

## **POLITICAL INEQUALITY AND WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN PARLIAMENT IN SELECTED AFRICAN COUNTRIES**

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**Abstract:** This research is linked to feminist legal theory which is based on the principle of equality and individualism. It's opposed to the patriarchal ideas that dominated Africa. Female political participation in Africa differs. While South Africa is 46.8%, Rwanda 61.3%, Uganda 34.4%, Egypt 27.4%, Kenya is 21.8% respectively. These instances of unequal participations in governance are pointer to the fact that there is political inequality in Africa generally. Despite its many gender equality policies, regional and international documents accepted as a requisite for achieving development. Therefore, the paper comparatively investigated the political inequality syndrome and women participation Uganda, South Africa, Egypt, Kenya and Rwanda as selected countries in Africa. The major objective is to unravel the ratio of political participation between men and women. Comparative research methodology was generated to secure secondary data through qualitative and quantitative approaches using single percentages in analysis. It finds out that quota system and or the entrenchment of affirmative action, seat reservation etc are necessary for the achievement of maximum female representations in Africa.

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**Keywords:** Inequality, Patriarchy, Parliament, Representation, Constitution

### **INTRODUCTION**

Democratic governance is achieved when women and men are able to influence the political agenda on an equal footing (UN, 2004). Therefore women political participation is the actual involvement of women in the governance of the communities they belong to whether via elective, appointive or merited position. Similarly, Dubrow (2016), sees political inequality as structured differences in the distribution of political resources. According to this definition, one group has greater or lesser access to, or acquisition of, political resources than another group. On a global context, Cook (1994) opined that discrimination against women is a national and international human right issue. According to the UN Women, "from the local to the global levels, women's leadership and political participations are restricted. Women are under-represented as voters, as well as in leading positions. This occurs despite their proven abilities and their right to participate equally in democratic governance". Comparatively, as of July 1, 2019, only 24.3% of national parliamentarians were females globally (IPU, 2020) while in other domains of government as of January 2019, only 17% of government ministers were women (House of Commons Library,, March 4, 2019). Similarly, Eme et al (2014) citing Mark (2014) added

that "... we know that gender disparity in political participation is a global phenomenon and not peculiar to one country. The level of women's participation in governance in sub-Sahara Africa was 20.2% Asia 17.9%, Pacific 14.9%, Arab 10.7%, Europe 20.9%, and America 22.7%.

Karl Marx described it as the Chauvinistic nature of men to perpetuate dominion over women. How could women that constituted half of the world's population (49.6% Female, 50.4% Male of 7,550,262,000) total world population according to the UN 2017 World Population Report, hold only 24.3% of seats in parliaments globally? Women's inactivity in politics is due to traditional gender roles and deep-seated cultural and religious norms that had become impediment according to Open Society Initiative for West Africa (2019). Islamic Purview of women is that of raising children and culture as bearers. Both Christianity and Islam characterized women as the weaker sex whose natural place is the home. For the Egyptian Freedom and Justice Party (2011), women are to be restricted to the home with roles limited to that of a mother and wife. The Muslim Brotherhood's ideological framework stated that women could take part in politics, as long as it did not undermined her ability to perform her primary role of mother and wife. Another constraint is the non implementation and general constitutionalization of Beijing affirmative action and Quota System. These made the phenomenon of women low participation in politics worrisome (Eme et al, 2015).

Dubrow (2016), juxtaposed the nature of political inequality and especially how unequal are human beings. Tripp (2013), looked at the presence of women in African politics and saw that Africa is a leader in women parliamentary representation. Bauer (2013) focused on gender quotas in Africa, and asked about the impact of increasing women in parliament. Nzomo (2011), discussed feminism and governance in Africa using feminist approach. However, non of the above specifically centered and insisted on the legislation of female's political participation and ascertained whether it constituted a problem towards women active participation in governance. Hence, this work explored the constitutionality of gender policies in Africa. The point of departure is to comparatively access the disparity in African political inequality and why all African countries had not enshrined the African Charter on Human and People's Right (ACHPR) and the African Union Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in their Constitutions.

### **Research Questions**

- i. Are women politically active in Africa?
- ii. What are the percentages of female participation in parliament?
- iii. Are there some traditional, religions and domestic gender roles that are inimical to the political participation of women in Africa?
- iv. Can constitutional provisions limit or promote political participation of women?

