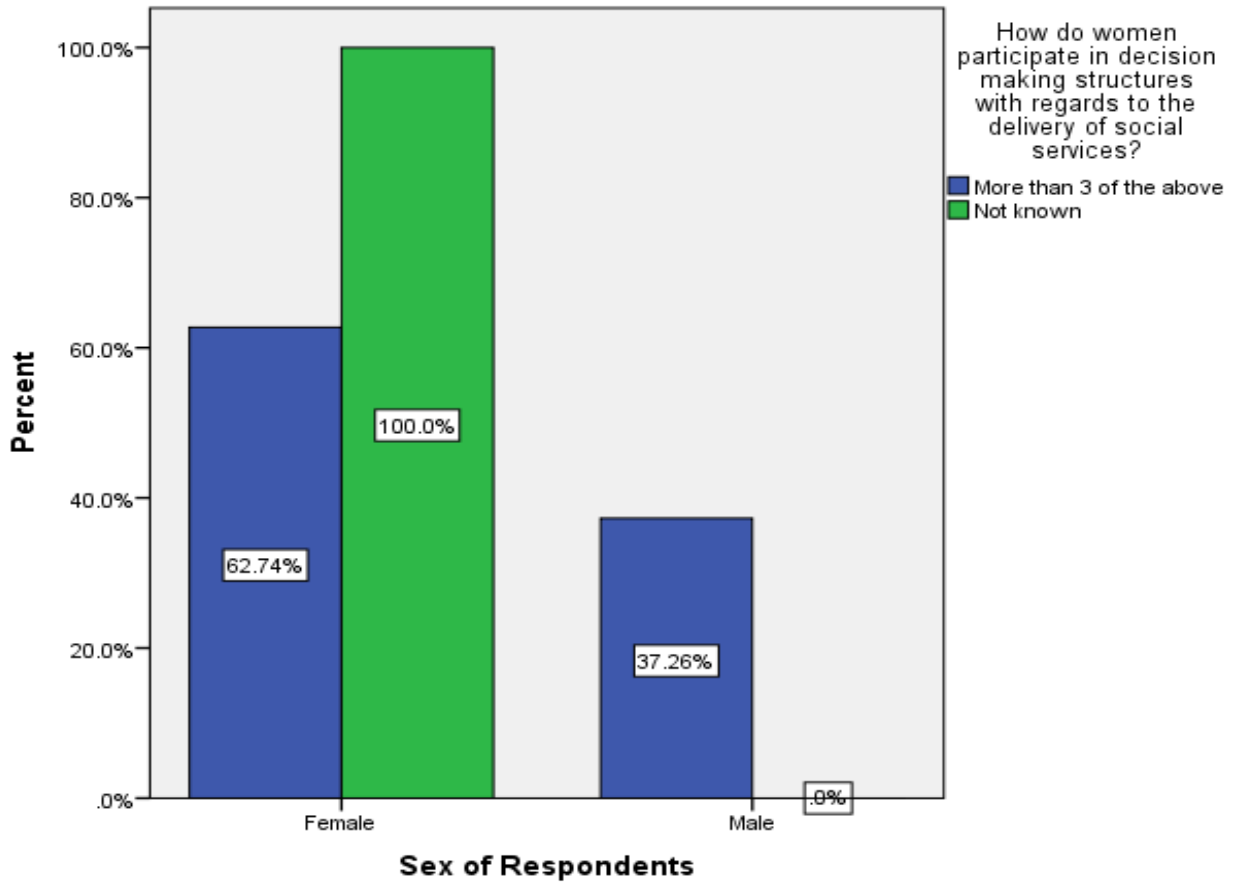
4.2.8 Functionality of development decision making structures

The author also investigated the functionality of decision making structures to make sure that these are in place so that the participation of women in these structures can be outlined. One cannot talk of women's participation in local governance decision making structures when these structures are not functional or in place hence the need to confirm the functionality of these structures before talking about women's participation in such structures.

