WE WANT TO BE IN THE ROOM WHERE IT HAPPENS

Challenges for Women's Representation in the Zambian Parliament

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Abstract

This essay explores the cultural and socio-economic barriers for women's political representation in Zambian politics as well as the importance of women's representation for their human security. Due to a Western focus on earlier research, a developing country was chosen in order to investigate any differing perspectives that would emerge. The guiding research problem was why Zambia despite being relatively stable and peaceful still ranked lower in gender equality indexes when compared to their more unstable neighbours.

A theoretical model outlined by Nadezhda Shvedova was used to formulate interview questions. The main material used for the study was semi-structured interviews conducted with members of the National Assembly in Lusaka Zambia as part of a Minor Field Study. The results allowed for an expansion of Shvedova's model with one more category. The main conclusion reached is that all barriers outlined in Shvedova's model were present in Zambia but that there is a slow but constant progress in eliminating these barriers mainly through political will and representation of women in politics. Suggested continuations of the study are to do a comparative study with a country in the region as well as conducting non-elite interviews and surveys outside the capital city Lusaka.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Political equality and equal participation in politics are central values to normative democracy theories. Women as equal citizens should have the same political rights as men for it to be a true democracy making their under-representation a democratic deficit (Phillips, 1998:228). Feminist critique would argue that women's under-representation and male dominance in politics is a source of insecurity that only affects women and is a part of the structural violence that women experience due to current power structures (McKay, 2004).

In 1979, the UN adopted The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) requiring all ratifying parties to eliminate any gendered discrimination in the citizens' opportunities and rights (OHCHR, no date). By signing it, states parties have agreed that gendered discrimination exists and to take steps to counteract them. However, according to the 2018 gender equality report done by the World Economic Forum, there is a 32% global gender based disparity in all sub-indexes (Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival, and Political Empowerment). The report also shows that political empowerment is the biggest source of gender inequality as there is a gap of 77% between men and women (Global Gender Gap Report 2018, 2019).

In the 1994 Human Development report by the UNDP, human security is introduced in order to expand the traditional definition of security as state-bound into a more all-encompassing term. In accordance with this, the feminist perspective on human security focuses on the security of the individual and community rather than the state and its territory (UNDP, 1994). It also expands the idea of what can be a threat to security by expanding the definition to include structural and institutional violence. Structural violence is the intangible violence that is embedded into the socio-cultural structures and occurs in the legal, political, environmental, economic or cultural traditions (McKay, 2004).

According to Beth Woroniuk, there are key gendered dimensions of human security that are often neglected in security studies. One of these dimensions is that of gender inequality in power and decision making (McKay, 2004).

An analysis of human (in)security by Susan McKay argues that women and girls' insecurities are different from those of men and boys and are worsened by the power imbalance that exists

in patriarchal societies. McKay continues to criticize human security studies for its gender blindness in an area that is gendered arguing that by generalizing the concept to "human" security, it assumes that all humans face the same or similar insecurities (McKay, 2004).

Research in representation has shown that part of the reason that women are underrepresented in politics is because the roles that women have been assigned are more suited to the private sphere of the home and family rather than the public political sphere (Inglehart and Norris 2003).

Research has also shown that conflict, especially internal conflicts such as intractable civil wars, leads to inequalities in the country (Forsberg & Olsson, 2016). However, this does not mean that peaceful countries have been able to reach equality. Even in modern, industrialized countries that are characterised by economic prosperity and high human development, gender equality in politics seems intangible (World Economic Forum, 2019). This raises the question of what acts as a barrier to reach this equality.

Zambia is a former British colony in southern Africa that gained its independence in 1964 and has remained relatively peaceful since. It is signatory to the CEDAW as well as regional conventions to end discriminations against women (PeaceWomen, 2019, SADC, 2018) While the inauguration of the current president brought with it an increase of women in positions of power - as members of parliament, ministers and even in the vice presidency – it remains one of the lowest ranked countries in terms of gender equality and equal representation in politics (PeaceWomen, 2019).

1.2 Research Problem and Question

Previous research has shown that gender equality and internal conflict are inextricably linked and that gender equality lays the base for peaceful conflict resolution (Forsberg & Olsson, 2016). It is arguably this focus on equality and peaceful conflict resolution that led to the creation of the UN security council resolution 1325 of which a key component is the increased participation of women in politics (USIP, no date). Zambia has been described as a source of stability within the region of southern Africa; since its independence in 1964 (BBC News, 2018). One of the main priorities of the country has been aiding neighbouring countries in decolonisation and peaceful conflict resolution. Despite its location, Zambia has avoided a civil war and has managed to peacefully transition from a dictatorial state to a multi-party state. However, despite the decades long peace and stability, Zambia consistently ranks low in

the gender equality and equal political representation reports undertaken by different international organisations, sometimes even lower than the DRC, a nation steeped in conflict. Zambia presents a contradiction to the previous research that links conflict and inequality and raises the questions: how come Zambia remains unequal and what obstacles are there for reaching gender equality in Zambia?

To narrow down the question and to make it more empirically testable, the research question is: *What are the barriers for women's political representation in Zambian politics?*

1.3 Aim

The intradisciplinary aim of this study is to give a cumulative contribution to critical feminist theories on representation and to the gendered perspective on human security. This will be done by applying existing theories and models and expanding existing research to include a non-Western perspective. The extradisciplinary aim of the study is to help identify the obstacles for equal representation in Zambian politics so as to allow for the implementation of targeted solutions.

1.4 Limitation

According to previous research in representation theory and feminist theory, there are three levels that can explain the power, or lack thereof, that a certain group has within a society. These are actors, institutions and structures (Wharton, 1991). The actors are the specific agents (individuals or groups) that consciously try to affect the structures and institutions around them (Wharton, 1991). The institutional level is comprised of the systems within a country for example the electoral system, the level of bureaucracy and functionality of different institutions. The third and final level is the structural one; this level describes the often unwritten and sometimes unseen rules that govern within a certain society that divide that society into groups and hierarchies. The structural level includes gender roles, socio-economic divides and, in general, can be summarised as the culture of a society. For this research paper, the focus will be put on the structural level because the way the gender roles and the societal views on women affect their abilities to gain power are more suited to answer the research question.

The interviewees will be members of the national assembly because focusing on the national level allows for a more holistic perspective of how the country's gender balance looks. Since the representatives in the national assembly are from different areas of the country,

interviewing them allows perspectives from both urban and rural areas without having to travel to every corner of the nation.

