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FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS AND PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

GENDER AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND GENDER EQUALITY IN ZIMBABWE. CASE STUDY OF SOUTHDOWNS SUBURB, GWERU.

BY

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DEDICATION

I offer this thesis to my mother, Mrs M Mangisi-Mbewe as a token of reverence and as an honorary to my father the late Mr A Mbewe.

I also dedicate this to you: Happiness Ndaba, Tiffany Makunike, Veronica Mbewe, Nelia Ndaba, Patience Bodzo, Evancy Shumba, Belinda Hlatywayo, Calvin Chakabveyo, Mpho Sibanda, Tinashe Mudimbu, Gabriel Mbewe, Enzani Mareka, Sharon Chimanya, Esther Chawanda, Elina Marisa, Pride Makota, Lilian Maposa, Thelma Mbewe

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ACRONYMS

AU	African Union
CRCP	Chronic Poverty Research Centre
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GAA	Gender Affirmative Action
NGP	National Gender Policy
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
WAGCD	Women Affairs Gender and Community Development
ZETDC	Zimbabwe Electricity Transmission and Distribution Company
PSGP	Public Sector Gender Policy
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
ERC	Election Resource Centre

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ABSTRACT

Gender equality is a concept that many feminist and sympathizers the world over have been trying to achieve over the past five decades. Various measures to bring about this new kind of concept have been put forward including legislation, mainstreaming, gender affirmative action just to mention a few. But despite all the efforts and resources employed in endeavouring to achieve it, gender equality remains fantasy. The case of Zimbabwe is no different...

The issue of gender equality is a matter of social equity (Beijing Conference 1995) and as such it should be dealt with seriously. John Stuart Mill in his writing Subjection of Women (1869) highlighted that achieving gender equality leads to development of society and therefore Zimbabwe as a nation has also joined the rest of the world in the search for gender equality. The Zimbabwean government has adopted gender based affirmative action as its central contrivance to proffer gender equality. But however, 22 years after its inception, the policy's performance is dismal. In the search gender for gender equality, scholars argue affirmative action is useless. One wonders why it is gender activists' major tool to be used in achieving gender equality (Onsongo 2009).

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The study is a disclosure of the relationship between gender based affirmative action and gender equality. Twenty two years after the inception of gender based affirmative action, society is still characterised by tremendous gender inequality and the study brings to light the reasons behind this. Gender based affirmative action has been used on various platforms including political parties, parliamentary representation, university admission, awarding of scholarships, appointment into positions of authority just to mention a few. It should not be mistaken to conclude that the reason why gender equality is elusive is that gender based affirmative action has not been implemented; gender based affirmative action is the order of the day in the corporate world of modern day Zimbabwe but despite its rigorous implementation it has failed to achieve gender equality.

The study brings to the fore the reasons for this by taking into consideration Southdowns Suburb as a case study. This community is a rare phenomenon of nature as it has a large number of gender based affirmative action residing in one area.

The study's main focus is to determine whether the benefits of gender based affirmative action in this area included gender equality. And if that is not the case, reasons for that are to be revealed through the research. The study also focuses on crafting other ways of achieving gender equality.

Research findings will be based on information gathered from questionnaires, observations, interviews and input from gender experts in various institutions in the city of Gweru.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

Gender inequality has been a part of society not only in Zimbabwe, but the world over since the beginning of time. Women have been side-lined in all walks of life and regarded as an inferior class, a group of people meant to be nothing more than a housekeeper, a child bearer and/or a child rearer.

Religion has played a major role in perpetuating gender inequality, as highlighted in the Bible in Ephesians I vs. 22 which says 'wives submit unto your own husband.' and verse 24 which goes on to say, 'as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands'.

Even the Quran says ‘the male shall have the double portion of the female...and men are a degree above them (women).’ Thus gender inequality has its roots in religion, (Bakombo, 2013) and since ‘most cultures are largely shaped by their dominant religion’ (Nye, 2003, p.14) gender inequality is now a proper and normal characteristic of society. Gender discrimination and inequality is so inbuilt in the social mind-set that it is almost invisible to many people, (Tsanga 2010). Gender inequality is now so normal that both its perpetrators and victims see nothing wrong with it.

As such, gender activists had had enough of it and decided to stamp it out once and for all. Activists advocated for gender based affirmative action which would give women special privileges in getting admissions and promotions. (Pojman 2011) says this was when gender activists lost the fight against gender inequality. Women were so marginalised and underrepresented that activists wanted to end such tendencies swiftly and thus were in no temperament to consider other alternatives such as mainstreaming gender issues from kindergarten level. Gender based affirmative action is not built so much on the principle of bringing about gender equality in society but to ‘give preference to women because they were previously marginalised’ (Pojman 2011).

Such an approach in the fight against a formidable foe as gender inequality is as good as not fighting at all. Irrational thinking by the activists has but let the world to enter the 21st century with no sign of gender equality on the horizon. Zimbabwean gender technocrats are no different as they were taken up in the tide of making gender based affirmative action a priority. And 22 years later since the inception of gender based affirmative action, according to Chitsaka Chipaziwa (2008), pervasive inequalities still exist and a lot still needs to be done.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Affirmative action has been for twenty two years the major measure used to put an end to gender inequality in society. More than a score years later however, gender inequality is still rampant as if nothing has been done.

1.4 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Gender equality is an issue of national concern. Among the many justifications behind encouraging gender equality, two are most important. The first is that equality between women and men is an issue of social justice and human rights, (GIAW, UN 2001). And the second is, according to John Stuart Mill's Dual Contribution Theory of 1869, the realizing of gender equality will lead to both women and men working together for the growth and development of society. The research's justification stands to chart a way forward in the search for gender equality since the current path called gender affirmative action seems to be headed towards abyss. Solutions towards attaining gender equality are presented in the research.

1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- a. To bring out the reasons for the failure of affirmative action to achieve gender equality.
- b. To highlight the reasons for the perpetuation of gender inequality.
- c. To propose viable ways of bringing about gender equality.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- a. What are the reasons behind the failure of gender based affirmative action in achieving gender equality?
- b. What factors have contributed to the perpetuation of gender inequality?
- c. What influences will contribute to the realization of gender equality?

1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Affirmative action is a fairly new subject and as a result there are a few sources of reference for the researcher to gather information from. However, a handful of experts can be relied upon for credible and viable analysis of the topic in question.

- Affirmative action is a national policy, supported by regional bodies like SADC and the African Union and as such getting respondents to speak up against it (if they feel that way) will be a challenge. The researcher has to explain to the respondents that they can freely express their views about the ills of affirmative action as it is their Constitutional right to freedom of thought and of expression.
- Further, the researcher is a full time student who has other modules and school extra-curricular activities to attend to and thus time to carry out research will be limited. To minimize the impact of time constraints, the researcher will work long late hours and during weekends and public holidays.
- Getting people to speak against their customs will be a challenge as it is regarded taboo. The researcher will give an in-depth explanation as to why the research is being conducted-which is to change society for the better.

1.8 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study will cover the Southdowns suburb since it is in this area that a significant number gender based affirmative action beneficiaries reside in. This means that the researcher will get a vivid picture of the impact of affirmative action on gender inequality in a societal set up. This area will thus be a perfect sample population that can be a true representation of the city in particular and the country in general.

1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- The researcher was guided by moral considerations in the conducting of the research. Voluntarism was chief among them as the researcher realized the participants of the research had to willingly participate in the conducting of the research.
- The researcher also ensured the image of the participants, their families or organizations that they belonged to were not harm. This was done by granting and guaranteeing anonymity where it was requested and also highlighting the research was for academic purposes only.

1.10 CONTRIBUTION TO LITERATURE

The research output will be an assemblage of gen on the defects of gender affirmative action in its dealing with gender inequality in Zimbabwe. The information will help technocrats in formulating better ways of achieving gender equality.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

Gender equality and inequality as concepts have a lot of literature about them, from theories (liberal and feminist) to didactic novels such as *Nervous Conditions* (1988) and *She No Longer Weeps* (1985) all by Tsitsi Dangarembga and to constitutional writings (the Bill of Rights, National Gender Policy). However, in as far as showing the performance of gender based affirmative action is concerned, the matter has a shortage of literature. This is supposedly due to the fact that in Zimbabwe, as it is in most developing countries, gender based affirmative action is a subject not as pertinent as those of bread and butter.

Nonetheless, few pieces of literature can be referenced in showing the limitations of affirmative action. Tino Chinyoka in his article, *'Affirmative Action and Gender Equality in Zimbabwe Draft Constitution'* (2013) brings out the limitations of affirmative action. He talks of the issue of equal representation saying whether, when it is implemented fully, that will signify the appearance of gender equality; or whether it will be just 50-50 representation, nothing more. He argues that though the problem (gender inequality) had been identified, and a solution (gender based affirmative action) had been proposed; that does not address the basis of the problem (society and culture), but merely the symptoms (fewer numbers of women in positions of authority). It was 'sort of like putting a bandage on someone that has a sore throat,' he argued.

Further, there are also other regional scholars that have given input as to why affirmative action has limited chance of gaining gender equality. These can be referenced to the Zimbabwean case because the problem is the same. Jane Onsongo wrote a thesis titled *Affirmative action, gender equity and university admissions – Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania* (2009). In this work she came to conclusions that affirmative action is ineffective due to the fact that it has outlived its usefulness and is now doing more harm than good. She wrote that at the time affirmative action came into being in the 1960's women were significantly marginalised and so corrective measures had thus to be put in place. However, nowadays a lot of women are now entering the corporate world easily and so the need for special treatment is no longer necessary. She added that 'the existence of such programs (affirmative action) would lead to society doubting the ability of women, worse still herself doubting her

own capability' as she will be constantly wondering whether she became a doctor due to preferential treatment or her own ability.