- **WADCO**

In ward 20, out of the 217 respondents who participated in this study, 211 of them agreed that the WADCO is functional and has more than three of the following attributes of a functional structure: calling for consultative meetings with communities, calling for feedback meetings with

communities, taking minutes, making resolutions as well as taking action in implementing resolutions made (as shown in the table 4 below). Only five respondents demonstrated lack of knowledge on the functionality of the ward 20 WADCO. Since more respondents from the questionnaires admitted to the functionality of the WADCO, the author can safely conclude that the ward 20 WADCO is functional.

Table 4: Functionality of WADCO, ward 20

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	More than 3 of the above	211	97.2	97.7	97.7
	Not known	5	2.3	2.3	100.0
	Total	216	99.5	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.5		
Total		217	100.0		

Results from ward 15 respondents show that the WADCO is functional. About 161 respondents out of a total of 167 respondents agreed that the WADCO has more than 3 qualities of a functional structure. These results are summarized in table 5 below. Most respondents stated that the WADCO calls for both consultative and feedback meetings, take minutes and implement resolutions. The ward Councillor who is also the WADCO Chairperson is very active and works closely with the people in initiating development in the ward said one key informant interviewed.

Table 5: Functionality of WADCO, ward 15

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Take action in implementing resolutions	1	.6	.6	.6
	More than 3 of the above	161	95.8	96.4	97.0
	Not known	5	3.0	3.0	100.0
	Total	167	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		168	100.0		

- **VIDCO**

The VIDCOs of ward 15 Mutasa which include Zinyembe, Manyau, Duri, Chipangura and Chinzou are functional as stated by respondents in the ward (refer to table 7 below for detailed analyses). The majority of respondents who completed the questionnaires agreed that these VIDCOs are functional and that they call for meetings with communities, make resolutions and implement resolutions. Table 6 below shows that 162 respondents out of a total of 167 agree that these VIDCOs are functional. Some of the recurring resolutions made by these VIDCOs as stated by respondents include rehabilitating roads and boreholes. From the FGDs conducted it came out clearly that these resolutions are being implemented as boreholes in the ward are being rehabilitated particularly in Zinyembe village leading to improved service delivery.

Table 6: Functionality of VIDCOs, ward 15

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	More than 3 of the above	162	96.4	97.0	97.0
	Not known	5	3.0	3.0	100.0
	Total	167	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		168	100.0		

Table 7: Frequencies of the functionality of VIDCOs in ward 15

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Zinyembe	102	60.7	61.1	61.1
	Manyau	22	13.1	13.2	74.3
	Duri	23	13.7	13.8	88.0
	Chipangara	9	5.4	5.4	93.4
	Chinzou	11	6.5	6.6	100.0
	Total	167	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		168	100.0		

The case of ward 20 is similar to that of ward 15 with the majority of respondents stating that VIDCOs in the ward are functional. Table 8 below shows that 211 respondents out of a total of 217 respondents agree to the notion that VIDCOs in the ward have more than 3 qualities of a functional structure. The VIDCOs are from the following villages: Chimuriwo, Musewe, Charumuka, Ziteya, Chimbadzwa, Jarai, Nyambayo and Matendezvo. Table 9 below shows the frequencies of responses from each village as well as the percentage of these responses at village level. If VIDCOs are functional then it is easier to now investigate the participation of women as this structure exists.

Table 8: Functionality of VIDCOs, ward 20

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	More than 3 of the above	211	97.2	97.7	97.7
	Not known	5	2.3	2.3	100.0
	Total	216	99.5	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.5		
Total		217	100.0		

Table 9: Frequencies of the functionality of VIDCOs in ward 20

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Musewe	52	24.0	24.0	24.0
	Charumuka	28	12.9	12.9	36.9
	Chimuriwo	19	8.8	8.8	45.6
	Nyambayo	27	12.4	12.4	58.1
	Chimbadzwa	26	12.0	12.0	70.0
	Matendezvo	38	17.5	17.5	87.6
	Jarai	6	2.8	2.8	90.3
	Ziteya	21	9.7	9.7	100.0
	Total	217	100.0	100.0	

- **Council**

The ward 20 respondents showed limited knowledge on the activities of the Council and all the 217 participants demonstrated that they are not aware of the functionality of the Council as shown in table 10 below which outlines the summary of the responses from the ward. This shows limited interaction between the Council and the people of ward 20.