Finally, women in the national assembly were chosen for interviews in order to focus on their personal experiences and perspectives while also gaining insight into how they overcame any barriers there were.

1.5 Disposition

This essay will begin with an exposition of relevant background in Zambian history, political system and status when it comes to gender equality. After this, the theoretical background will be presented first through an outlining of relevant earlier research in different dimensions and then through an explanation of the model that will be used to investigate the empirical material. After that, choice of method, interview questions and material will be discussed and critiqued. The analysis will be divided into major themes found in the responses to the interview questions through the dimensions found in the model and new ones introduced for the specific case study. Finally, there will be a discussion of the results going into the solutions for the barriers that have been suggested by the participants as well as a discussion of the importance that female empowerment has for human security. Suggested improvements for the study and suggestions for further research will also be discussed in this section.

1.6 Background

1.6.1 Zambian history

A report by Janet Parpart explains that the gender relations in Zambian society found their origin in the interconnection of colonial powers and the mining industry. Colonial governments in charge of the mining industry concluded that married men made for more efficient workers as they had a steady support system and a set of dependents at home. The support system would ensure that the workers were well-fed and free from doing domestic labour. The dependence of the family on the workers would ensure that they were reluctant to fight the leadership, underperform or quit their job (Parpart, 1986). Part of this strategy included putting limitations on women's political and economic independence to ensure their continued dependence on the male miners; this policy relegated women to domestic and reproductive roles. After the decline of the mining industry and Zambian independence from British rule, the gender relations that had been established remained (Parpart, 1986).

From its independence in 1962 until 1991 Zambia was a single-party state ruled by the first president Kenneth Kaunda. Kaunda created the Women's League; a powerless organisation of women whose role was to help men achieve power (Schuester, 1983). The elections of 1991

saw the shift to a multi-party system and a new generation of young women who rallied against the subservient roles that women had been assigned in society. These women were seen as a sign of moral decay and Western influence and were shunned by the men and the more traditionally inclined older women in the Women's League (Geisler, 2006).

1.6.2 The political system

Since its independence in 1964, Zambia has been a presidential republic with the president being head of state and government. The presidential office serves as the executive branch of the government and the unicameral parliament and the government serves as the legislative branch. In its current configuration, the parliament consists of 156 elected members, 8 presidentially appointed members, a speak of the house and the vice president. The 156 are elected through a first past the post system (IFES, no date).

1.6.3 Current Gender Status

In 2008, Zambia was a signatory of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) protocol on gender and development. The protocol set a goal for the signatory parties to have 50% representation of women across all areas of politics. Despite this, according to the SADC gender protocol barometer, the percentage of women in the national assembly has remained in the teens. There was a decrease in 2012 from the previous year from 15% to 12%, conversely, in 2017 there was an increase from 13% to 18% in 2018 (SADC, 2018). In the local governance gender balance indicator, the percentage of women remains in the single digits at 9% in 2018, an increase from 6% the previous year. The percentage of female cabinet members has decreased from 30% in 2016 to 25% in 2018 (SADC, 2018).

In the aggregation of the parliament representation indicator of the years 2011-2018, Zambia remains the third worst country for women's representation in southern Africa behind DRC and Botswana. In the local governance indicator, it is the fourth worst behind Angola, Seychelles and DRC. In the cabinet member indicator, it is behind Mauritius, DRC, Zimbabwe and Botswana (SADC, 2018).

2. Theoretical Background

2.1 Earlier Research

2.1.1 Non-Western Countries

According to research done by Iwanaga on women's participation in Asian politics, the political culture in a country will affect the so-called supply and demand sides of politics i.e. the culture in a country will affect how many women want to run for office and how successful their run for office will be. (Iwanaga, 2008:12) In the same paper, Iwanga and

Wang explain that gender and sex role socialisation affect how women and women's abilities are perceived in society. Politics and decision-making are seen as masculine endeavours that women are not able to undertake as they are associated with domestic labour (Iwanaga, 2008). When researching the role that women have in Japanese politics, Iwanga asserts that while Japan is a highly-developed country, it consistently ranks low on women's political empowerment. Women are few and far between in politics and when they are present, it is in the less influential circles such as the upper house of parliament (Iwanaga, 2008). While the main focus of the Japanese study was how electoral systems affected the sparsity of women in politics, Iwanga also outlines socio-economic and cultural factors such as lack of access to education and property, traditional gender roles, disproportionate labour burden and the need for male approval before seeking office (Iwanaga, 2008).

Lucas Kivoi published a study in 2014 about the obstacles to political participation and representation for women in Kenya (Kivoi, 2014). Kivoi came to the similar conclusions on which overarching categories of obstacles face women's representation in Kenyan politics: cultural, economic and political/institutional (Kivoi, 2014). However, in Kivoi's research, the aspects that are included in cultural barriers are different. Under cultural barriers, Kivoi gives examples of how traditional gender roles express themselves in Kenyan society. Among these are: the fact that in Kenyan tradition, it is considered taboo for a woman to address a man in public; the fact that a woman's marital status becomes codified only when she gives birth to a male child and, the fact that women who have not undergone the harmful practice of female genital mutilation (FGM) are not considered adults and therefore not able to hold any political office (Kivoi, 2014: 178). Kivoi further cites the roles that religion and gender stereotypes that act as a barrier for women's participation. The stereotypes dictate what masculinity and femininity means and classify politics as a man's world; consequently, women who engage in politics are seen as "irresponsible" and "unfit to be a wife". This stops women from wanting to engage politics as they feel they must sacrifice their femininity and their societally ascribed role as (potential) wife (Kivoi, 2014: 179). Among the economic obstacles, Kivoi lays blame on women's lack of access to land and property which are a big hindrance as political participation is a pay-to-play game (Kivoi, 2014: 179).