Taylor and Sander(2012) bring out the constraints of affirmative action saying that in the event of a disadvantaged group (women) getting into certain fields due to preferential treatment and not merit, it would be quite a challenge for them to perform well since they are not 'supposed' to be there under normal circumstances. The pace at which say the lecturer will be lecturing at is for those who are at a certain level of intelligence and thus putting a student in such an environment because policy requires half the class be female will actually constrain the progress of the student. Eventually the student may drop out and this in turn will further cement society's conception that women are incapable. This was the case with former Zimbabwe Football Association (Z.I.F.A) president Henrietta Rushwaya whose performance as president was appalling. Male chauvinists as a result murmured the cliché, 'she was bound to fail. After all she is a woman.' (Newsday of 22 March 2011).

Ghanaian Dzodzi Tsikata in *Affirmative action and the prospects for Gender Equality in Ghanaian Politics* (2009) says affirmative action is based on settling a score and not achieving equality as the gender activists want the world to believe. He believes feminists argue that society and men have oppressed women for long and hence in order for that to change women have to be involved more in decision making of policies. For this to happen they should get priority and privileges in admission and appointment. This however is not a solution because it is not society or men that caused the inequality but religion, which many feminists are a part of. Thus, in order to gain equality, Tsikata says feminists had to address religion and not wage a war against the society.

Professor Mamiko Ueno in her book *A Gender-Equal Society and Affirmative Action*(2011) highlighted that affirmative action is selective in nature. This means that it only catered for those women that have the capacity to enrol into certain programs or to run for parliament for example. But the majority of the women are not in that category and hence they are left out. She was giving this conclusion after her research on gender equality and gender based affirmative action in Japan's society.

It is only that group of women that have reached the position of possible election into Parliament for example who benefit from it through its quota system. That woman in Nembudziya cannot enjoy that quota system because she has no avenue to rise to that level as the society and family will tell her she has to stay home and bear children. Only the girls who

have managed to get past advanced level can benefit from preferential treatment and enter University. The dropouts, those forced into early marriages, victims of adolescent pregnancies and many other groups are not catered for. Thus, gender based affirmative action is no match to deal with gender inequality due to its selective nature.

This research therefore will help in covering the shortage of literature in as far as the ills of gender affirmative action are concerned.

2.2 SITUATION ANALYSIS: CURRENT GENDER STATUS QUO

The existing gender status quo has women and girls at a major disadvantage. The men and boys enjoy a significant number of advantages over their female counterparts. Society regards the males as more important than the females. This translates to the serious violation of women's rights going unpunished because women's rights are not seriously considered by society. Wunganai (2012) says women and girls in Zimbabwe have been driven to the periphery of society and are disadvantaged with economic dependency and social norms preventing them from combating sex discrimination. Hence, it is shown to recognize that the current gender status quo is imbalanced and negatively weighs heavily against women and girls.

This status quo did not appear out of the blue, hence it is thus sensible to explore the causes of this unfavourable state of affairs.

2.2(a) CAUSES OF GENDER INEQUALITY

The causes of gender inequality date back to the origins of man-kind. Various notions have been put forward by several scholars to conclude on the causes of gender inequality.

2.2(a)(i) Biological explanations

The biological differences of women and men contribute to their psychological make-up. The male hormone (androgen) makes males taller, heavier and more muscular while the female hormone (estrogen) makes women menstruate, have prominent breasts and relatively broad

hips. These hormonal differences explain in part why males tend to be more active, aggressive and dominant than females (Eitzen 2000). Burgess-Jackson (2009) argued that these biological differences lead to gender-based differences in which women are significantly at a huge disadvantage.

2.2(a)(ii)Religion

This is the major cause of gender inequality. At the creation of mankind in the Bible's book of Genesis, man (male) who was called Adam was created first and was given dominion over all creation (Genesis 1:26). And the woman, Eve was created after as a helper of Adam (Genesis 2:18). And referencing Genesis 1:26, Adam, the man, had dominion over her since she also was part of 'all creation.' And in Genesis 3:16, the Bible says the woman's desire shall be of her husband and he would rule over her. This shows that gender inequality originated from religion itself. And Zimbabwe being a largely Christian nation, the subjugation of women is also deeply rooted in the core of society because of the aforementioned religious beliefs.

2.2(a)(iii)Culture

The African culture, in which Zimbabwe is a part of, is predominantly patriarchal. Oxford dictionaries define patriarchy as a system in which males dominate women in all walks of life. Thus, the customs of culture therefore ignited the inferiority of women and girls in society. The Shona culture for example has a common saying '*baba ndiShe*' which means the father is the lord, and when a male calls a female, the female has to respond by saying '*Shewe*' which means my lord. The males, according to custom, are lords over the females and it is in this realm that society operates. And even at political and economic level, the males dominate. No one knows how Zimbabwe became patriarchal, but all and sundry knows that she is a masculine society. Hence the patriarchal nature of society is another cause of the gender inequality that we now know, and experience in present day Zimbabwe.

2.3 MEASURES PUT IN PLACE TO REDRESS GENDER DISPARITY

Gender inequality is a serious cause for concern and hence the government of Zimbabwe has employed measures to address the problem of gender inequality. Legislative efforts have been the major avenues taken by government to address gender inequality.

2.3(a) LEGISLATION

2.3(a)(i) International

2.3(a)(i)(1) Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women 1979

It is regarded as the first international treaty recognising the rights of women. The convention stressed on two concepts; equality between sexes as the primary objective and the elimination of all forms of discrimination as the penultimate goal. Zimbabwe ratified the convention in 1991 and in accordance with Article 4; it was mandated to 'adopt temporary special measures aimed at accelerating de facto equality between men and women'.

2.3(a)(ii)(2) Declaration of Beijing and the Platform for Action 1995

The declaration was a mandate to signatories of CEDAW to draw up policies that increased women participation in higher levels of society. In accordance with the Declaration of Beijing, Zimbabwe drew up its own platform for action aimed at ensuring the full and equal participation and representation of women in all walks of life. Among its major aims was to have 30% of all public service senior posts occupied by women by the year 2000.

According to the NGP (2014) Zimbabwe is also part to several conventions under international law. These include

- The Convention on Civil and Political Rights
- Equal Remuneration Convention

2.3(a)(ii) Regional

Regionally, Zimbabwe's commitment to the promotion of gender equality is also commendable by its ratification of the following

- The African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women of 2003
- The Solemn Declaration on Gender and Equality in Africa of 2004
- The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development of 2008
- The COMESA Gender Policy

2.3(a)(iii) National

Locally, the government engaged into commendable legislative actions that foster gender equality. Examples include

- The maintenance Act of 1999
- The Administration of Estates Act 1999
- The Sexual offenses Act of 2001
- The Education Act of 2004
- Chapter 28:1 of the Labour Act
- The Domestic Violence Act of 2007

In 2004 the PSGP set up Gender Focal Points in all government controlled organisations. The 2013 constitution also mandated the setting up of a Gender Commission. And the Constitutional Court ruled that the Marriage Act that legalised the marriage of girls at age 16 was unconstitutional.

The Zimbabwean Constitution is also a sign of the government's commitment to gender equality. Its affirmative action policy attests to this. Gender equality is one of the objectives to guide the country (Chapter 2 of the Constitution). The Bill of Rights recognises the equality of men and women in all spheres of life. It voids any policy that violates women's rights.

It is beyond reasonable doubt that Zimbabwean women and girls enjoy vast legal protection, but according to Freedom House's 2014 Freedom in the World report societal

discrimination still persists. For example the Administration of Estates Act was amended in 1997 to make the surviving spouse and the children sole beneficiaries of the estate as opposed to the eldest son mandated by customary law. However, only 37% of widows inherited majority of their spouses' assets (CPRC 2006). According to FAO (2016), women do not take legal action inheritance rights partly because of lack of support within the justice system and discrimination within their families.

It is against this background that gender affirmative action comes in to redress gender disparity which all the above mentioned efforts have failed.

2.4 DEFINITION OF TERMS

2.4 (a) Gender Affirmative Action

Gender affirmative action is an attempt to remedy the past and present discrimination of women by putting in place measures that help in providing them equal opportunity on the same footing as men (Berkeley 1996). It is designed to ensure that women and girls get access to resources and services on the same equilibrium as their male counterparts. Its main purpose is to redress the effects of past discrimination (Wanyande 2003, 50). Gender affirmative action is effected when a deliberate action is taken that gives such groups (women) priority in admissions, appointment and/or nominations to positions of responsibility (Onsongo 2009). It also endeavours to have a scenario in that in all walks of life, men and women have proportional representation.

It is sometimes called positive discrimination as it, in a way, discriminates against males by affording women special privileges based on their sex and in some cases (such as the quota system) denying males entry into certain areas as they are only reserved for women.

Affirmative action comes in a two broad categories which are the quota system and preferential treatment.

2.4(a) (i) the Quota System

This is a case in which a certain percentage of membership or candidatures of a certain organisation or constituencies is set aside for women (ERC2013). In Zimbabwe, the quota system is mandated by law in Chapter Two (2) section seventeen (17) in the Zimbabwean Constitution which mandates that every governmental body should have at least 50% women membership.

Quotas are found in two main categories;

- Political Party Quotas – measures adopted by a party aimed at having proportional representation of woman political aspirants at all political levels.
- Reserved quotas – refers to reserving a certain percentage of parliamentary seats for women.

Quotas are designed to enable women to have a significant population base in institutions in order to have a stronger voice in formulation of policies and decision making.

2.4(a)(ii) Preferential treatment

This method is also known as special privileges. It is a case in which the minimum required qualifications for a particular position are ignored in order to raise the chances of more women get into that position. For example, for one to qualify to contest for a seat in the board of a certain company (name withheld of anonymity purposes) they have to hold Doctorate in the relevant field of study. But if that person happens to be female, a Masters' degree is sufficient. In Zimbabwe, the entry requirement for the Schools of Medicine is 15 points which is however lowered to 14 for female applicants. In this way, more and more women get involved in certain areas that were previously male dominated.

And aided by the quota system, technocrats of gender affirmative action perceived numbers of women in key areas of the nation will rise significantly overtime.

2.4(b) Gender Equality

The Beijing Conference of 1995 defined gender equality as ‘the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys’. This means that the ‘rights, responsibilities and opportunities of individuals will not depend on whether they are born male or female’ (Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women, United Nations 2001). Equality however does not mean ‘identical’. The phrase gender equality does not mean females and males come to be identical. It means their sensitivities, priorities, interests, needs and views (which differ because one is male and the other is female) are all given equal consideration and attention in planning and consideration at all levels; from the family level in the home, and at national level in parliament and everything in-between.

