



An assessment of women's participation in South Africa's foreign policy decision making and execution from 2009-2019

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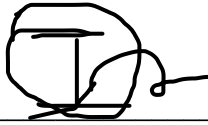
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DECLARATION

I, IPELENG NWAFOR, hereby declare that this study is my research work. This work has not been submitted before by another person to any University for any degree, in part or in full. I also declare that all the intellectual content used in this work by other writers has been properly acknowledged.

Signature



Date October 2022

Supervisor's signature



Date October 2022

DEDICATION

Firstly, I dedicate this work to God Almighty the great I AM THAT I AM in his word according to Jerimiah 29:11, “For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future”. I thank Him for bringing me this far.

Secondly, I dedicate this work to all women who are fighting against the triple burden of Patriarchy, Sexism, and Racism. Let us continue to raise our voices; the end will justify the means “Malibongwe Igama la ma khosikazi”.

Sicela uxolo nothando!

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Lastly, I thank my friends Koketso Masola, Oluwakemi Roseline Olatunji, Mpho Santho, and Apostle Friendad Kann. Thank you all!

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACDEG	African Charter on Democracy Elections and Governance
ANC	African National Congress
ANCWL	African National Congress Women's League
BPA	Beijing Platform for Actions
CEDAW	Convention on the Eradication of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
DIRCO	Department of International Relations and Cooperation
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency virus
SADC	Southern African Development Community.
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNHRC	United Nations Human Rights Commission

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ABSTRACT

This study was aimed at assessing women's participation in South Africa's foreign policy decision-making and execution. The study was motivated due to the significant dominance of male gender participation and leadership in DIRCO about women's participation since 1994. Four research objectives guided this study which included to investigate of women's participation in decision-making and execution in South African foreign policy, evaluating the challenges of women's participation in foreign policy decision-making; to ascertain the strategies that could promote women's participation in politics and South African foreign policy decision-making; and to make recommendations to promote women participation in politics and South African foreign policy decision-making. The Intersectionality and Kanter's Theories were adopted to underpin the study. Ten participants were selected for the purpose of this study, while semi-structured interviews were adopted to collect data from the participants. After data analysis, Atlas-ti software (version 9) was used to analyze data into themes and categories. Afterwards, network diagrams were presented as the outputs and were interpreted and discussed in relation to the focus of the study. Findings obtained from the study indicated that women's participation is less than 50% while they hold junior positions. It was discovered that challenges limiting the participation of women in foreign policy decision-making process include unfavourable cultural and traditional norms, religious practices, and lack of support for women, the influential attitude of men, financial issues, and under-representation in politics. The strategies and recommendations made by the study to improve the participation of women in the foreign policy decision -making and participation includes involving women as leaders, promoting gender equality, women's empowerment, public lobby and sensitization, training of more women, redressing cultural barriers, promoting bills to handle domestic violence, women's rights observation, removal of stereotypes against women, and improving feminist policies.

CHAPTER ONE

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction and background to the study

Despite their ethnic origin, South African women have always remained in the second echelon of culture. Past policies and practices, such as political parties' leadership representation structures deliberately benefited men, particularly white ones. The dominant ideology of masculinity and male dominance has become a global problem that defies the socio-political and economic aspects of liberal democratic states (Haastrup, 2020:2; Mathur-Helm, 2005:56-57). This socio-cultural ideology identifies women as inferior to men in both classes and as such assigns them the status of minors in both the public and private spheres of existence (National Gender Policy Framework, 2003). In the 21st century, the lack of women's inclusion and limited participation of women in leadership positions and decision-making remain barriers to fair political participation and sustainable development in a democratic setting.

According to Kimbu and Ngoasong (2016), women are often confronted with circumstances in which they play a supporting role in the management of the internal and external relations of the state, irrespective of their power. However, Williams (2016), argues that the South African foreign policy has a packed diplomatic agenda in the country's history, and that it is time for analysts to begin exploring the nature of the country's foreign policy vision, as South African diplomacy will have to address the challenges of uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity in the global order.

On the international scene, before 2018, countries such as Sweden and Canada committed to pursue the participation of females in foreign policies decision-making (Tiessen & Carrier, 2015). This commitment focuses on abolishing all aspects of gender dominance and inequality, and this seeks to eradicate assumptions of class (Tiessen & Carrier, 2015). This also strives to provide women with the ability to take part in decisions to serve the state and to confront the problems relevant to the international affairs and position of a nation (Robinson & Gottlieb, 2019). Junk *et al.* (2020), conclude that, even given steady change, the world still has a long way to go towards a fair representation of women in private and public decision-making, as gender gaps exist and women tend to experience inequality in access to work, and low involvement in private and public decision-making.

However, the Republic of South Africa has moved on from its status as the pariah regime in 1994, which had promoted racial supremacy and patriarchy, to a more inclusive democratic, non-racial and non-sexist society, based on the values of equality, justice, fairness and non-discrimination (Shefer, 2018). The preamble of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996:1-5) further states that the aim of the Bill of Rights in the Constitution is to heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental rights. It further explains that the Republic of South Africa is founded on the values of human dignity, the achievement of equality, and the advance of human rights and freedoms such as non-racialism and non-sexism.

However, on the contrary, the role of women's participation in both ministerial and legislative offices continues to be contrasted with that of men's participation (Haastrup, 2020:2-3). Perhaps, the drawback in the concise paradigm is the promotion in gender equality to restrict women to pure objects, and the reality that gender quotas are an easy way to alter the way things feel, without actually improving the way they are (Robinson & Gottlieb, 2019). Thus, the status and goals of South Africa's foreign policy cannot be isolated from the complexities of its transformation from the repression of apartheid to the creation of a new gender equal democracy. The reflections from the discourse above suggests that there are a plethora of issues and pointers that relate to the South African national goal of equality, inclusivity and women's participation in foreign policy decision making. Hence, it is the purpose of this study to assess the pitfalls bordering South African women's participation in decision making in its foreign policy agenda.

1.2 Research problem statement

With the resurgence of democracy since 1994, South Africa has seen a noticeable trend towards the campaigning of women to partake in leadership and politics. Historically, race and gender have subjected women's leadership roles in South Africa to a merely supportive responsibility. Throughout South Africa, both white and black women have been idealized historically as mothers, not as politically influential individuals (Musavengane & Leonard, 2019:136-137). Perhaps, the role played by black women in the liberation struggle has not been adequately recognized in terms of involvement in leadership and politics in South Africa. Consequently, there exist a limited number of women participating in South African foreign policy decision-making, as a limited number of women are represented in the political scene. Accordingly, women are still significantly under-represented in structures related to foreign affairs in South Africa. These include the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Foreign Affairs, ANC's

International Relations committee, ministerial advisory bodies such as the South African International Relations Council, as well as the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) as presented in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 Gender Composition of Top, Senior and Mid-Management of DIRCO

	Male	Female	Total
Top management	11	5	16
Senior management	146	114	260
Professionally qualified and experienced specialist and mid-management	551	490	1041

Source: DIRCO Annual Report (2018:152)

The significant dominance of male gender in DIRCO as presented in Table 1.1 shows the negligible number of women participating in foreign affairs, which has had only male director's general since 1994. The present makeup of the genders is skewed towards men, however, after the advent of the new age post-apartheid, the country has embraced and developed a range of programs, organizations and foreign initiatives. These include International Women's Day, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and Children, 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence Human Rights Day, and the South African Commission for Gender Equality as an approach to encourage gender equality as a human right in its domestic policies (Commission for Gender Equality Act, 1996).

Similarly, the status of democratic and constitutional changes maintained at all levels of socio-political and economic governance in the modern institutional democratic South African in diplomacy and foreign policy strategy have not yet integrated gender mainstreaming as a critical theory and cornerstone of its regional and global development strategy (Musavengane & Leonard, 2019:136). Perhaps, the issue the of lack of women's gender inclusivity in foreign policy decision-making in South Africa has historically maintained the dominance of males. To this end, it was identified that previous scholars in this area of study such as Haastrup (2020:3-5); Afolabi (2017) and Tripp (2017), have carried out studies on the trend of women's participation in politics and leadership, but limited studies have been conducted to assess the level of involvement and participation of South African women in foreign policy decision-making. It is in this context that this study was motivated to assess and evaluate the level of women's participation in South Africa foreign policy decision- making and execution. Hence,

it is hoped that the findings of this study will reveal the challenges that have hindered reasonable representation of women in South Africans foreign policy decision making as well as proffer academic solutions that will enhance positive integration of women in the decision-making of South African foreign policies.

1.3 Aim of the study

The aim of the study is to critically assess women's participation in South Africa's foreign policy decision-making and execution.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study is to assess women's participation in South Africa's foreign policy decision-making and execution from 2009-2021.

The Following are the sub-objectives of the study:

- To investigate the extent of women's participation in decision-making and execution in South African foreign policy.
- To evaluate the challenges of women's participation in foreign policy decision-making;
- To ascertain the strategies that could promote women' participation in politics and the South Africa is foreign policy decision-making.
- To make recommendations to promote women's participation in politics and South African foreign policy decision-making.

1.5 Research questions

The main research question of this study is 'what is the extent women's participation in South Africa's foreign policy decision-making and execution from 2009-2021?

The following are the sub-research questions of the study:

- To what extent do women participate in decision-making and execution in South African foreign policy?
- What are the challenges of women's participation in foreign policy decision-making?
- What are the strategies that could promote women's participation in politics and South African foreign policy decision-making?
- What are the recommendations to promote women's participation in politics and South African foreign policy decision-making?

1.6 The scope of the study

This research is limited to evaluating gender equality and women's engagement in South Africa's foreign policy, decision-making and execution. The study examines the role of government and political participation in the women's advancement in South Africa. The study will focus in a period of twelve years from 2009-2021. In essence, the study put its relevance from soon after the start of the democratic period up to the present government. The reason is to reflect post-Apartheid foreign policy and how it has included women in its administration.

1.7 Significance of the study

The focus of this study is on assessment of South African women 'participation in foreign policy decision-making. The study is of seminal importance, because previous and current scholars of international relations were preoccupied with South African foreign policy formulation and implementation, diplomacy, and multilateralism, with less emphasis on women's representation in policymaking. Between 2009 and 2016, Eddy Maloka served as a special counsellor to South Africa's foreign minister, and his most recent book was on the Interplay of National Interests, Pan-Africanism, and Internationalism in South African Foreign Policy. Just like other scholar's professor Landsberg, Alden and Le Pere, 2004.who just focused on multilateralism and did not mention women's representation. (Moloka, 2019)

The current existing literature on gender and patriarchy does not directly focus on the connection between the DIRCO foreign policy decision-making, execution, and women's participation. Perhaps, this study will produce in-depth findings on the connection between the DIRCO's foreign policy decision-making and execution, and women's participation. Consequently, there exist a limited number of women representations in decision-making class in different government parastatals, especially for foreign policy. It is on this basis that this study is conducted to ascertain the challenges that have hindered the participation of South African women in foreign policy decision-making.

However, this research will add to the body of knowledge and scholarly guidance on the existing problems that impede women's involvement in foreign policy decision-making, as well as to the structure that could help women's participation in South African politics and foreign policy decision-making. Also, the study will be available online for students of foreign policy, public policy experts on South Africa in International Relations, as well specialists in gender politics for future development of feminism in Africa in general.

1.8 Research methodology

This study-assessed women's participation in South Africa's foreign policy decision-making and execution. The research adopted qualitative design, which helped to gather the in-depth opinions of the participants. Creswell (2014) affirms that qualitative researchers believe in induction, also immerse themselves into the study with the view to finding concise perceptions of the participants on the study focus. An exploratory research design was chosen in order to provide new perspectives and findings in the phenomenon under investigation. The study selected ten participants which were interviewed using semi-structured interviews to observe Covid-19 regulations as, stipulated by South African government, interviews were online where WhatsApp calls, emails, phone calls, and Short Message Services were adopted as the means of communication. After data collection, the researcher transcribed the answers from the people interviewed and used Atlas-ti software (version 9) for analytical purposes. Afterwards, coding was done and themes and categories were selected and discussed basing on the four objectives of the study. Trustworthiness such as credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability were maintained in the study. In addition, all ethical concepts applicable to the study were maintained.

1.9 Definition of concepts

Patriarchy: The rule of men over women, women's subordination and male domination in which the class men' has power over the class 'women', and a web of economic, political, social and religious ideologies that enforces the domination of women (Maseno & Kilonzo, 2011).

Governance: According to Fukuyana (2013:6), governance is about the performance of agents in carrying out the wishes of principals such as in carrying out or executing what has fallen within the domain of public administration.

Women's Participation: Women's participation refers to the extent to which women are involved in a particular sector of society, to assist women in developing and implementing advocacy, policy, and legal reforms to increase equal participation of women in decision-making at all levels of society, from the home to the community, to national legislatures, peacemaking processes, and global fora (UNDP, 2010).

Decision-making: The action and process of making important decisions as well as explaining actions before thinking. It can also be described as positive and negative criticism looking at all ideas before deciding on anything such as laws or rules. Hidden assumptions,

secret beliefs and, convenient fictions are another attempt to investigate decision-making critically. (Haastrup, 2020:2-3).

South African Foreign Policy Making and Execution: Foreign policy decision-making involves a multi-dimensional range of values, strategies, political goals, and plans. It entails a dedication to the protection of human rights, dedication to equality, a commitment to justice and international law in ties between countries, and a commitment to stability (Musavengane & Leonard, 2019:136).

1.10 Chapter outline of the study

For this study, the following outlines the composition of the study, as it assumes a traditional dissertation format. That is, at the end of the study the report will take the following sequence and structure.

Chapter One - This section covers the introduction, background, motivation, and the problem statement as well as the objectives, questions and significance of the study.

Chapter Two- This section provides a review of previous literature and core concepts as it concerns women's participation in politics and leadership, as well as theoretical review of that which underpins women's participation in politics and foreign policy decision-making.

Chapter Three – This chapter provided details of the research methodology that covered the stages of the research design, including the sampling techniques and procedure, data analysis and ethical considerations followed in the study.

Chapter Four - This chapter details a report of the presentation of the coded data into themes and presents it diagrammatically into charts and graphs. In addition, this chapter provides the analysis of the results of the study in the form of research findings.

Chapter Five - This chapter presents the study conclusions, policy implications, and recommendations.

1.11 Chapter Summary

The existence of the new democratic structures, which were set up to broaden popular participation in national decision-making has not been more inclusive and responsive to women's concerns. Thus, this chapter has succeeded in providing the introduction to the study as it borders on women's participation in decision-making and execution in the South African foreign policy. Accordingly, the background to the study, motivation for the study, the problem statement, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study as well as a brief discussion of the research methodology were provided. The next chapter will provide a review of previous literature on women's participation in decision-making and execution in the South African foreign policy.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

There are many scholarly studies on women's participation in decision-making and the ramifications thereof, both at local and international levels. The question regarding participation by both men and women in all spheres of life is not a new engagement. Indeed, it has not been an issue of whether women ought to be involved in policymaking, but rather how to further improve the participation of women in a changing democratic society. Thus, this chapter of the study focuses on the theoretical framework that underpins this study as well as a review of previous studies as it concerns women's participation and their challenges in politics and decision-making with a major focus on South African foreign policies. In addition, this chapter will unveil the structures that could promote women's participation in South African foreign policy decision-making.

2.1 Review of related concepts to the study

This section of the study outlines and presents an in-depth overview of the core concepts that are relevant to the focus of this study. However, these concepts will provide a rational perspective into the dynamics that motivate this research.

2.1.1 Concept of patriarchy

Patriarchy is a social structure where males possess prime influence and predominate in government leadership positions, moral legitimacy, societal wealth, and land ownership (Tlaiss & Kauser, 2019). It is a critical idea that gives explanations for gender disparity. According to Mikaere (2019), patriarch means "father's reign"; in general, it refers to a culture in which men rule over women. In most African families, this type of regulation is ingrained. Allowing men to hold a greater societal position than women have permeated society's daily lives, especially the public sphere, which reflects in-state endeavors. Indeed, most African families have played an important role in perpetuating the patriarchal system for decades. The views instilled in youngsters during their socialization phase that they would play a variety of roles throughout their lives has have built a social machinery for the promotion of social norms that result in a variety of techniques of discrimination against women (Mikaere, 2019; Hadi, 2017). Men have taken advantage of this social order over time to enjoy domination over women, particularly in the political arena, where women are stereotyped and their subjugation is justified (Fuchs, 2018; Hadi, 2017). The social order of sex-role socialization that exists between men and

women allows for separate and uneven roles allocated by gender, resulting in a communally diverse work apparatus that continues to represent a significant impediment to women achieving substantially higher political positions (Chong, 2020; Fuchs, 2018; Hadi, 2017).

2.1.2 Concept of feminism

The concept of feminism is an idealistic type of feminist philosophy that centers on women's capacity through their acts and decisions to preserve their equality. Liberalism emphasizes every individual's right to equality, dignity, and a say in how they are governed, which is essentially consistent with feminist arguments of fair treatment of males (McCloskey, 2019). The goal of radical feminism in the late 1800s and early 1900s was to achieve women's rights with the premise that they would instead obtain individual liberty. Women were focused on achieving freedom by justice, stopping the brutality of men against women, and obtaining liberation from restrictions to become whole citizens. They felt no law or tradition would forbid the practice of personal rights. Early liberal feminists needed to combat the presumption that only white people earned complete citizenship.

Consequently, this concept provides females of today the freedom to be educated, vote and compete for elected office as men do. Besides, women have the freedom to operate outside the household, whether they are married or not (Kamenou, 2019). Therefore, Men and women who do the same job should be paid equally, and men should not be allowed to use violence against their wives. Women should be more evenly represented in policymaking positions, according to this study and many others. Though some people may challenge such convictions, most people have embraced them as principles of common sense. Nevertheless, these values have long become the expectations of feminism. Although, liberal feminism has no explicitly established collection of ideologies, which renders abstract their beliefs. They value the individualist approaches to justice and societal structures, rather than blaming patriarchal gender relations for inequalities.

However, liberal feminists contend that culture retains the misguided assumption that women are by definition less mentally and physically intelligent than men; therefore, the culture continues to discriminate against women in all walks of life. Liberal feminists claim that female subordination is embedded in a series of normative and legal restrictions that obstruct women's incorporation into the so-called public sphere, and their progress (Azizah & Fitri, 2020; McCloskey, 2019). Perhaps, this study supports the argument that aims for gender equity by political and legal change. The premise that drives this study to improve the fair representation

of women in South African foreign policy decision-making is based on this line of argument. Thus, in reconciling the under-representation of women at DIRCO, the contribution of women will not only be heard but also provide a fair representation of the gender that has the highest number in the South African population.