2.1.2 Structural, Institutional, Cultural

In their research on worldwide rising gender equality, Inglehart and Norris investigate barriers for women's participation and representation in politics. They investigate structural barriers

such as socio-economic obstacles, institutional barriers such as the political system and cultural barriers such as the view of women and the view of politics (Inglehart & Norris, 2003: 128) They began with the assertion that the political culture in a country may explain the discrepancies in countries with similar socio-economic and institutional standings. With this, they conducted a study using regressional statistical analysis on values surveys from a wide range of countries to measure the effect. They found a strong and statistically significant relationship between reported answers on women's roles in society and the number of women holding elected office in parliament (Inglehart & Norris, 2003: 138). After conducting multivariate analysis with further controls, they also found that the relationship remained significant and was more significant than some institutional factors such as electoral system or number of parties (Inglehart & Norris, 2003: 141). They conclude that there is a relationship post-industrial and socio-economically developed countries and those countries with a higher egalitarian attitude especially in the transition between agrarian and industrial as well as a relationship between egalitarian attitudes and younger generations (Inglehart & Norris, 2003: 144-145, 152).

2.1.3 Supply and Demand

Fox and Lawless researched the supply side of political representation in their article *Men Rule* where they investigated the gender gap in political ambition. Their study is limited to the U.S. and it is based on a series of surveys and interviews with potential political candidates (Fox and Lawless, 2012: 1-2). Fox and Lawless set out seven factors that lower the political ambition in American women. These factors can be categorised into women's perception of politics, women's perception of their own abilities and women's double labour. The authors found that women tend to view the political arena as highly competitive and vicious, a perception that was strengthened by the treatment of Hillary Clinton and Sarah Palin in their various political campaigns (Fox and Lawless, 2012: 5-7). They also tend to react negatively to certain campaign activities. On the other side, women tend to have less confidence in themselves and their qualifications to hold office, they will also receive fewer suggestions to run from their surroundings. Finally, the responsibilities for household chores and child-care that fall disproportionately on women make them more hesitant to run for public office (Fox and Lawless, 2012: 14-15).

2.1.4 Descriptive and Substantive Representation

Wängnerud investigates the relationship between descriptive and substantive representation. Wängnerud challenges the idea that the simple number of women in decision-making roles will automatically result in the increase in representation of women's interests. One of the difficulties in establishing a link between the two is the lack of agreement on which factors should be measured to indicate an increase in what Pitkin terms substantive representation, i.e. the representation of interests. Wängnerud finds that the link between the two types of representation is not one that should be assumed. She argues that female politicians tend to prioritise issues that are important to women but that the assumption that female politicians are only concerned with women's issues can pigeon-hole women into these issues and thereby perpetuate the very orders that are being combatted. Wängnerud concludes that there is an increase in substantive representation that occurs with increased descriptive representation but that the relegation of and dependence on female politicians to "women's issues" should be challenged (Wängnerud, 2009).

2.1.5 Socialisation

Dekker summarizes the consensus and debates within socialisation theory in his article on political socialisation. Dekker focuses his research on the Netherlands and argues that there are four factors that have an effect on the socialisation: gender, age, education and health. In terms of gender, Dekker maintains that there are clear differences in the political socialisation of boys and girls as an amalgam of surveys shows that boys in the Netherlands are more interested in politics than girls. This difference evens out at a certain age however, which leads Dekker to his second conclusion that the age of socialisation is important. He mentions the existing theories that the most important phase of socialisation occurs at a certain age (infancy, pre-pubescence or adolescence depending on the theory) and contends that socialisation occurs continuously throughout a person's life but that specific political opinions tend to be acquired later in life than the vaguer ones. Education is an important variable, Dekker argues, because those who have the opportunity to get a higher education also get more information in the political sphere (Dekker, 1991).

When it comes to the process of socialisation, Dekker presents sociological role socialisation. One theory states that people are socialised into certain roles because that is what the culture has determined for them, while another theory places more agency on the individual to navigate these roles. The consensus, however, is that the culture is a vital part that shapes the individual's personality, choices and opinions (Dekker, 1991).

Laura Frankel uses survey data to determine the effects of gender role socialisation on the level of confidence to run for political office. Frankel separates between gender defined as a set of behaviours and traits and sex defined as the biological dichotomy meaning that masculinity as an expression of gender does not exclusively denote men and vice versa for femininity. She found that masculinity is tightly linked with political confidence in both men and women meaning that both sexes feel more confident about their political prowess the more masculine they rank themselves (Frankel, 2016).

Interestingly, she finds that men tend to overestimate their abilities while women tend to underestimate theirs, even when comparing under-qualified men and over-qualified women. One of the theories she posits is that the ubiquity of men in politics gives other men the baseline confidence that women lack. Femininity on the other hand, had no effect on the political confidence of men mainly because femininity is an irrelevant quality when it comes to their political career. Politics being a masculinised game and men being valued by their ability to perform masculinity means that masculine traits are favoured while feminine traits are ignored. For women, femininity was tightly linked with political confidence. In this case, Frankel posits that women's ability to perform femininity is an important part of their social value and their likeability, both important factors in political success. She finds that for women, it is important to uphold and perform both sides of the spectrum: femininity to fit into the societal norm and masculinity in order to fit into the political norm (Frankel, 2016). Frankel's research shows that there is a balancing act women must do not only when it comes to private vs. public but also in terms of masculine vs. feminine; a balancing act that men do not have to worry about.

2.1.6 Human Security

In her feminist analysis of the concept of human security, McKay outlines a model for measuring human insecurity affecting girls and women and applies the model to post-conflict nations. The model divides violence that women are subjected to because they are women into an unorganized micro and organized macro level and into direct and structural levels (McKay, 2004).

Direct and unorganized violence is violence that is perpetrated between individuals. It occurs at a micro level and is not organised politically or institutionally. Examples of this are rape, domestic abuse and honour killings. McKay cites peace-keepers sexually assaulting women in the countries they have been sent to and post-war Afghanistan's lack of security forces

exposing women to violence as an example of direct violence at a micro-level (McKay, 2004).

Direct and organized violence is violence that is organised at an institutional macro level and is perpetrated directly on individual women. Examples of this are the use of rape as a weapon of war, sex trafficking, sex slavery and forced abortions. McKay cites the example of women in Afghanistan being forced to undergo invasive and abusive gynaecological procedures in order to prove their virginity and women and girls in Sierra Leone who were targeted and abducted into the RUF during the civil war in order to serve as child soldiers and child brides (McKay, 2004).

Structural and unorganized violence is violence that is indirect and not organized at an institutional level. Examples of this are lack of resources such as money, land and property, lack of adequate health-care, disproportionate negative effect from environmental degradation and lack of private and political choice. McKay cites the lack of opportunities women have to generate and secure incomes in post-war Afghanistan and Sierra Leone (McKay, 2004).