Gender equality is either qualitative or quantitative. The latter focuses on the need to achieve proportionate women representation in all walks of life – increasing balance and parity. In the case of Zimbabwe quantitative equality means, because the Zimbabwean population is 56% women, all institutions must have a population base of 56% female. The qualitative aspect of gender equality (which is the main focus of this paper) refers to achieving equitable influence on establishing development priorities and outcomes for women and men (Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women, United Nations 2001). This means that the voice of the mother will be regarded with equal reverence as that of the father in a family situation for example.

2.4(c) The nexus between Gender Affirmative Action and Gender Equality

According to (Tsikata 2009), gender affirmative action is there to remove inequalities that exist between men and women caused by past discriminatory practises.

Thus, gender affirmative action and gender equality are two concepts that are quite related in which (in theory at least) the former is a prelude to the realisation of the latter. The link between the two comes in two avenues;

- Gender affirmative action policies increase the number of women in previously male dominated areas such as universities, corporation boards, and politics among others. The increase in the number of females in these areas that were previously male dominated gives women a much louder and stronger voice in advocating for policies and decisions beneficial to the advancement of women’s issues (Eklund 2000). It is

because of the continued influence of women in politics that certain policies which bettered the condition and welfare of women were adopted. A few that will come to mind are the Domestic Violence Act of 2007, which criminalised domestic violence and in January 2016, the Constitutional Court ruled that the Marriage Act, which allowed girls as young as 16 to be married with their parents' consent, was unconstitutional and recognised 18 years as the legal minimum age of marriage. These policies only came into play because women within the decision making capacities (most of which got there through gender affirmative action) stood up and voiced their concerns. According to Higgins (2004) the first step in raising the condition of women to the same level as that of men is to put in place legislative measures that safeguard their (women) welfare.

Furthermore, it is clear to deduct that the creation of the WAGCD ministry and its entire works aimed at improving the condition of women came as a result of the influence of women in politics.

Hence by enabling more and more women to enter into decision making positions, gender based affirmative action sets a platform for the realisation of gender equality.

- (Coetzee 2005) says the influx of women into positions of influence will have a ripple effect as it will cascade down to the smallest unit of the country's population, the family, sending a message that says indeed the female is a capable being and as such must not be regarded as a domestic apparatus but as a key part of society. With the majority of the population of Zimbabwe (56%) being women the realisation of the capability and importance of women will begin to take place at an accelerated pace. Society will begin to shun customs that hamper the progress of the females such as getting married instead of furthering their education.

'We all need a role model' wrote Ruth Barnard in her article *Is Affirmative action an appropriate instrument for achieving Gender Equity?*(1996). This means that the little girl in Uzumba who was socialised to believe that women are kitchen instruments will be inspired to get up and find her place in the top echelons of society after she would have witnessed a lot of successful female Members of Parliament and Doctors.

Overtime, say 500 years, there is a high prospect that women and men would be equal beings in society.

2.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Notions have been suggested to explain the relationship between gender affirmative action and gender equality. This research focuses on two notions; the liberal feminist and the Marxist.

2.5(a) Liberalfeminism

Liberal feminism is based on a notion which focuses on women's freedom and equality to make their own choices. The theory bases its argument on the fact that gender differences are not based on biology, and as such women and men are not different and hence should be regarded as equals. Liberal feminists took one legal weapon of civil rights movement, gender affirmative action, to fight off gender inequality. Judith Lorber (2004) argues that feminists claimed a continued influx of women into the corporate world would lead to gender equality.

Liberal feminists however overlooked (intentionally or not) that the biological differences of women and men contribute to their psychological make-up. The male hormone (androgen) makes males taller, heavier and more muscular while the female hormone (estrogen) makes women menstruate, have prominent breasts and relatively broad hips. These hormonal differences explain in part why males tend to be more active, aggressive and dominant than females (Eitzen 2000). Burgess-Jackson (2009) argued that these biological differences lead to gender-based differences in which women are significantly at a huge disadvantage. Increasing the numbers of women in the corporate world does not address this.

The critique of liberal feminism, says Lorber (2004), has influenced many scholars to investigate deeper into the relationship of gender affirmative action and gender equality in regards to the former bringing out the latter. Thus, the researcher capitalized on the miscalculations of the liberal feminist theory to investigate further on why affirmative action is having problems in achieving gender equality and how best gender equality can be achieved.

2.5(b) Marxist feminism

The theory talks of the inferiority of women in the economic sense – the one who owns more resources is the superior. In the Zimbabwean context, as with most patriarchal societies, males dominate the corporate world. It argues that because the majority of women are jobless or are in less paying professions than those of men (Jayachandran 2014), men tend to be superior due to their superior economic position. As such, Marxist Feminists advocated for gender affirmative action as a means of getting more and more women into male dominated professions. They argued, Lorber (2004) wrote, this would give the majority of women a stronger economic standing that would raise them to the same level as that of men.

The Marxist Feminists rationale behind gender affirmative action bringing gender equality however overlooks what caused the inequality based on economic reasons in the first place. It was not a scenario in which on one fateful day a lot of women just found themselves housewives and in less paying jobs than men for no reason. In order to address the inequality, affirmative action has to begin at the root cause and not simply deal with the symptoms. It is this reason which caused this inequality in gender that this research brings out in the investigation. The shortcomings of this theory and the short-sightedness of its proponents are upon which the researcher has taken into account to unravel more on the failure of affirmative action in dealing with gender inequality.

2.6 SUMMARY

Over and above, the chapter gave an in-depth insight on the concepts of gender affirmative action, gender equality and everything that pertains to the two subjects. The gaps within the existing literatures are what this research is filling in.

CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The following chapter encompasses the methods employed by the researcher to gather data pertaining to gender based affirmative action and gender equality. The research tools includes both qualitative and quantitative methods. The chapter also gives the pros and cons of each research tool used and also give reasons as to why they were used.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is the blueprint for the amassing of data required to meet the objectives of the study (Kvale 1996). It encompasses all tools that the researcher employed to gather information. Research design also aims at justifying the use of certain research mechanisms ahead of those that were not used.

The research design of this investigation is both qualitative and quantitative in nature in order to get broad spectrum of data required for the realization of the objectives of this research. The following sections will further describe the research design and its related mechanisms.

3.2 (a) QUALITATIVE

Qualitative research is based on collecting actual descriptive and self-explanatory data (Grbich 2007). Qualitative research thus gives off information that is already in its 'real' state and does not need further explanations. In gender issues as is the case with this research, qualitative research is vital as it enables the researcher to get significant information about gender based affirmative action and gender equality which is original and thus not subject to alteration or distortion.

3.2(b) QUANTITATIVE

According to Labaree(2009) this is involves gathering raw numerical data. A statistical approach to the research was also used because numbers are certain and can never lie. In this

way, true and correct information about gender equality and affirmative action is gathered by the researcher.

3.3 TARGET POPULATION

Souza (2013) highlighted the target population is the grouping of units from which the researcher intends to, or has already derived information pertaining to the research. It is from the target population that the researcher gathered information on gender based affirmative action and gender equality from. The target population of this research is residents of Southdowns Suburb, the WAGCD ministry, gender experts in addition beneficiaries of gender based affirmative action.

3.4 POPULATION SAMPLING

3.4 (a) Purposive sampling

Purposive sampling was used by the researcher during the research. Purposive sampling was used in the research as it targeted a specific population sample from which the researcher intended to derive information from. The researcher purposively selected 40 households with gender based affirmative action beneficiaries in Southdowns suburb, gender experts in Gweru in addition to WAGCD Ministrystaff to create a research population sample. Purposive sampling is beneficial as it guarantees the researcher gathers information that is relevant to the issues of gender equality and gender based affirmative action.

3.4 (b) Random sampling

Random sampling, as the title denotes, is when a sample is taken without a specific pattern or target. Random sampling was used to complement purposive sampling because with random sampling, the raw data of gender equality and affirmative action is gathered and has little chance of being misleading unlike purposive whose data can be misleading due to distortion. Randomly asking anyone within the population sample can give a true representation of the impact of gender based affirmative action on gender equality in society. To increase the

reliability of the data thereof, a significant number of data collection means were used including a total of 125 questionnaires.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION

Data has to be collected by ways, and in a way that ensures the researcher gathers significant and true information pertaining to the research, (O’Leary 2004). Data collection means and procedures have to guarantee the information gathered thereof is as accurate as possible and not distorted or fabricated.

3.6 SOURCES OF DATA

Data for the research was collected from primary and secondary sources.

3.6(a) Primary data

This is raw first hand data. Primary data is data that is in its natural form and thus is largely accurate. For the research to have factual conclusions accurate data is needed and this is the reason why primary data was used as the major data source for the research. Primary data sources included questionnaires, interviews and observations. Primary data presents issues as they are and it is up to the researcher to draw up conclusions and explanations guarding against distortion and inaccuracy of information.

3.6(b) Secondary data

Secondary data is processed data, (Williaman 2005). This data is very important to the research as it gives the researcher explanations which are absent in primary data. Secondary data complements primary data as it gives reasons as to why certain things are the way they are. Sources of secondary data included reviews of textbooks, interpretation of questionnaires, observation findings and interviews with gender experts. This kind of data is

crucial to the research as it helps explain affirmative action and gender equality within the Southdowns suburb.

3.7 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

3.7(a) Questionnaires

Questionnaires were used to gather data on whether the population of Southdowns and WAGCD Min. knew what both affirmative action and gender equality were. They also required respondents to highlight whether gender based affirmative action was a viable enough tool to bring about gender equality. The response rate of the questionnaires too gave off significant information about society's stance towards gender issues. The researcher issued out 125 questionnaires to Southdowns residents and another 75 to WAGCD ministry. Questionnaires were used because they have the following advantages

3.7(a)(i) Advantages

- A true number of those who are conversant with gender equality or gender affirmative action or both is revealed. The method curtails cheating because the questionnaire requires those who say they are conversant, to define the terms.
- They cover a large section of population in a short space of time. 200 questionnaires were issued in just one day.
- It gives ample time to respondents to think, consult colleagues and come up with reasonably informative responses.

