

CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DIRECTION

The chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations drawn from the study. It summarises all the conducted throughout the study from the first chapter to satisfy the aim and objectives of the study. The conclusions presented here are will be drawn from the findings of the study presented in the fourth chapter while the recommendations are will be inferences guided by the insights from the literature review and the findings of the study.

The study aimed at analysing the effects of development policies on women in remote rural areas, the case of Gokwe's two districts with particular reference to the Growth Point and the Growth-with-Equity Policies. The study area was divided into three specific geographical areas namely: Gokwe Town Centre, Nembudziya Growth Point and the surrounding rural villages. The study used mixed methods to explore the effects of these policies on the women in Gokwe Ditriect and this included a questionnaire and some focus group discussions. The two research instruments were administered between June 2020 and March 2021. Chapter 1 introduces the study, outlines the strategies and purpose of the study while chapter 2 reviews the literature related to the study. Chapter 3 presents the methodology, the specific ways through which the data were gathered while chapter 4 presents the actual findings of the study. Chapter 5 discusses the findings, explaining the linkages of the findings to the wider gender and development discourse. Finally, Chapter 6 summarises and concludes the study with some recommendations.

The study makes the following conclusions based on the study's six objectives:

Objectivel: To explore the extent to which women in Gokwe are aware of the Growth Point and the Growth-with-Equity Policies. The study concludes that women in Gokwe district are more aware of the Growth Point Policy than the Growth-with-Equity policy, with other respondents assuming that the two policies are one. The conclusion is based on the premise that most of the participants in both research instruments indicated that they were aware

of the policies through government programmes conducted in the area during the 1980s and 1990s. However, some women were not aware of the policies because of their ages especially the younger respondents. This is against prior assumptions that women in Gokwe district are not aware of the two development policies.

Objective 2: To examine factors influencing effective implementation of development policies in Gokwe North and Gokwe South, respectively. The study concludes that corruption, lack of funds, lack of education and exclusion are some of the major factors which influence the successful implementation of development policies in rural areas. The other factors include: incompetence of the Government officials, lack of Government support initiatives like training and education, lack of monitoring and evaluation of the development programmes, lack of appropriate technology and negative attitude of the policy recipients.

Objective 3: To examine the effects of these policies on the livelihoods of women in Gokwe in terms of economic engagement, empowerment and inclusiveness. The study concludes that the Growth Point Policy and the Growth-with-Equity Policy had limited impacts on the livelihoods of women in Gokwe District. This was due to the fact that women do not own much as individuals, so whatever benefits are accrued are not directly in their names. However, not all was negative in Gokwe District from the implementation of the Growth Point and the Growth-with-Equity Policies. The women got access to education through adult literacy classes in the district and many women got a chance to further their education. In addition, the district got many Grain Marketing Board Depots which made their lives easier in terms of delivery of grains after the harvest. More shopping malls were built and this has made life easier for everyone since access to more goods has led to a reduction in food prices at the local townships. As the Growth Points expanded in service delivery, more public transport became available and everyone could travel to nearby cities to purchase goods for resale. A Government complex which houses many ministries was constructed for service delivery in areas of passports, birth certificates and national Identity

cards. All these are positive improvements gained through the implementation of the Growth Point and the Growth-with-Equity Policies.

Objective 4: To assess the benefits women, accrue through effective policy implementation

The study concludes that women in Gokwe had limited benefits from the Growth point and the Growth-with-Equity policies of 1981 because they did not get any properties in their own names. They only benefited minimally in terms of vegetable stalls, food vending stalls and the proximity of infrastructure like clinics, hospitals and schools that do not benefit women only, but groups and families. However, some benefited as individuals through access to residential stands at Nembudziya Growth Point, while some women benefited through access to education for themselves and their children.

Objective 5: To explore the challenges of these policies on women in Gokwe.

The study concludes that there are many challenges which deter women in Gokwe North and Gokwe South districts from accessing the benefits of development policies. These include male dominance, strict traditional structures, and lack of education and high levels of social exclusion of women.

Objective 6: To suggest and recommend some policy strategies that can be used to effectively implement development policies for rural women. The recommendations of the study are presented in section 6.4.

The study makes some recommendations which are connected to the models reviewed which were seen to be effective solutions for gender equality in other countries. Miedema *et al.* (2018) proposed the enabling resources, ability to exercise choice in the home and expression of equitable gender beliefs as a model which worked well for women in East Africa. It is essential to give the women a voice and some choices so that they can be empowered to stand on their own. Any policy will work effectively on a woman who is sensitised and well aware of her own rights, and such a woman would be willing and ready to change. Through the same concepts, the women in Gokwe can also be empowered through the same systems if given the chance to air their own views in families and in their communities.