### **Research Objectives**

- i. To ascertain the political status of women in Africa
- ii. To buttress the actual percentages of their participation
- iii. To evaluate if there are cultural impediment
- iv. To show that legal frame work promote women political participation

### **METHODOLOGY**

This research adopted the comparative research methodology. It aims at making comparisons across the selected different countries of Africa. Secondary data from textbooks, Journals and internet were used to get critical information which helped the researcher in the analysis. Some statistical tools such as simple percentage histogram, bar-chart were employed to compare the participation of women in politics in the countries under investigation. The areas of study are Kenya (East Africa) South Africa (Southern Africa), Uganda (East Central Africa), Rwanda (East Central Africa) and Egypt (North Africa). They were selected purposefully because of their numerical strength, advancement, feministic awareness, religious belief and to be used as a point of contact for discuss.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The research adopted feminist legal theory. The theory recognized that oppression results from the fact dominates and derive benefits from controlling, and subjugating. The theory is a synthesis of both Liberal and Radical feminism (Wandaka, 2019). While the liberal feminist approaches were the fight for equality of political rights using John Stuart Mill's liberalism, the second wave (Radical Feminism) using Patricia Smith, sees society as patriarchally structured to subordinate women (Ritzer and Jefferey, 2014; Dorey-Stein, 2018). Liberal feminist maintained that women as human beings are like men and are entitled for equal rights. The radicals in addition argued that the law, state and social institutions are all structured in the favour and interest of male class against the women hence; they called for its end (Wandaka, 2019).

### Political Inequality in Kenya

The research discovered that women in Kenya according to (Wandaka 2016), constituted about 60% of the total population. Going by 2020 figure according to Country Meters.Info, out of 53,168,380 persons, women constituted the total of 26.6 million persons (60.1%) more than the men. If the popular saying "majority carries the vote" counts, then Kenyan women following democratic principles should be a force to reckon with democratically. But the revise has been the case since the attainment of political independence in 1963: Kenya through the regimes has been grappling with persistent problems of political, economic and regional inequalities which had led to series of unbalanced development (Stiftung, 2012). Through various policies and interventions, the successive governments have tried to reverse the discriminative effects of colonial policies that had created wide disparities and structural imbalances. Those women are poorly represented with fewer services and opportunities to improve their well-being while men are generally better. Looked at from a national perspective (Kanyinga, Ibid), argued that inequalities in governance institutions have been an integral part of Kenya's social political life.

### Government Policies to Deal with Inequalities

At independence, Kenya inherited a system with unequal distribution of services. The Europeans dominated the major sectors alongside the Asian and the Arab competitors. Stiftung (2012:104), mentioned that gender inequalities were also noticeable. Successive regimes attempts to address these had been that of mixed results. Between 1963–1969, there was no female MP in Kenya and women's presence in parliament remained 4% through to the end of the 1990s. This was also period of total cooptation and silencing of women's political voices by the Kenya State (Nzomo, 2012). Since independence, Kenya's development strategy has been anchored on "African Socialism and its Application Planning in Kenya", this has served as Kenya's development bible for aimed to remove the series of inequalities inherited from the colonial period stated as follows:

*The state has an obligation to ensure equal opportunity to all its citizens, eliminate exploitation and discrimination and (will) provide the needed social services such as education, medical care and social security.*

In African socialism, the government committed itself to guaranteeing every citizen, males and females, poor and rich, full and equal political and economic rights to ensure the political participation of every person in the running of the country, and that Kenya's resources would be used to benefit all Africans.

### The 2010 Constitution of Kenya

The 2010 constitution of Kenya provided solutions to political inequality and legal framework for the recognition and protection of the rights of women, and marginalized group. It does this through its rights-based approach to development, where everyone males and females as enacted to fully participate and benefit. The constitution took the route of gender quotas, affirmative action and reservation of seats to reduce gender parity in all levels of government so that not more than 2/3 of the members of elective bodies shall be of the same gender. The constitution sets a minimum number of women that should be in politics. The provisions are meant

to prevent a super majority and dominance of the male class. The provisions of the constitution made it mandatory for women to be represented in the political leadership. Prior to 2010, the constitution did not recognize, and therefore did not prohibit discrimination constitution in Article 27 (8) provided that the state shall put in place affirmative action programmes designed to ensure that marginalized groups; “participate and are represented in governance and other spheres of life”. The constitution, at chapter 11, Article 174 on Devolved Government, also contained provisions that will improve equality of gender and ensure equity, one its major objective among others, is to protect and promote the interests and rights of marginalized groups. Chapter 4, on equity and freedom from discrimination, categorically stated that women and men have the right to equal treatment, including the right to equal opportunities in political, economic, cultural and social spheres. In addition, discrimination on account of sex either by state or individual is also outlawed. Article 250, demands that the head and vice of independent commission should not be of the same gender similarly, Article 97 of the Kenyan constitution created the position of women representatives. More importantly, Article 175 (c) and Article 197 states categorically that no more than two third of members of representative bodies in each county government shall be of the same gender.

