Improving Women Participation in Local Government in Ghana: An Empirical Study

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Abstract

Women involvement in decision making processes in governance for sustainable development is very critical, not only because they constitute majority of the Ghanaian population but they are discriminated and underrepresented in the socio-economic and political development activities thereby widening gender gap. This study sought to ascertain the factors responsible for low women participation in local government in Ghana. With a mixed method approach, this paper examines the underlining factor of low women participation in governance. With the feminism and notion of social gender perspective, inadequate financial resources, the perception of politics as a "dirty" game, lack of capacity and confidence on the part of women candidates among others were major factors affecting women participation in local government. To give women face lift in local government, the study recommended that government should pass a legislation aimed at reserving special quota for women and provision of special funds by NGO's and philanthropists to support women candidates.

Keywords: Decision-making, Ghana, Participation, Women candidates, Local government

Participation in politics is a very important factor for the democratic progress of any society. It is a fundamental pre-requisite of democratic quality (Diamond & Morlino, 2004). Ideally, democracy aims to preserve and promote the dignity and fundamental rights of the individual, achieve social justice, foster economic and social development of the community, strengthen cohesion of society, and enhance national tranquility (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 1997). Subsequently, when people participate in decision making within a political entity, governments are more effectively held account, constitutionally guaranteed rights are enforced and individual and community demands are better represented within policy process. Participation in politics thus ensures the realization of democratic objectives within a political entity.

A strong and effective local government is one of the most inimical elements for ensuring quality good governance and strengthening local government body. The local representatives of local bodies based on democratic ideas can promote the greater socio-economic emancipation of the people of the country and this largely depends on the maximum utilization of citizens, both men and women for its overall development. In Ghana, though women comprise more than half of the total population, the status of women is much lower than men in every sectors of the economy. Democracies around the world make special provisions to promote women

participation and as well reduce barriers to their meaningful participation. With the re-emergence of conservative trends, the mandated participation of women in local governments can be an important vehicle for driving change in the country's political landscape.

The participation of women in local government is critical for the legitimization of decision making processes. When women participate in local government, it enhances the legitimacy of the governments, ensures fair representation of society in elected offices, impacts the policy agenda by strengthening the ability of women related issues in society (Markham, 2013). The issue of women' participation in local government is and as much, human right centric in matters of political rights. Every individual has the right to participate in decision making processes that define his or her life. When women participate equally with men in local government, it ensures that the female perspective is effectively incorporated into policy decisions. Globally, there has been historic trends of women exclusion in politics. This is as a result of "multiple structural, functional and personal factors that vary in different social contexts across countries" (Bari, 2005). From the local to the global level, women face several obstacles in participating in political processes. Structural barriers, through discriminatory laws and institutions, and capacity gaps like lack of education, contacts and resources have led to the underrepresentation of women as voters, as well as in leading positions (UN-Women, n.d). In Ghana, the lack of gender analysis in the Ghanaian economy and the invisible role of women in Ghana in particular have a historical connection (Allah-Mensah, 2003). The next section of this paper presents the notion of Social Gender and Feminist Perspective on gender as theoretical framework, followed by review of the literatures, methodology, results and discussions, conclusions and recommendations.

Theoretical Framework: Feminist Perspectives on Gender

Feminist perspective is one approach that attempts to explain the underrepresentation of women in politics. Feminism is a defending movement of social equality among sexes in order to withstand gender discrimination and patriarchy. Feminist perspective is concerned with women' underrepresentation within positions in society, empowering individual and the reality of reflection of women lacking power on their domesticity from conflict theory (Perry & Perry, 2003, p. 207). Sancar (2009) expresses that in fact social gender relations are seen as inevitable characteristics that biology imposes or social facts referring to biological obligations has gained gender meanings. Actually in primitive society, differentiation of male and female in terms of biology provided the gender based labor division by differentiation of gender roles. The labor division in the forms of women getting pregnant and aftermath of pregnancies, baby-sit after birth and men' role in family are some gender based roles being constituted within primitive community life. However, this labor division based on male and female characteristics has also become the beginning of men' domination over women. In different societies, cultural codes regarding how appropriate woman should behave, are mostly developed in order to keep women at passive position. In societies while women are identified with status like motherhood or being wife, men are identified with status of occupational titles.