Table 10: Functionality of Council- responses from ward 20

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not known	216	99.5	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	1	.5		
Total		217	100.0		

Mutasa ward 15 respondents generally agreed that the Council is functional and has more than 3 qualities of a functional structure. Seven respondents were not aware of the functionality of Council while 160 respondents agreed to the Council having at least 3 qualities of a functional structure. Most respondents were stating that the Council takes minutes, makes resolutions and implements these resolutions.

Table 11: Functionality of Council- responses from ward 15

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	More than 3 of the above	160	95.2	95.8	95.8
	Not known	7	4.2	4.2	100.0
	Total	167	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		168	100.0		

- **WPC**

Water Point Committees (WPCs) are the most functional decision making structures in local governance in both wards. A huge number respondents from both wards highlighted on the questionnaires that the WPCs in those wards have at least 3 qualities of a functional structure. In overall, the WPCs call for feedback and consultative meetings, take minutes, are fully constituted (meaning the leadership constitute both males and females though females are dominant), make resolutions and implement these resolutions. It is in this decision making structure that females

take top positions like being the Chairpersons of the committee unlike in Council, WADCO and

VIDCOs This structure is the most interactive one as it is found closer to the home.

Table 12: Functionality of WPC, Ward 15

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	More than 3 of the above	162	96.4	97.0	97.0
	Not known	5	3.0	3.0	100.0
	Total	167	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		168	100.0		

Table 12 above and table 13 below show that the majority of respondents were of

the view that WPC are functional and have more than 3 qualities of a functional

structure with ward 15 having 97% and ward 20 having 95.8% of respondents

agreeing to this notion.

Table 13: Functionality of WPC, ward 20

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	More than 3 of the above	207	95.4	95.8	95.8
	Not known	9	4.1	4.2	100.0
	Total	216	99.5	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.5		
Total		217	100.0		

4.2.9 State and non-State actors' contribution to enhancing the participation of women in local governance

4.2.9.1 State actors

Ndlovu and Mutale (2013) noted that the positive trends in women's political participation in Africa have been abetted by the increased number of countries that have introduced quota systems for women's representation in parliament and in local government. Zimbabwe is one of the countries that introduced the quota system in 2013 and that saw an increase in the number of women in Parliament. However, this increase is at the national level and there is thus need to bring down the quota system approach to the local government level so as to increase the representation of women at this level of government.   Rwanda also introduced the quota system and a landmark was accomplished in the September 2008 Rwandan elections where women won 44 of the 80 seats in parliament (Ndlovu and Mutale, 2013). That was the highest percentage of women elected to parliament in the world (African Development Forum, 2008). This shows that the quota system works well in increasing women's representation in governance hence this process should be applied at the local government level to increase women's participation levels at the local level.

From the findings, in trying to enhance women's participation in local governance, respondents noted during FGDs conducted in Mutasa ward 20 that the government is issuing small-grants/loans to empower women so that they start self-help. The Financial Gazette (October 3-9, 2013) stated that one of the challenges hindering women's participation during elections is that women lack resources to campaign during primary elections. So by issuing small grants to women, the government is financially empowering women so that if they want to campaign for public office they do so as they will have the financial resources to do so.

4.2.9.2 Non-State actors

Generally, the enhancement in educational opportunities for girls and women has influenced the participation of women in politics. Ndlovu and Mutale (2013) noted that an improvement in women's education in most African countries has led to an increase in the number of women who are in a position to compete with men for political power in various levels (local and national government levels).