2.1.3 Women's participation in politics and leadership in South Africa

The UN Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 gave recognition to women empowerment thus, placing it as one of the basic and significant requirements for the establishment of any good democratic government across the globe. The Beijing Conference became a platform to take action through a body established at the conference known as Beijing Platform for Action (Esquivel & Enríquez 2020; Padovani, 2016). This debated on an empowerment plan of action for women into the 21st century. This meeting was seen as a landmark in women's empowerment, but there is not much evidence today to show that the recommendations of the Conference were fully implemented especially in the developing nations where challenges of under-development, and representation of women in participation on decision-making is needed the most (Haastrup, 2020). This indicates that there is a myriad of factors that can be attributed to the under-representation of women in the participation of key decision-makers, such as political leadership, patriarchy and governance (Kanyongolo, 2020). Thus, these factors are scanty, disjointed and asymmetrical in the current body of literature concerning the body of knowledge, while the current published scholarly works look at the problem under investigation from different angles.

However, women in political participation in South Africa have received little concern, as a limited number of women serve as key decision-makers in different political structures. When women are shut out, Haastrup (2020) and Kamenou (2019) emphasize that, this does not only imply discrimination, but also undermines judgment since the reasons for such judgments have not been addressed. Perhaps, the question of patriarchal society and toxic masculinity in the application of South African foreign policy indicates that this approach is not adequately equitable to involve women in decision-making (Haastrup, 2020). Since the dawn of democracy, the South Africa's establishment has pursued responsible foreign policy. This foreign policy perspective reflects on the African continent and contains a variety of articulations on social justice principles. Many nations have found social inequality essential to their foreign policy over the last decade. Whether expressed as a female foreign policy or not, this is viewed as a proposal toward a radical and responsible foreign policy.

Nonetheless, the participation of South African women in the struggle for independence can be seen in their attempts to persuade the few whites in authority in the 1950s to repeal the pass legislation, which enslaved the black majority and color people by imposing 'pass law' on them (Petersen & Matheson, 2020 & Pinnock, 2010). This resulted in the popular 1956 protest, in which hundreds of women marched to the president's office in Pretoria, pushing for the repeal of such legislation. Women's Day is observed on the 9th of August in South Africa as a result of this remarkable act of the women. Thus, taking into account the historical record of South Africa, it becomes impossible to exclude the participation of women in the successful and effective governance of South Africa.

Although the present leadership of President Cyril Ramaphosa has shown concern towards the inclusion of women in the leadership and policy decision-making positions, more equitable representation is still yet to be addressed, as the majority of the executive and policy decision-making members are men. Therefore, South Africa cannot be viewed as merely a possible beneficiary of pro-gender equity and justice foreign policies but as part of the story of this form of foreign policy. However, South Africa's current foreign policy status and goals cannot be isolated from the history of its transformation from the repression of apartheid to the creation of a new, multi-racial democracy. Thus, the lack of knowledge in certain sources with pro-gender or feminine foreign policy activities limits the likelihood of systematic information of female participation in South African foreign policy decision-making. Hence, there is an acute awareness of the need to address these socially constructed inequalities, which has given rise to the work of the Commission on Gender Equality in South Africa.

2.1.4 The meaning of women's participation

Women's involvement is defined as a process and a result of women's participation in political and economic institutions such as bureaucracies, policy-making bodies, and representative groups (Grabe, 2015). Over the last two decades, the majority of Africa's post-colonial governance institutions have made steps to reduce "leadership inequality." To overcome the gap in decision-making organs, numerous solutions have been implemented during the 1990s, including quotas in decision-making bodies, guidelines, policies, and international agreements. Nonetheless, men continue to have a monopoly on the decision-making organs. Given the modest rate of increase in the number of women in positions of power in politics and business.

Women's participation and equitable leadership chances are now universally regarded as important and inseparable aspects of any long-term strategy for economic growth and pro-poor

development in Africa. A number of stakeholders have suggested that women in leadership positions would make a significant impact in country governance, and that women have special abilities and unique experiences to bring to these processes (Meena, 2009; TGNP, 2005; Grabe, 2015; Yoon, 2013). Female executives are also seen as more honest and ethical by employees than male executives.

Women have a fundamental right to participate in all political decision-making, including peace processes at all levels. Including women in peace processes adds a broader range of perspectives and enhances the ability of peacemakers to address the concerns of a wider range of stakeholders, which has been proven to lead to more sustainable peace. Yet, women are often underrepresented or excluded from official peace processes. Therefore, mediators need to promote understanding among the conflicting parties of the value of the participation of women (Erika Veberyte, 2015). Table 2.1 presents the women's representation in the democratic South African Parliament.

Table 2.1: Women representation in the democratic South African Parliament

Parliament of RSA	6th	5th	4 th	3rd	2nd	1st
% of women MPs in NA	46%	40%	43%	33%	30%	27.7%
% of women MPs in NCOP	36%	28%	30%	41%	17%	*

Source: NA & NCOP Table Sections (1994-2020)

Table 2.1 depicts that the representation of women MPs in NA was very poor in the first parliament but started improving till the 6th parliament. However, this needs to be improved until a 50-50 ratio to men representation is achieved. Also, it is observable in Table 2.1 that women MPs in the NCOP is still improving, as there were no women represented in the 1st parliament of RSA, but made up 36% of representation in the 6th parliament.

Table 2.2 presents the participation of women in several offices in 2004, 2009, 2014 and 2019.

Table 2.2 Women's participation in several offices

	2004	2009	2014	2019	Comment
Women MPs	33%	43%	40%	46%	Highest proportion of women in Parliament in 2019.
Women in the NCOP	41%	30%	28%	36%	Proportion of women in the NCOP, need substantial increases moving forward.
Women MPLs	30%	41%	37%	46%	Highest proportion of women in 2019.
Women in cabinet	42%	41%	41%	50%	Highest proportion in 2019, 50% cabinet for the first time
Women deputy ministers	60%	39%	44%	46%	Falls short of the 50% mark.
Women premiers	44%	55%	22%	22%	Dropped from 2004 and 2009, 22% in the last two elections, needs urgent action to achieve the 50% mark.
Women voters	55%	55%	56%	55%	Consistently at around 55%
Women as news sources	22%	24%	25%	20%	Lowest proportion of female sources in the last four elections.

Source: NA & NCOP Table Sections (2004-2019)

Table 2.2 portrays that women in decision-making is minority looking at premiers, and presidential offices, women are not in decision-making portfolios.

2.1.5 The meaning of decision-making

Women are under-represented in positions of power around the world. Gender equality and diversity, on the other hand, are widely acknowledged to have positive benefits on businesses, institutions, and the economy as a whole. Only 59 percent of the global gender gap in economic possibilities has been closed, according to the World Economic Forum in 2016. It will take another 170 years to close it at the current rate of change (Adams, 2015).

When we focus on decision-making roles, the positive effects of gender equality and diversity become much evident. Much of the previous literature has focused on the advantages of diversity: involving both men and women in decision-making broadens perspectives, increases creativity and innovation, diversifies the pool of talents and competences, reduces conflicts, improves decision-making processes, and may better represent the firm's various shareholders. Furthermore, when the leadership is gender balanced, the company's image improves. Women are better able to deal with difficult personal relationships, they pay closer attention to people's needs, they are inclined toward conflict prevention and resolution, they are more willing to share their views with others and make efforts to reach agreements, and they monitor and give feedback more intensively (Ferreira, 2014).

2.1.6 The status of African women in decision-making processes

Many gender equality and women empowerment (GEWE) missionaries, non-governmental organizations, women's groups, and individuals have worked together in various national, international and transnational contexts to bring women and women's interests into government affairs (Devlin & Elgie, 2008) through initiatives aimed at meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Agenda 2030 (Basu, 2018). There was an increase in the visibility of women's involvement in leadership and decision-making in Africa between 1995 and 2005. According to Zubeyr et al. (2013), the implementation of a gender quota system, resulted in an increase in the number of women participating in public decision-making in Mozambique (34.8%), South Africa (32.8%), Tanzania (30.4%), Uganda, Burundi (30.5%), Rwanda (48.8%), Namibia (26.9%), and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Rwanda, for example, has the highest percentage of female parliamentary representation in the world (48.8%). In 2006, women's organizations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo successfully convinced the government to put the idea of 50–50 participation in the Constitution (Sow, 2012). The government of Burundi incorporated a quota for 30 percent female participation in the 2005 constitution and the electoral code in 2009 (Sow, 2012). Priority funding was given to political parties with a large female representation in Mali, Niger, and Cape Verde, ensuring the nomination of at least 10% female candidates for elected or appointed positions (Boakye Yiadom and Musa, 2010; Krook, 2015). Gender quotas, a system of reserved seats, were used to elect some female MPs in Sub-Saharan Africa (Yoon, 2001).

Despite these efforts and successes in some African countries, there are still significant differences in the degree of women's visibility in decision-making across the continent, ranging from 5% in Egypt to over 40% in South Africa (Yoon, 2001; Kunovich & Paxton, 2005). In countries like Ghana, Bawa and Sanyare (2013) found a persistent drop in women's participation in public life and politics. Gender insensitive ideas, which designate the private domestic realm as the feminine domain and the public and political sphere as the male territory, are most likely to blame for this deterioration (Geisler, 1995).

2.1.7 Post-election women's representation in the South African parliament

Women gained 23 seats across all parties in the 2019 elections. The present composition of the National Assembly shows that women account for 46% of the total membership. This represents an increase of 11% over the previous parliament. The growth in women in the national assembly to 45 percent is a significant result considering that women made up only

2.7 percent of parliament prior to 1994 and 27 percent in 1994. This is partly owing to the Economic Freedom Fighter's 4.46-percentage-point surge in popularity (EFF). The ANC lost more seats, but still holds the majority with 213 MPs, 119 of which are held by women. The formal opposition, the Democratic Alliance, was reduced from 89 to 84 seats, with 31 of those seats going to women. The EFF now has 44 seats, with 23 of them being filled by women. South Africa, Rwanda and Ethiopia are among the world's few gender-balanced cabinets with 50%, 61% and 50 % respectively (Sow,2020).

Following the 2019 elections, women's representation in provincial legislatures grew from 30% to 43%. The province of Limpopo has the highest proportion of female legislators, with 53 percent of seats in the legislature held by women, exceeding the SADC parity target. The Western Cape has the lowest gender representation in its legislature, at only 35.7 percent. Given the DA's attitude against women's political engagement, this is unsurprising. (Sow,2020)

Overall, South Africa has made significant progress, and its parliament is undoubtedly one of the most gender-diverse in the world, ranking third in Africa and tenth worldwide. However, in terms of gender equity, it still lags short. At the national and provincial levels, there have been some adjustments and advances, but there are still discrepancies within parties. The DA remains gender-neutral; the ANC may have greatly improved; and the EFF is showing signs of progress. All of the parties considered, however, continue to have a male-dominated top leadership. As a result, greater effort must be given to ensuring women in high leadership positions within political parties. Women's political participation should be encouraged by political parties. This could be accomplished by shifting attitudes and views about women's political participation. A key aspect would be affirmative action attempts to ensure women's representation in high positions in political parties, which have traditionally been held by men. Political parties can unite their efforts in this way to break the current stalemate. (Basu,2019)

2.1.8 Criteria used to appoint diplomats in South Africa

Heads of Mission are appointed by the President in terms of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, Chapter 5, section 84. The Constitution does not prescribe any criteria. The Constitution does not provide for qualifications required. The Department through its Diplomatic Academy runs a 12-week orientation programme for its Heads of Mission-designate. It is a full-time programme, which includes high-level briefings from all the Departmental Business Units including political desks, finance, human resources and planning, and monitoring among others.

The programme takes in strategic briefings from partner departments, which cover all major domestic priority areas and the extensive economic diplomacy agenda, which is done in partnership with the DTI. All major SOEs and relevant Government agencies are also invited to engage with the Heads of Mission-designate. There is also an interface with business advocacy stakeholders and several site visits are undertaken as part of the programme. The orientation programme contains briefings from all nine provinces and their provincial promotion agencies. Every programme undertakes a provincial orientation visit to a province identified by the group, where economic and infrastructure opportunities are visited, including relevant Industrial Development Zones (IDZs).

The Heads of Mission programme also affords the opportunity for the group to interact with experienced senior diplomats, both serving and retired, and tap into their invaluable knowledge on serving South Africa abroad. In the final analysis, the programme is both an exposure to current South African policy priority areas and a refined understanding of the Department's mandate abroad.

In addition, Heads of Mission are supported by well trained staff components from DIRCO who are career diplomats. These officials are specialists in their fields of work closely with Heads of Mission. (DIRCO, 2015). The President is ultimately responsible for South Africa's foreign policy and international relations, according to the 1996 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. As a result, it is the President's authority to select mission heads, receive foreign mission heads, conduct state-to-state contacts, and negotiate and sign all international accords. Non-technical, administrative, or executive international agreements will only bind the country after being approved by Parliament, which also approves the country's ratification or admission to multilateral agreements. For informational purposes, all foreign agreements must be submitted before Parliament. South Africa's foreign policy is formulated, promoted, carried out, and managed by the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation. (2020 Official Guide to South Africa)

2.1.9 Extent of women's participation in decision-making in South Africa

Women's participation in decision-making in South Africa is very low, and women in key positions, from municipal to national government, are outnumbered by men. Young women and women from marginalized groups, in particular, report finding it difficult to participate in or influence policymaking in their nations. Women encounter a number of obstacles that

prevent them from participating in politics and making decisions, including discriminatory political systems, as well as social, economic, and cultural impediments. 2007 (Lovenduski)

Women's engagement in decision-making benefits not only them, but also progress and democracy in general. The Commission on the Status of Women's agreed conclusions on "equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes" state that "the goals of equality, development, and peace cannot be achieved without the active participation of women and the incorporation of women's perspectives at all levels of decision-making, and that women's equal participation is a necessary condition" (Campbell, 2006).

Women's participation advocates provided a range of arguments for why it is vital for women to participate (Broderick, 2012). Women have distinct demands and interests, according to some participants, which are better represented by other women. Others claimed that women have distinct leadership styles and that their consultative and cooperative methods would improve politics. Other speakers emphasized how the lack of women in elected positions affects democracy. A discussion regarding the importance of women participating in decision-making so that they can serve as role models for the next generation of girls and boys was also held. Women's participation was a question of human rights for others. Each of these points is described in more detail below (Lovenduski, 2007).

Women take a different approach to leadership, one that is more consultative or cooperative. "Nations that exclude women from decision-making or are content with low levels of participation by women are not only unwisely and unnecessarily robbing themselves of a rich reservoir of talent, experience, and wisdom, but they are also missing out on the qualitatively different approach that women bring to the decision-making process," Sierra Leone's John Peter Amara said (Wolbrecht, 2021).

2.2 Women participation in politics: an overview

Assessing the participation of women in the development of South African foreign policy suggests that the government has struggled to challenge and eradicate all aspects of gender inequality and marginalization. According to Akala (2018), women's participation at the local and global level is limited, as women are deprived of the capacity to engage in political practices such as decision-making and governing by political parties, as women's leadership and political involvement are constrained. Historically, the traditional culture of patriarchy and male domination has been a global problem that transcends the socio-political and economic dimensions of the liberal democratic states. In the 21st century, the absence of women's

inclusion and the poor representation of women in leadership positions and decision-making remain obstacles to political participation and sustainable development (Grillos, 2018; Place & Vardeman-Winter, 2018). In addition, this issue has gradually evolved into a modern conceptual change in the foreign policy agenda of the individual countries in the implementation of the growth agenda.

The UN Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 gave recognition to women empowerment, thus placing it as one of the basic and significant requirements for the establishment of any good democratic government across the globe. The Beijing Conference became a platform to take action through a body established at the conference known as the Beijing Platform for Action (BPA). They intended to debate an empowerment plan of action for women into the 21st century. This meeting was seen as a landmark on women's empowerment, but there is not much evidence today to show that the recommendations of the conference were fully implemented, especially in the developing nations, where challenges of underdevelopment, and under-representation of women in participation in decision-making is needed the most. This indicates that there are myriad factors that can be attributed to the question of women's under-representation in the participation of key decision-making, and such factors are political leadership, patriarchy and governance (Place & Vardeman-Winter, 2018). These factors are scanty, disjointed and asymmetrical in the current body of literature concerning the body of knowledge, as the current published scholarly works looked at the problem under investigation from different angles.

It is for this reason that this study symmetrically articulates the phenomenon of women's participation in decision-making in South Africa to address the objectives in three thematic goals of political leadership, patriarchy and governance. The study supports the view of Mageza-Barthel (2019) and Alchin *et al.* (2018), as it explores the phenomenon of power relations as it applies to women's participation in South Africa from three thematic dimensions of women's participation, decision-making, patriarchy and development. In essence, women's political participation has been defined in many ways by different authors. According to Alchin *et al.* (2018) and Place and Vardeman-Winter (2018), women's participation from the local to the global level is minimal, as women are being deprived of chances of taking part in many things such as decision-making and the ruling of political parties as women's leadership and political participation is restricted.

Women's political engagement and representation in Africa is considerably more important today than it was a few decades ago, when many African countries gained independence (EISA 2010). Following that, these countries adopted liberal democracy as their preferred system for gaining and losing power through elections. For a variety of reasons, such involvement and representation spark heated arguments and interest among the region's political parties, civil society organizations, and women's organizations. For starters, women's access to franchise rights has sparked heated debates around the world, as such rights have only recently been granted, and some countries are still struggling to grant women full franchise rights despite mounting international pressure from women's and human rights organizations

Second, excluding women from the franchise violates the CEDAW, the International Convention on Human Rights, the African Human Rights Charter, the 2008 SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance (ACDEG 2007), all of which promote equal participation for women in Africa's democratization. Third, given Africa's recent democratization trajectory, countries where women lack the full franchise and basic human rights, despite numerous international agreements on gender equality, are becoming increasingly unsettling to nearly the whole globe. Third, given Africa's recent democratization trajectory, countries where women lack the full franchise and basic human rights, despite numerous international agreements on gender equality, are becoming increasingly unsettling to nearly the whole globe.

Fourth, while women joined men in liberation, anti-colonialist, and anti-apartheid battles in many SADC nations, particularly in Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania, and South Africa, the patriarchal structure of various liberation and nationalist organizations impeded gender equality (Hassim 2006:98; Geisler 2004:69). Analysts contend that there is still a lot we don't know about what happened in the trenches in South Africa (liberation war camps). As a result, the role of women in the struggle for independence in South Africa can be seen in their attempts to persuade the few whites in authority in the 1950s to repeal the pass legislation, which forced the black majority and color people into servitude by imposing a 'pass law' on them (Pinnock, 2010).

This resulted in the popular 1958 demonstration, in which hundreds of women marched to the president's office in Pretoria, pushing for the repeal of such laws. Women's Day is observed on the 9th of August in South Africa as a result of this remarkable act of the women.