Structural and organized violence is indirect violence that occurs at the macro level and is organized institutionally. Examples of this are exclusion from peace agreement processes, lack of political power, inability to participate in elections as a candidate or a voter, religious violence and lack of access to institutions such as health-care and education institutions. McKay cites the high maternal mortality rates in Afghanistan and Sierra Leone and the laws that prevent women in both countries from voting, owning and inheriting land. McKay also cites the under-representation and exclusion of girls and women in the disarmament processes in Sierra Leone due to girls and women not being perceived as combatants, they were not afforded the same opportunities to reintegrate back into society which made it difficult for them to get an education which in turn exacerbated their economic insecurity (McKay, 2004).

2.2 Theory

This research paper will be based on Shvedova's model on barriers to political participation with a focus on socioeconomic and socio-cultural factors and a complement from Sapiro's gender socialisation theory.

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The dimensions of representation used in this essay will be the ones outlined by Hanna Pitkin. The four types Pitkin identifies are authorised, symbolic, descriptive or substantive. The focus in this essay will be on the latter two; descriptive representation means a person represents a group because they share similar characteristics while substantive means a person works to advance the preferences, rights and interests of the group they're representing (Pitkin 1967).

In her book *The Politics of Presence* Anne Phillips theorizes that it is female politicians that can best represent women's interests. This theory acts as a link between descriptive and substantive representation (Phillips, 1995). While this essay will mainly investigate descriptive representation, Phillips theory on the link between the two, with Wängnerud's qualifications set out above, will act as a basis for discussion and analysis (Wängnerud, 2009).

In her work Political Integration of women, Sapiro discusses how political socialisation affects women's role in politics. Sapiro theorizes that the public/private dichotomy can be an explanation for the low number of women in politics (Sapiro, 1986: 165). Even when women get jobs and can advance their professional careers, they must always balance it with the second job that is domestic labour. Women do the bulk of the domestic work-load to maintain the household (Sapiro, 1986).

Another obstacle that Sapiro outlines for women's political participation, and therefore numerical representation, is the way the political is perceived. Political skills and activities have been defined as a masculine trait. In addition, the political activities that women engage in (voting, organising petitions etc.) have been deemed non-political which also serves to exclude women from the political sphere (Sapiro, 1986).

According to Janet Clark, sex-role socialisation refers to the acceptance of different gender roles assigned to the genders. While sex-role socialisation theories have usually been about how children are socialised to view the world in certain ways, Sapiro extends socialisation to adults and how they affect and are affected by the culture around them (Clark, 1991: 71). Women are thought to be passive and domestic while men are active, take-charge and dominant (Clark, 1991:71). The pervasiveness of these roles affects the number of women who are willing and able to run for office because they may be regarded as less feminine and because they have domestic and family work that they need to manage which takes their time from politics. It also affects the demand side of politics because it makes political parties and voters unlikely to accept them as leaders because women are regarded as unable to lead (Ibid).

In *Women in Parliament: Beyond Numbers*, a report by international IDEA, Nadezhda Shvedova writes about the obstacles women world-over face to participate in parliament. The categories of obstacles are similar to other studies: socio-economic, political and, socio-cultural (Shvedova, 2005: 33). Shvedova argues that political systems such as electoral processes act as obstacles for women. She finds that countries with Proportional Representation (PR) political system have a higher rate of women in elected office (Shvedova, 2005: 34). Another major political obstacle Shvedova cites is the masculine model of politics; she argues that politics are adapted towards masculine norms and lifestyles for example the lack of flexibility in schedule that would allow for working mothers to participate in politics, especially since parental responsibilities tend to be relegated to women (Shvedova, 2005: 36). In Socio-economic obstacles, Shvedova includes three major obstacles: the lack of financial resources, illiteracy and lack of education (standard and political) and, the double labour burden of domestic and professional work (Shvedova, 2005: 41). Shvedova argues that despite the increase in women's contribution to the economy and in women's employment rates, women's gains have not increased at the same rate. She cites this discrepancy as well as the amount of unpaid domestic labour women do as reasons for the feminisation of poverty. This is further exacerbated by the fact that women bear a double burden as they do a larger share of the unpaid domestic work (Shvedova, 2005: 42-43).

In the category of Socio-cultural obstacles Shvedova outlines four obstacles: gender roles and traditional gender ideologies, the lack of confidence from women to run for elected office, women's perception of politics and, the way women are portrayed in media (Shvedova, 2005: 44). Traditional gender ideologies hinder women from participating in politics as they restrict them to the roles of mothers, housewives or maybe working mothers that have nominal, low-paying jobs. To be able to advance in the political sphere, women must abandon their feminine side and play up their masculinity often depicting themselves in an asexual manner. Femininity is apolitical and must be abandoned in order to enter into the political world (Shvedova, 2005: 45). Another subset of the socio-cultural obstacle is the fact that many women perceive politics to be a "dirty game" (Shvedova, 2005: 45). This may be because of levels of corruption, bribery and extortion (Ibid). The role of mass media as an obstacle for women's empowerment is not limited to negative portrayals but lack of information about issues and organisations that are of interest to women as well as erasing or diminishing the roles that women have played in the culture and history. The media can also help perpetuate

negative and/or restricting ideas of women and ideals of how women should behave (Shvedova, 2005: 47).

3. Method

3.1 Method

The method being used in this paper is qualitative textual analysis based on answers to semi-structured interviews.

A semi-structured interview design was chosen instead of a structured one to capture nuances and differences that would not be apparent to the interviewer before the interview is conducted. A semi-structured interview allows the interviewees to carry the conversation themselves and feel freer to discuss details and also allows for the interviewer to ask follow-up questions. Simply put, the ability to tailor the interview to the interviewees answers and experiences was deemed most appropriate (Bryman, 2012: 476). Oakley's points on why the semi-structured and unstructured interview methods are the best fit for feminist research also influenced the choice as it allows for more rapport between interviewer and interviewee. While the hierarchical relationship may not be as pronounced when conducting interviews with experts and elites like the sample in this paper, it still allows for the interviewee to take more space in the conversation and in the research than the interviewer which fits into Oakley's reasons for preferring the qualitative interview (Bryman, 2012: 491). It is arguable that a quantitative analysis would have allowed for a more highly generalizable result but the quantitative analysis was also rejected because it would necessitate the researcher shaping the answer and conversation rather than the participants.