The following are the disadvantages of questionnaires, which are however outweighed by the advantages.

3.7(a)(ii) Disadvantages

- Respondents that seemed to know what gender affirmative action and gender equality pretended not to know because they did not want to be disturbed.

- Some respondents did not answer all the questions.

3.7(b) OBSERVATIONS

Observations were also employed as data collection means. The observation was on instances in which affirmative action has been implemented and whether it has had any significance in as far as creating gender equality is concerned.

Observations were chosen for the following advantages.

3.7(b)(i) Advantages

- Information is not censored as in the case of interviews and questionnaires. In this way, the researcher got full information pertaining to gender equality and gender affirmative action.
- Information from observation is usually true. It is from observing the normal day to day way of life of society that the researcher gathered credible data on the relationship between gender equality and affirmative action.

3.7(b)(ii) Disadvantages

Observations had its weaknesses however. These included

- Observation did not give the whole information since it does not ask questions. It simply gave off information that is visual and at face value.
- Observation usually did not explain information by itself. The explanation rested on the researcher who may make errors due to the inadequacy of information not revealed by observation.

3.7(c) INTERVIEWS

Face to face interviews with gender experts were conducted. The focus was to gather information on what these professionals thought about gender affirmative action and gender equality. Interviews with such experts was picked as a data collection tool as information

derived thereof is principally relevant and accurate since these professionals have studied gender issues profoundly.

The reasons for choosing interviews included.

3.7(c) (i) Advantages

- Expert information was collected since the interviews are conducted with experts in the field of gender.
- Interviews had an advantage of clarity in the sense that in instances where the researcher had problems understanding a certain issue within the discussion, they could ask for clarity.
- Interviews guaranteed the researcher got responses to all their questions.

3.7(c) (ii) Disadvantages

- Many of the scheduled interviewees declined the interview requests.

3.8 SUMMARY

The chapter was a description of the methods that were used in this research to gather information. These methods were thus used to obtain information necessary for the success of this research which is in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This section brings out findings of the research. The findings were critically analysed to bring out the reasons behind the failure of affirmative action in bringing about gender equality. The reasons for the perpetuation of gender equality were also discovered. It is also from these findings that more viable ways of bringing out gender equality were drawn from. The findings were gathered from methods such as interviews, observation and questionnaires.

4.2 QUESTIONNAIRES

125 questionnaires were handed out randomly to residents of Southdowns suburb while another 75 were handed out to members of the Ministry of Women Affairs Gender and Community Development Midlands Province. The questionnaires, among other things, sought to find out whether the society (represented by the Southdowns suburb as the sample) knew what gender equality was, what GAA was, and whether the latter could help in bringing about the former. And if the latter could or could not bring about gender equality, the respondents had to give reasons for their line of argument.

Table 1 shows the response rates of the issued questionnaires.

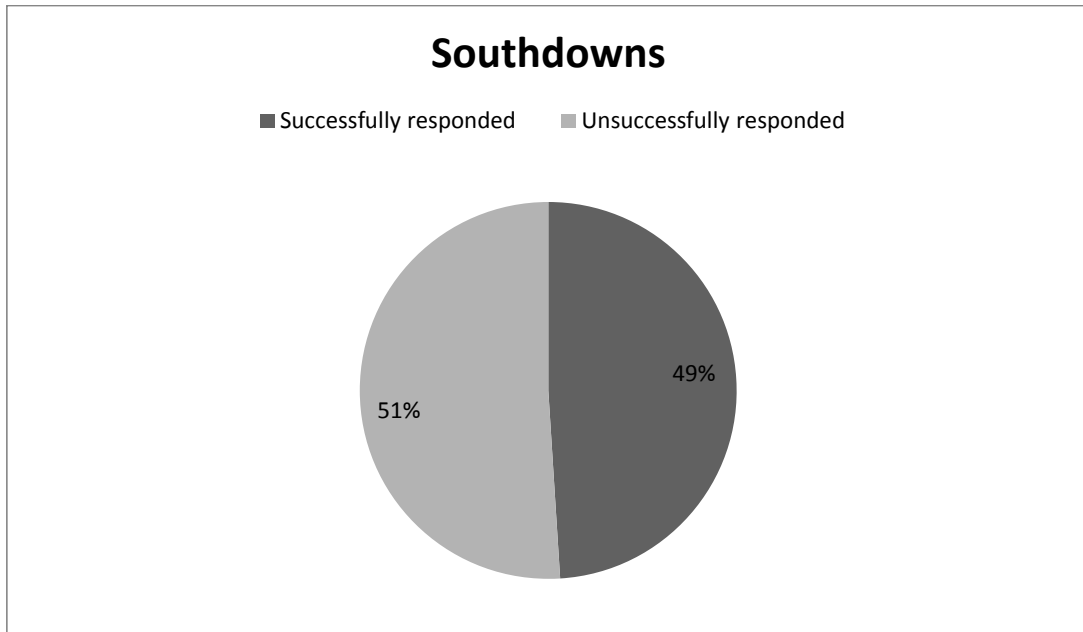
Table 1

Respondents	Questionnaires administered	Successfully responded questionnaires	Unsuccessfully responded questionnaires	Response rate
Residents	125	61	64	49%
Min. of WAGCD	75	60	15	80%
Total	200	121	79	60%

Source: primary data

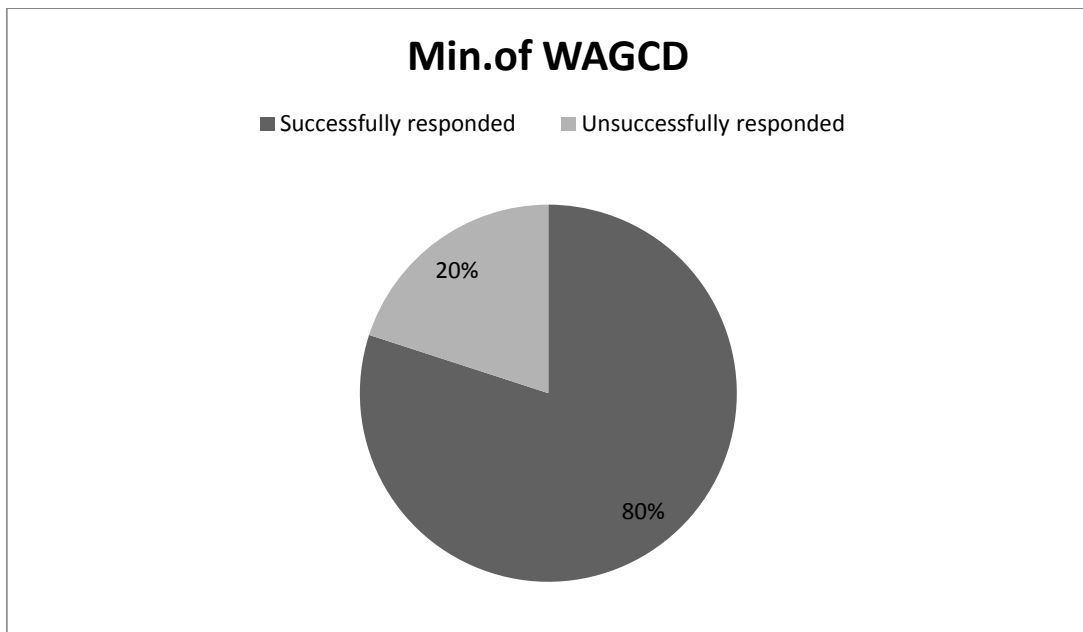
Figure 1 and Figure 2 below presents the response rates of the questionnaires administered in Southdowns and at the Min. of WAGCD respectively.

Figure 1



Source: Primary data

Figure 2



Source: Primary data

As shown above, 200 questionnaires were administered. Out of the 125 administered to Southdowns suburb a total of 61 were successfully responded to giving a response rate of 49%. 60 of the 75 questionnaires administered to the Min. of WAGCD were successfully responded to giving a response rate of 80%.

Questionnaires that were not successfully responded to amount to 79. The reasons for the failure included ignorance of the subject in question – this was most prominent in the Southdowns suburb. Also, some respondents cited time constraints as their reasons for non-response while some others claimed affirmative action and gender equality were not issues of concern to them.

According to (Kumar 2011) the response rate of questionnaires provides a lot of information pertaining to the research. It is no different in this case.

4.2(a)FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE PERPETUATION OF GENDER INEQUALITY

4.2(a)(i) Society's indifference towards gender issues

61 out of 125 (49%) questionnaires were successfully answered in the Southdowns Suburb. For a grave issue such as gender inequality those figures are appallingly low. This shows issues of gender are not important to society as represented by the population sample. This is one reason why gender equality has remained missing in society from generation to generation. Society is mainly focused on bread and butter issues and thus gender equality to them is not much of an issue that needs their attention as signified by the low response rate of the questionnaires. Since less than half of the sample did not respond to the questionnaires it can be translated to mean society is not giving attention to gender equality and affirmative action and hence the end result is the perpetual absence of gender equality in society.

The Min. of WAGCD's 92% response rate also leaves a lot to be desired. As the bearers and heralders of affirmative action and the chief lobbyists of gender equality, this Ministry was supposed to be eager to respond to the questionnaires as they were part of research of their profession. Their response rate to these questionnaires was supposed to a perfect 100%.

The quest for gender equality must involve everyone and this reluctance by the Ministry of WAGCD to assist the researcher by responding to the questionnaires spells doom in as far as achieving gender equality is concerned. This is because the chief protagonists of gender equality are not eager to work hand in hand with other fellow gender activists such as the researcher.

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, the questionnaires aimed at determining among other things, whether society knew what GAA and gender equality were and whether the former would bring about the latter.

Table 2 below presents the knowledge of society in relation to GAA.