### **Political Inequality and Short Coming of the Constitution**

Even as well intended and properly articulated the constitution had the following short coming. Lack of incentive, entrench mechanism, party interest, the culture of tokenism and lack of implementation. The constitution of Kenya (as Amended), (National Assembly Bill No. 4 of the 2018). But as beautiful as it is the bill failed because the National Assembly refused to enact it (Ghai and Jill, 2011). A Gender Analysis of the 2017 Kenya General Election in conjunction with the National Conference on women’s political participation stated that:

*For the first time in Kenya’s history, women were elected to serve as governors and senators, and 29% more women ran for office than in the previous election. According to report published by National Democratic Institute (NDI) and Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA). Generally, women held about 145 positions in the 2013 general election and 172 out of the 1,883 elective positions in the 2017 Kenya general election. This according to (NDI/FIDA 2018), accounted for only 23%, and yet below the 33% constitutional provision.*

For the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Kenya has the least number of women in parliament in the East African community. According to Kimani (2017), just 23 women were elected to the National Assembly out of 290 contested seats, and 3 women only were elected in the senate out of 47 contested seat. Therefore, in the 2017 election, women only made up 21% of National Assembly and Senate. In the 20 cabinet secretaries appointed, only 4 were women (Chatham House, 2020). Owiti (2015), citing KNBS (2013) stated that Kenya is ranked 103 out of 169 countries, making it the 66<sup>th</sup> most unequal country in the world (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics K.N.B.S and Society for International Development SID, 2013). And that aggregate national statistics indicate huge gaps in the quality of life between the rich and the poor, urban and rural populations, regions and ethnic groups and between genders in Kenya. This, several scholars like (Rothchild, 1969; Nellis, 1974; Kariuki, 2004; Widner 1992 and Land, 2009) agreed specifically that Kenya inequality had been a subject of discourse since independence (Odhiambo-Atienko, 2002; and Githongo, 2005).

### **Political Inequality in Egypt**

Egypt is an Islamic country and is rooted in Islamist ideology. There purview of women is that of rising of children and as culture bearers of Islam. Islamist theories also characterized women as the weaker sex and their natural place as the home. In Egypt women are restricted to the home with roles limited to that of a mother and wife (Freedom and Justice Party, 2011). The Muslim Brotherhood’s ideological framework stated that women could take part in politics, as long as it did not undermined her ability to perform her primary role of mother and

wife. Women public life is tied to her first duty as a mother. This is Egyptian Islamist ideology. (El-Sheikh and Kirkpatrick, 2013) quoting Abul A'la Maududi:

*“As human have no control over their sexual desire, it must be controlled by the law in order to protect men from the seduction of women”.*

Hence, Shehadeh (2003), citing (Hassan Al-Banna 1906 – 1949) “called for the segregation of male and females, and that women should only be present in the public sphere if they apply all Islamic regulations in dress and behaviour, by covering their bodies, refrain from eye contact with men, stand behind them in mosques and use separate entrances and exits”. It is upon this assumption that Islamist politicking worked. The basis of Islamist ideology creates a framework which is largely incompatible with the principle of equality between men and women, a fundamental tension between Islamism and women’s rights suffice it that Egypt is therefore, either a democracy or Islamism (Al-Ali, 2000).

### **History of Women Participation in Egyptian Governance**

Egypt granted women the right to vote and run for elections in 1956. The first Arabic country to do so. In the 1957 elections, (8) eight women ran for parliamentary election and 2 of whom won. Subsequent developments, however, pushed Egypt back from been a regional pioneer to a regional lagger. Despite the early start, women’s representation in parliament continued to be quite small (between 2 and 3%) until the 2011 uprisings that ousted Hosni Mubarak. The only exceptions were the 1987 and 2010 parliaments, during which gender quotas were applied (Abdolgawad and Hassan, 2019). The limited inclusion of women in the executive branch tells a similar story of minimal female representation. The first female member of cabinet was Hekmat Abo Zeid 1962. Since then, the average number of women in cabinet ranged between one and three women, out of a cabinet that recently reached around 30 members.

Beginning from 2013, the overall political context of the Egyptian women changed. Their parliamentary representation increased sevenfold since 2013 and their participation in the executive branch increased threefold in the 2018 cabinet (El-Din, 2021). The 2015 parliamentary election, however, was a trend disrupter. It resulted in a historic rise in female representation. A total of 75 women out of 568 seats, a change mostly derived by gender quotas. An additional 14 women were appointed by the president. In total, 89 female members currently hold seats in parliament, making up 14.9% of all representatives. This was sequel to gender quota system adopted on an unprecedented scale in the parliament and local councils after 2014, (El-Feki, 2017).