Tripp (1999) stated that the accessibility of donor funds channeled through International and local NGOs, Religious bodies, Embassies, and International foundations has played a crucial role in stimulating the intensification of national level organizations that support women's political activities. All these institutions have supported efforts of women to participate in civic education, constitutional reform, legislative reform, leadership training, and programs for women parliamentarians (Ndlovu and Mutale, 2013). All these have been essential in increasing women's political participation in Africa. Hence non-State actors are also playing a key role in enhancing women's participation in politics even at the local level. There is thus need to broaden the scope of these activities to also promoting women's participation not only in political decision making structures but also in decision making structures that promote development like WADCOs and VIDCOs. There is need for civic education to encourage women to participate in decision making processes that affect their communities.

From the FGSs conducted, participants in overall from both wards stated that local Non-Governmental Organizations were conducting civic education and encouraging women's participation governance. Women in Mutasa ward 20 however, noted that a lot still needs to be done to enhance the participation of women in local governance as the participation is still limited especially in Council and other decision making structures. Respondents noted that there

is need to disseminate information on what the Constitution states with regards to women's participation rights as well as to distribute the Constitutions in simplified language so that women can read on their own. Respondents in ward 15 Mutasa during FGDs noted that Constitutions were distributed by an NGO called the Centre for Community Development in Zimbabwe (CCDZ) but these are written in English and the legal jargon is not easy not only for women but the rest of the communities to comprehend. The respondents from the two wards also noted that an organization called ACPDT has tried distributing Constitutions that have been summarized in vernacular but not all people managed to get copies hence the need to ensure that every woman gets a copy so that they read about their rights on their own.

4.2.10 Challenges hindering women's participation in local governance and solutions to address them

From a Report produced by Oxfam Canada (2013) it came out clearly that Zimbabwean women's participation is limited by lack of resources, political violence and male-biased internal political party systems. This limits the political participation of women hence the low numbers of women's representation at the local government level. There is need to tackle political violence so that female candidates at the local level particularly Councillors also participate freely without intimidation. All these challenges generally affect women to participate in local governance not only in political decision making structures but also in those structures that promote development.

From the findings, two major and recurring challenges that hinder women's meaningful participation in local governance were outlined during the FGDs carried out in wards 15 and 20. Key informants interviewed such as village heads and Councillors also highlighted the same challenges. The first challenge outlined was that women among themselves look down upon each

other. This has resulted in women electing males in leadership positions and leaving out fellow women. The solution offered for this challenge is for women to work together regardless of their differences. Some men in the ward 15 FGD exclaimed that women constitute the greatest percentage of the population and if they start supporting each other through voting for each other, more women will be elected in office. Financial Gazette (October 2013) stated that one of the challenges that hinder women's participation in governance is that men use women to fight female candidates. This can also affect women candidates who may be elected into office as Councillors leading to low representation of women in Council.

The other challenge outlined by respondents that hinder women's participation in local governance is that husbands deny their wives the opportunity to participate in public space. This means even if women are willing to participate in local governance, their husbands to some extent have the final say to all that and if a husband denies his wife from participating, the wife adheres to that as culture puts the position of a women under the male counterpart. Ndlovu and Mutale (2013) postulate that due to the influence of patriarchy, men continue to be in authority of the state of affairs and make decisions almost exclusively, even when the issues border on women. The solutions propounded by respondents to overcome this challenge/barrier to women's participation in local governance include the need for awareness raising among men so that they promote gender equality and understand the importance of women's participation in local governance and in turn support women so as to enhance their participation in local governance.