Notion of Social Gender

The notion of social gender is another important concept that can be linked with the representation of women in politics. According Eveline and Bacchi (2005, p.497) social gender is a notion related to society's vision, perception and expectations from us, as woman and man. As a result of reflection of biological differences to social life, women and men being exposed to unequal conditions within the social relation and sustaining lives again in unequal conditions have brought provision of gender inequality. Today, the fact is, gender is considered to be different from sex and it is achieved later during the adolescence, in other words embracement of these identities by society is accepted by both the fields of sociology and psychoanalysis. That is to say, this notion is substantial for different disciplines beyond politics and woman studies. Gender equality is, equal benefit in opportunities in society, individuals not being treated differently due to gender and provision of *de facto* equality at every fields of life. This notion is related to the research question of this study in the sense that it

examines women' underrepresentation and lack of participation in local politics due to social gender inequality. It is expected to be understood how in specific regions social gender notion constitute a disadvantage for women in their political participation.

Evolution of Local Government in Ghana

Local governments in Ghana, just like elsewhere in the world, act as a very important agent as far as the administration and development at the local level are concerned. Local governments have been part of Ghanaian heritage and culture. Individual Ghanaian communities regardless of size, has ways of governing themselves that might be markedly different. Each community headed by a chief is backed by a council of elders. According to Ahwoi (2010), this could be described as local governance but not in a formal way.

In the then Gold Coast, the colonial administration operated a system that relied on native authorities to uphold law and order rather than involve natives in real local government administration (Gocking, 2005). The British specifically adopted a local government system known as Indirect Rule System (IRS) with chiefs serving as the pivot of administration. In spite of this, the colonial government acknowledged chiefs and other traditional figures as having wielded much military, policy-making and social influence to administer local affairs. A unit of local government called Native Authorities was used as a tool to administer law. But, this system was found by some experts not to be precisely clear-cut as it was identified to be undemocratic and characterized by corruption and inefficiency (Ahwoi, 2010). In 1951, the passage of the Local Government Ordinance created a two-tier structure which was a mixture of the British system and the local administration. This system was found to be inherently weak as too much emphasis had been laid on local allegiances and sentiments resulting in conflicts among local educated elites and the traditional authority over leadership of local affairs. This set the tone for other local administration acts such as Local Government Act, Act 54, (1961) and Act 359 (1971). However, in 1974, the 1971 act was amended which saw the creation of a four-tier structure of Local Government

consisting of the regional councils, district, and area, municipal and urban councils.

As far as Ghana's local government administration system is concerned, the amendment carried in 1974 was the last major reform. It marked the transition from the old to the current local government dispensation. Even though, successive governments since independence implemented various forms of Decentralization and Local Government Policies, the current Decentralization Policy began in1988 under PNDC Law 207.

The Structure of Local Government in Ghana

At the sub-national level, many different kinds of structures have been purposefully arranged as part of the decentralization process. These structures are found at the regional, district and sub district levels. At the apex of these structures is the Regional Coordinating Council (RCC) located in each regional capital in Ghana. The RCC is responsible for coordinating and keeping under surveillance the performance of all local government authorities in the regions. MMDAs are underneath the RCC followed by other sub-district structures such as Sub-Metropolitan Councils, Urban, Town and Zonal Councils in addition to Unit Committees nearest the ground). Under PNDC Law 207, at the beginning, governance at the sub-national level was created as a three-tier structure.
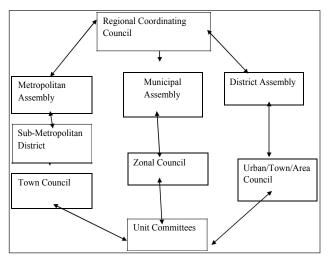
Fig. 1: The Local Government Structure

However, having Ghana's Constitution in 1992 and Local Government Act (462) in 1993 coming into force, the initial three-tier structure saw an improvement. The RCC are on the first tier, MMDAs

are on the second tier, while Urban or Town or Zonal or Area Councils in addition to Unit Committees are on the third tier. However, in translating it into action, Unit Committees are the most fundamental foundation on which other sub-national structures build on. A clear-cut geographic area comprising a population of more than 250,000 is put under a local government called Metropolitan Assembly. Another geographic area whose population is within 95,000 and 250,000 is also put under a local government known as Municipal Assembly. A District Assembly is a local government that has a population of at least 75,000 and at most 95,000.