During the post Hosni Mubarak era, the overall political context of the Egyptian women changed tremendously. Women actors and women’s issues have been at the forefront of Egyptian politics since the 2011 uprising, similar to the 1919 protest against British occupation. On one hand, the 2011 protest that took place after Mubarak’s ouster have included noticeable participation by women activists and ordinary women. Some of the post Mubarak challenges are the establishment of gender quota: perhaps the first major effort was whether to establish a gender quota in the first Mubarak parliamentary election, a move several Islamist forces viewed as highly controversial, majorly between the Salafist al-Nour Party and the Conservative Islamists. Secondly, Equal Political Right: another battle in the post Mubarak era was whether to give women equal political right to run for president and assume prime minister position during debates on the 2012 Constituent Assembly for new constitution.

### **Women in Egyptian Politics 2010 – 2018**

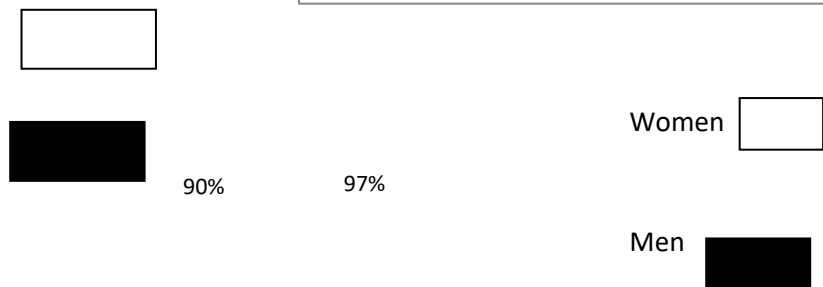
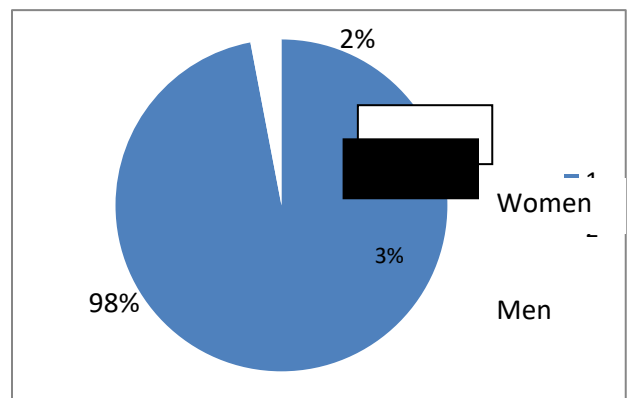
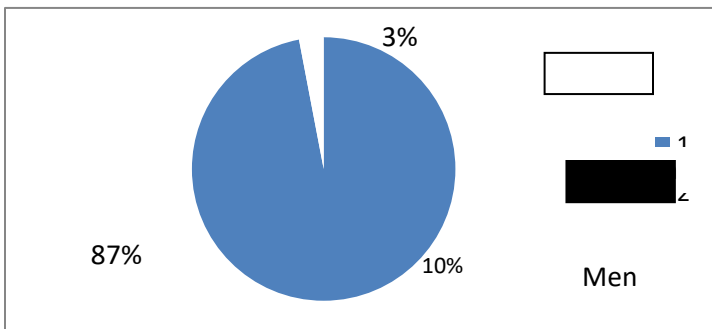
Within 2010 to 2018 Egypt had four presidents; Hosni Mubarak, Mohammed Mors, Adly Mansour and Abdel Fattah el-Sisi. Under Hosni Mubarak’s rule in 2010, out of the 518 seats in the lower House of Parliament, 67 (13%) were given to women. However, this already low level of representation fell the more under Mohammed Morsi’s government to 2% even further below the world average of 23% in lower or single house female representation. Out of 100 members Constituent Assembly to form a new constitution as appointed by president Morsi (June 2012 – July 2013) only 6 were women. The whole of 94 were men. These 6 women, according to the National Council for Women were also members of president Morsi Muslim Brotherhood members. And