Furthermore, as early as the 1900s in South Africa, women (particularly Black African women) challenged the state by resisting what they saw as undemocratic and repressive tendencies, which included, among other things, the denial of their franchise rights under the pass law system (Petersen & Matheson, 2020). They directly questioned the apartheid system on multiple occasions, such as in 1956 at the Women's March to Pretoria, which was held to oppose the passing of laws at a time when black women did not have the right to vote. Issues of social and traditional practices, on the other hand, appear to have a meaningful impact on women's capacity, preparation, and efforts in sociopolitical and managerial endeavors (Pinnock, 2010). Following the African leadership debates, numerous traditional behaviors are harmful to women's self-worth and self-image, both of which are necessary components for self-confidence if all genders are to actively participate in politics (Mageza-Barthel, 2019; Alchin et al. 2018).

According to Penceliah (2011), the lack of women in leadership posts in South Africa and around the world may be related to gender-based social institutions that inhibit women from recognizing their own leadership potential. She went on to say that, despite some progress in terms of women's empowerment, there is still a long way to go in terms of increasing women's representation in decision-making roles. Despite the fact that there have been various movements in place and different national attention to the issue of equal rights, (Moraga & Anzalda, 2015) argue that the question of why women are still struggling to break through a gender gap that undermines women's upward mobility in the political arena remains a source of debate for many researchers.

2.3 The structure of South African foreign policy

The transition process of South African foreign policy started before the 1994 election, amidst the constitutional negotiations to restore democracy to South Africa. The foundations of its foreign policy were: human rights; respect for justice and international law; promoting African interests; and regional economic collaboration. During this period of transition into a democratic nation, Landsberg (2012) and Elizabeth (2008) emphasized that Department of foreign affairs, formulated a sub-council, concerning foreign policy to liaise, monitor, make recommendations and assist towards achieving the following

- a. Increasingly achieving the largest possible consensus on matters concerning the foreign interests of South Africa especially the long-term goals;

- b. Acquiring suitable agreements with the global community on the contribution that the group will make to South Africa's peaceful transition towards democracy;
- c. Ensuring that any foreign policy initiative benefits the country holistically, and not one political group or another;
- d. Securing such foreign assistance as the Sub-Council deems necessary, in collaboration with the Sub-Council on Finance, to meet the socio-economic needs of the citizens as a whole and not to serve the interests of one political group or another and
- e. Fostering such international relations, including trade, finance, culture and sport, as the Sub-Council believes will benefit the country as a whole.

Consequently, the Sub-Council was actively and effectively involved in the pursuit of South Africa's international relations, with regard not only to policy issues but also to the development of the new Foreign Affairs Department, budgetary matters, senior staff assignments, the opening of new missions abroad and other management issues of medium or long-term significance. However, the present government has continued to operate within the aforementioned goals, which is expected to continually contribute to the growth of treaties between South Africa and other nations. South Africa does not retreat from its constructive foreign policy, especially in Africa, as such ties have the potential to affect its stability and prosperity (Landsberg, 2012). South African foreign policy is also a manifestation of identity politics, which has played a crucial role in the post-apartheid state. Foreign policy has been very influential in helping shape the internal character of the current South African democracy (Amao, 2019; Elizabeth, 2008).

Nevertheless, the literature on the South African foreign policy is full of arguments and counter-arguments as scholar's attempts to reposition post-apartheid South Africa into the new developmental agenda and foreign policy discourse. For instance, they took the time to critique the previous Presidents and administrations for failure to address everything except the critical developmental question of gender parity in foreign policymaking and execution in South Africa. Landsberg (2012) is named as the leading author and father of South African foreign policy who has written widely on this trend, and who sought to conceptualize the topic of national concern under the government of President Jacob Zuma, and attempted to examine the difference between domestically oriented national goals and wider international foreign policy diplomacy.

"Shortly after Zuma was sworn in as President of the Republic of South Africa, a new foreign policy was announced as a beam of national interest to drive the country's foreign policy,"

Landsberg (2012) asserted. He went on to say that "the failure to act as a paradigm of national interest is a weakness that has long characterized South African foreign policy," and that the post-apartheid South African government, from Nelson Mandela to President Thabo Mbeki, has sought to pursue a more progressive foreign policy identity. He harshly criticized Mandela and Mbeki's attempts as a rhetoric that struggled to pinpoint the national interest on a local level and failed to match domestic concerns with foreign affairs.

However, after President Cyril Ramaphosa secured his position as the president of South Africa, he ordered a review of South African foreign policy, with a major focus on a renewed pivot towards Africa as a continent. As of 2020, South Africa took over as Chair of the African Union (AU) and stated that the African Renaissance would be the guiding force of its term in that role. Specific emphasis should be given to reinforcing the regional economic communities (Recs); the Pan-African Parliament (PAP), the Pan-African Women's Organization (PAWO) and programmes such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). To this end, it is still clear that, although the current South African Foreign Minister is a woman who owns responsibility for state foreign policy and relations, a fair representation of women in her directorate remains a concern, as limited information on the gender distribution of South African foreign policymakers still exist in previous literatures. Hence, the identified challenges of women's participation in South African foreign policy decision-making are detailed in the section below.

2.4 Challenges of women's participation in South African foreign policy decision-making

The research on women and politics discusses how participation is performed in the political space; it also focuses more on the effect that it has on gender equity. As the current South African Constitution promotes fair treatment of women without sexism in the socio-political system, it is noticeable from the numbers of officeholders in DIRCO, that the country is still struggling to engage a good percentage of women in foreign policy structures of South Africa (DIRCO, 2020). This practice confirms the view postulated by Petersen and Matheson (2020) and Thompson (2002) who argue that this kind of system is the bedrock of patriarchy, in which the male gender holds the power and leadership in society and women are excluded from it. Indeed, this system patriarchy is a social construction and "the source of the oppression of women in the 21st century in Africa". As such, the factors of patriarchy and colonialism work in a dialectical relationship and are interwoven to entrench the oppression of African women.

Meanwhile, Musavengane and Leonard (2019) and Thompson (2002) posit that the exclusion of women from governance is a major feature of traditional societies, a system of social stratification and differentiation based on sex, which provides material advantages to males, while simultaneously placing severe constraints on the roles and activities of females. Perhaps, the political participation and representation of women in Africa matters much more today than it did a few decades ago, when many African countries attained political independence (EISA 2010). Ban Ki-Moon (2015) in his terms, also supported targeted efforts for women's participation in world leadership as a prerequisite to reach the most vulnerable groups. According to Isike and Ogunnubi (2017) and Qobo and Nyathi (2016), the role of peacemaker and broker in Africa and defender of Africa's interests abroad has been a central feature of South Africa's foreign policy throughout the last decade. There is no question that researchers who have written on South African foreign policy in post-colonial and post-apartheid democratic environments, including many academics around boundaries, have concentrated primarily on core abstract topics and problems relevant to foreign policy administration and mechanisms such as national security, diplomacy and multilateralism.

However, the issue of the position of women in foreign policy decision-making has drawn less attention in the minds of previous scholars. Therefore, this structural imbalance in the participation of women in South African foreign policy decision-making also needs to be hammered into the minds of male-dominated democratic institutions in governance and leadership spheres. Perhaps, true democracy cannot thrive until more than half of the South African population participates in it. Thus, there is a disparity in literature because less focus has been put on women's involvement in foreign policy development, cooperation, national security, diplomacy and multilateralism in South Africa's foreign policy decision-making. Hence, a conceptual detail of the challenges of women's participation in South African Foreign Policy decision-making as revealed from previous literatures is provided below.

2.4.1 Customs and Laws

Biased laws and customs continue to hamper effective women's participation in South African foreign policy decision-making. The custom and laws of many societies in recent times are one-sided by enslaving women to men thus, underrating their confidence (Krook, 2020; Tlaiss & Kauser, 2019). The general effect of sexual orientation predisposition, social standards and practices has rooted a feeling of mediocrity in women thus, disadvantaging them in the socio-political scene compared to their male counterparts. These communally established norms and conventional roles compel women to underrate their roles as women by admitting

nomenclature such as the 'weaker sex', and coerce them into believing that they cannot achieve such exceptional success as men.

Most traditions, for example, educate male children rather than female children, who are expected to stay at home and care for the family's domestic requirements before being married. This form of unequal social order enhances women's illiteracy and reinforces their notions of their inability to compete politically and in life in general. Due to time constraints, women in South Africa have a tough time participating in politics (Asongu et al., 2020; Plagerson et al., 2019). Thus, because of the complexity of their various positions in the environmental and parental realms, as mothers and spouses combined with household duties and caring work, their time is short to give to those incentives and active political involvement.

2.4.2 Religious practices

Religious practices obstruct women's participation in politics. By-laws, norms, and religious ideals that have been crafted to legitimize male supremacy and the relegation of women to the periphery of political discursive practices and engagements have a negative impact on women (Robinson & Gottlieb, 2019). Despite the fact that the South African Constitution guarantees everyone the right to religious and political equality, research demonstrates that these rights are only opinions. In a true sense, many women's lives are governed by customary and Sharia laws. Some Islamic ideologies, for example, forbid women from actively participating in political activities, association, or making public speeches, effectively obstructing their political goals. Cultural immobility limits many women's options. In Muslim countries, sex segregation and the purdah system are utilized together.

In order to boost their political chances, women must be given the same opportunity as men to actively participate in politics and be reasonably exposed to the necessary rudiments of politics. As a result of the restrictions imposed by religious customs, women in South Africa are excluded from political engagement. However, as a result of this problem, women's representation in South African foreign policy decision-making is reduced.

2.4.3 Financial constraints

Women's economic condition has a significant impact on their ability to participate in political decision-making. Politics is gradually becoming a costly endeavor. In recent years, a large sum of money has been required before a candidate can participate in politics. Many women in today's society do not own or have access to productive resources (Kumar et al., 2019; Nassani et al., 2019). As a result, this limits the extent of their political participation. As a result, having

access to resources affects their connection and influences their participation in other political organizations and constituent bodies such as the Senate, National Assembly, and others.

Women's long history of discrimination continues to put them at a disadvantage financially. Men had more financial muscle to achieve their political goals because of persistent gender inequality (Nassani et al., 2019). Most women lack the financial means to pursue their political goals because they must rely completely on their male partners for financial assistance; and most sponsors prefer to fund male politicians since they are regarded to be more successful in politics than their female counterparts (Hasunuma, 2019). Because women lack access to resources and cash, it is impossible for them to compete and run successful political campaigns, which are exceedingly costly. In a strict sense, this bias against women's right to access to means of production contributes to women's poor participation in governance and politics (Kumar et al., 2019; Nassani et al., 2019).

Women, particularly in rural communities, are faced with a high level of poverty, and this serves as one of the biggest obstacles in their political aspirations. According to the Census Report, there is a wide economic gap between women in urban and rural communities in South Africa. In addition, the economic opportunities of the majority of women residing in rural areas are disproportionate to those of their peers living in urban areas. This is a big obstacle for them to contend reasonably with men at the national or provincial elective political level (Greyling & Rossouw, 2019).

Empowering women economically facilitates ownership of resources (Greyling & Rossouw, 2019). Financial resources are an important component in election processes especially during planning for campaign, meetings, publicity and payment of nomination fees by political parties. When women are politically empowered, they are enhanced to take up key political positions where policy decisions in the Executive and Legislative arm of government are taken (Hasunuma, 2019). In addition, empowering women economically, as well as providing them with access to education and information, helps them to overcome household challenges impeding them from full involvement in politics and political elections.

Many African women do not have the financial means to fully engage in decision-making. According to Hasunuma (2019), women frequently lack the financial means necessary to fully engage in leadership and decision-making. Women in underdeveloped nations have less time and few resources for political engagement due to the circumstances of capitalism market interactions.

2.4.4 Political impediments

Political structures continue to hinder women from playing a significant role in politics. The observations below are common among the political challenges women are faced with:

- a. Politics in most African countries has continuously been linked with maleness thus "a men-only affair"
- b. Men dominate the majority of the political parties, therefore, making it challenging for women to have political positions;
- c. Most public establishments such as Labor unions are equally dominated and controlled by men;
- d. Lack of women's orientation towards political activities and their training is not shaped for political leadership representation and
- e. Electoral politics is most times disposed to conflict and as a result, women are scared away from getting involved in politics.

Electoral violence is another barrier that prevents women from participating in politics (Mlambo et al., 2019). Women in most African societies are viewed as the "weaker sex," and as a result, they frequently become potential targets when political violence erupts (Burchard, 2020; Mlambo et al., 2019). During campaigns, male politicians are more prone to promote hooliganism and political violence than female politicians. Assaults on female applicants and their families are common, prompting many other potential female candidates to drop out of politics altogether.

As a result, women's lack of interest in political organizations cannot be blamed on their male legislators' lack of political liberality in incorporating women into political administration assemblies. When women's demands are ignored, it leads to a rise in infant and child mortality, poor economic development, and low rural yields, all of which have a negative impact on women's personal happiness. Women's engagement in crucial leadership positions is also a significant step toward ending inequity and widening pay disparities between men and women.

2.4.5 Women's perceptions of politics

Another issue contributing to women's underrepresentation in foreign policy decision-making in South Africa is their political viewpoint. Women have a bad perception of politics and political activities, which prevents them from becoming interested in government matters (Baba et al., 2020). The majority of women regard politics as filthy, and the savagery that characterizes African politics has kept them a long way from political participation.

Women also appear to be individual architects of their political development and empowerment, in particular when they hold on to these long-outdated assumptions and opinions that politics is a dirty game and consequently, a game made for the men (Hadzic & Tavits, 2019). A long-held perception against women has tended to work against women's liberation and gender equality. Thus, politically dynamic women are tagged as “reckless” and along this line not fit for marriage or “wife material” since they are regarded as being “too free”. Indeed, in most African cultures, men are socialized to be strong, courageous, autocratic, dominant and autonomous, while women are categorized as sensitive, romantic and fragile (Hadzic & Tavits, 2019). Stereotypes are more often than not negative and have been utilized to relegate women from in basic decision-making associated with leadership.

2.4.6 Family work and time constraints

The unequal distribution of family care and domestic responsibilities suggests that women spend more time than their male counterparts having children and caring for their children and houses. The cost of motherhood includes not only the time, effort, and medical care of pregnancy and childbirth, but also the deeper maternal commitment required for nursing and the unrelenting inclination of women to immerse themselves heavily in childcare as their children develop, according to reports (Adisa et al., 2019). Being a part of childcare, whether male or female, takes time and presents a difficulty of navigating and negotiating between family duties and a political position. This is due to the fact that work is rarely distributed equally between men and women. As a result, women are increasingly disadvantaged in this regard than men, which frequently results in their incapacity to fully participate in politics as a result of various domestic activities limiting their participation effectiveness (Shaw et al., 2019). As a result, despite their families' disapproval, men are more likely to run for political office, whereas women with merely supportive families could comfortably run for political office.

2.4.7 Socio-demographic barriers

Age limits, gender conventions, and cultural customs are examples of barriers that prevent women from engaging in decision-making. Nzomo (1997) linked Kenyan women's restricted political participation to the significant duties and burdens associated with a woman's reproductive, home, and productive roles.

2.4.8 Time factors and gender stereotype

According to Kiamba (2008), the time demands of such roles collide with the demands of the family, which is a barrier in and of itself. Gender stereotypes also imply ingrained societal and

systemic gender prejudices, which frequently prohibit women from participating in decision-making processes. The 1992 Gender Affirmative Action Policy, the 1999 Nziramasanga Commission, and the 2004 National Gender Policy, for example, all worked to advance gender equality and eliminate all types of gender-based discrimination in Zimbabwe. Gender stereotypes and a lack of support at home and at work, according to Chabaya et al. (2009), are still some of the key factors of persistent under-representation of women in school leadership and decision-making.

2.4.9 Male resistance

Men's aversion to sharing political authority and decision-making processes with women is a worldwide problem (Schein, 2001). In Africa, there is an urgent need for substantive female representation in decision-making positions, particularly in the formulation of GEWE-related policies and the mainstreaming of gender into existing policies, as well as plans and programs aimed at explicitly advancing the SDGs' gender equality agenda across the continent. In order to achieve gender equality in development, lasting peace, and good governance within African sub-regions, women must have a significant presence as key decision-makers in policy creation.

It's also important to involve women's organizations in decision-making and transformation by partnering with GEWE projects. Women's participation and representation in African decision-making organizations should be about more than just numbers; it should also be about their empowerment for political leadership and accountability at all levels.

State actors must be compelled to build legislative frameworks for the GEWE at the national level. Non-state actors such as trade unions, political parties, interest groups, professional organisations, and the private sector/business should all be active in policymaking. Transnational women's social movements should evolve, as should interaction with the GEWE. Women must influence policies and initiatives aimed at increasing women's access to economic opportunities and effective engagement in politics, in addition to decision-making.

2.5 Structures that could promotes participation of women in politics and South African foreign policy decision-making

This section of the study examines the structures that could promote women' participation in politics and South African foreign policy decision-making. Politics is incorporated into this argument as it provides the gateway that informs the gender representation in South African foreign policy decision-making. Among other structures identified from previous literature,

women's movements and activism, gender quotas, electoral system, political leadership system and women's empowerment was found relevant for this study as detailed below.

2.5.1 Women's movements and activism

According to Brown et al. (2019), women's movements and campaigns around the world stand out as one of the most important factors in the recent adoption of new gender-based politics. These self-organized movements have had a significant impact on the drive for legislative and constitutional reforms that aid in the expansion of women's rights around the world. These movements, on the other hand, are extremely relevant because they are no longer compelled to participate in the hegemony of the main ruling political party's networks, but instead have the freedom to choose their members and set their own aims. Women's groups in Uganda, for example, highlighted a variety of concerns in the early 1990s, ranging from women's political leadership recognition to domestic abuse, rape, gender equality, sex education in the curriculum, female genital mutilation, and corruption (Tripp, 2001).

Women's efforts have been repaid as a result of this struggle by the fact that the new Ugandan Constitution contains a section requiring gender equality to be integrated into any legislation passed by Parliament. A prohibition on laws, rituals, and traditions that delegitimize the position of women was also included in the draft, as was a provision to form a Commission on Equal Opportunity to guarantee that constitutional values are followed and an increase in the number of women representatives.

The National Women's Lobby Group (NWLG) and six other organizations in Zambia were successful in convincing the Constitutional Commission to include sexism, affirmative action, domestic violence, and the UN CEDAW in the proposed Constitutional Article on Women's Rights (Lungu, 2018). As a result, similar movements and powerful efforts have taken place in other parts of Africa and around the world.

It was also highlighted that women from various groups, such as the WNC and the Management Committee of the Congress for Democratic South Africa (CODESA), played a lobbying role in multi-party talks in South Africa during the constitutional deliberations. As a result, if a well-structured women's movement is promoted, there is a better chance of women being represented in South African foreign policy decision-making. This may help not only with women's representation in South African foreign policy, but also with women's equal inclusion in other government systems.