Concept of Participation

Participation has become an essential ingredient and a prerequisite of good governance. Development as a process of increasing people's capacity to determine their future means that people need to be included in the process of planning their needs and development. Participation is part of the process and definition of development. There is, therefore, a growing consensus that people everywhere have a basic human right to take part in decisions that affect their lives.

According to World Bank (1996), participation is a process through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives and the decisions and resources which affect them. Participatory development in Africa, came to the pinnacle of development discourse following the signing of the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation (ACPPDT) agreed at Arusha, Tanzania in 1990 (Africa Institute of South Africa,2002). Currently,participatory planning at local level is important because decentralized development planning remains a valid framework for sustainable development and good governance agenda (Chinsinga, 2003). Participation as used in this study refers to local population typically women being part of governance at the local level. This is because women should fully participate and decide on policies for development at their grass root level.

Women and Local Government in Ghana

The local government system in Ghana is central to government's efforts at developing the country

and balancing the administrative machinery. The 1992 Republican Constitution created the framework within which intergovernmental relationships, functions and sources of funding including the District Assemblies Common Fund (DACF) and its administration were mapped out (Zanu, 1996). The current system is premised on the element of participatory democracy. The decentralization policy and the legal framework makes the District Assemblies (DAs) the highest political, administrative, legislative and deliberative organ at the district level and are therefore charged with the onerous duty of ensuring development in an atmosphere of peace in their respective jurisdictions. The system is made up of a four–tier (3) metropolitan and three-tier (4) municipal/ 103 DAs. Each of these is constituted by seventy (70) percent elected and thirty (30) percent nominated members, presided over by a Presiding Member (PM) with an overall administrative Chief Executive, appropriately called Metropolitan, Municipal or District Chief Executive (MCE or DCE). These are supported by the work of subcommittees (ibid). The elected positions are keenly contested for, though without the political party furor characteristic of general elections because the system is (controversially) non-partisan. It is within the elected positions that women' performance would be analyzed subsequently. As part of the efforts to engender institutions, some DAs created Women in Development subcommittees. Where assemblies could not elect adequate number of women, the government through the nomination of women as government appointees shored up their number (Brown, Ghartey and Ekuma, 1996). Since 1988, the performance of women in politics at the local level has recorded some steady but slow progress of not only the number of women contestants but also those who actually win. We may note however, that these numbers though not at appreciable levels, offers some modicum of hope to women' political participation at the local level and a shadow of what is to take place at the national level as more women get in and gain required and necessary experience. Brown, Ghartey and Ekuma sought to bring the situation of women in the local government system to the public domain through an examination of women participation in local government. Their study also sought to analyze the factors that affected the extent of women participation and

design appropriate strategies for the enhancement of the political rights of women. Since then, there have been integrated studies on women in public life generally with portions on the performance of women in local government administration. Brown et al reiterated that women' political participation has a link with the effectiveness of their political activities and their ability to impact local political establishments on the communities, give direction through their involvement in policy and decision making (Brown, Ghartey and Ekuma, 1996).

Women' position in the larger society

At the level of the household where decisions regarding fertility and the production, exchange and consumption of resources are made, at the level of the community, within institutions and in society at large, women consistently have a weaker voice than men. Within the household, the customary social demarcation of expenditure generally gives the responsibility for visible, formal and predictable expenditures such as rent, electricity and school fees to men. This promotes their status as the main providers leaving women with the unpredictable, every day and invisible responsibilities such as provision of clothes, school uniforms and food. It also leaves women disadvantaged in terms of their ability to control resources and to negotiate matters of vital concern to their wellbeing such as the number of children they might have and how to space them, the frequency and manner of sex, the use of contraception and the status of the marriages they enter into. Within the division of labor within households, Ghanaian women continue to shoulder the burden of reproductive activities, commonly known as household chores, within the household. Although more men are increasingly involved in some of these activities, successive Ghana Living Standards Surveys point to the fact that women do the bulk of domestic work in addition to their income earning activities. These multiple tasks result in women's workload being far heavier than that of men. This compromises their ability to accumulate resources from productive activities and participate in public life. Both women and men are active in community affairs. However, their involvement is gendered, with men dominating community governance institutions such as chieftaincy and the unit committees of the District Assemblies

and women participating more in community level activities related to the reproduction of their households. In some rural communities, structures such as the Unit Committees are regarded as male associations. This works through to the national level and translates into male numerical and political dominance of the District Assemblies, the Legislature, Executive and Judiciary. As a result of long standing disadvantages and discriminatory practices, women often lack experience and practice with public lifeand have skill deficits in formal education, public speaking and the craft of politics. This reinforces the pervasive notion that politics and political positions are not for women, and that they are better suited for support and service functions. Many proverbs about the role of women convey this, whether it is in the view that women should sell garden-eggs rather than gunpowder or that even if they should own a gun, it would be lodged in a man's room or that if they should rear livestock, it would be a man's responsibility to sell it. (Amoah, E 1997).