The interviews were recorded instead of written down to allow for natural conversation to flow. After the interviews were conducted, overarching recurring themes were identified for analysis.

The participants were approached by email, a standardized email was sent to every female member of parliament and to the head of the committee on gender affairs through email addresses found on the National Assembly website. The participants with phone numbers available on the website were also contacted by phone.
All participants were given the options to be anonymous and to abstain from being recorded.

3.1.1 Operationalisation and Interview Questions

To conduct interviews and operationalise the theory, a set of questions was constructed based on the model of political barriers outlined by Shvedova: traditional gender ideology, women's perception of politics, political confidence and portrayal in media. The empirical material is largely based on the interviewees' own perceptions and experiences so the questions were created in order to allow for expression of these perceptions. For the questions about traditional gender roles, the participants were asked both about their own opinions and the perception of what the Zambian culture looks like.

- What does it mean to be a woman according to you?
- What does womanhood mean in Zambian culture?
- Do you feel women have to work at home and at work?

These questions were chosen to answer the traditional gender ideology point in Shvedova's model. The questions allow the participant to express their own views and traditional views of gender roles and to expand on any possible differences between them. The third question was chosen to allow for confirmation or dismissal of the aforementioned "double labour".

- When you were starting out in politics how did this affect you?
- In your career now how does the perception of women affect you?

These questions were chosen in order to answer the political confidence and perception of politics aspects of Shvedova's model. The answers to these would allow for analysis of how the participants' political confidence was affected by tradition and culture. They also allow for an understanding of how Zambian women and Zambians in general perceive the political game and the idea of women in politics.

- How do you think women being in parliament and in politics affects society and affects women in society?

This question was chosen to address the participants' perception of how descriptive representation may lead to substantive representation.

- How are women portrayed in the news and pop culture?

This question was chosen in order to highlight the participants' experiences of how women are portrayed in media and how they themselves are portrayed in media as female politicians in contrast to how their male colleagues are portrayed.

- Why do you think there aren't more women in parliament?

This question was asked at the end of every interview in order to give the participants a chance to identify a barrier that had not been explored during the conversation. The answers to this question would allow for an expansion of Shvedova's model when being applied to a Zambian context.

The specificities of culture outlined in the earlier research above highlight the need for conducting a qualitative case study when researching cultural obstacles as there are nuances and differences that become lost when doing a quantitative research.

3.2 Material

The sample group of interviewees were female members of the national assembly and female members of cabinet. This sample was chosen because the experience of the women who are the few who are included in the political process will shed light on the difficulties and barriers they faced. The women interviewed are the ones closest to the subject itself and therefore those with most knowledge of it. Out of 31 female members of parliament, 9 answered and their responses as well as the responses from the chairman of the committee for gender affairs will act as the basis for analysis. The interviews varied in length from 20 to 35 minutes depending on the length of the respondents' answers.

Due to the low number of respondents – one third out of the potential pool of participants – this paper and the results therein may be criticised because they are not highly generalizable.

4. Analysis

4.1 Traditional Gender Ideologies

A recurring theme in every interview was the idea of a woman's place, specifically that a woman's place is in the home and in the kitchen. To be a good woman means to stay home and take care of the family. When asked to define womanhood, respondents associate womanhood with being a mother, a carer and a wife (Interview Subjects 1-10). It is important to note however that the respondents do not view the role of mother and wife as a restrictive one but as something that allows women to become better leaders:

> Women are mothers and when you have a woman as a leader |…| they are
> able to share what they have with the community |…| How they deal with
> resources, how they deal with people, it's in another way than the men.

> (Interview Subject 3); [traditionally] The role of a woman is to keep quiet
>
> and do what the men say (Interview Subject 5).

Women are also meant to be submissive and act in accordance with the will of the men in their family, while this is improving in modern times, this submissive role still expresses itself when women go into politics as many interviewed express that women who want to run for office must ask for permission from their husbands (Interview Subjects 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7). In the rural areas, women are meant to be married off quickly to alleviate the burden on their family. The idea that a woman should be educated and become a leader is wasteful because the girl should invest her time in becoming a good potential wife (Interview Subject 1, 4, 5, 7).

The private public nexus was addressed as a barrier as women in their more submissive and domestic roles should also not be seen in public gatherings. The arena of polity and leadership was – and in certain areas is – an arena for men.

> First and foremost, the traditional stereotypes about where a woman's place is, it's
> historical it's been there for ages in many countries. A few moved faster in achieving
> the women's suffrage and so forth, in Zambia we've probably lagged behind for a long
> time. Those stereotypes still exist by and large. Women are not necessarily considered
> by and large to be public. They're not meant to be public |…| they're not meant for
> the public domain. They ought to be in the private. (Interview Subject 4).

This means that women who do speak up in community gatherings where men are present and take political leadership are perceived to be speaking out of turn (Interview Subjects 1, 2, 3, 4). "…A married woman now is not supposed to go out there socializing go in all these social places… They are not supposed to be seen so much" (Interview Subject 2). In the family, in the community and in the country, it is the men that are perceived to have the necessary leadership skills to be the leaders. The women may be competent to serve under them and in accordance to their wishes but not as leaders "The men are supposed to be heard first." (Interview Subject 2). Women are meant to be soft-spoken and not heart but conversely, when they are competing with a man for a political position, the man will be preferred precisely because women are seen as too weak and soft-spoken to be able to negotiate and fight for their constituents (Interview Subject 4). The femininity/masculinity divide acts as a double-edged sword preventing women from entering politics.

Achieving success in a leadership position within a community can lead to the woman being called a man. Not in a negative way to detract from her femininity but to say that the leadership skills exhibited make her "worthy" of being called a man. "Society itself saw me as

not just a woman but said 'she's also a man' so they put this coat of man on me because of my experience in the civil service. That made it a little easier for me" (Interview Subject 5). Furthermore, respondents lay blame on the religious culture and its promotion of rigid gender roles. The structure of the church itself favoured and still favours men attaching a religious importance to a patriarchal cultural order (Interview Subjects 1, 4).

In terms of the genesis of the traditional gender ideologies, blame was lain on the past colonial order that established men at the head and women at the base and on the religion which perpetuated that order. However, the female respondents also cited their faith as a point of strength that guides them in troubled times. This can lead to the conclusion that it is the cultural aspect of religion and its use as a power structure that is the issue, not the religion itself (Interview Subjects 1, 4).