4.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, the popular decision making structures in wards 20 and 15 are VIDCOs, WADCOs and WPCs with WPCs being the most popular. Women mostly participate

meaningfully in WPCs more than any other development decision making structure in local governance. Reasons given by women for this outcome during FGDs are that this decision making structure is closer to the villages and that it deals with the improvement in the delivery of water of which women are the ones mostly affected by unavailability of water as they are the ones who do domestic chores. This makes most women to participate in the decision making processes of this structure as well as taking up leadership positions in this structure. Women during FGDs in Mutasa ward 15 expressed concern over the limited number of women who participate in Council activities as well as the limited representation of women in this local decision making structure. Solutions to increase the representation of women in these structures were propounded by women themselves and they stated that there is need to increase the political participation of women so that they are elected in Council. Women emphasized that they should support and encourage each other in participating in local governance so that decisions that are made also address their needs and priorities with regards to the provision of social services. The men highlighted the need for awareness raising among women so that they participate in local governance.

Chapter 5 : CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0   Introduction

Chapter 5 gives the conclusion of the whole study and proffers recommendations that policy makers and other private players can adopt and implement so as to enhance the participation of rural women in local governance. The chapter will give a summary of the findings, make conclusions from the findings and lastly give recommendations.

5.1   Summary of findings

The summary of findings will be given as per objective of this study. The objectives of the study include:

- **To understand the legal frameworks at the local as well as regional and international levels (which Zimbabwe is a signatory) that promotes the participation of women in local governance.**

The study managed to discuss the legal frameworks that Zimbabwe is signatory to at the national, regional and international levels which provide for the rights of women to participate in governance matters. The Beijing Platform of Action provides for the active participation of women and the incorporation of women's perspectives at all levels of decision making so that equality and development can be achieved. This study has identified that there are some decision making structures whereby women's active participation is limited for instance in Council. However, in WPCs, WADCOs and VIDCOs, the participation of women is generally fair but there is still need to enhance this participation.

The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) advocates for the participation of women in decision making. CEDAW obliges the State to implement its provisions including the enshrinement in the Constitution of the principle of equality between men and women, and the adoption of national legislation protecting the equal rights of men and women. CEDAW provides for the women's right to participate in decision making on an equal footing with men in relation to policy formulation, holding public office among others. The Zimbabwean Constitution is very progressive and contains provisions that promote gender equality in all spheres of the society. This is a positive step towards also ensuring that there is equality in the participation of citizens in local governance.

The Zimbabwean Constitution under Section 2.9 on National Objectives provides for gender equality in decision making structures. Section 17 (1) (a) of the Zimbabwean Constitution provides for the State to promote the full participation of women in all spheres of Zimbabwean society on the basis of equality with men. Zimbabwe has managed to domesticate regional and international instruments that promote women's participation in decision making as the Constitution of the country has such provisions.

However, there is also a challenge in relation to the implementation of the Constitution. This has resulted in the under-representation of women in all areas of decision making. For instance in local authorities by the year 2010, only 18.8% of women occupied this decision making structure. This is a small figure given that women constitute about 52% of the total population of the country. There is thus need for the full implementation of the Constitution so as to enhance the participation of women in local governance.

- **To examine the level and forms of participation of women in local governance.**

The study has also managed to investigate and examine the level and forms of women's participation in local governance. The lowest level of participation is through attending development meetings and women do attend these meetings called for by WADCOs, VIDCOs and WPCs in their numbers as was stated during FGDs conducted. The medium level of participation is the positions women hold in decision making structures as well as women making contributions during meetings called for by these development making structures. Findings show that women are now taking up leadership positions as compared to previously whereby this space was reserved for the males due to tradition particularly in VIDCOs which are traditional decision making structures. It is in WPCs that women participate the most and top leadership positions are held by women. In VIDCOs, very few women occupy leadership positions as tradition restricts women from becoming traditional leaders. However, even though women do not occupy top leadership positions that has not negatively affected their participation. This shows that numbers do not necessarily count and there is need to go beyond statistics. Quality or meaningful participation is only required to enhance the position of the woman in society. In Council there is the least participation of women and very few women hold leadership positions. The highest level of participation entails implementing community actions that bring development. Women implement community actions that promote development in VIDCOs, WADCOs and WPCs for instance the rehabilitation of boreholes and roads among others.