Methodology

This paper is amixed method using data from semi-structured interviews and questionnaires through purposive sampling of women in the Effutu District Assembly. The study adduces this approach, because the mixed method compensate for each other's weaknesses (Creswell 2009; Thornhill, 2009). The method used enabled the researchers to gather responses through expressions of feelings and ideas and at the same time quantify information about a phenomenon. With this, both semi structured interviews and questionnaires were employed in collection of data from 42 respondents in the Effutu Assembly. The sampling technique employed in this study was purposive sampling for recruiting respondents in the community and examining the views of the opinion leaders. The purposive sampling technique aimed at targeting specific people who have direct link to the study i.e. women in the municipality.In all, 40 respondents were available for the study expect two who were absent at the time of conducting the research. Structured interview guide was employed to collect data from two officers in the assembly. The questionnaires were administered by the researchers themselves and a team of young graduates conversant with the

area and fluent in the language of the people. The data obtained was analyzed using SPSS statistical package version 16. The results obtained were represented in frequency and percentage table for easy interpretation and understanding. Interviews were recorded, transcribed and recapitulated for the study based on themes and sub-themes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section deals with data presentation and analysis of data collected on the field. Issues are raised based on the specific objectives of the research. The first part analyzes the demographic characteristics of respondents including their educational and marital status while the second part captures the responses of the people on the causes, and the possible solutions. The analysis of this chapter is done using questionnaire responses while data presentation was done using the frequency and percentage table.

Characteristics of Respondents

The researchers selected the respondents based on different characteristics such as sex, age, level of education and marital status in order to avoid bias.

Table 1: Age characteristics of respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18-25	6	15
26-30	4	10
31-40	16	40
41-50	6	15
51-60	4	10
>60	4	10
Total	**40**	**100**

Source: Field data (2018).

Table 1 represents the age characteristics of the respondents. From the table 1, it is seen that 15 percent of the respondents are in the ages of 18-25, another 10 percent also falls between the ages of 26-30 years. Those who are between the ages of 31-40 represents 40 percent, those between 41-50 years represents 15 percent. The greatest percentage for those in ages 31-40 clearly confirms the words of an officer from the Assembly. *"Almost half of the elected assembly members are within the ages of 31-40."* It was observed that people within the said ages participate more in contesting for positions in

the Assembly. 51-60 and 60 years and above each represents 10 percent.

Table 2: Sex characteristics of respondents

Sex Status	Frequency	Percentage
Male	0	0
Female	40	100
Total	**40**	**100**

Source: field data, 2018.

Table 2 represents the sex characteristics of the respondents. From the table all the 40 respondents selected are females representing the 100%. The researchers were only interested in females for the study.

Table 3: Educational background of respondents

Education Status	Frequency	Percentage
Primary	6	15
J.H.S	4	10
S.H.S	8	20
Diploma	2	5
Degree	6	15
No formal education	14	35
Total	**40**	**100**

Source: Field data, 2018.

Table 3 above represents the educational background of the respondents. From the data provided, 15 percent represents those respondents with primary education background, 10 percent represent those with J.H.S education background, 20 percent for those with S.H.S education, 5 percent for those with diploma certificate and 15 percent for those with university degree. Finally, 35 percent represents those with no formal education. The high percentage for those with no formal education shows the high rate of illiteracy among women in the municipality. The low educational background of the respondents is a major factor affecting their participation in local governance.

Table 4: Marital characteristics of respondents

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	16	40
Married	4	10
Divorced	10	25
Widowed	10	25
Total	**40**	**100**

Source: Field Data (2018).

Table 4 above represents the marital status of the respondents. From the table, 16 respondents represents 40 percent, widowed and divorced respondents represented 25 percent each whiles the married had the least 10 percent. From the table, the reason for the low cooperation of the married was the fact they were not willing to combine politics with their normal housekeeping chores.