4.2 Dirty game

Another trend in the respondents' answers is that women who go into politics are commonly referred to as prostitutes and there is an assumption and a spreading of rumours that the advances she has made in her career are in exchange for sex. This leads a lot of women to shy away from politics lest they be so labelled and lose the respect they have within their community and society (Interview Subjects 3, 4, 5). The men in their family, whether their husbands or their fathers, will also hesitate to give their permission and their support because they are afraid that their wives names and therefore their family names will be besmirched (Interview Subject 1, 3, 4, 5, 7).

There is also a fear of repercussions that women will face such as violence and other name-calling that women do not want to subject themselves to that leads them to forego running for office (Interview Subject 1, 5).

There is also the fact that, by and large, politics is a game dominated by men. The female respondents all reported that there is an abundance of men not just in the parliament but in the local level in the regions they lead. This means that the MPs and ministers are the only women in a room otherwise filled with men which can be a daunting atmosphere. "Most of them are men so |…| I'm always standing in front of men and some of them will say "no a woman can't talk in front of us what are you?" So, it's … a challenge." (Interview Subject 2). The negative perception of women in politics can also be present within the parliament because while an informal gathering of male parliamentarians is perceived as an important meeting to discuss policy, an informal gathering of female parliamentarians will be perceived as a gossip ring with the male parliamentarians interrupting a discussion to ask what the women are gossiping about. Similarly, an informal cross-partisan discussion among men is

perceived as a good way to insure political unity but if there is a cross-partisan discussion among women, it is perceived as the woman selling out her party (Interview Subject 2, 4).

4.3 Lack of Confidence

According to many respondents, women are not encouraged into the public life to the same extent as men especially in the more rural areas. When it comes to education, the priority will be to educate the boys in the house, even if the girls outperform the boys at school. This leads to a lot of women feeling that the public arena and especially the area of politics and leadership is not something that is suited for them (Interview subject 1, 3, 4, 5). From a young age, girls are taught to do the household chores and take care of the home; anything outside this role is unsuitable for women. Therefore, especially in the rural areas, getting into politics is not even considered to be in the realm of possibility for girls. "Sometimes you feel like 'oh this is it. This is how it is, I don't think I can make it. I don't think I can do it" (Interview Subject 3). Therefore, it is arguable that it is learned early that being a woman is an automatic disqualifier from being a politician or a leader (Interview Subject 2, 3, 4).

Young girls will also be socialised to be quiet and demure and a girl who is "too talkative" and "too loud" will be chastised for acting like a boy. Girls are told to tone down their thoughts, opinions and voices lest they lose their femininity (Interview Subject 3, 4).

> A girl growing up in the village would be told 'don't talk too much as if you're not
> a girl' so it means she has to tone down so immediately her assertiveness starts being
> suppressed quite early. 'Sit properly!' doesn't go to a boy child, it'll go to a girl so
> that in itself already starts modelling a girl in a traditional setup to be coiled and not
> to flare (Interview Subject 4).

Later in life, this will manifest itself in that a girl who is too opinionated and too independent will be seen as a bad woman and a bad potential wife; as a result, many women will choose not to put themselves in a position that demands they be outspoken lest they miss out on marriage and family which is by and large seen as the main goal for a woman (Interview Subject 4, 9).

Another source of doubt that stops women participating in politics is the idea that it will be more difficult to find a husband and build a family if one is engaged in politics. The prospect of having to balance the difficult work of being a member of parliament – which includes a lot of travel within the region of constituency and between the region and the capital – and managing the family can be seen as too daunting (Interview Subject 1).

There is a perception that anything women say is less important than whatever men say. Therefore, even if a woman does gain enough confidence to run for any political office, she is

soon discouraged when her male opponent and his views are given more credence than her and hers (Interview Subject 4).

The lack of confidence was not as prominent a barrier when compared to the other dimensions.

4.4 Portrayal in Media

When it comes to women's portrayal in media, three recurring themes were found, these are the prominence of cyber-bullying on social media, the spreading of rumours on both social and traditional mass media and the discriminatory reporting in traditional media (Interview Subjects 1-10). All the respondents named cyber-bullying on social media as a major challenge for them in their careers especially since it disproportionately affects female MPs and ministers. The reported cyber-bullying ranges to everything from spreading unfounded rumours to name-calling. The spread of rumours can also occur on traditional media such as newspapers and news programs, however, this does not happen to the same extent as it does on social media (Interview Subjects 3, 4, 5, 6, 7). The respondents also argued that the way women are spoken of on social media affects the way they are perceived to their constituents. It also affects women and girls' perception of politics as it increases its unsavoury aspects and its perception as "a dirty game" (Interview Subjects 3, 4, 5). Competitors who may want to take over the seat after the next election may also use the social media landscape to create doubt among the electorate: "The many that want to stand now, they tend to expose certain weaknesses so that they discourage us so that they can put off other women. |…| Someone went into my constituency, gave money to 1 or 2 people to say very negative things about me." (Interview Subject 5).

An interesting response was that even when there is cyber-bullying and spreading of rumours, the fear is mainly how it will affect the family's reputation and not how it will affect the woman personally. The woman has to not only worry about herself and her reputation but she has the burden of representing (and therefore shaming) her family (Interview Subject 2).

When it comes to traditional media, the problem is less the spreading of rumours and name-calling – though that is also present – and more the discriminatory reporting. Respondents report that women's successes are under-reported when compared to men and that their failings are over-reported (Interview Subjects 2, 3, 4, 7). One respondent even said the lack of portrayal of women in leadership positions is one of the main barriers for political participation saying:

> I just feel that lack of exposure, that's the thing which is drawing women back from
> these positions. Cause I think if there'll be a lot of sensitization you know sensitizing

> women that there's nothing wrong with becoming a member of parliament |…| we
> need a lot of sensitization. (Interview Subject 3)

In pop culture, by and large, the respondents perceived that women are portrayed either as sexual objects to promote style products and products for men or they are portrayed as mothers working in the kitchen to promote cooking or cleaning products.

One respondent also expressed frustration that women's historical achievements were swept under the rug or assigned to men (Interview Subject 4).