- **To examine how State and non-State actors are enhancing the participation of women in local governance.**

In trying to enhance women's participation in local governance the government is issuing small-grants/loans to empower women so that they start self-help. The Financial Gazette (October 3-9,

2013) stated that one of the challenges hindering women's participation during elections is that women lack resources to campaign during primary elections. So by issuing small grants to women, the government is financially empowering women so that if they want to campaign for public office they do so as they will have the financial resources to do so.

Non-State actors like Non-Governmental Organizations are conducting civic education and encouraging women's participation governance. Women in Mutasa ward 20 however, noted that a lot still needs to be done to enhance the participation of women in local governance as the participation is still limited especially in Council and other decision making structures. Respondents noted that there is need to disseminate information on what the Constitution states with regards to women's participation rights as well as to distribute the Constitutions in simplified language so that women can read on their own.

- **To identify challenges to women's participation in local governance and to recommend possible solutions.**

The first challenge outlined was that women among themselves look down upon each other. This has resulted in women electing males in leadership positions and leaving out fellow women. The solution offered for this challenge is for women to work together regardless of their differences. Some men in the ward 15 FGD exclaimed that women constitute the greatest percentage of the population and if they start supporting each other through voting for each other, more women will be elected in office.

The other challenge outlined by respondents that hinder women's participation in local governance is that husbands deny their wives the opportunity to participate in public space. The solutions propounded are that there is need for awareness raising among men so that they

promote gender equality and understand the importance of women's participation in local governance and in turn support women so as to enhance their participation in local governance.

It is clear from the two main challenges outlined above that there is ignorance among women and men on the importance of women's participation in local governance. The solution to both challenges outlined above is to raise awareness among all community members so that there is acknowledgement of the importance of women's participation in local governance and the benefits it will bring to the community at large.

5.2   Conclusions

From this study, findings show that the participation of women differs depending on the decision making structure being discussed. Some women meaningfully participate in some decision making structures while others do not. The following are conclusions that have been made on Mutasa District rural women's participation in local governance:

The leadership positions that women hold in decision making structures include being Secretaries, Treasurers and Committee members. Very few women are Chairpersons of decision making structures. This is true for most VIDCOs in both wards 15 and 20 of Mutasa District. The council as well has the top leadership positions occupied by males for instance the Chairperson. However, in WPCs, women actively participate and all the forms of participation are practiced by females including attending meetings, making contributions during meetings, implementing community actions that bring development as well as holding top leadership positions. It is in this structure that you rarely find men as leaders but mostly female leadership than in any other decision making structure.

Some respondents are not aware of decision making structures that promote development and this entails that they do not participate in the decision making that affect their communities. These respondents were mentioning names of NGOs as decision making structures that promote development and yet these are only agents to development. There is thus need to conduct awareness raising campaigns so that women are able to distinguish the two and that they also participate in local governance.

5.3   Recommendations

Government should extend the quota system which was introduced at the national level for legislators to local government level to increase the representation of women. When the quota system was introduced at the national level, it led to an increase in women's representation in Parliament from 19% to 34% in the 2013 elections (The Herald, 29 August 2013). The same should be extended to local authorities so that women's representation is increased.

Local Authorities and in this case the Mutasa Rural District Council, should effectively practice gender budgeting. Gender budgeting is a system of taking into account the inequalities that arise as a result of the different roles that are assigned to different groups in society (SAPST and WIPSU, 2015). Gender responsive budgets entail the analysis of expenditure and revenue of men and women and the budgets are adjusted appropriately to address gender inequality (SAPST and WIPSU, 2015). When these gaps/inequalities are identified, they are then addressed as a certain amount from the mainstream budget would have been allocated to address such. This means the capacity gaps for female councilors can be overcome through holding empowerment programmes for these women particularly female Councillors. This in turn enhances women's participation in local governance particularly in Council.