Factors accounting for low women participation in Local Government

In line with the research objective, this section presents the responses of the respondents on factors accounting for low women participation in local government in the Effutu Municipality. Prior to that,respondents' views were sought on matters relating to their local political participation.

Table 5: Women's participation in Assembly voting

Have you voted in a district Assembly Election?	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	8	20
No	32	80
Total	**40**	**100**

Source: Field data, 2018.

Table 5 shows the responses of the respondents on the question as to whether they have ever voted in district level elections. From their responses, 8 respondents representing 20 percent responded YES whiles the rest of the 80 percent responded NO to the question. They are of the view that election of Assembly members is not beneficial to them and for that matter they see no reason for taken part in voting them into power. They argue that people elected as representatives are not helping to ensure development as supposed of them but rather wait for another election year before they come down to them.

Table 6: Women and Assembly's elections

Are you aware you can equally contest in D.A Election?	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	26	65
No	14	35
Total	**40**	**100**

Source: Field data, 2018.

The information on table 6 is the responses of the respondents on whether they are aware they can equally contest in assembly elections. From their responses, 65 percent are aware they can contest while the remaining 35 percent are not aware because they think assembly positions are mainly reserved for men.

Table 7: Women candidates in Assembly elections

Have you assembly Before?	Contested in election	Frequency	Percentage
Yes		2	5
No		38	95
Total		**40**	**100**

Source: Field data, 2018.

Table 7 shows the responses of the respondents. 5 percent responded that they have contested and held various positions at the local level. All of the two respondents have contested and are currently serving as unit committee members for their electoral areas. The rest of the 95 percent responded that they have never contested for any local level position. Subsequent analyses will portray the factors responsible for low women participation in local government in the Effutu municipality.

Table 8: Reasons for low women representation in local government

Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of capacity & confidence	8	20
Inadequate access to financial Resource	6	15
Socio-cultural practices	12	30
The perception of politics as "dirty" game	14	35
Total	**40**	**100**

Source: Field data, 2018.

Table 8 shows the reasons for low representation of women in local assembly in Effutu municipal. From the table 20 percent of the respondents were of the view that lack of capacity and confidence is a contributing factor that hinders women' participation and representation in local politics. The study revealed potential women candidates considering running for position often think that lack of education would not favor them because they did not have adequate prerequisite experience of public speaking through the use of the "Queens" language. Actually, this should

not be a problem to potential women candidates who are not educated or have little educational background. This is because; according to section 54 of the Local Government Act (Act 462) "A district should organize its assembly sessions in English or any Ghanaian Language common to the district assembly members. Nonetheless, the study revealed that standing order and other reports of the assembly is deliberated in English language during assembly sessions. This development persistently poses a problem to assembly members of the municipal Assembly who could neither read, write nor speak English Language. An officer from the Assembly remarked, *"Some of our women assembly members who had once represented their people are always handicapped and cannot make any proper contributions due to the use of English Language as a medium of communication in the assembly."*

Also, the study revealed that 35 percent of the women perceive politics as a "dirty" game. Information collected revealed that women candidates face stigma in the municipality because it is commonly believed that women who engage in politics are cheap and immoral like prostitute, who provide sexual favor to some dishonest men in leadership positions to get financial assistance in order to run for political positions. Due to this, women do not have interest in entering into politics in the municipal.

Thirdly, socio cultural practices are a major affront to women participation in local politics in the municipal as a result of the responses of 30 percent of the women. These socio-cultural practices which manifest itself in attitude and morals have gained acceptance over long period of repeated practices in the municipality. As a result, men are the heads of the family and therefore take decisions on behalf of their families whilst women are socially disempowered and tied to domestic activities such as cooking, keeping homes, and supporting children's education. The study further revealed that women candidates who stood and contested positions with men are often discriminated upon by the electorates during voting because the electorates have more trust in men than women in the political sphere. This agrees with the findings of O'Brien and Krook (2012) study which argues that socio-cultural practices of societies have negative impact on women political participation.

Lastly, inadequate access to financial resources is a critical factor preventing women into local politics. 15 percent of the responses revealed that women in the municipality do not have access to financial resources for immediate use to contest for political positions. This points to the fact that women in the municipality engage in informal activities such as fish mongering, petty trading and food selling. Consequently, they do not generate enough income as compared to men who run much bigger businesses in the municipality. These often times make potential candidates particularly women unwilling to contest for political offices.