that those few were illegal and factional whose purpose was to monopolise the formation of the constitution. An under representative of women and women’s issues in wider Egyptian society. Sholkamy Hania, added that the female members of the FJP were there as logistics and recruitment rather than as high level decision makers, a cavalier attitude to appointment (Scholkamy, 2012). Under Muslim Brotherhood rule, 85% of women claimed that their views and opinions were not represented by any political group. The structural inequality, within president Morsi’s government was largely due to the Brotherhood reluctance to implement a quota for a minimum proportion of women with various state institutions, FJP representative Azza el-Garf (2010) further explained that women had not yet proven themselves competent. She added that introducing gender allocation would be a form of discrimination against men (Morsy, 2013). Overall female parliamentary representation sank from 13% under President Hosni Mubarak to 2% under president Morsi’s government (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2013). During Mohammed Morsi regime, only 3 women were chosen for the 21 strong team of advisers and aids. Two of which among the three were Islamists. This reoccurred even under president Adly Mansour interim government (4<sup>th</sup> July 2013–8<sup>th</sup> June, 2014). Out of the 50 member Constituent Assembly women were only 5. It rose again under President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi (2014) to 162 (27.4%) out of 591 in Lower House (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2020).

**Fig. 1: Parliamentary Representation – lower House June 2010. Parliamentary Representation – Lower House June 2012**

**Source:** Women in National Parliament [www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm](http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm)

**Fig. 2: Parliamentary Representation – Upper and Lower House June 2010**



**Source:** Women in National Parliament [www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm](http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm)

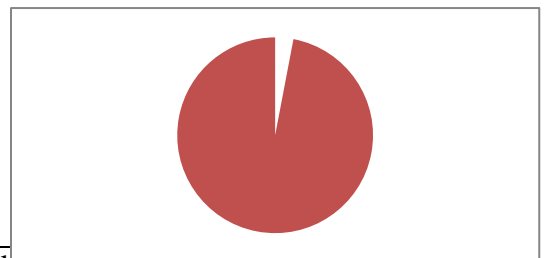
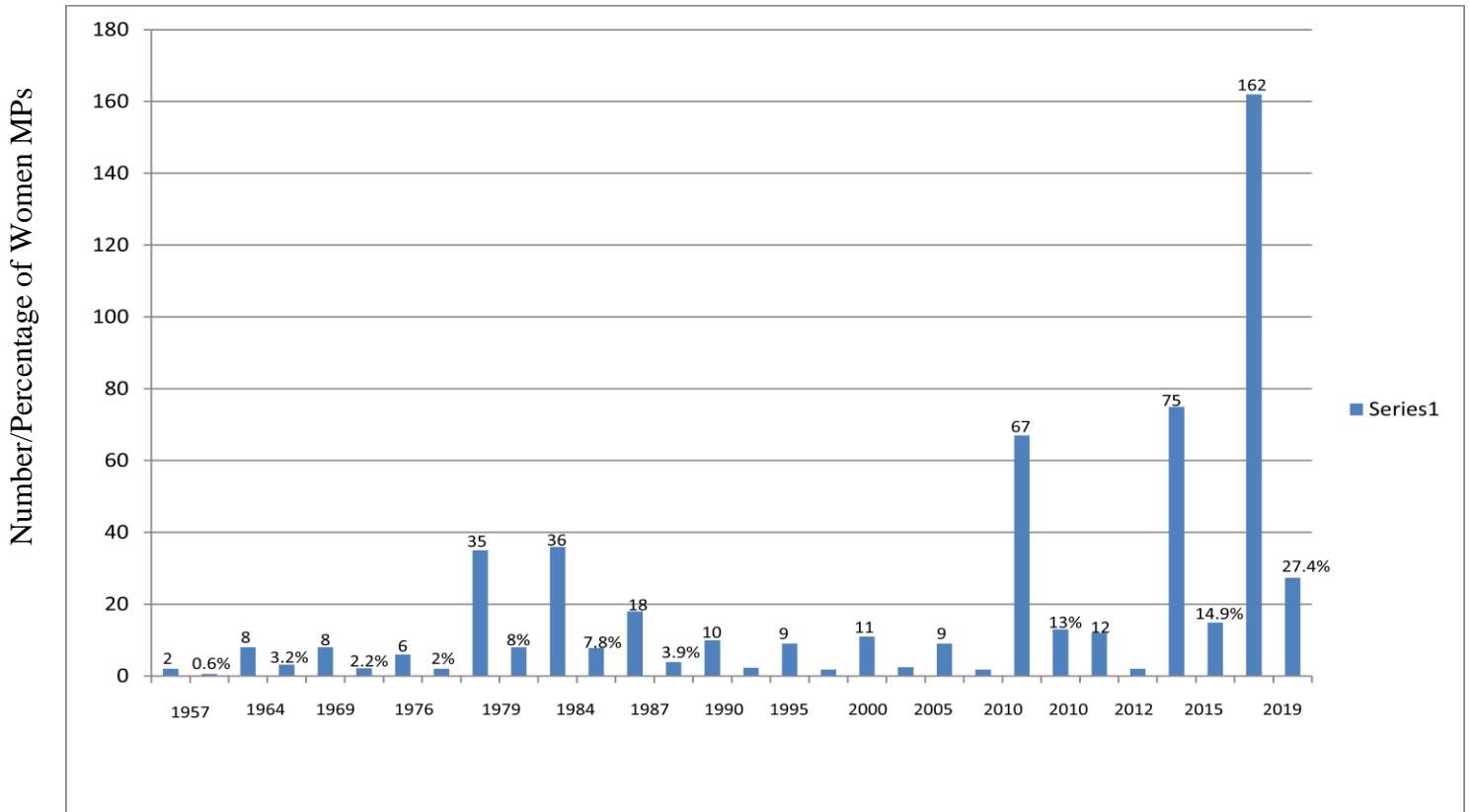