Both State (including government Ministries at District level and RDCs) and non-State actors (Civil Society) should continue with awareness raising programmes on women's rights especially participation rights so as to increase the participation of women in local governance. Ncube and Waiganjo (2015) note that in public policy formulation processes, public participation typically involves preparing the public to participate through civic education and public information campaigns. There is thus need to empower women so that they participate meaningfully in decision making structures. Empowerment could be in the form of boosting their confidence in public/ public speaking skills and enlightening the women on women's rights as contained in the Constitution. Being a leader in these public decision making structures like Council, WADCOs, VIDCOs and WPCs involves addressing citizens hence the need to acquire public speaking skills for women to effectively carry out their mandate. Both State and non-State actors must support women and build their capacity around such areas. This in turn can influence the rest of the women in communities to also speak out on issues that affect women even during meetings called for by these decision making structures.

Both State and non-State actors must also encouraging citizens, women included, to attend full Council meetings so that they are aware of proceedings in their districts. This helps in that if women feel that their concerns are not being discussed in Council, they then can call for meetings with their Councillors, who represents citizens in Council, and make their concerns known so that they are taken up to Council for implementation.

There is need to simplify the Constitution and distribute it in the communities so that women can read about their rights on their own. Respondents in wards 15 and 20 noted that there is need to disseminate information on what the Constitution states with regards to women's participation rights as well as to distribute the Constitutions in simplified language so that women can read on

their own. Respondents in ward 15 Mutasa during FGDs noted that Constitutions were distributed by an NGO called the Centre for Community Development in Zimbabwe (CCDZ) but these are written in English and the legal jargon is not easy not only for women but the rest of the communities to comprehend. There is thus the need to simplify the supreme law of the land so that every citizen is able to understand and know their rights.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Questionnaire Guide for men and women

My name is Abigail Chikovha, a final year Master of Arts in Development Studies student at the Midlands State University (MSU). I am currently undertaking a study for my dissertation with the title: *An examination on the meaningful participation of rural women in local governance: The Case of Mutasa Rural District.* You are free to participate in this exercise with the assurance that whatever you will say here is confidential and will be used exclusively for academic purposes in the writing of this dissertation.

Interview Details

Interview data			
District		Ward	
Village/ town		Date of interview	

SECTION 1: Demographic information

1.01	Age of respondent: *tick where appropriate* 1= 18-30 years 2= 31-45 years 3= 45-55 years 4= 55-65 years 5= above 65 years

1.02	Mark respondent's sex	Male	Female

SECTION 2: Research Questions

1. **Are you satisfied with women's participation in local governance?**

Tick where appropriate	
Satisfied	
Moderately satisfied	
Not satisfied	

2. **Are women aware of their right to participate in local governance?**

Yes	
No	

3. **Are women aware of decision making structures that promote development at the local level?**

Yes	
No	

4. **Name the decision making structures in your ward that promote development?**

………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………

5. **Do the following decision making structures constitute women?**

Structure	Chairperson		Vice Chairperson		Secretary		Treasurer		Committee Members	
	Female	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**
WADCO										
WARD ASSEMBLY										
VIDCO										
VILLAGE ASSEMBLY										
COUNCIL										
WATER POINT COMMITTEE										

6. **How do women participate in decision making structures with regards to the delivery of social services?**

	LEVEL OF MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION: *tick where appropriate*			
Decision making structure	**Attending development meetings**	**Raising contributions during development meetings**	**Positions women hold in decision making structures**	**Initiating community actions**
WADCO				
WARD ASSEMBLY				
VIDCO				

VILLAGE ASSEMBLY				
COUNCIL				
WATER POINT COMMITTEE				

7. Are the development decision making structures functional?

Decision making structure	Call for consultative meetings with communities	Call for feedback with communities	Take minutes	Make resolutions	Take action in implementing resolutions
WADCO					
WARD ASSEMBLY					
VIDCO					
VILLAGE ASSEMBLY					
Council					
WATER POINT COMMITTEES					