2.5.2 Gender quotas

The quota system establishes a predetermined amount of participation for both genders in order to ensure that decision-making bodies are fairly represented (Barnes & Holman, 2020; Greene et al., 2020). The quota system is an affirmative action tool that ensures that women are represented in decision-making and policy-making bodies. Quotas, as temporary special measures, are aimed to accelerate de facto parity between men and women, according to Article 4 of the CEDAW Protocol, and are not to be viewed as unequal as specified in the present Convention (CEDAW, 1979). Quotas could, however, be established by statutory or legislative mandates and political groups. Tripp and Kang (2008: 339-340) argue in a rigorous and important review that the adoption of quotas sought to account for the existing obstacles to women's participation presented by cultural influence, electoral structures and economic underdevelopment. Thus, since the mid-1990s, many other African countries have introduced gender quotas and quotas serve as the most enlightening catalyst for women's political representation today (Tripp and Kang, 2008:339-340).

However, the quota system could be voluntary or mandatory depending on the choice of the political platform of any nation or organization (Barnes & Holman, 2020; Greene *et al.*, 2020). Many African countries have successfully implemented both voluntary and mandatory quotas in their legal systems and party platforms. Consequently, previous studies emphasized that, women can add their own experiences, viewpoints, skills to politics and that they are much more likely than men to put in place policies relating to abuse against women, wellness, education and childcare (Sotiriadou & de Haan, 2019).

Perhaps, in the case of South Africa, two key factors (electoral and quota system) contributed to the representation of women in parliament in the 1994 election (Boezak, 1999). Indeed, this system informed the number of gender representation in the parliament and it was believed that a fair representation of women was recorded in this regard. Ironically, this electoral and quota system have either favoured the male gender on one hand and different political parties avoid it on the other hand (Groenewald, 2018). Nevertheless, Hassim (2004:335) argues that the improved inclusion of South African women as a gender will not only provide a concurrent representation of the electoral positions of marginalized people but also provide a platform that gives room to hear the voice of South African women. Hence, it is believed that if gender quotas are embraced and encouraged in the political setting of South Africa, a reasonable number of women will have the opportunity to participate in the decision-making of South African foreign policy.

2.5.3 Electoral system

The core of the relationship between political parties, elected officials, and political organizations is said to be determined by electoral systems (Marien et al., 2020). As a result, the country's election system has a significant impact on the proportion of women in political leadership. The two main types of electoral systems are majority or pluralistic and proportional representation (PR). According to statistics, the PR system aids a higher number of women in winning seats in parliament (Nyenhuis, 2020; White, 2019).

In PR systems, voters elect a political party, and seats in parliament are distributed based on the number of national votes received by the political party. The "zebra law" on the party list, according to which the second seat is awarded to a woman, produces the most visible consequences. As the case of South Africa has showed at the national and provincial levels, the PR approach has proven to be the most effective political method for women's representation, notwithstanding low involvement at the local government level (McEwan, 2003). The majoritarian or pluralistic electoral system, on the other hand, provides a platform where seats in parliament are shared among the districts and the candidate who receives the most votes is elected as the representative (Nyenhuis, 2020). Women's chances of becoming elected are slim in this situation. Thus, to promote women's representation in the leadership and decision-making level within the democratic sphere, the electoral system needs to be restructured for fair gender representation.

2.5.4 Political leadership system

Political parties' structures give two platforms in this regard, they can either stimulate or inhibit women's participation. According to Paxton et al. (2020) and Bouka et al. (2019), there is a need to analyze the political party system in order to boost women's access to decision-making positions. Political parties may serve as a gatekeeper to elective posts, and they also play an important role in encouraging women to participate in politics (Haastrup, 2020). Thus, the political leadership structure provides a significant platform for gender representation through candidate recruitment, allowing women to participate in decision-making at both the provincial and national levels. The political party structure, according to Geys and Srensen (2019), influences the composition and list of elective posts, as well as the list of aspiring candidates.

However, if political parties wish to ensure fairness of gender representation, which promotes women's participation in policy decision-making position, it could be done through adopting a fair structural selection and nomination process within the political party system.

Consequently, several strategies exist through which women political participation could be promoted. These strategies include but are not limited to the formation of women's wings within the political parties, provision of training and funding for effective campaigning and creation of platforms for women's participation in party decision-making as well as incentives that promote women in politics. Hence, since political parties are the gate-way in obtaining elective positions in a democratic sphere, which therefore informs the participation of women in foreign policy decision-making, political leadership systems are encouraged to incorporate structures of fair gender representation in decision-making positions.

2.5.5 Women's empowerment

Empowering women means giving them access to and ownership of financial and productive assets that enable them to engage in productive activities as well as participation in formal political spheres and other organizational settings. Thus, to increase the participation of women in South African foreign policy decision-making, women need to be empowered and encouraged within political parties. Empowering women does not only promote their participation in collective actions, but also promotes greater self-efficacy, ability to contribute to decision-making policies, bargaining power, leadership capability, ownership of resources, and financial independence (Lv & Deng, 2019).

However, previous studies focused more on the economic empowerment of women rather than the broader empowerment impacts, which present potentials that promotes not only the capabilities for societal survival qualities but also participation in political and decision-making structures. Hence, to sustain the growth of women's participation in decision-making within the South African democratic spheres, empowerment is key, as it provides women with the confidence to contribute and participate in the growth of democratic activities.

2.6. Research Gap

It is without any doubt that the scholars who wrote on South African foreign policy in the post-colonial and post-apartheid democratic non-sexist society, like other academics beyond the borders closely focused on the key generic issues and questions that relate to foreign policy administration and process such as national interest, diplomacy and multilateralism. However, the question of the role of women's participation in foreign policy decision-making have received limited concern from previous scholars, especially in the South African context. Thus, this developmental lacuna relating to the exclusion of women in the South African foreign

policy decision-making and execution still needs to be drilled into the minds of the male-dominated political society in areas of governance and leadership.

As a result, a research gap is described as an area of research in which there is inadequate information to make a decisive informed judgment (Robinson et al., 2011). While many methods for conducting research exist, there has always been a gap in the literature, which has stimulated ongoing research in the topic. As the field of research expands, major developing challenges draw researchers' attention, requiring them to give appropriate and supporting data for decision-making (Visvanathan et al., 2017; Rowbotham et al., 2016). However, the gap in the literature is that there are currently limited studies that aptly capture or explore the inclusion of women's participation in South African foreign policy decision making. Consequently, this study will fill the gap by adopting the following steps as detailed below:

- a. By critically examining the theoretical framework that informs women's participation in politics and foreign policy decision-making;
- b. By identifying the state and the challenges of women's participation in South African foreign policy decision-making and
- c. By identifying the structures that could promote the participation of women in politics and South African foreign policy decision-making.

2.7 Theoretical framework

The topic of gender equity and women's political participation is not only a question of scholastic concern. It provides multiple viewpoints important for people in both the political and social sphere (Hartlep, 2011). The key point is the issue of universal human freedoms, the fair rights of all and the potential for political influence. Gender is a socially and culturally formed element dictated to function amicably in different social roles. This applies to the natural, cultural and psychological features of males and females by socialization. Thus, gender is a social tool responsible for distribution of roles based on femininity and masculinity (Grillos, 2018; Place & Vardeman-Winter, 2018). However, in the absence of a fair distribution of roles and participation, gender bias and marginalization become inevitable. Thus, to provide a clearer understanding of how women's marginalization is redressed, this study looks at the participation of women as an instrument of restoring equity to correct historical injustices that bring about the deprivation of women's participation in politics and leadership in South Africa.

However, there exist diverse past research on why there are very few women in politics and policymaking positions compared to their male counterparts (Grillos, 2018; Place & Vardeman-Winter, 2018). For the benefit of this study, Intersectionality Theory and Kanter's Theory were chosen as the key theories for examining why there is a disparity in the proportion of women to men in South Africa's foreign policy, given the reality that women are the majority voters in every election in South Africa. The two theories are appropriate as they underpin this study to explain why women lag far behind in political participation as opposed to their male counterparts. In addition, Intersectionality and Kanter's Theory help to break down the presence and functioning of women's associations in the public sphere by contextualizing their activities as part of certain historical events, and therefore propose a means of correcting them. Hence, these two theories, as detailed below, provides this study with a logical foundation and application that will facilitate an in-depth argument and analysis of the concept of women's participation in South African foreign policy decision-making.

2.7.1 Intersectionality Theory

Intersectionality is a theoretical framework that helps in exploring how aspects of one's social and political identity (gender, race, class, sexuality, ability, etc.) may interact to establish specific modes of discrimination. It seeks to expand the goals of the first movements of feminism, which centered primarily on the perspectives of middle-class women. The broad agenda ensures that intersectionality is used to identify mixtures of injustices that members of society experience (Thompson, 2002:339). Besides, Intersectionality Theory seeks to transform women by removing all legal constraint on the freedom of women to behave as free individuals in the community, in the face of economic and social pressure as a final step toward a more ideal society (Mueni, 2014:22-27). This development means reconsidering the history and the potential in which people are treated as successful drivers of change.

In essence, Intersectionality Theory was introduced in 1989 by Professor Kimberle Crenshaw to explain how race, gender, and other human attributes are of common concern, and overlap. Accordingly, the purpose of intersectionality as a theory is to examine how different identity categories affect individuals and institutions, and take into consideration such interactions while seeking to achieve social and political equality. Intersectionality theory has seen an uptick of inequality across the globe, but other variables affecting women's involvement of decision-making are sexism, policy, employment, faith, history, wealth, and so on. Intersectionality acknowledges that people may face prejudice based on intersectional identities. In addition, this theoretical framework would help to address the first and third

research objectives, which are to determine the level of women's participation and decision-making in South Africa foreign policy and to recognize reasons that prevent women from participating in decision-making in South Africa.

2.7.1.1 Application and assumptions of Intersectionality Theory to the study

Nevertheless, in applying this theory to the focus of this study, stakeholders and present leadership in South African politics should adhere to the fair distribution of roles among gender. Thus, this process will help in the holistic inclusion of women in decision-making positions, as well as eliminating all form of constraints on the freedom of women in politics and leadership in South Africa, with a major focus on foreign policy decision-making. This theory was selected to offer a rational evaluation of the course that this study would take, as it applies to the sense of the integrated structure of decision-making positions in South African foreign policy which removed women from these key roles. Perhaps, Intersectionality is a valuable form of thought in social research that offers, through reflective contemplation, an empirical method capable of identifying complex power dynamics that inequality is a form that is responsive to disparities and exploitation inside and between classes (Fixmer-Oraiz & Wood, 2015:59-60). Hence, it is expected that in adopting the dynamic of this theory, the South African foreign policy will experience a coherent integration of both genders in decision-making. In highlighting the complexities frequently ignored by previous scholars surrounding women's participation in policymaking, Intersectionality Theory is aligned to the following main assumptions:

a) Interlocking Matrix of Oppression

Social intersections of inequality have been defined as the matrix of dominance and the vector of oppression and privilege (Ritzer & Stepinisky, 2013:204-207). This assumption of intersectionality theory applies to how disparities between individuals (sexual identity, gender, colour, age, etc.) act as patriarchal mechanisms for women and alter the perception of living as a woman in society. Consequently, the case of male domination in foreign policy decision-making in South Africa has become a paradigm with obvious disparities synonymous with gender discrimination, rather than personal ability acknowledgement.

b) Standpoint Epistemology and the outsider within

Standpoint is the unique perspective of an individual's world. It is an Intersectionality Theory assumption that perceives that societal information is located within a specific geographical location of a person's knowledge, which is special and subjective; it differs based on the social

circumstances under which it has been created (Mann & Kelley, 1997:340). The assumption of the outsider within, though, applies to a specific perspective that includes self, culture, and community. This relates to the unique interactions that people are exposed to when they transition from a traditional cultural context (i.e., family) to that of contemporary culture (Collins, 1986:17-20). Thus, even though a woman, particularly a black woman, may become prominent in a specific field, she may feel as if she does not belong to her family. Similarly, the capability of women in South Africa as it concerns foreign policy decision-making has not received the recognition it deserves. Their attitudes, actions and cultural nature outweigh their worth as an individual; therefore, they are outsiders within themselves.

c) Resisting oppression

According to Collins (1986:19), dominance of gender always involves the objectivity of the dominated. As such, all forms of oppression imply the devaluation of the subjectivity of the oppressed. However, this statement suggests that self-assessment and self-definition are two forms of overcoming oppression. To this end, to combat the role of male domination in South African foreign policy decision-making, South African women need to reassess and redefine their capacity to face the obstacles that have undermined their recognition. Perhaps, self-assessment and self-definition will help in preparing and positioning South African women to oppose the assumed devaluation of womankind in leadership especially in African foreign policy decision-making.

2.7.2 Kanter's Theory

Woman's rights as a social development goes back to the sixteenth century. The movement started as a resistance to women's oppression in their workplaces and denial of rights to suffrage. Kanter's theory perceives the marginalization of women and along these lines seeks to go about as a shield against such marginalization (Suhermin, 2019). Kanter's theory of structural empowerment focuses on the structures within the organization rather than the individual's qualities (Suhermin, 2019; Chambliss & Uggen, 2000). In addition, the theory believes that a leader's power will grow by sharing that power through empowering others, and as a result, leaders will realize increased organizational performance. The theory in this way recognizes avenues, for example, associations that empower women to play an active role in the process of change in the society. The variance in terms of taking part in political activities between men and women is molded by the social environment rather than being normal. The emphasis here is therefore on the potential similarities between the genders instead of the

differences. In essence, the accentuation is towards ending the male partiality and domination (Fiske, 2010).

2.7.2.1 Application and assumption of Kanter's Theory to the study

This theory assumes that the power of the leader will grow successfully by empowering others and, as such, the leaders can achieve optimum organizational efficiency. Perhaps the question is how much the leaders in South Africa empower others, especially women, in foreign policy matters. To this end, the assumption of Kanter's theory acknowledges six conditions of empowerment in an organization, which include

- a. Opportunity for advancement refers to the possibility for growth and movement within the organization as well as the opportunity to increase knowledge and skills (Laschinger *et al.*, 2001).
- b. Access to information, refers to having the formal and informal knowledge that is necessary to be effective in the work place (Wagner *et al.*, 2010).
- c. Access to support, involves receiving feedback and guidance from subordinates, peers' supervisors, and not to be undermined in handling some projects because of being a woman (Krebs, 2008).
- d. Access to resources, refers to one's ability to acquire the financial means, materials, time and supplies required to do the work (Ravazzolo, 2009)
- e. Formal Power is that which accompanies high visibility jobs and requires a primary focus on independent decision-making. (Wagner *et al.*, 2010).
- f. Informal Power comes from building relationships and alliances with peers and colleagues (Wagner *et al.*, 2010).

Many organizational behaviorists have focused their research and their studies on these six factors. The foundation of institutional dominance and intellectual strength stems from the work of Kanter in the 1970s. Furthermore, Kanter posits that with tools, information, and support, people's skill base will improve, they will increasingly make informed decisions and overall accomplish more, thereby benefiting the organization as a whole (Suhermin, 2019). To this end, this study argues in support of this theory, which promote the growth of power sharing between genders for a holistic advancement of organizational performance. Hence, applying this theory to the context of this study, the stakeholders in DIRCO should initiate an inclusive

structure that will accommodate both genders in decision-making participation. By so doing, the participation of South African women in foreign decision-making will increase.

The two theories are useful for illuminating this study because they help to explain why women lag substantially behind their male counterparts in foreign policy decision-making. Furthermore, it dissects the presence and operation of women's organizations in the public sphere, placing their actions in the context of certain historical events and, as a result, proposing a remedy (Suhermin, 2019). The study focuses at women's involvement as an instrument of restoring equity to remove historical injustices that lead to women's marginalization in order to gain a complete understanding of how women's marginalization is addressed (Walker, 2015). The study focuses at how women may deal with marginalization and find a solution to end the injustices that are placed on them as a result of the way society is constituted in this light (Connell, 2020). By emphasizing consciousness over action, Kanter's perspective reconsiders the past with a possible solution, an arrangement based on views of a male-dominated society, implying a transformation guided by social context rather than natural phenomena.

2.8 Chapter summary

In this study, it is the researchers' observation that the South African liberal democracy is increasingly struggling to move away from the historical traditional status-quo of patriarchy, to a more inclusive constitutional democracy. Thus, this chapter has succeeded in providing two theories (intersectionality and Kanter's theory) as they underpin this study. Existing literature regarding the women's participation in South African foreign policy decision-making was analyzed, and the factors that pose challenges to women's participation in South African foreign policy decision-making. Finally, the structures that could promote the participation of women in South African politics and foreign policy decision-making was provided. The next chapter provides the research methodology used for the empirical phase of the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Chapter three is based on research Methodology and it outlines how the researcher collected data and analyzed it through employing research methods and tools. This chapter outlines the procedure that the researcher followed. The chapter begins by providing what research methodology is and the type of research to be employed. Data collection methods was presented followed by data analysis method, limitations and ethical considerations. The chapter ends with a chapter summary

3.2 Research approach

The exploratory qualitative research method has been selected in this study for its strength of collecting the deep meaning and information from the natural setting of the phenomena of women's participation in South Africa's foreign policy decision-making and execution. As cited in Marshall and Rossman (2016:2-3), it is argued, "qualitative approach is an evolving approach to the study of social phenomena, that takes place in the natural world, that is fundamentally interpretive". Similarly, Creswell (2014) cited in Gerber *et al.* (2017: 4) writes that qualitative research is an established form of enquiry that explores people's experiences in their natural setting.

In this case the researcher seeks to assess the context or setting of the participants through mix of communication options, and gathering information personally interpreting what they find as informed by their experiences. That is, constructivists hold the assumptions that individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work, and these meanings are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views, rather than narrowing meaning into a few categories or ideas. In addition, Ardalan (2011:34) posits "the interpretive paradigm sees the social world as a process which is created by individuals, and is concerned with understanding the world as it is, and that social reality is the result of the subjective interpretations of individuals".

Moreover, this philosophy is principled on the goal of the research as relying on the research participant's views of the situation being studied. The research questions become broad and general so that the participants can construct the meaning of a situation typically forged in discussions or interactions with other persons. The more open-ended the questions, the better as the researcher listens carefully to what people say or do in their life setting. Thus,

constructivist researchers focus on the specific contexts in which the people live and work in order to understand the views and experiences of the participant. This study was informed by the research philosophy of constructivism in order to explore the extent of women's participation in South Africa's foreign policy decision-making and execution. This research philosophy is preferred for its relevance of data, which was collected from a natural setting from the respondents in DIRCO. That is, in the process of information gathering, the researcher asked unstructured open-ended questions of the research participants and construct meaning from the discussions and interactions in the natural environment of the respondents in order to interpret the meaning about their world.