4.5 Double Standard

The double standard that exists for women and men in general and male and female politicians may also act as a barrier for women's participation and representation in politics. Women need to prove themselves many times over in order to gain the trust and respect that their male colleagues get more easily (Interview Subject 2, 4, 5). In media and in the Zambian society, male politicians who have not been able to make any progress will be re-elected while the female politicians need to work twice as hard for the same results. This is also true before they become elected where the women need to have shown their competence as leaders in other areas such as business or be daughters of well-known high-achieving politicians to be considered viable candidates (Interview Subjects 4, 5).

Within the traditional role that women must serve comes the "double labour" that women must perform of working at work and at home; a standard that men do not have too meet. This acts as a barrier because, as one respondent put it:

> Look at our activity profile when we come back from work. [
> My husband] will sit there reading the newspaper and being updated on current
> events. I will get there, take care of [him], ask him if he wants a cup of tea and
> make a cup of tea. Start working in the kitchen to do all sorts of things and the
> things I have to deal with for work, will be done last. By the time I start thinking of
> them, I'll be very tired. Do you think I'll be promoted in good time or
> competitively with [my husband]? He will go faster! (Interview Subject 4)

This double labour is not just present for adult women but is present throughout childhood; girls help their mothers with the household chores while boys go outside and play. In later years, if the woman is unmarried, she is still supposed to take care of her family and is therefore locked into the role of double-worker throughout her life (Interview Subjects 2, 3, 4, 9). Not only does the double labour burden fall solely on the women, the onus is on them to find the balance between home and work with help from their husbands if they are lucky. For members of parliament, there is even more of a burden since they have to work in the

parliament, in their home constituencies and at home (Interview Subjects 1, 2, 3, 4, 9) "It is these obligations that have discouraged women from participating in national issues" (Interview Subject 9). So not only does this triple labour exist, not being able to balance it is considered a failure. If the husband feels that the wife is neglecting the children and the household in order to fulfil her political career, he may rescind his permission for her to enter into politics.

> If they disagree, then I think that family will have issues. Even if it's to say no she's going for a committee meeting, the husband will say 'no, don't go where are you going?' so there will be problems (Interview Subject 2).

4.6 Socioeconomic

A lack of financial resources is a barrier that every respondent agreed on. Women in Zambia are economically disadvantaged and campaigning is an expensive endeavour, without the support of their husbands and/or other men in their lives, women do not have a fair chance to enter politics. There is still a financial dependence that women have on the men which necessitates the men being willing to invest in the woman's political career. Institutions are also less likely to lend money to women because they do not believe that women will win their campaigns and so be able to pay the money back. Because of this, women remain largely dependent on the men in their lives for financial support (Interview Subjects 1-10).

Part of the reason that boys will be prioritised for education and investment in families is that the girls will be married off to another family. Therefore, the father in the family will feel like it is a waste of time and money to invest for a girl to educate herself because it does not lead to her getting married. As one respondent expressed "It is like investing money into another family because she will be married off into that family" (Interview 1).

The prioritisation of boys' education over that of girls also led to them not gaining the knowledge required to make and manage money and the political knowledge required to run for and hold political office (Interview Subject 3, 4, 7). Even when women are given the knowledge to make their own money, the money they make still belongs to the men in the family (Interview Subject 4). "People who come to the meetings for farmers were women |…| yet the money is not necessarily there and by identity they are not necessarily the farmers. 'Farmer' is a man." (Interview Subject 4).

Another socio-economic barrier that women face is the presence of corruption in politics. Respondents reported that a candidate must pay hefty sums to the constituencies in order to gain their support or promise some form of compensation once elected. Since many powerful

members in the electorate do not believe that women will be able to win, they do not see the point of investing in somebody that will not be useful to them in the long run. There was also a perception among the participants that women are seen to be less corruptible than men and therefore less worthy of investment (Interview Subjects 2, 4).

5. Discussion

5.1 Suggested Solutions

Many of the participants in the interview suggested that a codified quota system was the way to achieve equal participation not just in the national assembly but in every level of politics. A quota system would codify equal participation in law (Interview Subjects 1, 2, 4). However, one of the interviewees was critical against this saying that it was up to women to be more present and become popular in their constituencies so that they can become elected rather than having women in power simply because of a law. She argued that this would lower the women's legitimacy in the electorate's eyes (Interview Subject 5).

One of the participants argued that while economic difficulties act as a barrier for women, the lack of economic prosperity on a national level may eliminate other barriers such as traditional gender roles. The argument is that financial difficulty makes it necessary for everyone in the family to earn an income so that the family may stay afloat. Since this allows women to leave their traditional gender roles, it opens the door for them to take on traditionally male professions such as politics and leadership (Interview Subject 2).

One participant suggests that a good solution is that parties put forward female candidates in the areas where they know they have a stronghold and know they will be elected instead of the current system where parties nominate women in constituencies that they know they will lose simply to have said that they had nominated female candidates (Interview Subject 2). Another suggestion was better regulation of media, both traditional and social, so that the portrayal of women was fair so that there was less negative representation of women and more representation of women's achievements both modern and historical.

Many of the participants also claimed that simply seeing women in positions of power would lead to a shift in how women and men view gender roles and ideologies and would lead to more women and girls feeling confident to run for political office. The participants cite examples of female teachers, nurses and truck drivers (traditionally male dominated professions) and how they act as role models for other girls and women to also step into a

male-dominated field (Interview Subjects 1, 2, 3, 4, 5). One way this is being changed is that children in school are given many opportunities to visit the national assembly and meet the female members of parliament.

5.2 Importance for Human Security

As political empowerment is a source of human security, the barriers for women's equal participation in Zambia found in this study are examples of structural violence that disproportionately affect women and lead to their insecurity. Arguably, hindering women from having an equal say in their day to day lives and in the way their country is run hinders them from having an equal share in financial profits, in education, in positive portrayal in media which then hinders others in their political participation and acts as a vicious cycle. It can also be argued that this prevents them from addressing the violence (such as gender based violence and child marriages) that occurs as a result of women having a lower status in society than men.

The participants in the interviews all felt that women being in parliament improves the lives of women in Zambia in general both in terms of symbolic value as encouragement for other women to become politicians and a push-back against the idea that women cannot be leaders. Women being in parliament also improves Zambian women's lives in terms of substantive value that women in power are better at addressing women's needs and advocating for them (Interview Subjects 1-10).

5.3 Conclusion

The research question of what barriers exist for women's equal representation in Zambian politics has been examined through the lens of Shvedova's model.