Effects of Non-participation on the life of women in the Municipality

This section presents the views of the respondents on the effects of non-participationon the political life of women in the Municipality.

Table 9: Effects of Non-participation on the life of women in the municipality

Effect	Frequency	Percentage
Remoteness of Government	22	55
Little or no information about assembly Programs	18	45
Total	**40**	**100**

Source: Field data, 2018.

Table 9 shows the responses of the respondents on the effects of non-participation on their political life in the municipality. 55 percent were of the view that local government is far away from them as they cannot feel its presence. The study revealed that their non-participation in the local politics do not make the activities of the assembly interesting to them. One respondent is of the view that *"whether assembly or no assembly, I live my life, when I face problem, the assembly don't come in to solve it for me. In fact I don't see there is ONE here."* Finally, 45 percent of the respondents were of the view that they are not aware of the programs and activities of the assembly. They are of the view that people elected to represent them are not accountable and do not come down to enlighten and inform them about some of the major decisions taken in the assembly. They only come down when they want them to renew their tenure of office. These attitudes of the elected have made them lose interest in the assembly programs.

Measures to Encourage Women Participation in Local Government

This section presents the measures to encourage women participation in local government.

Respondents shared views on measures they think will help to encourage women's participation.

Table 10: Measures to encourage women participation in local government

Measures	Frequency	Percentage
Public education of Women	10	25
Strengthening of affirmative bill to be more effective	18	45
Provision of funds by NGO's to assist women in politics	12	30
Total	**40**	**100**

Source: Field data, 2018.

Table 10 above represents the responses of the respondents on measures to encourage women participation in local government. 45 percent were of the view that there should be a special quota system for women to encourage their participation in local government. There should be a constitutional laid out plan for a special quota system to be introduced in the Ghanaian politics. With the introduction of the affirmative bill in Ghanaian politics, much emphasis should be given to the local assembly to allow women to contest for special reserved seats. The system should be strengthened and monitored to its full realization to allow women to contest and participate in local politics. Also, 25 percent of the responses revealed that public education is a major factor that can contribute to strengthening women in local politics. Public education is enlightening individuals about a program or an issue. Women in the municipality should be educated on the role they can play in contributing to effective decision making in the municipality. The Assembly should be empowered by the central government to organize educational forum aimed at educating women to take up the challenge of contesting in the local level elections since the role of women in politics cannot be overemphasized. Lastly the role of NGO's and stakeholders in helping to provide financial support to women candidate in elections is very crucial from the responses of 30 percent of the respondents. Provision of financial resources will help women to organize campaigns, print posters and get in touch with the electorates so as to enable them to explain their *manifestoes* to them. The NGO's should organize common campaign platforms to allow all women candidates to explain and campaign for themselves during local election. This will help to reduce the problem women go through during campaigning and elections.

Recommendation

After a careful study of the findings, the following are some recommendations to be accentuated. First, the Government of Ghana should pass a legislation to facilitate the participation and representation of women in local level elections in forms of reservations. For example, the Government of Ghana should adopt a quota system reserving a certain percentage of seats in districts/ municipal assemblies for women. This is likely to improve women participation in local government in the country.

In addition, Non-governmental Organizations, and financial institutions should be enthused to economically empower women through financial supports. If women have financial support from these bodies, they can venture into economic activities that can earn them much to be financial independent so that women candidates can sponsor their political activities. Again, NGOs and other charitable organizations as well as individual philanthropists should work in partnership to set up an educational funds to help provide financial assistance to support girl child education. This would encourage girls to stay in schools at all levels of the educational leather to learn in order to acquire knowledge and skills, to improve their confidence level for future political positions.

Furthermore, the Non-Formal Education programs must be well resourced to cater for women in the Non-Formal Education system to be able to read, write and understand issues relating to governance and politics. This would allure to improving the level of women's political participation and representation in the country.

Finally, religious and opinion leaders should be encouraged to spearhead crusades to promote the cause of women representations in politics in their respective communities. These stakeholders must organize campaigns to educate the local people

about the importance of women in both national and local politics.

CONCLUSION

The active involvement of women in local government has been identified as necessary because of the effective management capabilities of women and for the fact that women constitute the largest proportion of Ghana's population. Democracy cannot truly deliver for all of its citizens if more than half of the population remains under-represented in the political arena. Therefore, creating space for women to participate in local government is a vital step towards enhancing gender equal governments and gender sensitive policies.

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