3.3 Research design

Myers (2013:19) posits "The main purpose of the research design is to provide a road map of the whole research project. It should include clear guidelines and procedures with regard to what you intend to do in a research proposal". However, Creswell and Poth (2018:49) argue that "research design means the plan for conducting the study. There is no agreed upon structure for how to design a qualitative study, although the books on qualitative research vary in their suggestions for design, the process is very much shaped by the particular method adopted by the researcher". Marshall and Rossman (2016:19) hold that case studies are widely used among qualitative researchers because of the focus on intensity and depth, as well as exploring the interaction between the case and the unit of analysis and also setting boundaries around the case.

The exploratory research design has been selected for its suitability, as the researcher explored the in-depth subjective views of the research participants from a natural environment of the study.

3.4 Population and research setting

The population of the study consists of all women in the South African diplomatic mission, particularly in the Department of International Relations and Co-operation. South Africa occupies the southernmost tip of Africa with its long coastline stretching more than 3 000 km, from the desert border with Namibia on the Atlantic coast southwards around the tip of Africa, and then north to the border of subtropical Mozambique on the Indian Ocean. According to Stats SA (2021), the current population of South Africa is 60,276,365, accessed on 18 October, 2021.

South Africa is a constitutional democracy. Since the end of apartheid in 1994, it has been regarded globally as a proponent of human rights and a leader on the African continent. The president is a head of state and the highest in decision making (SALO, 2017)

3.5 Sampling

Sampling is a data collection procedure whereby the researcher represents a population by selecting individuals or units that are to be studied. it is thus defined as “the selection of some part of an aggregate totality on the basis of which judgment or inference about the aggregate or totality is made; the process of obtaining information about an entire population by examining only a part of it” (Creswell, 2014).

3.5.1 Sampling approach

This study adopted a non-probability sampling method, which is an interpretivist research method, which does not emphasize on the representative nature of the sample. Non-probability sampling is a sampling approach in which the individual members of the population do not have an equal or known likelihood of being selected to be a member of the sample” (Jackson, 2015:121). This approach is preferred for its relevance to a study of this nature, as it does not put emphasis on the number of the sample research participants to be representative, and the study’s results in this approach are not generalizable to the entire population.

Non-probability sampling is very costly but it is time-effective. However, it is also very easy to use when the research or study seems impossible to conduct for example, when you have a small number of people or population to work with. The disadvantage therefore is that it is impossible to know how well you are representing the population, as most of the time it is a challenge to know the number of people you are working with, the population changes almost every day so there is no constant number to focus on.

3.5.2 Sampling technique

According to Waller (2016: 62), “sampling is the process of selecting participants, cases and locations for your study. Your sampling strategy is intimately related to the goals of your research and paradigm within which it is operating”. Deciding where and with whom to conduct your study has important consequences.

One form of non-probability sampling is convenience sampling. It is a sampling technique in which research subjects are obtained wherever it is convenient for the researcher. Basically, it is the purposeful selection of participants who can best help understand the phenomenon under investigation. The researcher applied the convenience sampling technique, because the few

research participants to be included in the study are conveniently accessible and located in South Africa, at the Department of International Relations and Cooperation in Pretoria. The rationale to apply this sampling technique is to make the study feasible in reducing the costs to achieve the study's timelines of the North West University requirements for a Master's degree in International Relations, and within a reasonable budget.

3.5.3 Sampling size

A total number of ten seasoned female diplomats who are South Africans were selected from the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), and requested to participate voluntarily in the study. The selected research participants were located at the Directorate of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations. The participants identified were better placed in the organization to understand the questions on women's participation issues in foreign policy formulation and implementation. Normally, the educational requirement for an individual to be a diplomat is honours degree in political science or international relations. Therefore, the inclusion criteria focused on participants who have attained an Honours Degree. In addition, the researcher was biased to socio-economic level and age.

Exclusion criteria are males, non-South Africans, a diplomat without a degree qualification or one who is not working at directorate level. As Ivankova (2015) argues, sampling is done from a more or less complete list of individuals in the population to be studied, and those people who have a chance of being included constitute the sample frame. In addition, Kumar (2014:229) posits "sampling is the process of selecting a few (a sample) from a bigger group as the basis for estimating or predicting the prevalence of an unknown piece of information, situation or outcome regarding the bigger group".

3.6 Data collection

Data can be gathered using two approaches namely primary data collection and secondary data collection. The study employed both primary and secondary data collection.

3.6.1 Primary data collection

Primary data is data collected by the researcher; it is the researcher's original data that has been gathered through methods such as interviews and questionnaires. The researcher employs primary data to achieve the research aim, research objectives and answer research questions. Primary data is important because the researcher gathers raw and reliable data from people who are familiar with the subject matter, which makes the research somewhat credible. The study used face-to-face and online interviews to collect data.

3.6.2 Interviews

According to Babbie (2010:274) “interview is a data collection encounter in which one person (an interviewer) asks questions of another (respondent)”. Interviews may be conducted face-to-face or by telephone. Babbie adds that the manner in which interviews ought to be conducted vary by survey population and survey content. Similarly, O’Leary (2017:224, 239) maintains that structured interviews entail the use of pre-established questions, in a predetermined order, with a standard mode of delivery, prompts and probes are also predetermined and used under defined circumstances.

This method puts the researcher in charge, not only do you get to ask what you want, when you want, you also get to ask it how you want you get to choose the wording, the order and data collection is directed towards your research question, hypothesis, aims and objectives the data collected is not superfluous but is, in fact, custom-built for your research project. In this study, the researcher used the semi- structured interview as a data collection tool for its strengths and advantages. The predetermined questions were written down with a standard mode of delivery of research questions by the researcher. The interviews were conducted online with the participants at the Department of International Relations and Co-operation (DIRCO).

3.6.3 Recording of interviews

The narrative recording was done and captured in the form of a tape-recorder or cellphone as a backup in case any unforeseen circumstance happens to the hand written face- to-face interview. There are many ways of recording observations, the researcher records the interaction makes brief notes while observing the interaction, and later makes detailed notes. The biggest advantage of narrative recording is that it provides a deeper insight into the interaction. (Kumar 2014:175). For the purpose of this study, the researcher used the tape recorder to secure the narratives interview proceedings as a quality back-up.

3.6.4 Secondary sources

Books, periodicals, newspapers, journal articles, government legislations/reports, and the internet are the major secondary sources for this study. Given the current nature of the topic under study and the historical manner in which events have unfolded, the internet serves as an important source of information for the research. The secondary sources informed the study by providing rich bibliographic and background information.

3.6.5 The researcher's role

According to Creswell (2014), the researcher's intent in the interpretive paradigm is to make sense of, or interpret the meaning others have about the world, rather than starting with a theory. In addition, Ardalan (2011:34) maintains that researchers in the social constructivism paradigm recognize their role within the phenomenon under investigation, and their frame of reference is one of participation as opposed to observer. For the purpose of this study, the researcher asked for a letter of permission to conduct the study from the supervisor for collecting data from the authorities in DIRCO. The role of the researcher in the study is to interview the research participants in their natural geographical environment.

3.7 Data analysis method and procedure

According to Bernard et al. (2017:161), data analysis is the search for patterns in data and for ideas that help explain why those patterns are there. It starts before you collect data, as you have to have some ideas about what you are going to study, and it continues throughout research project. As you develop ideas, you test them against your observations and modify them. Olsen (2012:79) states that in content analysis, all texts are coded by linking up the codes to all relevant texts to develop themes. Similarly, Creswell (2016:169) posits that the coding process involves aggregating qualitative data into a small number of units of information. These units are known as codes and are assigned meaningful labels. These codes are then grouped into broader units of information known as themes.

The researcher applied two separate methods of triangulation in the qualitative approach to analyze both the primary and secondary data. The first method of narrative analysis was used to analyze the raw primary data collected from the research participants by means of face-to-face and online unstructured interviews. The information was developed, constructed and coded in line with the research questions and according to the similarity index to explain the trends, patterns and the themes and to build on the discourse relating to women's participation and decision-making in South African foreign policy making and execution. The second data analysis method to be used is the content analysis approach. The researcher used the literature findings to develop, construct and address the themes connected to the research questions in the study.

The Atlas.ti software (version 9) software was used for the purpose of content analysis, which is a systematic approach to classify, categorize and code of observations, field notes and other

interview raw data into patterns and themes, and to further develop it into the findings, themes and conclusions of the study.

3.8 Ethical considerations

The researcher followed the ethical stipulations and considerations of the North West University Post-Graduate Manual to the letter. That is, the research proposal was presented to the university's ethical committee, and the ethical clearance letter from the committee was received as a way of permission to conduct the study. Permission was sought from the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) to conduct the study from the respondents. In the process of sourcing information from the respondents, the following ethical considerations were observed: confidentiality, informed consent, privacy consideration to do no harm, and privacy of the individual.

- Confidentiality: The researcher guaranteed participants that their personal information including names and other private information will not be disclosed to third parties.
- Informed consent: The researcher was transparent and made sure that the participants understand the aim of the study. It included an accurate explanation of the evaluation as well as of the risks and benefits of this study.
- Doing no harm to research participants: The researcher protected and ensured that there is no-harm from research activities affecting the research participants.
- Privacy: The researcher made sure that all the participants are treated with respect and sensitivity.

3.9 Chapter summary

The research approach used to identify solutions to the study's challenges was discussed in this chapter. The research methodology, research approach and design, population and sampling technique, data collection, data analysis, and the trustworthiness of data collection devices were all discussed in this chapter. All of the ethical ideas used in the study were described properly. The research findings are presented and discussed in Chapter four.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research results obtained through interviews with the selected participants of this study. The interviews were done online through telephonic means, emails and WhatsApp calls. The reason for conducting online interviews was to observe the Covid-19 protocols, as specified by the South African Government. The researcher captured the responses from the participants through electronic means and field notes. The interviews focused on the three research questions of the study and the researcher ensured that the responses from the participants stayed on track by making use of an interview guide. The researcher further guaranteed that all the ethical concepts as presented in the study were maintained. The study recorded a 100% response rate as ten people scheduled to participate in the study all participated. Having recorded this response rate, the study is said to have arrived at a valid conclusion, as Serame (2011) affirms that a study can achieve a valid conclusion with a response rate of 70%.

4.2 Presentation of results

This section presents the results obtained from the interviews with the ten participants of the study. After capturing the participants' perceptions, opinions and feelings on the women's participation in South Africa's foreign policy decision-making, the responses were subjected to rigorous analytical processes with the help of Atlas-ti software (version 9). The results were presented using tables, graphs and the Atlas-ti network diagram. In the interpretation phase, pseudonyms were used to represent the participants to maintain the principle of anonymity in a research process. This section further presents the biographical information of the respondents, as well as the findings for each research objectives. The next section presents the biographical information of the participants.

4.2.1 Biographical information of the participants

This section presents the biographical information of the participants, which includes gender, job specification years of experience, race, and current position.

The next section presents the age of the participants.

4.2.1.1 Age of the participants

The participants' ages are presented in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Age group of the participants

Age group in years	Frequency
31-35	1
36-40	1
41-45	2
46-50	2
51-55	3
Above 55	1
Total	10

Table 4.1 depicts that more participants in the age range of 51-55 participated more in this study than others age ranges.

4.2.1.2 Job description and current positions of the participants

The participants were asked to specify their job description and current positions; their responses are summarised in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2 Job description

Job description	Frequency
DIRCO/Diplomat	10
Total	10

According to Table 4.2, all participants are Diplomats and workers in DIRCO.

4.2.1.3 Participants' years of experience

The years of experience of all the participants are summarised in Table 4.3

Table 4.3: Participants' years of experience

Years of experience	Frequency
1-5	0
6-10	3
11-15	3
16-20	1
21-25	2
26-30	0
31-35	1
Total	10

Table 4.3 depicts that all participants in the study have more than 6 years' experience at work and therefore are deemed competent to answer questions regarding their participation in South African foreign policy decision-making.

4.2.1.4 Participants' pseudonyms

The pseudonyms of the participants are summarised in Table 4.4

Table 4.4 Participants' pseudonyms

Years of experience	Frequency
Participant 1	P1
Participant 2	P2
Participant 3	P3
Participant 4	P4
Participant 5	P5
Participant 6	P6
Participant 7	P7
Participant 8	P8
Participant 9	P9
Participant 10	P10
Total	10

To maintain anonymity in the research process, pseudonyms were attributed to the participants during the interpretation phase. All the direct excerpts of the participants' responses were quoted verbatim to ensure rich description.

4.2.2 Presentation of participants' responses on the research objectives

This section presents the responses of the participants on each objective as presented in Sections 1.4. Atlas-ti software (version 9) was used to identify the themes and categories of responses and these were presented in network diagrams. The themes of responses represented the objectives of the study and categories represented the responses from each participant. All the responses, perceptions, and feelings of the participants towards their participation in South African foreign policy decision-making were presented. Direct excerpts were quoted where necessary to indicate the perception of the participants and these were denoted using pseudonyms to maintain anonymity of responses.

The next section presents the word cloud of the responses.

4.2.2.1 Word cloud of the responses

In Figure 4.1, it is observable that the dominant words from the Atlas-ti output include women, gender, DIRCO, participation, decisions, and South Africa.

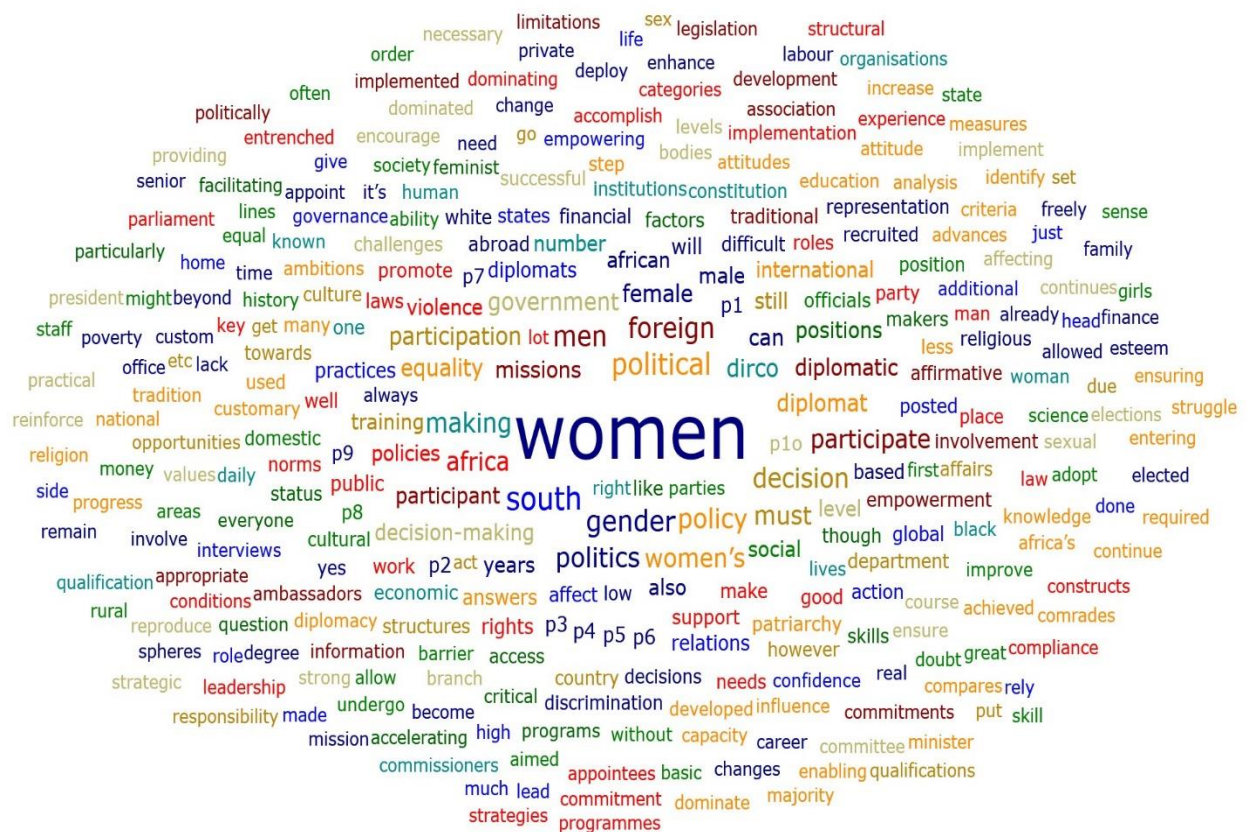


Figure 4.1 Word cloud of responses

4.2.2.2 Responses on research objective one

This objective pursued the extent to which women participate in decision-making and execution in the South African foreign policy. This objective was included to know if women actually participate in decision-making and the criteria used to appoint women to be involved in decision-making in South African foreign policy and decision-making. Figure 4.2 presents the summary of findings from the participants.

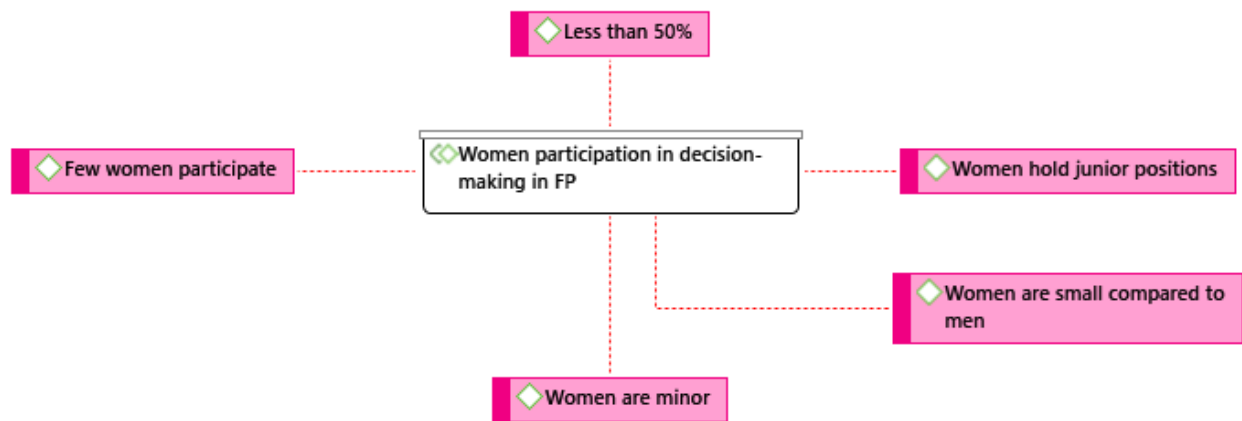


Figure 4.2 **Extent of women’s participation in South Africa’s foreign policy decision-making**

According to Figure 4.2, participants indicated that women’s participation is less than 50% and they hold junior positions. Furthermore, some participants indicated that women are few compared to men, women are minor, while few participate in political activities. The direct excerpts from the participants are as follows:

P2 said “Only few women participate in diplomacy because the arena has been dominated by men”

P3 attested “The number of women that participate in diplomatic missions is less compared to men”

P5 said “It is sizeable number, maybe in junior positions and not positions that involve decision-making” and **P6 attested** “Women are few when compared to men in diplomatic missions”.