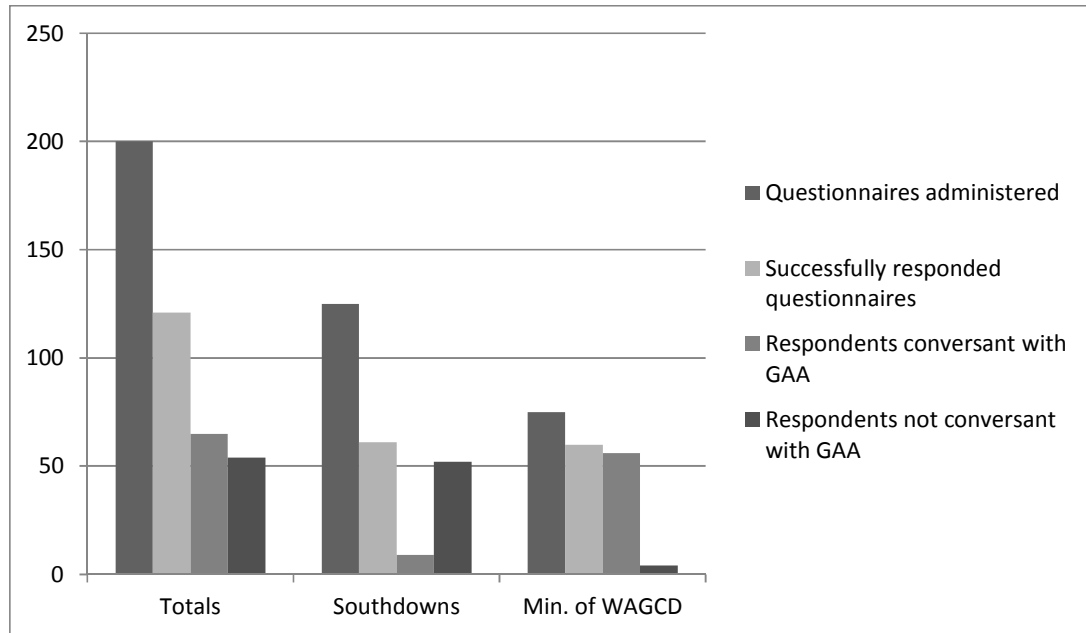
Table 2

Respondents	Questionnaires administered	Questionnaires successfully answered	Number of respondents conversant with GAA	Percentage of respondents conversant with GAA
Southdowns Suburb	125	61	9	15
Ministry of WAGCD	75	60	56	93
Totals	200	121	65	54

Source: Primary data

Figure 2 shows the above data in a simplified but vivid form.

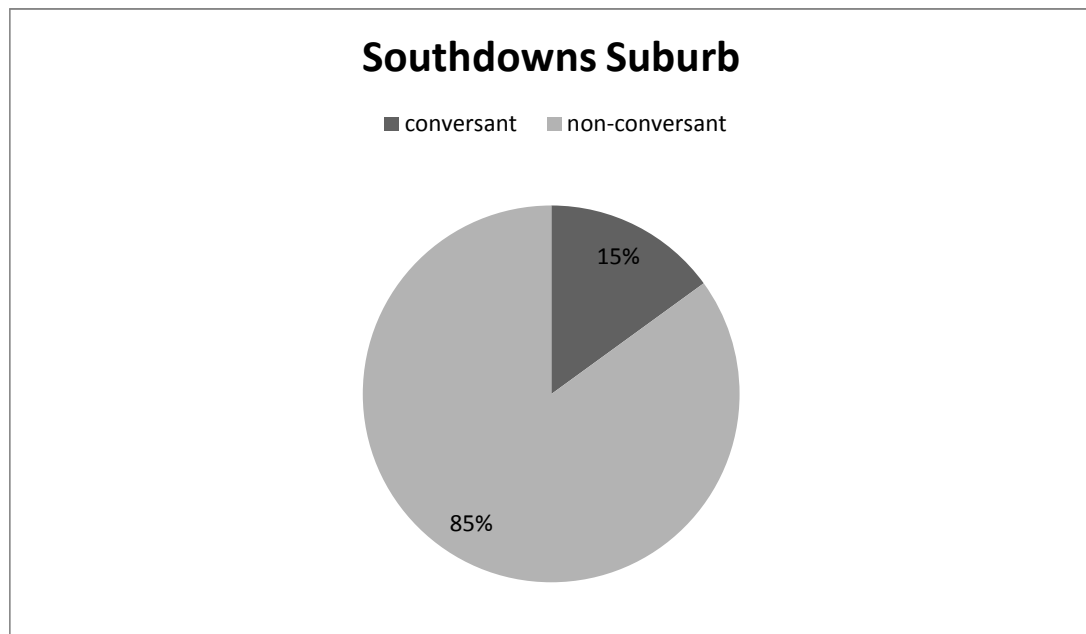
Figure 2



Source: Primary data

Figure 3 shows the percentage of the respondents conversant gender affirmative action from in Southdowns suburb

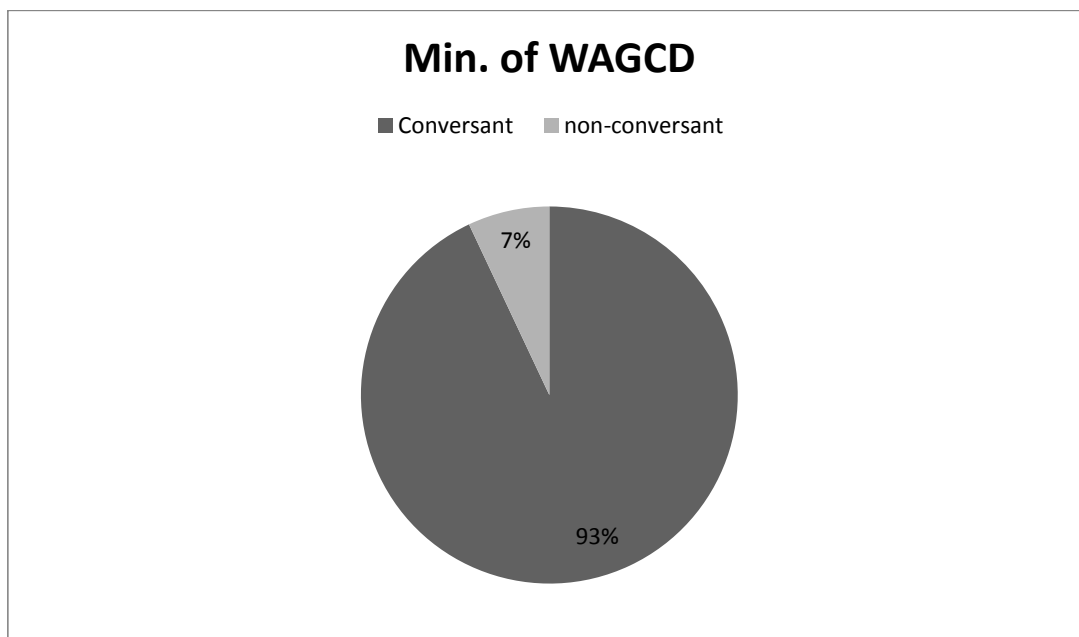
Figure 3



Source: Primary data

Figure 4 shows the percentage of the respondents conversant gender affirmative action from the Ministry of WAGCD

Figure 4



Source: Primary data

4.2 (b) REASONS BEHIND THE FAILURE OF GAA TO BRING ABOUT GENDER EQUALITY

4.2(b) (i) Society's ignorance about the concept

Very few people know about GAA policies and hence the majority does not take advantage of them. The data reveals that 15% know what GAA is. For a concept that has been in existence for twenty two years, that figure is far too low. Hence for this reason, if society does not know what GAA is, this means it (society) cannot take advantage of the policies of it (GAA). Subsequently society cannot make use of the advantages therein which include preferential treatment and quota system. Thus if society itself does not know GAA, a program put in place for the realisation of gender equality, there is no way gender affirmative action can bring about gender equality.

4.2(b) (ii) The ignorance of affirmative action by its protagonists (Ministry of WAGCD)

Further, those in the ministry that crafted GAA itself struggled to convincingly define the policy. Though they were a negligible number (4 which is 7%) that ignorance itself is a serious cause for concern. The members of the Ministry of WAGCD are one of the groups in which the hope of success of GAA rests. And if they themselves struggle to explain what the concept is all about, GAA is shooting blanks. Hence if they do not know what GAA is all about, they cannot propagate the concept to society. And if society does not know about the concept, she cannot mobilize to be part of the program.

4.2(b) (iii) Selective nature of Affirmative Action

It is only in the corporate world that the numbers of those who are conversant with affirmative action are high (93%). The corporate world however is quite a small number to effect changes in as far as gender inequality is concerned. GAA will fail to realise gender equality because it does not encompass the majority of society. (Ueno 2010) says that such policies (affirmative action) have to be imprinted into the very depths of society for them to have a huge impact. But however, it is only the Ministry of WAGCD (and the few that it interacts with) that know about GAA and they are the only ones which benefit from its policies. Wongai Zhangazha (2013) concurs saying the quotas and preferential treatment benefits the elite women, not all women. Hence, because only a few people in society benefit from affirmative action, the policy fails to achieve gender equality because the majority of society does not benefit from it.

Finally, the issued questionnaires also sought to determine whether society (represented by Southdowns Suburb) realised that it was living in a gender unequal environment. The questionnaires deduced this information by requiring respondents to define gender inequality.

The same was required also from the Ministry of WAGCD.

Table 3 represents the knowledge of society in relation to gender inequality.