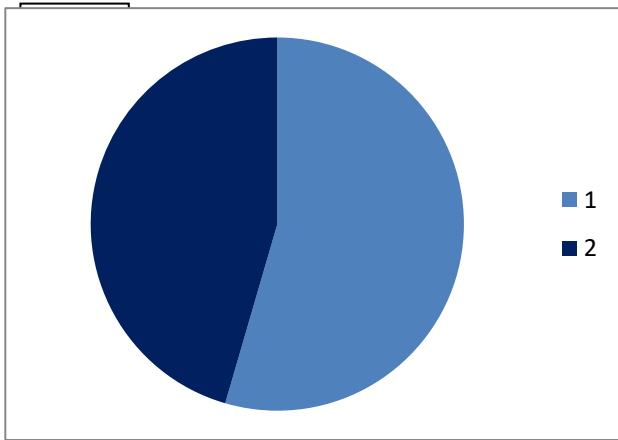
Fig. 3: Women's Representation in Egyptian Parliament 1957 - 2019



### Political Inequality in South Africa

From 1910 to 1994 during which democracy arrived, members of the parliament were elected chiefly by the South African white minority. The South African parliament had a mere 2.7% representation of women (Pitamber, 2016). The successive governments had undertaken various measures to advance the position of women and to promote gender equality in all spheres (Myakayaka - Manzini, 2005). By South Africa's 1999 election, she added, women accounted for 29.8% of the elected public representatives. This gave it the edge in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) regions. Under president Cyril Ramaphosa, for the first time, women made up half of the government's cabinet. Pitamber (2016) citing South African Government stated that women ministers now comprise 41% of the cabinet, women Deputy Ministers make up 47% of the total number of Deputy ministers and there is a 45% representation of women in the National Assembly and National Council of Provinces The World Bank (2019) data on proportion of seats held by women in national parliament has it that the 45% is the highest proportion in the history of South Africa. This dramatic improvement is presented thus: 32% 2004, 42% 2009, 41% 2014 and 46.8% 2019 – 2014 (IPU, 2020).

**Fig. 4: Female/male MPs ratio 2020**



**Source:** PMG and World Bank data on proportion of seats held by women in Nation Parliament 2020.

### Political inequality in Rwanda

Rwanda has a population of 8,128,553 inhabitants of which 52.3% are women. Consequential to the 1994 genocide of which most of the people who died, who never returned home after fleeing, or who were imprisoned on charges of genocide were men. Women became saddled with the responsibilities of caring for families, taking care of about 500,000 orphans and fostered by families headed by women and assuming duties that were traditionally carried out in patriarchal Rwanda by men. Women heads of household comprise of 34% of the population. Rwanda is governed by a multiparty presidential system of government (Izabiliza, 2005). Strong political commitment in Rwanda has resulted in significant positive strides in the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment. In fact, women's representation in decision-making positions makes Rwanda the World leader in term of women in parliament after the 2018 parliamentary elections (United Nations Development Programme UNDP, 2018).

### The 2003 Constitution of Rwanda

Rwanda is signatory and had domesticated all legal instruments that protect the right of women nationally, regionally and internationally. In the Worlds of President Paul Kagame:

*“Gender equality in every sector is not a favour, it is a right. It is the way it should be. The right to equality is not something that can be given or taken”.*  
(Kagame, 1999).