P8 said “The participation of women is less than 50% of gender representation”

P9 said “The total number of women is small when you compare it to men however the department is recruiting more women in foreign Affairs”.

The findings obtained in this section correspond to those of Haastrup (2020) and Kamenou (2019), who affirm that women in political participation in South Africa have received little concern, as a limited number of women serve as key decision-makers in different political structures. Of the same view, Akala (2018) opines that women's participation at the local and global level is limited, as women are deprived of the capacity to engage in political practices such as decision-making and governing by political parties, also women's leadership and

political involvement are constrained. Despite the fact that the present leadership of President Cyril Ramaphosa has tried to include women in leadership and policy decision-making positions, more equity representation is still to be addressed, as the majority of the executive and policy decision-making members are men. In this regard, Grillos (2018) points out that the absence of women's inclusion and the poor representation of women in leadership positions and decision-making remain obstacles to political sustainable development. This indicates that there are myriad factors that can be attributed to the questions of women under-representation in the participation of key decision-making, and such factors are political leadership, patriarchy and governance (Place & Vardeman-Winter, 2018). Nevertheless, in the words of John Peter Amara from Sierra Leone "Nations that exclude women from decision-making or are content with low levels of participation by women are not only unwisely and unnecessarily depriving themselves of a rich reservoir of talent, experience and wisdom, they are also missing out on the qualitatively different approach that women bring to the decision-making process (Wolbrecht, 2021).

4.2.2.2.1 Responses on sub-objective one

This section asked to know the criteria adopted by the South African Government to appoint diplomats. The responses from the participants are summarized in Figure 4.3 below:

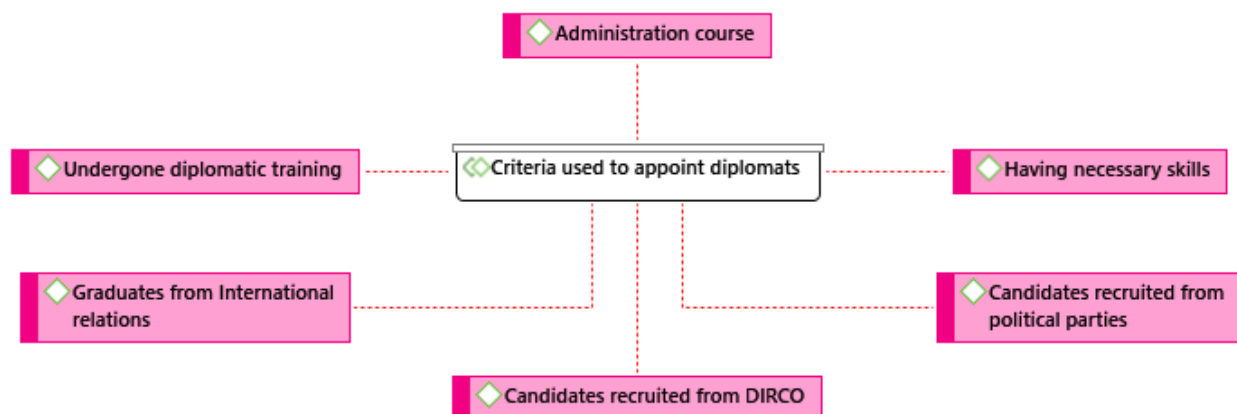


Figure 4.3 Criteria used by SA government to appoint Diplomats

According to Figure 4.3, the participants indicated that the criteria to appoint Diplomats includes going through an administration course, and having necessary skills of leadership. Others confirm that criteria include candidates recruited from political parties and DIRCO,

candidates who have graduated with degrees in from international relations from South African institutions, and candidates who have gone through diplomatic training. Direct excerpts from the participants are as follows:

P1 said *“There are two categories of Diplomats at senior level in the South African Missions abroad, there are career diplomats, who are recruited from DIRCO and there are political appointees, who are recruited from the political party. These mentioned categories go out as Head of Missions (Ambassadors/High Commissioners). You then have the rest of the diplomatic staff which is recruited DIRCO staff (also career diplomats)”.*

P2 said *“Having the skill of international relations like bachelor of political science and international relations, you can be involved in international policy decision-making process”.*

P3 affirmed *“You could be selected if you have a degree of political science and international relations preferably honours level upwards or being deployed from politics”.*

P4 said *“A criteria used to appoint diplomats is having necessary skills and working at the Department of International Relations known as DIRCO”.*

P5 said *“All South African Diplomats have to undergo training before they are posted abroad. The Diplomatic Training and Research Development (DTRD) branch offers training for mission administration course, Diplomatic training: political line function officials, and heads of mission training for ambassadors. Upon completing training officials must spend a period of time back at the desk to practical do what they were trained on, they also have to have a valid security clearance and must again go for interviews before being posted. The only group that are not subjected to interviews are from the level of Directors i.e. from level 13, all other officials from level 1-12 have to go for interviews. If not successful the officials will have to reapply for the next intake, those who are successful will also again undergo a refresher course before being posted abroad”.*

P6 affirmed *“One can be appointed as diplomat as HE/SHE is employed in Department of International Relations and Co operations with qualifications required. Then there*

is also political deployment where most of comrades who failed in their top positions then they are dumped in diplomatic missions to save them from embarrassment”.

P8 said *“One could be appointed if being educated with tertiary qualification e.g economics, political science, international law etc”*

P9 said *“To be a successful diplomat you should be well read. One should have knowledge about history, geography, languages and customs”.*

P10 said *“A person can become a diplomat when they have strong analytical organizational and leadership skills. They must have good judgmental and high integrity. In addition they must be able to communicate effectively, both in writing and orally. They must be multi linguistic”.*

DIRCO (2015) affirms that the president appoints Diplomats, and the appointment is made on merit or the experience of an individual in a political career. The Constitution of South Africa (108 of 1996) Chapter 5, Section 84 further states that Heads of Mission are appointed by the President. However, the Constitution does not prescribe any criteria or provide for qualifications required but the candidate must be a person of sound mind with additional tertiary qualifications, or trainings, or candidates recruited from political parties or DIRCO (Official Guide to South Africa, 2020). DIRCO (2015) state that the Department through its Diplomatic Academy runs a 12-week orientation programme for its Heads of Mission-designate and this is a full-time programme which includes high-level briefings from all the Departmental Business Units including political desks, finance, human resources and planning and monitoring amongst others. The President is ultimately responsible for South Africa's foreign policy and international relations, according to the 1996 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. As a result, it is the President's authority to select mission heads, receive foreign mission heads, conduct state-to-state contacts, and negotiate and sign all international accords.

4.2.2.3 Responses on research objective two

This section perused the challenges of women's participation in foreign policy decision-making. This objective was included in the study to identify the limitations and possible challenges that hinder South African women from participating actively in the foreign policy decision-making process. The responses from the participants are presented in Figure 4.4 below:

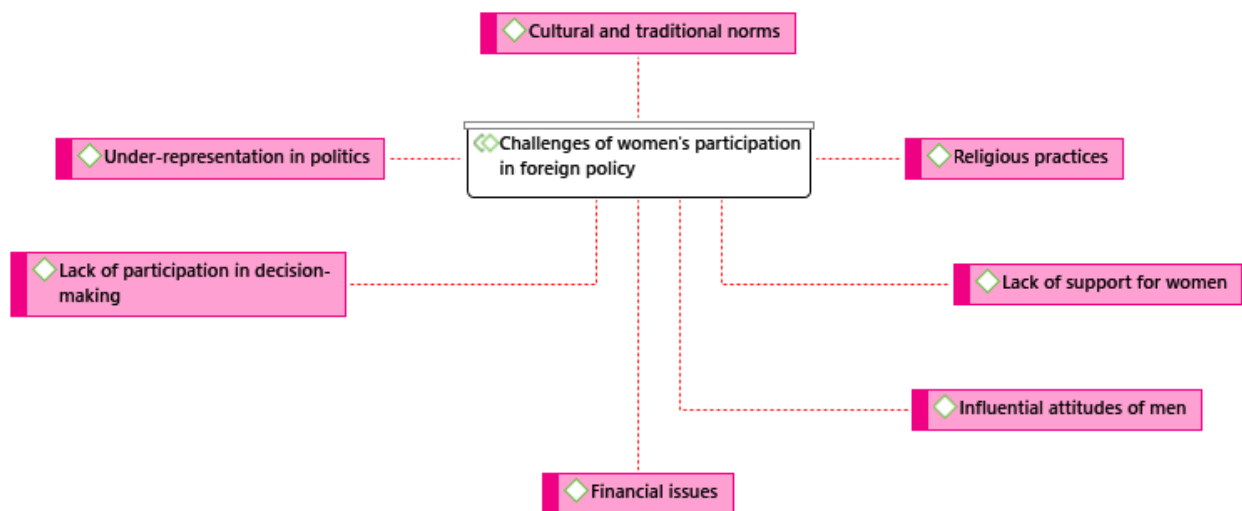


Figure 4.4 Challenges of women’s participation in foreign policy decision-making process

According to Figure 4.4, the participants indicated that challenges in including women in foreign policy decision-making process include cultural and traditional norms, religious practices, lack of support for women, influential attitude of men, financial issues, lack of participation in decision-making process, and under-representation in politics.

P2 said “Challenges of women’s participation in foreign policy decision-making process includes male chauvinistic attitude, custom and tradition”.

P3 suggested “It incorporates religious rituals as well as a lack of female support.” Women's participation in politics is hampered by religious practices Laws, standards, and religious beliefs that have been crafted to legitimize male domination and the relegation of women to the periphery of political discursive practices and engagements have a negative impact on women. Despite the fact that the South African’s Constitution guarantees everyone the right to freedom of religion and association, it is argued that these rights are only ideas. In reality, many women's lives are governed by customary and Sharia Laws. Some Islamic ideologies, for example, forbid women from actively participating in political activities, forming associations, or giving public remarks, obstructing their political goals.”

P4 said “Challenges of women’s participation in foreign policy decision-making process include men’s hostility towards women and wrong perception about women”.

P5 said *“Diplomacy is still a male dominated field and most women are subjected to great injustice, when posted abroad for example women officials, in the event that they fall pregnant, they are entitled to come home at their own cost, Secondly, they would have to return to their country of accreditation in 60 days; these places women and their newborns in a very difficult position as in most cases they would have to travel with infants as young as three weeks. This needs to be rethought as it doesn’t make sense as they have four months’ maternity, what is the rationale in having them to risk their lives?”.*

P6 said *“Women are under-represented in politics which is one of the determinants that shift foreign policy of the country”.*

P7 said *“Women participate in decision-making at a lower level because they must always struggle against patriarchy. Very few women participate in decision-making compared to the population of women”.*

P8 affirmed *“Structural limitations on women. Because majority decision makers are men, women continue to be on the sidelines though a few advances have been achieved. Though measures are put in place for gender equality it is difficult to implement them because of social constructs that reinforce and reproduce patriarchy”.*

P9 attested *“Financial problems. Women’s economic position to a great degree plays a substantial role in increasing their involvement in political decision-making posts. Politics is progressively becoming an expensive venture. In recent times, a lot of money is required before a candidate can participate in politics. Women’s long history of segregation continues to keep them at a financial disadvantage. The entrenched gender discrimination gave men additional financial cleavage to accomplish their political ambitions. Most women do not have the financial buoyancy to accomplish their political ambitions, as they have to rely solely on their men to get financial support; and most sponsors choose to support male politicians because they are perceived as more successful in politics than their female counterparts. Empowering women economically, as well as providing them with access to education and information, helps them to overcome household challenges impeding them from full involvement in politics and political elections”.*

P10 affirmed *“Women's ability to act politically both inside and outside the voting booth, particularly as community organizers and elected officials, is often molded by*

norms that drive wider social structures." An entrenched patriarchal system in which males have family authority and decision-making power is fundamental to the limits that women endure. Traditional views and cultural attitudes about women's duties and standing in society, particularly in rural regions, are still strong. Traditional gender roles and labor divisions are still obviously gendered. Social standards that make it harder for women to quit their traditionally domestic duties in favor of more public roles outside the home. Women's gender identity is still primarily seen as domestic in character, and this continues to be a barrier to women's participation in international affairs"

Findings from this section conforms to those of Krook (2020) who states that Biased laws and norms continue to obstruct women's effective participation in foreign policy decision-making in South Africa. Tlaiss and Kauser (2019) agree that many civilizations' customs and laws are one-sided in modern times, enslaving women to men and so undermining their confidence. Women have a sense of mediocrity as a result of their sexual orientation predisposition, social standards, and actions, putting them at a disadvantage in comparison to their male counterparts in the socio-political arena (Plageron et al., 2019). As a result of these communally formed conventions and customary roles, women are forced to undervalue their obligations as women by embracing nomenclature such as the 'weaker sexes,' and they are bullied into believing that they cannot reach exceptional achievement as men (Asongu et al., 2020).

In the view of Robinson and Gottlieb (2019), religious practices obstruct women's participation in politics. By-laws, norms, and religious ideals that have been crafted to legitimize male supremacy and the relegation of women to the periphery of political discursive practices and engagements have a negative impact on women. Despite the fact that the South African Constitution guarantees everyone the right to religious and political equality, research demonstrates that these rights are only opinions.

Kumar *et al.* (2019) affirm that lack of support for women and their economic status play a major role in growing their involvement in political decision-making positions. Politics is gradually becoming a costly endeavor. In recent years, a large sum of money has been required before a candidate can participate in politics. Many women in today's society do not own or have access to productive resources (Nassani *et al.*, 2019). As a result, this limits the extent of their political participation. As a result, having access to resources affects their connection and

influences their participation in other political organizations and constituent bodies such as the Senate, National Assembly, and others.

Schein (2001) affirms that men's aversion to sharing political authority and decision-making processes with women is a worldwide problem. . In Africa, substantive female representation in decision-making positions is urgently needed, particularly in the formulation of GEWE-related policies and the mainstreaming of gender into existing policies, as well as plans and programmes aimed at explicitly advancing the SDGs' gender equality agenda across the continent. Women must have a major presence as important decision-makers in policy making in order to achieve gender equality in development, long-term peace, and good governance within African sub-regions.

In the view of Baba *et al.* (2020), another issue contributing to women's underrepresentation in foreign policy decision-making in South Africa is their political viewpoint. Women have a bad perception of politics and political activities, which prevents them from becoming interested in government matters. The majority of women regard politics as filthy, and the savagery that characterizes African politics has kept them a long way from political participation.

Robinson and Gottlieb (2019) confirm that religious practices obstruct women's participation in politics. By-laws, norms, and religious ideals that have been crafted to approve male supremacy and the relegation of women to the periphery of political discursive practices and engagements have a negative impact on women (Robinson & Gottlieb, 2019). Despite the fact that the South African Constitution guarantees everyone the right to religious and political equality, research demonstrates that these rights are only opinions. In a true sense, many women's lives are governed by customary and Sharia Laws. Some Islamic principles, for example, forbid women from actively participating in political activity, association, or marriage.

4.2.2.3.1 Responses on sub-objective two

This section asked to know the extent of freedom of allowing women to participate in the foreign policy decision-making process in South Africa. This question was posed to understand if there are legislative or constitutional limitations for women's participation in the foreign policy decision-making process. Figure 4.5 presents the summary of the participants' responses.

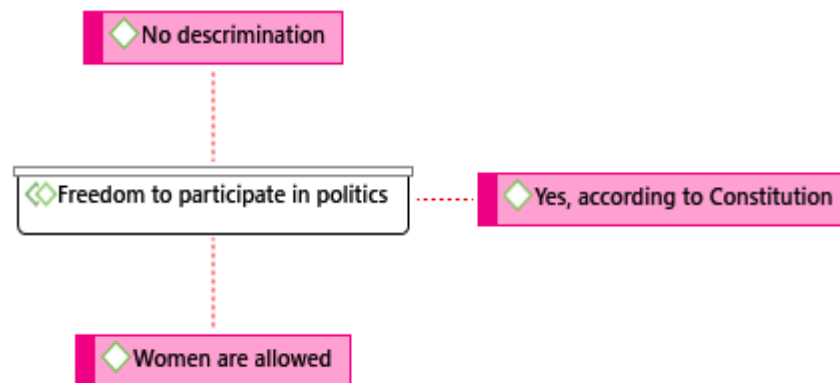


Figure 4.5 Freedom to participate in decision-making process

In Figure 4.5, participants attested that there is no discrimination or limitation for women to participate in the foreign policy decision-making process. All the participants affirmed that women are allowed to participate according to the prescripts of the Constitution. Direct excerpts from the participants are as follows:

P1 said “Yes women are allowed to participate in politics and foreign affairs”.

P2 affirmed “No, women are still facing discrimination”.

P3 said “Yes according to Constitution of South Africa women are allowed to participate in foreign affairs”.

P5 said “South Africa’s foreign policy is based on its Constitution which states that South Africa belongs to all who live in it as well as the Freedom Charter. The White Paper on South Africa’s foreign policy is very clear on this; there is no discrimination on anyone based on their gender or their sexual orientation”.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (108 of 1996) highlights that South Africa belongs to all that live in it regardless of status or gender. It also sets no limitations on involving women in decision-making processes. Therefore, women are eligible and free to contest or be involved in decision-making processes. Akala (2018) opines that when it comes to women's participation in the creation of South African foreign policy, it appears that the government has failed to address and eliminate all forms of gender discrimination and marginalization. Women's participation in local and global politics is limited, according to Akala (2018), since women lack the capacity to engage in political activities such as decision-making and ruling by political parties, and women's leadership and political activity are limited.

4.2.2.3.2 Responses on sub-objective two

This section explored the factors that affect women in the foreign policy decision-making process in South Africa. The responses from the participants are summarised in the Atlas-ti network diagram in Figure 4.6.