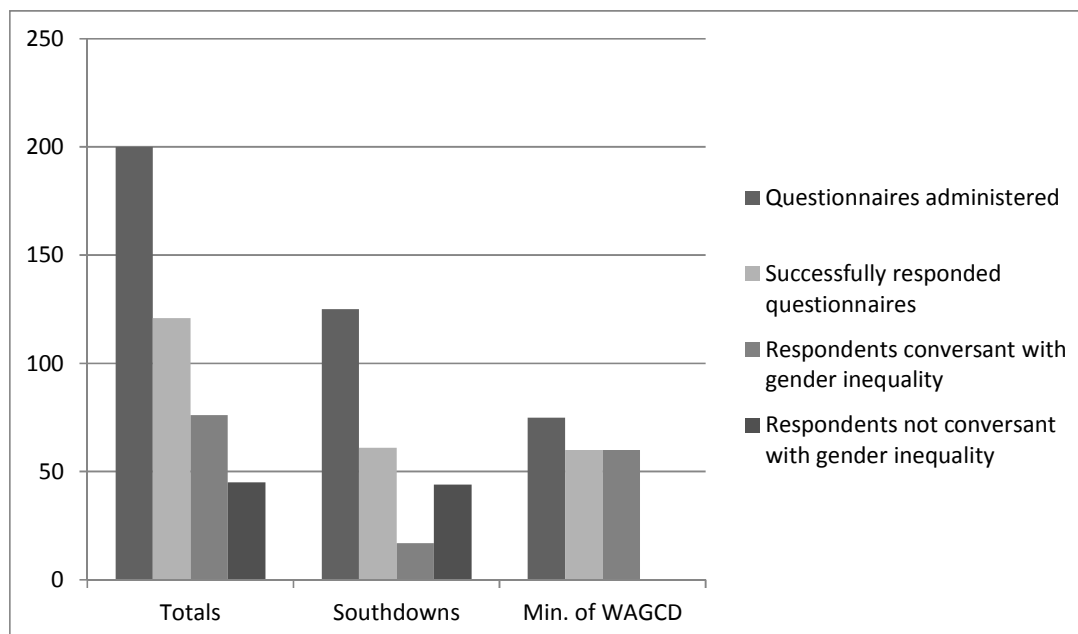
Table 3

Respondents	Questionnaires administered	Questionnaires successfully answered	Number of respondents conversant with gender inequality	Percentage of respondents conversant with gender inequality
Residents	125	61	17	28%
Ministry of WAGCD	75	60	60	100%
Total	200	121	76	63%

Source: Primary data

Figure 5 shows the above data in a simplified but vivid form.

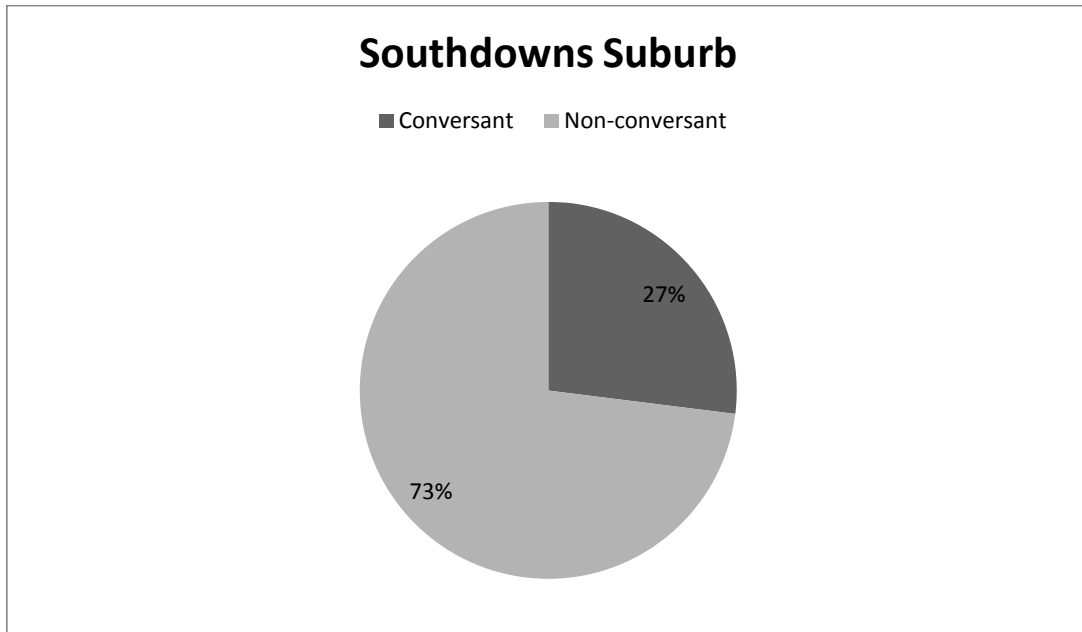
Figure 5



Source: Primary data

Figure 5 shows the percentage of respondents conversant and non-conversant with gender inequality in the Southdowns Suburb.

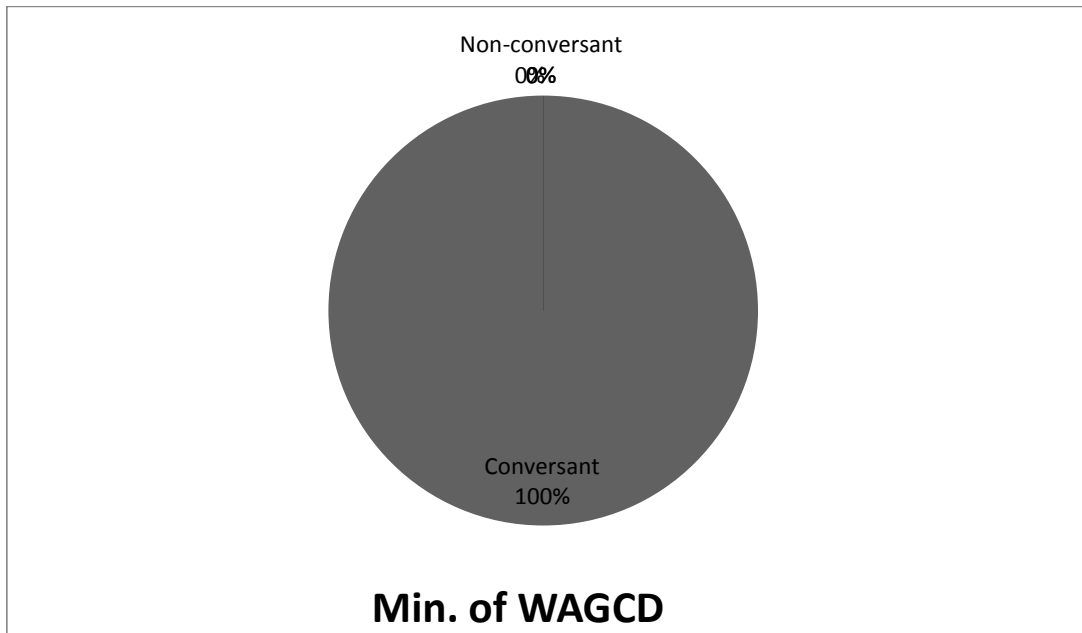
Figure 5



Source: Primary data

Figure 6 shows the percentage of the Ministry of WAGCD conversant with gender inequality.

Figure 6



Source: Primary data

Only 27% of the respondents of Southdowns correctly concluded that there was gender inequality in society. What the majority thought to be gender equality was actually gender inequality.

The Ministry of WGCD respondents all correctly pointed out that the society had serious gender disparities.

4.2 (c)FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE PERPETUATION OF GENDER INEQUALITY

4.2(c) (i) The Ignorance of Gender Inequality by Society

One of the major reason for the perpetuation of gender inequality is that the majority of society itself does not know what gender inequality is. Only 17 out of 61 (27%) people asked know what gender inequality is. This means society does realise that it is living in a gender unequal environment. Gender inequality to them is the normal way of life such that neither the perpetrator, nor the victim of gender discrimination realise its existence. Tsanga(2010) said gender discrimination and inequality is so inbuilt in the social mind-set that it is almost invisible to many people. Therefore if society does not know what gender inequality is, it means she can never realise that there is gender inequality and cannot hence make any effort to stop it. Thus gender inequality goes on.

4.2 (c)(ii) Gender protagonists are not heralding gender issues to society.

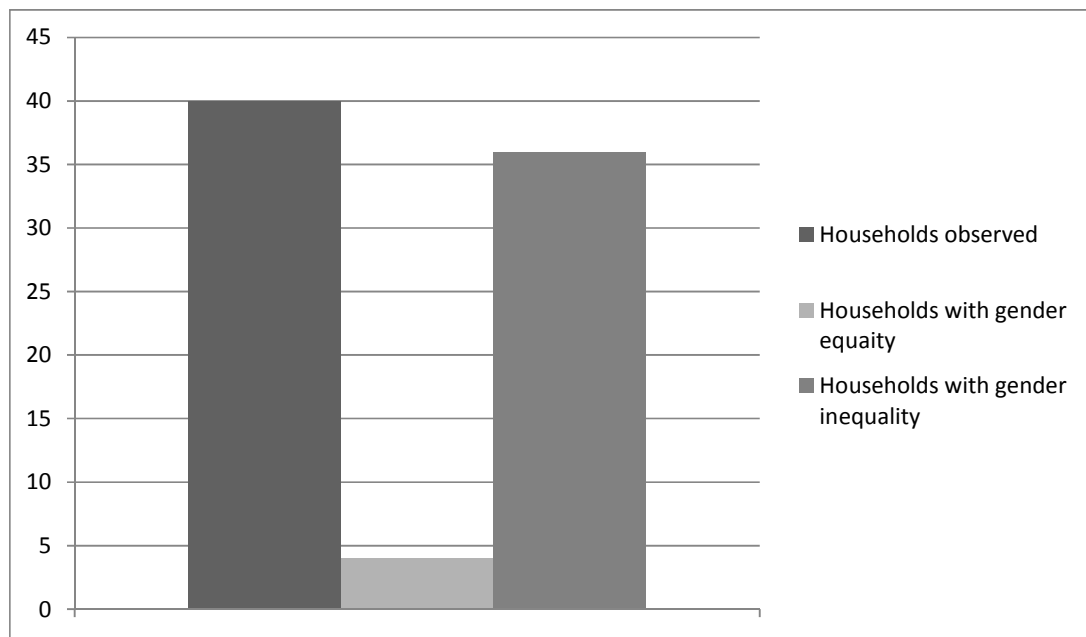
The data reveals that all the respondents of the Ministry of WAGCD are well versed with the concept of gender inequality. 100% of the respondents correctly alluded to the presence of gender inequality in society. However, the corresponding numbers of the low respondents of Southdowns Suburb reveal that the gender protagonists are not getting the concept of gender inequality to society. Knowing what gender inequality is by the Ministry of WAGCD is not enough in the fight against gender inequality. This knowledge must be passed on to every member of society. By not enlightening society about gender inequality, it means that society continues to live in a gender imbalanced society and thus no effort is put by society to end it.