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR COOPERATION

Appendix 2: Key Informant Interview Guide

My name is Abigail Chikovha, a final year Master of Arts in Development Studies student at the Midlands State University (MSU). I am currently undertaking a study for my dissertation with the title: ***An examination on the meaningful participation of rural women in local governance: The Case of Mutasa Rural District.*** You are free to participate in this exercise with the assurance that whatever you will say here is confidential and will be used exclusively for academic purposes in the writing of this dissertation.

Interview Details

Interview data			
District		Ward	
Designation		Date of interview	

SECTION 1: Research Questions

1.   How do women participate in local governance decision making structures like Council, WADCOs, Ward Assemblies, VIDCOs, Village Assemblies, Water Point Committees in Mutasa District?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………….

2.   How are ward and village development plans formulated?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………

3.   What are the programs being implemented by State and non-State actors to enhance the participation of women in local governance in Mutasa District?

State Actors (Council, Ministries etc.)

…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………

91

………
………

Non-State Actors (NGOs, Churches etc.)

………
………
………
………

4.   To what extent are the programs (Mentioned in question 2 above) enhancing the participation of women in local governance?

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……
……
……

5.   What are the challenges that hinder women's participation in local governance?

……
……
……
……

6.   How can the challenges (mentioned in question 4 above) be overcome?

……
……
……
……
……

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR COOPERATION

Appendix 3: Focus Group Discussion Guide: For single sex

My name is Abigail Chikovha, a final year Master of Arts in Development Studies student at the Midlands State University (MSU). I am currently undertaking a study for my dissertation with the title: *An examination on the meaningful participation of rural women in local governance: The Case of Mutasa Rural District.* You are free to participate in this exercise with the assurance that whatever you will say here is confidential and will be used exclusively for academic purposes in the writing of this dissertation.

Interview details

Place of interview/ discussion: ………………………………………………………………

Name of facilitator: …………………………………………………………………….

Name of note taker: ………………………………………………………………………

Number of participants:

Males	
Females	

Age range of participants: from …………….. (Years) to ………………… (Years)

SECTION 1: Research Questions

1. What is your understanding of local governance?
2. How do women participate in decision making structures like WADCOs, Ward Assemblies, VIDCOs, Village Assemblies, Council and Water Point Committees?
3. How are ward and village development plans formulated?
4. What are the State actors (Council, Ministries etc.) doing to promote the participation of women in local governance in Mutasa District?
5. What are then on-State actors (NGOs, churches etc.) doing to promote the participation of women in local governance in Mutasa District?
6. What opportunities are available that can increase the participation of women in local governance?
7. What challenges hinder women's participation in local governance?
8. How can women's participation in local governance be improved?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR COOPERATION

Appendix 4: List of key informant interview participants

DESIGNATION	WARD
Councillor	20
WPC committee member-Chimuriwo village	20
WPC Chairperson, Chimuriwo village	20
VIDCO Secretary, Nyambayo village	20
Village Head, Nyambayo village	20
WADCO Committee member	20
VIDCO Committee member, Musewe village	20
Councillor	15
Village head, Zinyembe village	15
VIDCO Committee member, Zinyembe village	15
Village head, Duri village	15
Village head, Chinamasa village	15
Village head, Manyau village	15
Village head, Chipangura village	15
WPC Committee member	15

Appendix 5: FDGs held and number of participants aggregated by sex

FGD	Date Held	Venue	Sex and Number of Participants		Total
1	16 October 2015	Chidahuyo Shopping Centre	Females	10	**10**
2	16 October 2015	Chidahuyo Shopping Centre	Males	10	**10**
3	16 October 2015	Zinyembe village	Males	10	**10**
4	16 October 2015	Zinyembe village	Females	10	**10**
GRAND TOTAL					**40**