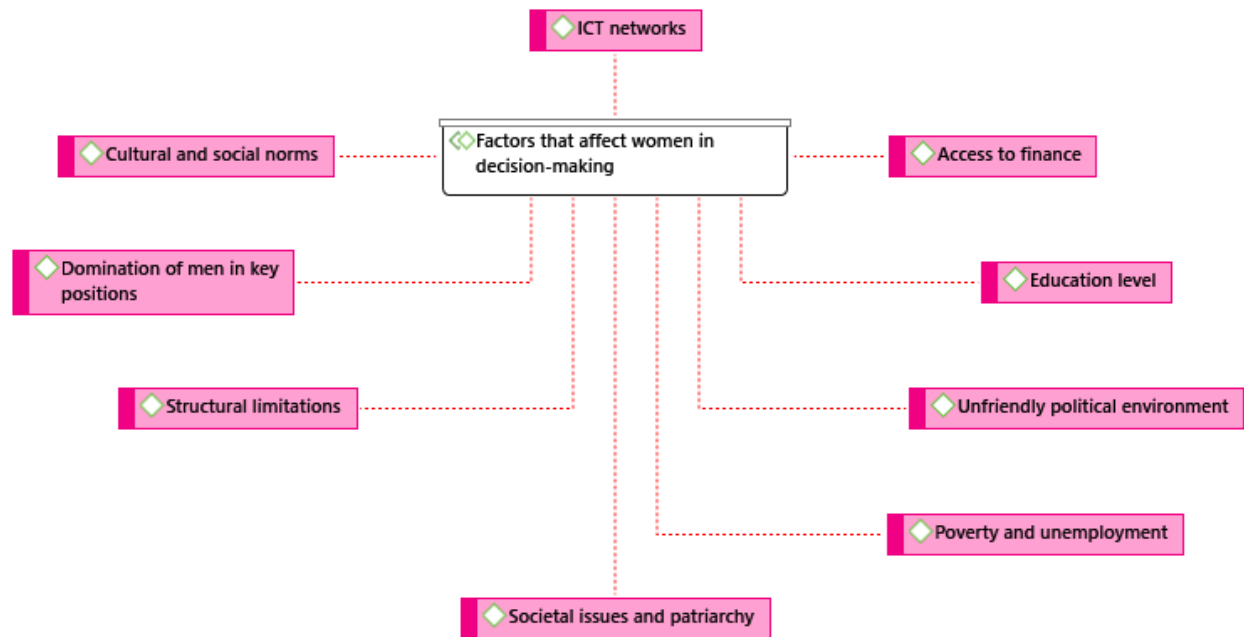


Figure 4.6 Factors that affect women in decision-making process

Figure 4.6 portrays that the challenges of women to participate in foreign policy decision-making process include access to finance, education level, unfriendly political environment, poverty and unemployment, societal issues and patriarchy, structural limitations, domination of men in key roles, cultural and social norms, and ICT networks. Following are the excerpts from the participants.

P1 said “Politics in general affect women to be part of decision-making as men dominate in key positions of decision-making”.

P2 affirmed “Challenges include unfriendly political environment and societal and patriarchy”.

P4 attested “Poverty and unemployment are feminized in South Africa, as they are in most developing countries. It goes without saying that a woman's social and economic status has a direct impact on her ability to participate in political organizations and

elected bodies. There is enough data to suggest that women's development is linked to their level of representation."

"Education, in particular, helps to attenuate traditional values adherence. Reduced fertility rates, increased urbanization, increased access to finance, greater mobility, ability to network widely through information technology techniques, work force participation, and attitudinal changes in perceptions about the appropriate role for women all contribute to women's ability to compete politically with their male counterparts. So lack of those factors make women to less participate in politics and decision-making".

"In the guise of culture and tradition, there is still a lot of practice that pulls women backwards. All political parties must continuously recognize the aforementioned characteristics in order to build platforms for their questioning, deconstruction, and rebuilding. The silence about traditional attitudes and cultural practices that oppress women is a betrayal of the fight for gender equality."

P5 said *"South Africa is a democratic state and therefore no real factors affect women participation, however the work that women do in their daily lives might also be a challenge i.e. unpaid work: being a provider, a mother, a father and a teacher. Balancing all these acts might be the real challenges affecting women.*

P6 said *"Still suffocation and victimization from man who are still in resistance believing that Women are meant for sex and taking care of the family, affect women from making critical decisions in bigger institutions. Our own sisters and mothers have low- esteem they doubt themselves this led them to be dependent too much on the men counter-parts. Due to low- esteem they end up being liabilities and unable perform and make critical decisions. Sometimes the issue of support, most of them became disgruntled due to lack of support from their follow team mates".*

P7 said *"Structural limitations on women. Because majority decision makers are men, women continue to be on the side lines though a few advances have been achieved. Though measures are put in place for gender equality it's difficult to implement them because of social constructs that reinforce and reproduce patriarchy".*

P8 affirmed *"Women are affected by corruption in politics where by qualified candidates are oppressed just because they are women known as being weak and*

emotional there is strong belief that women cannot handle big positions like being minister of finance or being president etc. women must lead low portfolios so it is always a case that men dominate decision making while women must just agree with decisions that have been made”.

“Many women have qualifications that add potential on their credentials but they will not be voted for they will be discriminated by men and some women who believe in jealousy women find it difficult to reach on top level where decisions are made simply because male comrades demand a lot, some women were forced to give sex before being voted some were emotionally harassed by propaganda so that they mustn’t compete with men in positions. Women in positions are few and it affect women decision making in government”.

P9 said *“It’s institutionalized patriarchy and gender inequality. The condition of women in all three spheres of government is the same, having to endure and survive sexism daily. Having to be undermined and treated differently from male colleagues who have the same qualification like you as a woman. It’s a daily expression of gender power relations that place men above women. Men marginalize women in political spaces. Everything is done to bring women down”.*

P10 said *“Patriarchy remains the main factor that affects women participation in decision making of government. The mentality of being weaker than men is still intact. Women are being denied an opportunity to occupy key positions both in government and politics since they are still being doubt to have the capacity of occupying key positions because of low confidence and suffocation from man who are mostly traditionalists. Man is still resistant from being led by a woman”.*

Findings from this section depicts that there are several factors that constrain women’s participation in the foreign policy decision-making process. The findings conform with that of Ballington and Matland (2004) who affirm that many African women do not have the financial means to fully engage in decision-making. Women typically lack the financial means needed to fully participate in leadership and decision-making. In addition, Goetz and Hassim (2003) attest that the conditions of capitalist market connections have left women with limited time and few means for political participation. In the view of Kiamba (2008), women lack ample time to be involved in active politics, also the time demands of political roles collide with the demands of the family, which is deemed an absolute barrier. Structural barriers, according to

Kiamba (2008) further limit women's participation in decision-making. In the same direction, Chabaya *et al.* (2009) found out that gender stereotypes and domination of men in key roles are among the factors affecting the participation of women in the foreign policy decision-making process

The study of Petersen and Matheson (2020) points out that patriarchy also affects women's participation as men control power and leadership in society while women are excluded. Indeed, the system (patriarchy) is socially constructed, which is the foundation of women's subjugation in Africa in the twenty-first century. As a result, patriarchy and colonialism have a dialectical relationship and are intertwined to perpetuate African women's oppression. Furthermore, Musavengane and Leonard (2019) state that African culture, sexual orientation predisposition, social standards, religion, and behaviours have engendered a sense of mediocrity in women, putting them at a disadvantage in comparison to their male counterparts in the socio-political arena. In this regard, women are compelled to undervalue their responsibilities as women by accepting nomenclature such as the 'weaker sex' and they are coerced into believing that they cannot attain remarkable achievement as males do, as a result of these communally created conventions and conventional roles. However, these standards have even limited some women from being educated like men thereby restraining their chances to participate in decision-making (Krook, 2020; Tlaiss & Kauser, 2019).

4.2.2.4 Responses on research objective three

This section explored the strategies that could be adopted to improve women's participation in foreign policy. This objective was included to opine measures to attract and increase the participation of women in the decision-making process. The responses from the participants are summarized in Figure 4.7.



Figure 4.7 Strategies to improve women's participation in decision-making process

Figure 4.7 portrays those strategies to improve the participation of women includes involving women as leaders, promoting gender equality, women's empowerment, laws against domestic violence, public lobbying and sensitization, training of more women, and redressing cultural barriers.

P1 said *“Involving more women to head foreign policy decision-making bodies will improve women's participation in decision-making process”.*

P2 suggested that *“Quota laws and gender equality and women's empowerment should be addressed, also law against domestic violence should be enforced”. There should be economic empowerment programmers for women and girls”.*

P4 said *“Deliberate policy and laws that compel everyone to observe public lobby and sensitisation, and mass mobilisation”.*

P5 attested *“There needs to be more investment in training, government institutions must stop operating in silos and work towards more coordinated efforts”.*

P6 said *“The establishment of a women's branch or a women's policy committee can be the vehicle for beginning the change in male attitudes and a first step in the campaign for affirmative action. Attracting women into the party to get the number of votes needed to have influence in party decision-making or policy forums is also a vital step and a women's branch can be a more comfortable place for women entering politics for the first time”.*

P7 said *“Empowering women with more skills and education as this will boost their confidence and open more opportunities for them that will allow them to be mentally sharp and being independent thinkers”.*

P8 said *“Facilitating conditions conducive to the speeding of equality between men and women so that women can participate in political, social and economic life of their country on equal terms with men and ensuring that their right to own property as well as their other human rights are respected and that they are not excluded from the enjoyment of their fruits of their labour or from performing public functions and being decision makers”. “Facilitating the necessary conditions whereby rural women can have access to basic social services and to ways and means of lightening their work load” “Support for women to organise themselves into groups, networks and associations”.*

P9 attested *“Gender-based violence is a major source of worry in South Africa, impacting both women and children. A third of women will encounter some type of sexual violence over their lifetime. Almost every day in South Africa, the media reports on a heinous incident of gender-based violence against women and girls. Men should be involved in eliminating violence against women and promoting gender equality, according to the government. If the death penalty is implemented in the country, many women will be rescued from violence and violent killings, and women will be able to participate freely without fear.”*

P10 said *“We must address culture as a barrier to advancement and push for women's affirmative action. Remove substantial structural impediments entrenched in custom, culture, religion, and tradition that prevent women from holding decision-making roles.” “Revamp and scale up capacity building for women in politics and leadership: Initiatives to strengthen the knowledge, information, and gender analysis capacities of female members of Parliament and diplomats should be scaled up to give women the confidence to keep their seats and inspire other women to vote.” “Political parties must encourage women's engagement by providing free membership to women, so that money is not a barrier to women entering politics, because more women in politics can influence decision-making in South African governance.”*

Findings obtained in this section portrays that empowering South African women would be a solution towards achieving equitable representation and participation in foreign policy decision-making. Lv and Deng (2019) point out that women's empowerment promotes not just their involvement in collective actions, but also their self-efficacy, ability to contribute to policymaking, bargaining power, leadership capability, resource ownership, and financial independence. However, Barnes and Holman (2020) posit that the representation of women could be improved by promoting gender equality. Barnes and Holman (2020) further affirm that establishing a quota system will establish a predetermined amount of participation for both genders in order to ensure that decision-making bodies are representative. A quota system is an affirmative action tool that ensures that women are represented in decision-making and policy-making bodies (Greene et al., 2020). Quotas, as temporary special measures, are aimed to accelerate de facto parity between men and women, according to Article 4 of the CEDAW Protocol, and are not to be viewed as unequal as specified in the present Convention (CEDAW, 1979).

The facilitation of a public lobby and sensitisation or training of more women in politics, according to Lungu (2018), would serve as a means to promote women participation and representation in decision-making. A prohibition on laws, rituals, and traditions that delegitimize the position of women will help to protect women to be able participate in active politics. Most traditions, which for example, educate male children rather than female children, who are expected to stay at home and care for the family's domestic requirements before being married should be readdressed. Geys and Sorensen (2019) believe that political leadership structure provides a significant platform for gender representation through candidate recruitment, thus allowing women to participate in decision-making at both the provincial and national levels. The political party structure, according to Geys and Sorensen (2019), influences the composition and list of elective posts, as well as the list of aspiring candidates. Asongu *et al.* (2020) also note that this form of unequal social order enhances women's illiteracy and reinforces their notions of their inability to compete politically and in life in general. Due to time constraints, women in South Africa have a tough time participating in politics (Plagerson *et al.*, 2019). As a result, due to the complexities of their diverse roles in the environmental and parental domains, as mothers and spouses with domestic responsibilities, they have little time to attend to political matters or events. Though stakeholders and the current leadership in South African politics should adhere to the Intersectionality theory as noted by Mueni (2014) to ensure fair distribution of roles among gender. Consequently, this procedure will assist in the full participation of women in decision-making roles and the abolition of all restrictions on the freedom of women to participate in politics and leadership in South Africa, with a particular emphasis on the formulation of foreign policy.

4.2.2.5 Responses on research objective four

This section explored the possible recommendations to be applied by the South African government to promote women's decision-making in foreign policy. Figure 4.8 presents the summarized responses from the participants.

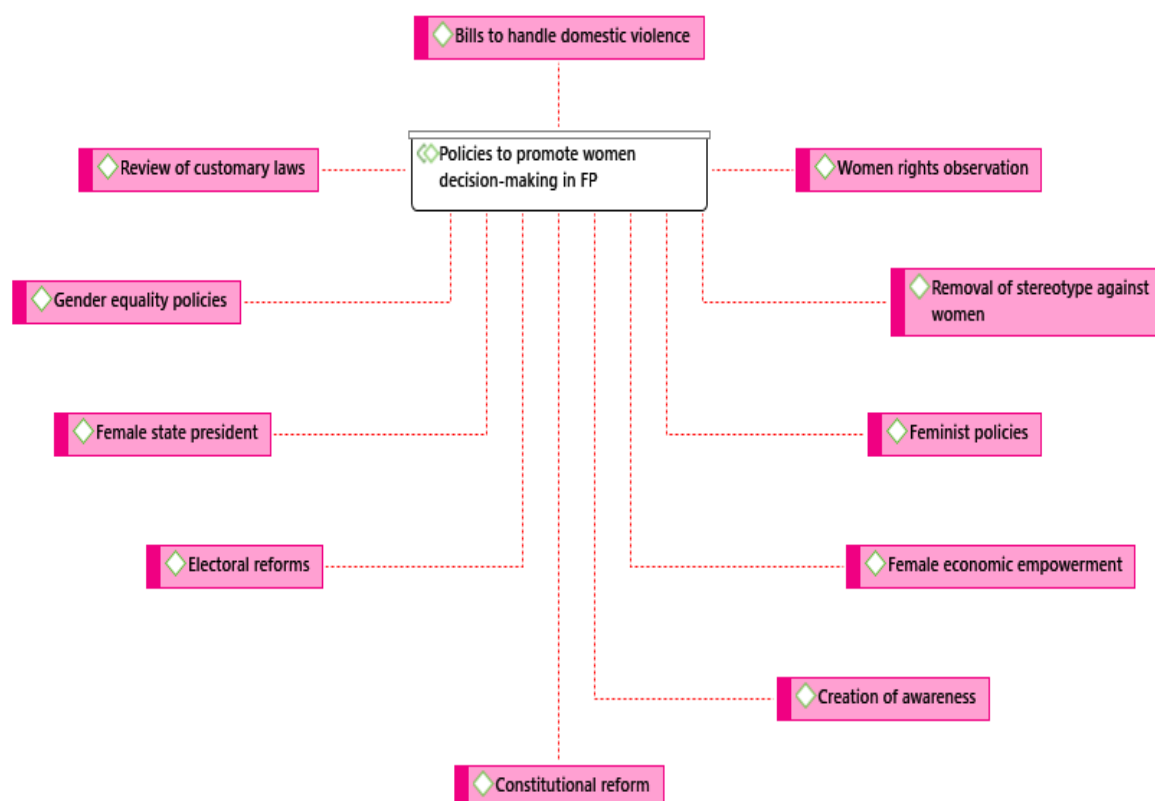


Figure 4.8 Recommendations to promote women’s participation in decision-making

According to Figure 4.8, the participants recommended that women’s participation in decision-making process in the South Africa’s foreign policies could be enhanced by making bills to handle domestic violence, women rights observation, removal of stereotypes against women, feminist policies, female economic empowerment; creation of awareness, constitutional reforms, electoral reforms, a female state president, gender equality policies, and review of customary laws. Excerpts from the participants are as follows:

P1 said “A Female State President will also enhance this more and there should be an established Affirmative action programs targeting women”. “There should be implementation of laws that seek to the removal of stereotypes against women and girl child in all spheres”.

P3 attested “There should electoral reform”. “Gender Equality Policies: by accelerating progress and opportunities for everyone. Which speaks of accelerating gender equality by addressing gender specific”.

P5 said “South Africa already has good policies that promote the participation of women, what often lacks behind is the political will to include women in practical decision-making processes, South Africa was once a leader in the number of women in

government, but with time, we have lost ground and have been overtaken by countries like Rwanda, we need to move from rhetoric towards implementation”.

P6 said *“Like now we want the South African Constitution to explicitly stipulate that each political party must deploy 50/50 gender representation to all spheres of government and in strategic sectors. This will increase the numbers of women entering governance and decision-making. So political parties must be compelled to deploy equal gender representation”.*

P7 affirmed *“The Government of South Africa, civil society organisations and the private sector must raise awareness and encourage a change of attitude towards women and women’s rights”. “The Government of South Africa must fulfil its commitments on women’s rights, including its commitment to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)”.*

P8 said *“South Africa should adopt feminist foreign policy. The proliferation of feminist foreign policies has become a sign of commitment to another world order. Governments that adopt such action envision a world where women’s rights are equally important to those of men”. “They commit to empowering women and ensuring their meaningful participation across various issues”. “Such commitments, therefore, are understood as the objectives of a feminist foreign policy”. “States that promote human rights and multilateralism are known as “good states.” Good states are those that use foreign policies to improve global justice beyond their borders and transform global politics through the pursuit of good international citizenship, which requires sensitivity to the needs and wants of “others.” The states that take on a similar view on global politics and their responsibility on the global scale rely on an alternative vision of global politics, looking at the drivers of conflict and the root causes of violence in communities, societies, and institutions”.*

P9 said *“Government should eliminate step by step, prejudices as well as customary and other practices that are based on the idea of male supremacy and enabling women to hold public office and to participate in the decision-making process at all levels”. “A fairer distribution of national wealth through pro-poor policies, programmes and public expenditure”. “The Government of South Africa must ensure compliance with laws and policies that protect women”. “The Government of South Africa must ratify the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Bill and ensure its compliance’.*

“Opportunities for female social and economic empowerment must be expanded, to reduce the feminisation of poverty”.

P10 said *“Women's rights should be promoted as human rights, and customary, cultural, and religious traditions should be subject to the right to equality.” “Women's affirmative action programs should be established and implemented.” “Women's economic empowerment should be fostered.” “Serious consideration should be given to modifying rules and practices that have hampered women's access to basic needs, the economy, and decision-making in the past.” “Parliament and other legislative bodies have already passed enabling legislation. Additional legislation should be developed as needed to enable women's empowerment and gender equality to be achieved.” “Effective machinery at the national and provincial levels, as well as in public and private organizations, should be built to assure policy implementation.” Adequate structures and resources must be set aside to ensure that programs are implemented.” “All policymakers, strategic and operational managers should receive appropriate training to increase their knowledge, abilities, and attitudes in gender analysis and gender equality.” It is necessary to develop effective collaborative strategies to improve relationships between formal political structures such as the Cabinet, Ministries, Government Departments, the Commission for Gender Equality, the Office on the Status of Women, the Parliamentary Ad Hoc Committee on the Quality of Life and Status of Women, and other Portfolio Committees.”*

Findings from this section depicts that there are a variety of ways to improve women's participation in the foreign policy decision-making process. In the view of Brown *et al.* (2019), facilitating women's movement and other campaigns for inclusion of women in politics is very vital to increase new gender-based politics that have been adopted in recent time. Women's advocacy in South Africa should guarantee that gender parity is enshrined in the Constitution (Albertyn, 2018). As a result, constitutional clauses covering the right to equality, independence, and reproduction, as well as the right to protection and control over one's own body, should be enshrined in the Women's Charter and accepted by the Women's National Coalition to enhance women participation in active politics (Nhlapo, 2017). According to Barnes and Holman (2020), facilitating a quota system establishes a predetermined amount of participation for both genders in order to ensure that decision-making bodies are representative. Greene *et al.* (2020) affirm that a quota system is an affirmative action tool that ensures that women are represented in decision-making and policy-making bodies. In the view of Lv and

Deng (2019), empowerment is essential for women's engagement in decision-making in the South African democratic spheres, as it gives them the confidence to contribute and participate in the development of democratic activities.