4.3 OBSERVATIONS

Information was also gathered from observations. 40 households which have beneficiaries of affirmative action were visited on a weekend. The information that was being sought included the gender roles of the family members and the treatment of women and girls in those families. The researcher would observe the relative way of life of these families and gather information as to whether GAA has had an impact in as far as bringing about gender equality is concerned.

Figure 7 below shows the data obtained from the observations.

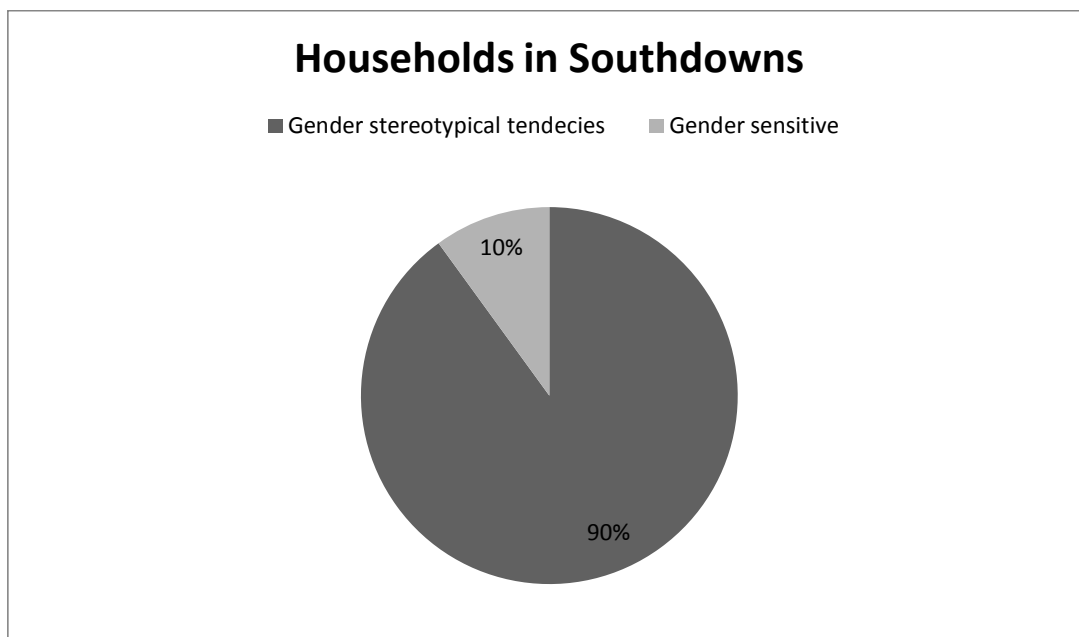
Figure 7



Source: Primary data

Figure 8 shows the findings of the observation in percentages.

Figure 8



Source: Primary data

The data reveals that the majority of households that were visited still had negative gender stereotypical tendencies despite them having beneficiaries of affirmative action. 36 out of 40 (90%) of the sample reveals that affirmative action is having unsatisfactory results in as far as achieving gender equality is concerned.

On arrival at one of the houses under observation, the researcher requested the mother (who was doing laundry outside) for permission to conduct research, but was told to ask permission from the father since, according to her, was the head of the home. The father was in the living room watching a cricket match.

It should be noted that the mother is a committee member of the ZETDC workers committee and is part of the one thirdwomen representation required by the quota system.

4.3(a) REASONS FOR THE FAILURE OF GENDER AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IN ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY

4.3(a)(i) Affirmative action's failure to address the root cause of gender inequality

From the observation societal allocation of gender roles was discovered. The woman's role is to do all the chores within the home while the man is not expected to. The woman is also subject to the man, who is the authority. These tendencies are passed on from generation to generation and have become custom.

GAA thus fails to deal with this because it does not go to the core of the cause of gender equality which is society and its gender unequal tendencies. This woman was a direct beneficiary of affirmative action, but back home she was a domestic worker- not a mother or a wife who is supposed to rest and enjoy quality time with her family on a weekend. Furthermore, she was a second in command in her own home for the simple reason that she was born female. Hence, the observation deducted that GAA fails to curtail gender inequality because it does not address the root cause of the problem.

4.3(b) REASONS FOR THE PERPETUATION OF GENDER INEQUALITY

4.3(b)(i) the impotence of gender affirmative action

The data obtained from the observation of GAA beneficiaries revealed that only 4 out of 40 households visited had a semblance of gender equality. It cannot be concluded for certain to mean this state of gender equality (in the 4 households) is as a result of GAA but what is for a fact is that of the remaining 36 that still had negative gender stereotypical tendencies, GAA was not working.

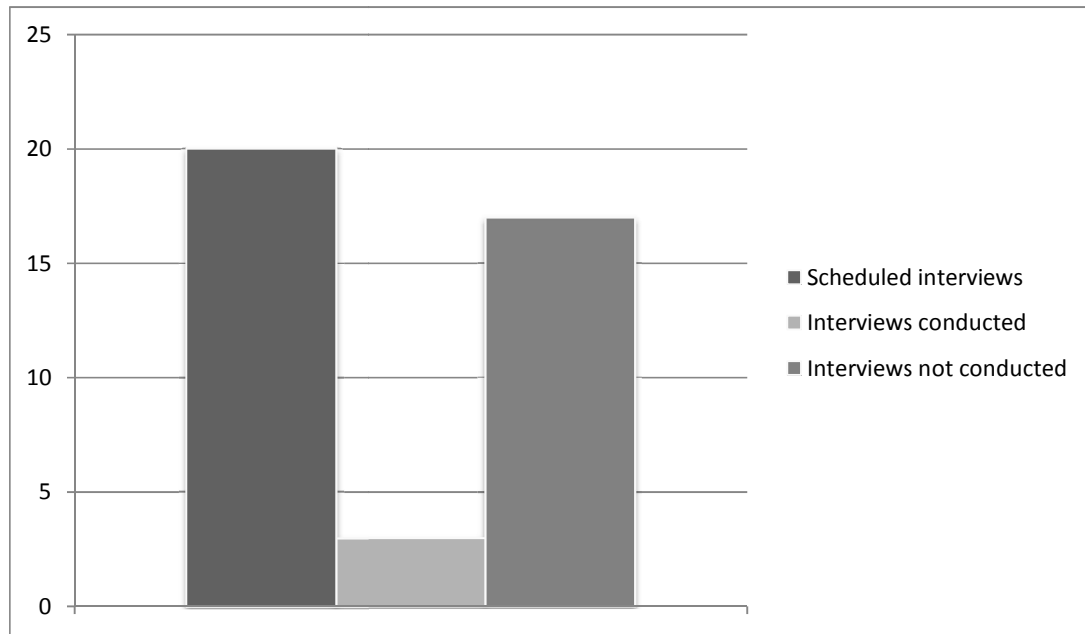
Gender inequality is perpetuated because of the fact that the tools used to curb it are simply not working. GAA has failed dismally to bring about gender equality as shown by the data leading to the unchecked perpetuation of gender inequality.

4.4 INTERVIEWS

Interviews were also conducted as a data collection means. The interviews were directed to gender experts in the city of Gweru who were asked to explain the relationship between behind gender affirmative action and gender equality and why gender inequality continued to exist despite the various measures put in place to halt it.

Figure 9 presents the successfully conducted interviews against the scheduled interviews.

Figure 9

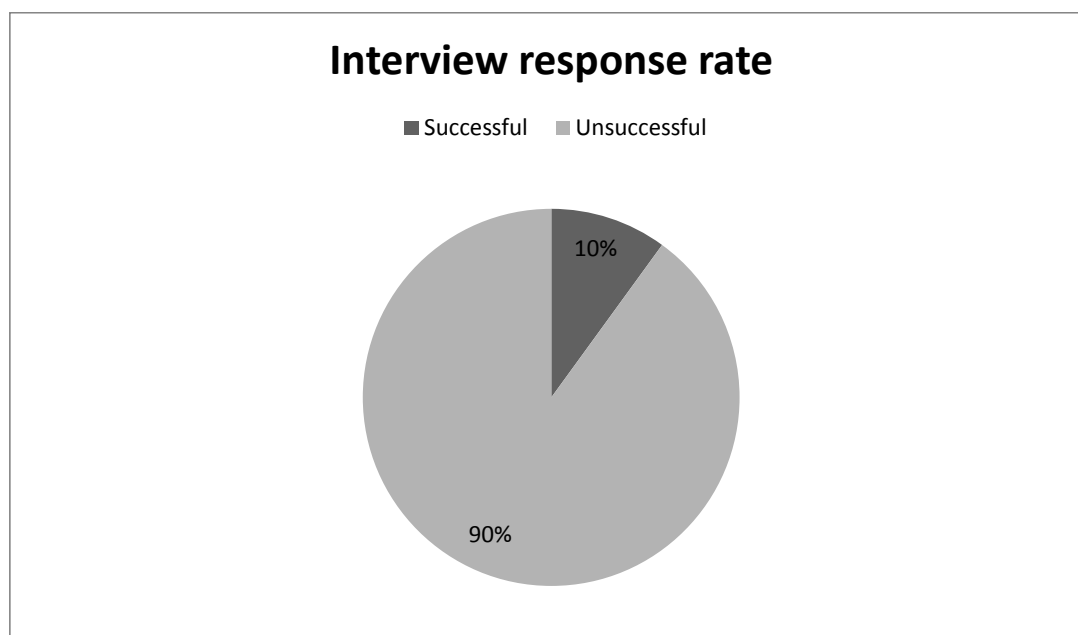


Source: Primary data

20 interviews were scheduled to be conducted with various gender experts in Gweru. Only 2 were successfully conducted. The remaining 18 failed to commence because the interviewees claimed sitting for an interview was an actual waste of time while some others claimed they could only be interviewed by members of their organisations.