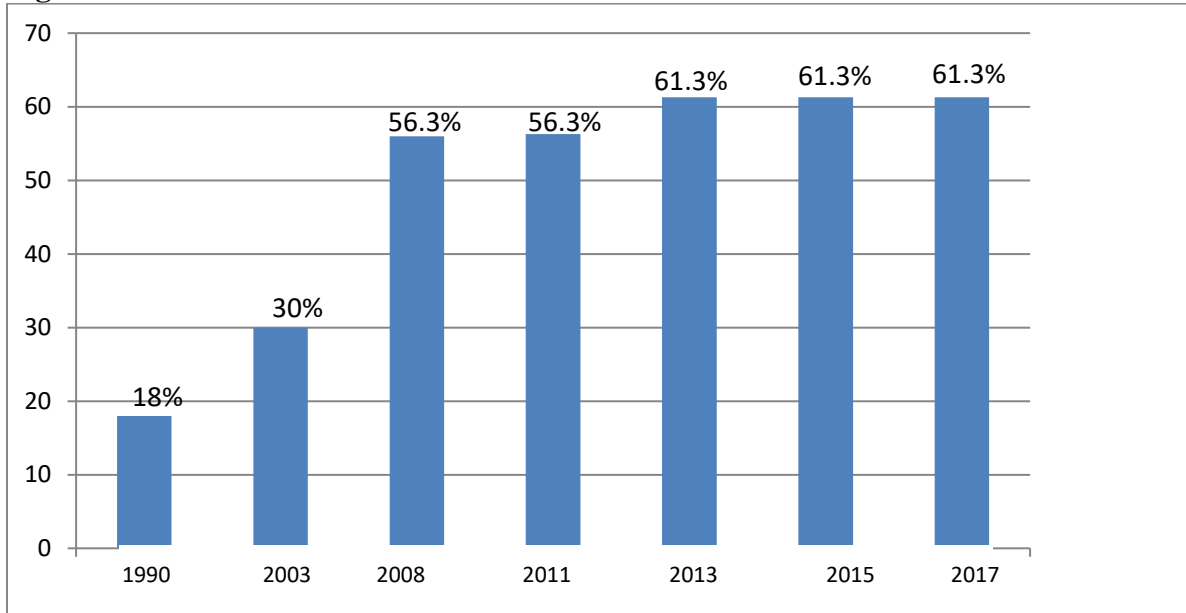


The constitution of Rwanda according to (Rwandan Women Parliamentary Forum, 2005) affirms the country's adherence with the principle of ensuring equal rights between men and women. Article 9 stipulates that women are granted at least 30% of the posts in decision-making organs. Article 76 provided that 24 (30%) of the eighty (80) seats in the Chamber of deputies (legislature) are reserved for women. Likewise, Article 82 specified that at least 30% of the seats in the senate be occupied by women (African Development Bank Group Report, 2008).

### **History of Female Participation in Politics**

During the pre-colonial era, women participation in politics and decision making in Rwanda was insignificant specifically at the higher echelon. Their responsibilities were child education, welcoming of visitor, managing of household and advising of husbands. Before the genocide, many of the Rwandan women were absent from political life where social and political decisions are made. They stayed inside the home and therefore did not participate in public debates. They were under represented, in 1992, only 3 females were appointed ministers and out of 70 parliamentarians, only 12 were females. And until the genocide, there were no female Mayors. The only women that had substantial influence during the pre-colonial era were the Queen Mothers, notably, Kanjogera (Hogg, 2010).

After the distinctive genocide of 1994, there appeared the need to reconstruct the country. Rwanda women started to play important role after the genocide. The Government of National Unity demonstrated its goodwill and gave women a stake in the rebuilding process by appointing them into different leadership positions and this had continued. For president Paul Kagame, "gender equality is not a favour but a right". Hence, Rwanda has a higher percentage of representation of women in government than any country in the World. In 2017, women occupied 49 seats out of the 80 seats in the lower House parliament while 10 out of 26 seats in the Upper House of Parliament (Patrick, 2019; IPU 2020). Thus, (Elliot, 2019) summarized this by saying "women make up about 62% of Rwanda's National legislature far more proportionally than any other country followed by Cuba. They have contributed significantly in ensuring a strong political commitment toward the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment. The Rwandan government introduction of quota in political parties rather than seat reservations in parliament was a major stride in ensuring a higher representation of women in government. This was made necessary because about 70% of the surviving population after the genocide was women. Patrick (2019) citing Claudette Mukamana, a District Vice Mayor, stated that the presence of so many women in Rwanda government has resulted in the passing legislations meant to improve gender equality. And in all angles of governance, women are there. Of the 14 Supreme Court Justices, 7 are women. At the local level, under the decentralization arrangement, women occupied 26% of the post on the executive councils of each province (Hogg, 2010).

**Fig.5: Women in Rwanda Parliament**

Source: UN women 2018, IPU 2020

### Political inequality in Uganda

#### History of Female Participation in Uganda

The National Resistance Council has been the ruling party since Statistically, Kadaga (2013) citing Tripp (2000:39, 71), traced the history of Ugandan women political participation to 1986 when the National Resistance Council came to power. Since then according to her, there had been a steady rise in female participation in politics. This became possible through introduction of affirmative action. Boniface (2013) also added that Yoweri Museveni had been its president ever since.