According to Greyling and Rossouw (2019), economic empowerment of women facilitates resource ownership, also financial resources are crucial in election campaigns, particularly during campaign planning, meetings, publicity, and the payment of nomination fees to political parties. When women are politically empowered, they are able to hold significant political posts in the Executive and Legislative branches of government, where policy choices are made (Hasunuma, 2019). Cultural immobility limits many women's options to participate in active politics, especially in Muslim countries where sex segregation and the purdah system are utilized together. In order to boost their political chances, Robinson and Gottlieb (2019) affirm that women must be given the same opportunity as men to actively participate in politics, and be reasonably exposed to the necessary rudiments of politics. Women in South Africa also faces many difficulties in participating in politics due to time constraints and customs (Asongu *et al.*, 2020; Plagerson *et al.*, 2019). As a result of culture, the complexities of women's different roles in the environmental and parental domains, assuming the position of mothers and spouses while juggling household responsibilities and caring jobs, their time is extended to provide those incentives while neglecting active political activities. Musavengane and Leonard (2019) state that women's absence from governance is a major aspect of traditional society, a system of social stratification and differentiation based on sex that gives men pecuniary advantages while restricting women's responsibilities and activities. Musavengane and Leonard (2019) therefore point out that women's rights should be protected, while domestic violence should be handled to allow women participate actively. In addition, Qobo and Nyathi (2016) highlight that there should be constitutional and electoral reforms to favour women in politics. The South African leaders should also consider the application of Kanter's theory as explained by Wagner *et al.* (2010) by empowering women in politics. Kanter's theory advocates absolute empowerment through opportunity for advancement, access to information, access to support, access to resources, formal and informal power through building of relationships.

4.3 Chapter summary

This chapter presented the research results obtained from the semi-structured interviews with the Diplomats. The presentation followed the order of the interview guide as presented in Appendix 1. The biographical information of the participants was presented followed by the responses of the participants on each research question.

The responses were analysed using Atlas-ti software (version 9). The outputs from the analysis were presented using tables and graphs. Interpretations were made after presenting each output, also pseudonyms were used to quote verbatim responses of the participants to enhance the thick description as required in every qualitative research. Afterwards, the findings were interpreted and corroborated with the literature review outcomes in an endeavour to find solutions to the problems of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations of the study. The chapter further presents the overview of all the chapters included in the dissertation, as well as the summary of findings obtained for each research question of the study. The following section presents the overview of the study.

5.2 Overview of the study

Chapter One presented the introduction and background of the study. In the background, it was highlighted that political party's leadership representation structure has deliberately benefited men, particularly white ones, while women remain marginalized in all aspects of leadership, including foreign policy decision-making roles. It was also noted that women are often confronted with circumstances in which they play a supporting role in the management of the internal and external relations of the state, irrespective of their power. Regarding this motivation, the study was aimed at assessing women's participation in South Africa's foreign policy decision-making and execution. The objectives and research questions were clearly outlined in this chapter. Other topics embedded in the chapter include the significance of the study, definitions of key concepts included in the study, chapter outline, and terminated with the chapter summary.

Chapter Two provided the literature review and the theoretical background of the study. The literature review explained some related concepts such as patriarchy, feminism and women's participation in politics and leadership in South Africa. Other headings expounded upon include the structure of South African foreign policy, challenges of women's participation in South African policy decision-making, and structures that promotes women's participation in foreign policy decision-making process. The theoretical background adopted the Intersectionality theory and Kanter's theory. The Intersectionality theory helps in exploring how aspects of one's social and political identity (gender, race, class, sexuality, ability, etc.) may interact to establish specific modes of discrimination. Furthermore, Kanter's Theory of structural empowerment believes that empowerment is promoted in work environments that

provide employees with access to information, resources, support, and the opportunity to learn and develop. In addition, this theory believes that a leader's power will grow by sharing the power through empowering others and as a result, leaders will realize increased organizational performance.

Chapter Three presented the research methodology adopted to find answers to the research objectives of the study. The study adopted an exploratory qualitative research method due to its strengths of collecting deep information from the natural setting of the phenomena of women's participation in South Africa's foreign policy decision-making and execution. In this case, the researcher assessed the context of the participants through visiting the work setting, and gathering information, personally interpreting what they find as informed by their experiences. A total number of ten seasoned female diplomats were selected from the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), and requested to participate voluntarily in the study. The selected research participants were located in the Directorate of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations. Semi-structured interviews served as a technique of data collection where the researcher regulated the flow of the interview to remain on track regarding the focus of the study. Atlas-ti software (version 9) was used for the purpose of data analysis, which is a systematic approach adopted to classify, categorize and code the responses from the participants. Data were categorized into patterns and themes, and were interpreted and discussed by corroborating them with the findings from non-empirical studies. The chapter further presented the trustworthiness of data collection and all the ethical guidelines observed in the study.

Chapter Four presented and interpreted data collected from the participants. The presentation followed the order of the interview guide. The biographical information of the respondents was presented, followed by the responses from the participants on each research question. After data analysis, the outcomes on the research questions were presented using Atlas-ti network diagrams. Themes and categories of findings were presented, interpreted and discussed. The researcher also used pseudonyms to quote direct excerpts from the participants to enhance thick description. All outcomes were well discussed to proffer solutions to the problem of the study.

Chapter Five presented the overview of the study, summary of findings, conclusion, and recommendations of the study. The next section presents the summary of findings of the study.

5.3 Summary of findings

The study comprised of four research objectives and this section presents the findings obtained from each research objective. The findings were based on the following objectives:

- To investigate the extent of women's participation in decision-making and execution in South African foreign policy.
- To evaluate the challenges of women's participation in foreign policy decision-making;
- To ascertain the strategies that could promote women's participation in politics and South African foreign policy decision-making.
- To make recommendations to promote women's participation in politics and South African foreign policy decision-making.

5.3.1 Findings on research objective one

This section investigated the extent of women's participation in decision-making and execution in South African foreign policy. Findings indicated that women's participation is less than 50%, and they hold junior positions. Participants indicated that women are small compared to men; women are minor, while few women participate in political activities. Further findings depict that the criteria to appoint Diplomats includes going through an administration course, and having necessary skills of leadership. Others criteria as confirmed by participants include recruitment from political parties and DIRCO, candidates who have graduated with a degree international relations in South African institutions, and candidates who have gone through diplomatic training.

5.3.2 Findings on research objective two

This section explores the challenges of women's participation in foreign policy decision-making. Findings depict that there is no discrimination or limitation for women to participate in the foreign policy decision-making process. All the participants affirmed that women are allowed to participate according to the prescripts of the Constitution. Participants indicated that challenges in including women in the foreign policy decision-making process include issues surrounding cultural and traditional norms, religious practices, lack of support for women, influential attitude of men, financial issues, lack of participation in decision-making process, and under-representation in politics. Findings obtained in the study portrays that the limitation of women to participate in foreign policy decision-making process include domination of men in key positions, unfriendly political environment, societal issues and patriarchy, poverty and

unemployment, education level, access to finance, ICT networks, and cultural and social norms.

5.3.3 Findings on research objective three

This section explored the strategies that could promote women's participation in politics in South African foreign policy decision-making. Findings obtained in the study portray that strategies to improve the participation of women includes involving women as leaders, promoting gender equality, women's empowerment, law against domestic violence, public lobby and sensitization, training of more women, and redressing cultural barriers.

5.3.4 Findings on research objective four

This section provided recommendations to promote women's participation in politics in South African foreign policy decision-making. Findings obtained in the study indicated that strategies to improve the participation of women include involving women as leaders, promoting gender equality, women's empowerment, a law against domestic violence, public lobby ZX president, gender equality policies, and review of customary laws.

5.4 Conclusion

Over the years, males have dominated South African political decision-making and office holding has been dominated by males, while females hold supporting positions. This study, therefore explored the extent of women's participation in decision-making and execution in South African foreign policy. The study was guided by four research objectives. Data was collected from ten participants using semi-structured interviews, and analysed using Atlas-ti software (version 9). Findings revealed that the participation of women in the foreign policy decision-making process is less than 50%. It was also disclosed in the study that women are free and eligible to participate in political activities throughout South Africa. However, it was noted that women have a wide-range of challenges limiting them from being involved in active politics, but the study emphasized the need to overlook cultural, religious, and unfavourable political environments, patriarchy, and influential attitude of men and get involved in active politics to achieve equal representation. Furthermore, the study concludes that women can achieve equal representation in the foreign policy decision-making process if the recommendations of this study would be implemented by South African government.

5.5 Limitations of the study

This study only assessed women's participation in South Africa's foreign policy decision-making. The findings may not be practically generalizable to other contexts due to the

differences in customs, religions and traditions in South Africa. During the data collection process, it was an uphill task to secure appointments with the participants of this study in the qualitative component. The participants were very busy and confirmed that they have busy schedules, which caused constant rescheduling of appointments and extended the period of data collection, with significant financial implications. Also, most participants responded through emails, which limited the chances of interacting with them.

5.6 Recommendations of the study

The recommendations of this study are made to the South African government and the women.

5.6.1 Recommendations to South African government

- The South African government should always involve women as leaders in politics.
- Gender equality should be promoted to ensure that women feel free to participate in leadership roles.
- There should be promotion of women's empowerment to enable women to have same rights as men.
- Women's leadership should be promoted by revisiting the law against domestic violence, also bills to handle domestic violence should be promoted.
- There should be encouragement by facilitating public lobby and sensitization to enable women to understand their constitutional rights in participation.
- There should be training of more women to participate in active politics.
- The cultural barriers hindering women's participation in political activities should be re-addressed.
- The South African government should observe women's rights and be involved in the removal of stereotype against women.
- The South African Government should promulgate feminist policies to enhance women's participation in the foreign policy decision-making process.
- There should be strategic constitutional reforms where women should be empowered to participate in decision-making processes.
- There should be electoral reforms that should favour women leadership
- Having a female state president would also help to involve women in the foreign policy decision-making process.

- There should be a review of customary laws to enhance women's participation in decision-making processes.
- The South Africa Government should consider adopting a feminist foreign policy in their constitution.

5.6.2 Recommendations to South African women

The recommendations made to women are as follows:

- Women should endeavour to be involved in active politics to ensure equitable representation.
- South African women should contest for political positions to ensure that their opinions would be voiced.
- Women should be available to participate in trainings and other political empowerment programmes.
- Women political leaders should always sensitize others to create awareness of their constitutional rights.

5.6.3 Recommendations for future or additional studies

This study explored women's participation in South Africa's foreign policy decision-making and execution. It was noted that there is more male dominance in South African politics than women. It was also discovered that so many challenges do contribute towards women's dismal participation. This study recommends that other studies should be conducted to know how South African women should be empowered to participate fully in politics and to contribute in the foreign policy decision-making process.

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APPENDIX 1 INTERVIEW GUIDE



Introduction

This serves to inform you about the study titled “An assessment of women’s participation in South Africa’s foreign policy decision-making and execution”. This interview will allow individual participants the opportunity to freely talk about their opinion. The interviewer controls the pace of the interview by treating the interview questions in a standardised and straightforward manner. The same set of questions will be used for all interviews and these will be asked in the same order or sequence.

Participants: A total number of ten seasoned female diplomats was selected and requested to participate voluntarily in the study from the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO). These participants have been selected to participate in the study to assist in developing measures to enhance women’s participation in South Africa’s foreign policy decision-making and execution.

Resources required

A suitable venue would be required for conducting the in-depth interviews but to observe COVID-19 protocols, the interview would be conducted online or through telephonic means. A notepad and audio recorder will be used during the interview session with prior approval of the participants.

Introduction Phase

Good day, my name is I.M Nwafor, a master's student from the North-West University, Mafikeng Campus. This interview is aimed at improving talent management measures to achieve organisational goals. This interview will only last for 20 minutes and your concise and unbiased responses will be appreciated. Any information provided in this exercise is considered confidential; it will not be used against you in any way. It is to note that participation is only voluntary as you may withdraw at any time, also the results of this study will be open for scrutiny. In this regard, you may request a copy of the result if you so wish.

Please note that a record of this interview will be done to ensure that your comments and contributions are adequately captured for processing purposes. However, your name will not be attached to any comments, views presented, and/or perceptions expressed. **The questions are open-ended which depicts that you will be allowed to give your opinions in each of the questions.** Do you have any questions in this regard before we continue?

1: Demographic data

1. Age	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50
2. Job description					
3. Years of experience	6-10	11-15	16-20	Above 20	

Research Questions

1. To what extent do women participate in decision-making and execution in the South African foreign policy?
 - 1.1 What criteria are used by the South African government to appoint Diplomats?
2. What are the challenges of women's participation in foreign policy decision-making?
 - 2.1 What is the extent of freedom of allowing women to participate in foreign policy decision-making process in South Africa?
 - 2.2 What are the factors that affect women in foreign policy decision-making process in South Africa?
- 3 What are the strategies that could promote women participation in politics and the South African foreign policy decision-making?
- 4 What are the recommendations to promote women participation in politics and the South African foreign policy decision-making?

Thank you for your response

APPEDIX II APPROVAL LETTER FROM HUMANITIES



PO Box 1174, Vanderbijlpark
South Africa, 1900

Faculty of Humanities
Humanities Research Management Committee
Tel: (016) 910-3662
24389080@nwu.ac.za
Date: 04 MAY 2020

Mrs I.M Nwafor

Student no: 23685220

Research title as approved by the Humanities Research Management Committee: An assessment of women's participation in south Africa's foreign policy decision making and execution (2009-2019)

Dear Mrs I.M Nwafor

This letter serves to confirm that your Masters research proposal has been approved by the Humanities Research Management Committee.

The ethics application is referred to the:

* Research Ethics Committee- BaSSREC: X .

* Research Ethics Committee-HHREC: .

For the details on the procedure that you will have to follow to submit to the Ethics Committee contact Miss Phindile Radebe at 24389080@nwu.ac.za. When your ethics application has been successfully completed and approved please inform her as the responsible person.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phindile Radebe', is written over a horizontal line.

APPENDIX III ONLINE TRAINING ETHICS CERTIFICATE



Certificate

October 14, 2020

This is to certify that Ms. Ipeleng Nwafor has successfully completed the Macquarie University Human Research Ethics Online Training Module for the Social Sciences and Humanities.

Macquarie University

APPENDIX IV ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER



Private Bag X1290, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: 018 299-1111/2222
Fax: 018 299-4910
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Senate Committee for Research Ethics

Tel: 018 299-4849
Email: nkosinathi.machine@nwu.ac.za

25 March 2021

ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY

Based on approval by the **Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (BaSSREC)** on 25/03/2021, the Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee hereby **approves** your study as indicated below. This implies that the North-West University Senate Committee for Research Ethics (NWU-SERC) grants its permission that, provided the special conditions specified below are met and pending any other authorisation that may be necessary, the study may be initiated, using the ethics number below.

Study title: An assessment of women's participation in South Africa's foreign policy decision making and execution from 2009-2019.

Study Leader/Supervisor: Prof Lere Amusan

Student/Research Team/Principal Investigator: I.M. Nwafor

Ethics number:

N	W	U	-	0	0	6	0	7	-	2	1	-	A	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Institution Study Number Year Status
Status: S = Submission; R = Re-Submission; P = Provisional Authorisation; A = Authorisation

Application Type: Single Study

Commencement date: 25/03/2021

Risk:

Low Risk

Expiry date: 25/03/2022

Approval of the study is initially provided for a year, after which continuation of the study is dependent on receipt and review of an annual (or as otherwise stipulated) monitoring report and the concomitant issuing of a letter of continuation.

Special in process conditions of the research for approval (if applicable):

General conditions:

While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, the following general terms and conditions will apply:

- The study leader/supervisor (principle investigator)/researcher must report in the prescribed format to the BaSSREC:
 - annually (or as otherwise requested) on the monitoring of the study, whereby a letter of continuation will be provided, and upon completion of the study; and
 - without any delay in case of any adverse event or incident (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the study.
- The approval applies strictly to the proposal as stipulated in the application form. Should any amendments to the proposal be deemed necessary during the course of the study, the study leader/researcher must apply for approval of these amendments at the BaSSREC, prior to implementation. Should there be any deviations from the study proposal without the necessary approval of such amendments, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited.
- Annually a number of studies may be randomly selected for an external audit.
- The date of approval indicates the first date that the study may be started.
- In the interest of ethical responsibility, the NWU-SGRE and BaSSREC reserves the right to:

- request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the study;
- to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modification or monitor the conduct of your research or the informed consent process;
- withdraw or postpone approval if:
 - any unethical principles or practices of the study are revealed or suspected;
 - it becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the BaSSREC or that information has been false or misrepresented;
 - submission of the annual (or otherwise stipulated) monitoring report, the required amendments, or reporting of adverse events or incidents was not done in a timely manner and accurately; and / or
 - new institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary.
- BaSSREC can be contacted for further information or any report templates via 21081719@nwu.ac.za / 13128388@nwu.ac.za.

The BaSSREC would like to remain at your service as scientist and researcher, and wishes you well with your study. Please do not hesitate to contact the BaSSREC or the NWU-SCRE for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

Yours sincerely



Prof Jacques Rothmann

Chairperson NWU Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Original details: (22351930) C:\Users\22351930\Desktop\ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY.docm
8 November 2018

File reference: 9.1.5.4.2

APPENDIX V LETTER FROM EDITOR

House 367

Hex River Lifestyle Estate

Waterkloof East Ext 12

Rustenburg 0299

08/12/2021

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled

**AN ASSESSMENT OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN SOUTH AFRICA'S
FOREIGN POLICY DECISION-MAKING AND EXECUTION (2009-2019)**

Submitted by **NWAFOR IPELENG M**

 **ORCID 0000-0003-3027-876X**

For the degree of **MASTER OF SOCIAL SCIENCE
(INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS)**

At the **NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY**

Has been edited for language by

Mary Helen Thomas (B.Sc. Hons. PGCE)



Email: thomashelen212@gmail.com

Cell: 072 242 9066

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Feminism 10 December

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