The interview response rate is presented in the figure below

Figure 10



Source: Primary Data

4.4(a) REASONS BEHIND THE PERPETUATION OF GENDER INEQUALITY

4.4(a)(i) Absence of expert knowledge on the matter

The low response rate (10%) of the interviews is another piece of data from which the reasons behind the perpetuation of gender inequality can be drawn from. The targeted interviewees who declined the interview request are the individuals who are well learned in gender issues. Their input into the research would have provided sound information as to the way forward in regards to the realisation of gender equality.

Their reluctance to work with the researcher is evidence that society is robbed of information that would have proved useful in the fight against gender inequality. The phrase knowledge is power by Sir Francis Bacon (1597) is true and hence the withholding of knowledge by these experts means the city of Gweru and the nation of Zimbabwe is rendered powerless in the war against gender inequality. This hence results in the perpetuation of gender inequality

since society, due to its lack of knowledge, is too weak to fight it off.

However, useful information was gathered from the two interviews conducted.

The first interview conducted was with Miss Happiness Ndaba, a secretary at ZETDC Kwekwe, a holder of a Master's degree in Political Science (Gender Issues Major) from the University of Heading in Des Moines, Iowa, USA.

4.4(b) REASONS FOR THE FAILURE OF GENDER AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IN ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY

4.4(b)(i) Gender affirmative action 'sends the wrong message'

Miss Ndaba highlighted that special treatment has connotations of charity or aid. She said that by mandating that girls enter medical school with 14 points and the boys with 15 points, policy makers are telling society that the girls are not capable of attaining 15 points. This also leads to the girl herself doubting her own capabilities as she constantly wonders whether she entered medical school because she was academically qualified or it was due to her sexual orientation. Miss Ndaba said that instead of building the image of the female citizens, affirmative action is actually destroying it.

Miss Ndaba also said that one of the reasons why GAA is failing to achieve gender equality is that most women that get into positions of authority or admitted to certain university programs via affirmative action fail to compete with their peers because they are not the same level. And when this happens, it sends a wrong message to society that indeed women are inferior. She said

'a B student put in a class of A⁺ students (because of preferential treatment) will have a hard time keeping up with her peers because she is in the wrong group. And when she eventually buckles under the pressure and drops out, this gives society reason to affirm the weakness of the female on the one hand, while on the other hand it destroys the confidence of the student as she may begin to believe that indeed she is not able because she is female...'

In another interview with one of the top officials of Msasa Project (who requested anonymity) information as to why affirmative action is failing to achieve gender equality was also gathered.

4.4(b)(ii) Gender affirmative action is not the right tool for the job

The anonymous interviewee highlighted affirmative action is a sound program, but just not for gender issues. He said that both preferential treatment and quota system have no effect on curtailing gender inequality. He said

'...even if you have the whole parliament comprised of women, when those parliamentarians go back home they are second class citizens because society says the father is the head. Gender inequality was caused by many factors. Our religion (Christianity) for example, subjugates the woman to the man...Affirmative action does not work there, leave it...50-50 representation is not a sign of gender equality...'

This interview revealed that gender affirmative action is having difficulties achieving gender equality because it does not address the causes of gender inequality. Gender inequality came as a result of cultural practises which include religion. Hence the stance by gender affirmative action of giving women special treatment in admissions and appointments proves fruitless as religion still binds society's way of life despite the increase of women in previously male dominated areas.

4.5 SUMMARY

The chapter focused on the research findings that were gathered and the information that they produced pertaining to GAA and gender equality. The reasons for the failures of affirmative action were revealed from these findings and as such possible solutions around gender inequality were drawn from these. These solutions will be brought out in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 CONCLUSION

Gender inequality is a cancer that needs to be removed from society as soon as possible. Its presence is detrimental to the growth and progress of society. It thus has to be, like a stump, removed right from the root. The research has come to a conclusion that affirmative action in its entirety has a lot of loopholes in as far as dealing with gender inequality as it does not get to the root cause. Gender affirmative action, when employed properly, is a sound means of increasing women participation in issues that matter. However participation does not mean the status of all women has been improved. Those who do not participate in mainstream issues remain second class citizens in society. Those women remain in the class of slaves.

It is not to mean however that affirmative action was or is a completely banal weapon in the fight against gender inequality. Its complimentary role of advocating for the increased participation of women at higher levels is a positive step towards gender equality as it raises the status of women. Affirmative action empowers the female by getting them into certain areas via preferential treatment and the quota system. It is what these women who have been empowered do once they get the power that matters.

It is thus of significance to consider the recommendations of the researcher given in the next section if gender equality is to be achieved.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are the researcher's recommendations on how to achieve gender equality in society. These recommendations are intertwined and as such they should be considered as complementary rather than isolated.

- **That society is imparted with knowledge as to what gender affirmative action is.** The powers-that-be must inform society of what gender affirmative action is about and the benefits that come with it. Issues like the rationale behind affirmative action should be thoroughly explained to both males (that the program is for the greater good

of increasing women participation not to ‘discriminate’ against males) and to females (that the program does not suggest their incapability, but that they get special treatment for the previous centuries of their oppression by custom). In this way, tensions between males and females that arise due to gender affirmative action and the negative connotations labelled upon the program will dissipate. Society will thus welcome the program whole heartedly and be eager to be a part of it.

- **Increase the scope of gender affirmative action.**

At present it is only the elite women and girls who benefit from gender affirmative action as the quotas and preferential treatment is only found at high levels of society. Responsible authorities must apply gender affirmative action to the low class women and girls in order to raise the status of women in society. Among other avenues, this can be done by giving first preference to female farmers in receiving farming inputs and selling them, giving women first preference in receiving treatment at hospitals and providing sanitary wear for free. By so doing, the reach of affirmative action significantly increases to include every woman in society and help raise her status in whatever societal class she is in.

- **Gender affirmative action must begin at pre-school level.**

Instead of waiting to employ the program when someone wants to enrol in medical school, who may have lagged behind due to socialisation, gender affirmative action must begin at a tender age. This ensures that all genders get the same treatment so that once the girl child is mature; they may be able to compete with their male counterparts even though they may have gotten into certain positions via quota system.

If the above three are not feasible, gender affirmative action has to be scrapped altogether. The resources that were previously channelled towards gender affirmative action would be directed to the fourth recommendation...

- **...that the government embark on rigorous gender awareness program**

The program must encompass the rationale behind gender equality (as alluded to in this research), about the ills of gender inequality (as evidenced by the current gender status quo), its causes, and tendencies that perpetuate it. The program must be concentrated to the rural areas because it is this area where the majority of the country's population resides. It is also there where gender inequality still has a stronger grip on society because traditional values are still intact. This will lead to society working hand in hand with the corporate world in the fight against gender inequality.

- Similarly, the education curriculum from kindergarten to tertiary level must have gender issues as compulsory. Lack of knowledge about gender inequality and its negatives is the reason why it has gripped the core of society. If society is taught, overtime gender inequality will become a thing of the past.

5.3 THE FUTURE

With the recent rise of feminists and their push for the recognition of women's rights as human rights, the quest for gender equality has just begun. But in its infancy, proper strategies have to be put in place to ensure the success of the quest. The strategies have to have a combination of longevity, to withstand the test of time; flexibility, to adapt to the dynamic nature of society and enough force to pull down every stronghold that is in conflict with gender equality.

The above recommendations are key ingredients to the strategy that guarantees the realisation of gender equality. And hence, feminists and their supporters alike, if they adhere to the recommendations of this research, gender equality in Zimbabwe will be realised sooner than originally anticipated.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

Respondent,

Thank you for your time. The following questionnaire is a data collection means for a research topic *Gender affirmative action and gender equality in Zimbabwe*. Please complete the questionnaire as fully as possible to the best of your knowledge.

Your participation is momentarily significant and appreciated.

Regards

Emmanuel Tinashe Mbewe

Midlands State University (Politics and Public Management)

.....

Date.....

What do you understand by the following terms?

1. Gender affirmative action

.....
.....

2. Gender equality

.....
.....

Do you think gender affirmative action can bring about gender equality? Give reasons for your answer.

APPENDIX 2:INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Interviewee,

Thank you for your time. I am Emmanuel Mbewe from the Midlands State University in the department of Politics and Public Management. I am carrying out a research on the topic ***Gender affirmative action and gender equality in Zimbabwe***. You are regarded as one of the top pundits of gender issues and hence your input to this research will be significantly crucial.

In accordance with research ethics, you have the right

- to request anonymity which will be granted without reservations. (**Requesting anonymity does not in any way invalidate your input in this interview**).
- to decide not to respond to any questions you may feel unwilling to respond to.(**Declining to respond to certain questions does not invalidate your responses to other questions**)
- to use any of the three (3) official languages of the state (English, Shona, Ndebele). (**The choice of language does not in any way alter the credibility of your responses**).

For purposes of evaluation, the interview is recorded and retained. Please respond to the questions as fully as possible to the best of your knowledge.

Thank you

Regards

Emmanuel Tinashe Mbewe

Midlands State University (Politics and Public Management)

.....

Date:

Name and (name of organisation).....

1. **What are the major reasons behind the perpetuation of gender inequality?**
2. **Do you think gender affirmative action can overcome the reasons mentioned in question 1? Please explain.**
3. **What is the way forward in the fight against gender inequality?**

APPENDIX 3: OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

Thank you for your time. I am Emmanuel Mbewe from the Midlands State University in the department of Politics and Public Management. I am carrying out a research on the topic *Gender affirmative action and gender equality in Zimbabwe*. You are a beneficiary of gender affirmative action and you are significant to the research.

The observation will be seeking to determine the impact of gender affirmative action in relation to achieving gender equality. The exercise will involve a 1 hour observation in which the following aspects will be under observation:

- Gender relations
- Division of labour
- Hierarchy of authority
- Allocation of resources (food, toys, rest time)

Each aspect will be graded on a score of one [1] to five [5] (with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent) and the total will be twenty [20]. A score above 16 is regarded a pass.

Please note any information observed during the exercise will remain private and confidential between the researcher and the family under observation.

Thank you

Regards

Emmanuel Tinashe Mbewe

Midlands State University (Politics and Public Management)

.....

ASPECT	SCORE
GENDER RELATIONS	
DIVISION OF LABOUR	
HEIRARCHY OF AUTHORITY	
RESOURCE ALLOCATION	

TOTAL