The main conclusion to be reached from the study is that the existing model presented by Shvedova is applicable to Zambia.

The traditional gender roles and ideologies that women inhabit in Zambian society prevents their equal participation in politics since they are socialised at a young age to think that their role is in the home and not in the public sphere of politics. Skills that are necessary for politics and leadership such as assertiveness and being outspoken are discouraged in girls and women for fear that they be unladylike. Women are meant to be submissive to the men in their family and therefore require the men's permission to run for political office. If the men in the family disapprove, it becomes very difficult for the woman to run for and hold office.

There is also a perception that being a wife and mother are the most important goals for a woman to have and politics will stand in the way of achieving that goal.

Women's perception of politics as a dirty game was also found in the empirical analysis as many respondents reported that women are likely to be harassed and bullied for daring to enter politics and express their minds. The fact that the political sphere is male-dominated also creates a hostile work environment that women do not want to enter. The men's perception of politics is also important because if the men of the family feel that politics will mean hostility towards their wives and daughters, they will not give them permission to run in order to protect them from it.

The lack of confidence is a dimension that was not as present in the study as the other dimensions. According to the respondents, women do feel qualified and empowered to run for and hold political office. However, the dimension is still present and is also one that stems from early socialisation when young girls are told that they are not as smart and as competent as the boys. However, the study can be criticized here because the interview subjects are all people who have had the confidence to run for and hold political office. This barrier may have been more prominent if interviews were conducted with the general public rather than those who have had enough confidence to run for office and are now politicians. However, the participants were still able to discuss their hesitation when embarking on their candidacy and political career.

The way women are portrayed in media has seen to have a certain effect in women's representation. However, this is arguably because it affects the other dimensions in the model. The lack of positive coverage in traditional media affects the way women are perceived; by not highlighting their successes in leadership, it contributes to the view that women are not meant for politics and public life but for the private. The unfairly negative coverage of female politicians in traditional media and the presence of cyber-bullying further adds to the perception that politics is a dirty game and decreases women's confidence in their abilities. A new dimension was added to capture the double standard that exists in Zambian society.

Though it is arguable this dimension bleeds into the others, it is separated as its own because it captures something that would otherwise be lost in the other dimensions. The first double standard found in the analysis is that women have to prove themselves much more than the men do in order to be considered their equals. The second double standard is the double labour that women have to perform as workers in the private and public domains. This double labour disproportionately affects women and in the analysis, the respondents found that they

had a triple labour to perform since being a member of parliament required full-time work in both the parliament and the constituencies. These double standards, by definition, act as a source of inequality in representation by raising the bar that women must pass in order to enter into and function within the political sphere.

Finally, the socio-economic dimension; while not a part of Shvedova's original model of cultural barriers for women's representation, it was included because a) every participant expressed its importance and b) it affected and was affected by culture to the extent that they are inextricably linked. Women's economic power is lower than men's because traditional gender roles dictate that this power must reside with men. Corruption in politics also becomes a barrier for women as they are perceived as less corruptible and less worthy of corrupting since they will not have the same political power as men.

The new dimension found in the empirical study may act as expansions but it is arguable that they are nuances and not clean-cut dimensions. It is also arguable that the barriers for women's representation in politics found in Zambia reflect the results of the previous research showing that the same types of barriers exist throughout the countries of the world regardless of level of development. However, this does not discount from the importance of doing research in countries outside of the Western world.

Many participants reported a shift in the unequal representation between men and women and that progress, while very slow, is constantly happening. The progress is attributed mainly to a shift in culture from traditional to modern, the exposure of women in leadership positions, in pop culture and news and a political will to change the status quo. It is interesting to note here that party divides played a role in how much progress the participants felt was happening and to whom they felt the progress was owed. A good example of this is that some participants arguing that the current ruling party Patriotic Front was acting as a barrier for women's representation by voting down a proposition to enact a quota system (Interview Subjects 1, 2) while those belonging to the party argued that it was because of the ruling party that there are more women in positions of power (Interview Subjects 6, 7).

5.4 Suggestions for improvement and further research

Having the answers of all female members of parliament would have helped this study gain more generalisability and is therefore a highly-recommended improvement for it. The interview questions could also be criticised for not being different enough and for not being clear enough to the respondents which affects the study's repeatability and validity. It would also allow for stronger evidence of the dimensions to emerge as it can be difficult to find a consensus among only ten participants. A more structured interview would also have allowed

for more consensus to be reached but the semi-structured method was chosen to allow for more freedom for the participants and to fall in line with Oakley's methods of feminist research.

A wider study where structural interviews or surveys are conducted nation-wide in order to capture the opinions and perspectives of those who are not in nor have any interest in politics would also be an interesting study in the Zambian political culture.

While a case study was chosen for in depth research, a comparative study would also yield valuable results. A comparative study between a country like Rwanda or South Africa (countries with a similar historical background and cultural make-up but better gender equality record) and Zambia for example would allow for a more nuanced and precise understanding of what barriers exist for women's political representation.

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6.2 Interview Subjects
(party in parenthesis)

Interview Subject 1, interviewed on 18-11-27, Honourable Mr. Jere Matthews, MP Head of committee for human rights, legal affairs and gender matters. (UPND)

Interview Subject 2, interviewed on 18-12-7, Honourable Ms. Attractor Malungo Chisangano, MP (UPND)

Interview Subject 3, interviewed on 18-12-11 Honourable Mrs. Prisca Kucheka, MP (UPND)

Interview Subject 4, interviewed on 18-12-11 Honourable Ms. Brenda Mwika Tambatamba, MP (UPND)

Interview Subject 5, interviewed on 18-12-12 Honourable Mrs. Pilila Mwanza Getrude Jere, MP (Independent)

Interview Subject 6, interviewed on 18-12-13 Honourable Mrs. Kampamba Mulenga Chilumba, Information minister (PF)

Interview Subject 7, interviewed on 18-12-13 Honourable Ms. Elizabeth Phiri, Gender minister (PF)

Interview Subject 8, interviewed on 18-12-13 Honourable Mrs. Mirriam Chinyama Chonya, MP (UPND)

Interview Subject 9, interviewed on 18-12-13 Honourable Mrs. Joyce Nonde Simukoko, Labour minister (PF)

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Interview Subject 10, interviewed on 18-12-13 Honourable Ms. Sylvia Bambala Chalikosa,

Minister office of the Vice President (PF)