BSR (2018) proposed an 'Act, Enable, Influence' model in which the proposal was to rope in other stakeholders in the gender equality efforts in Sub Saharan Africa. Making efforts to empower women as individuals is not practical because they are members of communities, families and nations. Empowering one person in a family may cause hatred and friction between spouses. The Government alone cannot reach out to all communities but companies can also contribute to these women empowerment policies by enabling the proposed policies to be implemented through provision of resources. For example, the two districts of Gokwe have much gaps in terms of proximity to schools, accessibility of some of the areas, lack of role models among women and so on that cannot be closed anytime soon because of lack of funds which was also indicated by the respondents in the study. Business people can also come on board and provide resources to empower small groups of women, families and communities with close monitoring and evaluation and such initiatives can be sustainable because they are monitored by people from the local areas. In addition, the model proposed that organisations can create work places which are safe from sexual harassment and gender exclusive language, thus companies can start the initiative within their own enterprises with their employers before taking the awareness raising outside.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (2018) also presented a model in which resources (bodily integrity, health and safety, financial and productive resources), agency (decision-making, leadership and collective action) and institutional structures (family, community, market, state, formal laws and policies, norms and social groups), are key in effective policy implementation for women from all walks of life. This model shows that the individual is the priority. An individual must ensure that he or she realise his or her own rights to life, right to health and safety so that they are able to take care of others in the family through production and nurturing. Much sensitisation is needed on men and women, particularly the women who have always sacrificed their own health and happiness in preference to serving others. In addition, agency becomes important so women in all rural communities should be enlightened on the importance of time, thus decisions have to be made within the correct timeframes for effective production and productivity. Lastly, the same women do not operate in a vacuum, thus they need the understanding of those around

them. Development policies can empower women but if the other members of the families and communities are not taught how to live with an empowered woman then it will be a problem and a recipe for conflicts. On the same note empowering only a single member of the family is not sustainable so policies should target all men and women, children, the elderly, the disabled irrespective of their race, age, gender, ability or disability and so on.

The study recommends inclusive policy implementation strategies which start from the grassroots to national level. Involving other stakeholders for resource mobilisation is more effective than relying on the Government as the sole resource provider to ensure that programmes are not aborted. It also recommends the following strategies for effective implementation of development policies implementation for women in rural areas.

More education and training sessions should be targeted at the women in rural areas of all ages. These should include evening classes for adults.

The beneficiaries and participants of development programmes should be on a 50/50 basis in terms of gender and age. Women can be given their own programmes through gender mainstreaming so that the real needs of women can be addressed by development policy, as suggested by EIGE (2019). More female role models should be encouraged to invest and visit the rural areas so that others can emulate. Women in leadership should be encouraged to perform to expectation so that they can be role models to those women who believe leadership is only for men. Girls should be encouraged to stay in school as long as possible to delay marriage. The Government should encourage the private sector efforts to invest in rural areas with incentives so that rural communities can benefit.

The study recommends the following stakeholders as key drivers of women empowerment and influencers of successful inclusive policy implementation in rural areas.

Government: The Government is the key stakeholder in rural women empowerment.

- a) The way development policies are implemented should always reflect gender equality, inclusion and involvement of rural women so

that they can be empowered through the various responsibilities they undertake for child survival and caring for other vulnerable sectors of the family like the children, the elderly and the disabled as noted by Hussein (2018) and Zhou and Zvoushe (2012).

- b) The introduction of more child-care homes, orphanages, old people's homes and specialised centres for children with disabilities in rural areas to enable rural women to work in other sectors other than the home as child and elderly minders.
- c) For gender equality to be achieved, there is need to re-orient socialisation initiatives towards gender equality for all particularly rural women who are suffering so much from the effects of strict traditional structures as compared to their urban counterparts.
- d) Education and training should include all so that women are accepted at all ages as equal potential partners in development just like their male counterparts, also noted Salvesen by (2008) and Chigudu (2014). On the same note, it is essential to ensure that members of parliament come from these constituencies (including women) so that they monitor progress of projects in their constituencies and the involvement of all sectors of the population and role models are found for the rural folks.

Non-Governmental Organisations: The NGOs can continue to work as development partners by providing financial assistance to projects meant for women as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives for the benefit of the local women, men, boys and girls. Such initiatives will also increase the catchment area for people with cash at their disposal to buy goods manufactured by the private sector.

Traditional leaders: Traditional leaders can also assist by ensuring that resources like land are equitably distributed to all particularly the widows, single and divorced women so that they are not excluded from such critical resources due to marital status. These leaders can also assist the government by paying close attention to fair distribution of resources and equitable accessing of benefits of development policy. Strict traditional structures like expecting only the woman to do household chores and take care of the sick, the children, and the elderly can be relaxed through introduction of equal

treatment of children at a tender age and teaching every child (boys and girls) all life skills so that perceptions and attitudes towards women change for the benefit of everyone and future generations. The traditional leaders have an important role to assist the government as specified in Chapter 15 of the 2013 Constitution of Zimbabwe

Communities: Communities should be taught through the socialisation process to respect women as an important sector of the population with critical role to play in development initiatives. Through traditional structures, the way women are viewed in society can change and improve through raising awareness and sensitisation of the communities. This will enable the women themselves to fight for and realise their human rights and be active members in development activities.

Law enforcement agents: Treating women as prostitutes while their male clients are left free is gender discrimination, thus the law should be amended in a way which treats single women with the respect they deserve in the sense of equality.

The study recommends further research aimed at:

- ☐ Analysing the number of women in leadership posts in the two Gokwe districts;
- ☐ Examining the contribution of women in agricultural production, and/or viability of women owned enterprises in the two Gokwe Districts;
- ☐ Examining women's access to land through the Land Reform Programme.