

**UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE**



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**Women in Organisational Management in Zimbabwe:  
Theory and Practice**

**BY**

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**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE**

**Supervisor: Professor Aminur Rahim**

## **DEDICATION**

This doctoral thesis is dedicated to my parents Annah and Edward Zikhali. To my mum, I know that you are the kindest, most generous person I have ever known, what is best in me I owe to you.

To my late father, you were taken before you could see what I have achieved. May God rest your soul in eternal peace.

To both of you, I am grateful for laying the strong foundation on which much that I do today is built.

## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this subsequent work is my own independent original work emanating from my years of hard work, pain and solitude by myself. In the best of my knowledge, this work has not been extracted from other people's work without an acknowledgement. The thesis has not been submitted to any University in whole or in parts for an award at any institution by me or anyone. The views expressed in this thesis are those of the author except where indicated by means of complete reference. Any errors and omissions remain the sole responsibility of the author.

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**Whitehead Zikhali**

## **ABSTRACT**

The study was premised on the truism that men have historically served in higher echelons of organizational management structures and women are under-represented. The principal objective was to explore the constraints faced by women in accessing higher leadership and senior management positions in public, private and non-governmental organisations in Zimbabwe. This study adopted the triangulation method, that is, qualitative and quantitative approaches. These mixed research methods, were upgraded by the feminist research methodologies, thereby making a contribution in the field of research. The study found out that the constraints that mostly hinder women from accessing leadership and senior management positions in public, private and NGOs were cultural practices, which represent levels of power and control that in turn hinder reforms; and women's socialisation into feminised roles. The study also found out that in most organisations, most females work under male leadership, and this traditional organisational culture, needs to be deconstructed and reversed in order to achieve gender equality. The study recommended for a human centric and integrated organizational management strategy for public, private and NGOs in Zimbabwe. The adoption of a human centric and integrated management approach should aim at gender equity and reduce women's under-representation. A human centred organizational culture has to be practiced, that would create organisational ethos that guide organizational management. An integrated organizational management approach should integrate all systems and processes into one complete framework, enabling people to work as a single unit, unified by organizational goals, shared vision and common values. The system should depend on a balanced mix of the masculine and feminine attributes. The approach should put its weight towards adoption of measures to attract, advance and empower women so as to benefit from their qualifications, experience and talent in a highly competitive environment.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

EEOL: Equal Employment Opportunities Law

HOD: Head of Department

MATW: Managerial attitudes towards women.

NGO: Non-governmental organisations

SARIPS: Southern African Regional Institute for Policy Studies

SADC: Southern African Development Community

UFH: University of Fort Hare

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