- From 1962 1<sup>st</sup> parliament to 1985 4<sup>th</sup> parliament, no woman was elected into the parliament.
- 5<sup>th</sup> Parliament (1986 – 1996), 34 women were elected to ‘women’s seats’ while 7 other women were elected on the ‘regular seats’. In total women constituted 41 seats (17%) of the National Resistance Council (Tripp, 2000: 39, 71).
- 6<sup>th</sup> Parliament (1996 – 2001), there was 39 districts in Uganda and, accordingly 39 (16%) women were elected as female district MPs.
- 7<sup>th</sup> parliament (2001 – 2006), during this period, 17 new districts had been introduced making it 56 seats and women secured 56 (23%) seats.
- 8<sup>th</sup> parliament (2006 – 2011), the parliament comprised of 217 constituency representatives out of which 99 (31%) were women while 79 of the women were district representatives, 14 were directly elected.
- 9<sup>th</sup> parliament (2011 – 2016), the parliament comprised of 375 members with 129 (34.4%) women MPs, an increase from the 8<sup>th</sup> parliament.
- 10<sup>th</sup> parliament (2016 – 2021), women got about 157 seats (34.7%), out of 452 MPs. 120 were district women representatives while 19 were directly elected (competed with me).

Comparatively, the overall representatives of women in direct election is very low, out of 8,793 directly elected council position, only 87 were won by women (Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2017). This indication points to the fact that women cannot still compete with their male counterpart in a general direct election. The National Resistance Council has been the ruling party since 1986 when they toppled Idi Amin (Simba, 2015). The Uganda parliament is unicameral and is composed of 426 seats out of which 112 are district women representatives. Though, it was established as far back as 1962, with the first parliament (1962 – 1963), 2<sup>nd</sup>

parliament (1963 – 1971) 3<sup>rd</sup> parliament (1979 – 1980), 4<sup>th</sup> parliament (1980 – 1985) respectively without females. Women started participating during the 5<sup>th</sup> parliament (Kadaga, 2013).

### **The Uganda Constitution**

Female political participation in Uganda had witnessed tremendous increase comparable to other African countries. This was made possible sequel to its constitution. The International Federation for Human Rights – FIDA (2009) citing the Ugandan Law Reform Commission Article 248 (1) 1995 constitution stated that the constitution of Uganda contains several provisions on the principles of non-discrimination and equal rights of women and men. Under Article 21, “All persons are equal before and under the law in all spheres of political, economic, social and cultural life and in every other respect and shall enjoy protection of the law ..... A person shall not be discriminated against on the ground of sex, race, colour, ethnic origin, tribe, birth, creed or religion, social or economic standing, political opinion or disability,” (FIDA, 2009).

Article 31, entitled ‘Rights of women’, provided that, “the state shall provide the facilities and opportunities necessary to enhance the welfare of women to enable them to realize their full potential and advancement”, “women shall have the rights to equal treatment with men and that right shall include equal opportunities in political, economic and social activities”, and “laws, cultures, customs or traditions which are against the dignity, welfare or interest for special measures to increase women’s representation in public life. Women shall have the rights to affirmative action for the purpose of redressing the imbalances created by history, tradition or custom. But this had been overturned according to the Uganda National Development Plan (UNDP) because of violence and untold discrimination. The limited political participation of women, as a major factor contributed to the persistence of violence and discrimination against women, has negatively impacted the Uganda’s development, (UNDP, 2018). It was observed that the limited political participation of women led to the formulation and passing of policies and laws which do not protect women’s rights, Uganda Human Rights Commission, UHRC/Human Right Watch, HRW Report, 2019).

Sequel to the above characteristics, and in an attempt to address the challenges. In 1995, a constitution was made. In Uganda, Article 32 (1), 33 (2), 33 (3), 33 (4), 33 (5), 78 (1) (b) of the 1995 constitution all encompass affirmative action seats for women. Furthermore, (National Objective XV and VI), also encompass affirmative action that led to the establishment of the Equal Opportunities Commission. The Local Government Act has the potential to strengthen women’s participation in local government decision making. The electoral Commission Act 1997, Mandated the Commission to organize elections and Cater for Women’s Quotas, while the political parties and organization’s Act 2005. The press and Journalist Act, and the Electronic Media Act prohibit negative reporting on women that stand for political posts. These laws help to enhance women’s active involvement in political leadership (UWONET Report, 2007). It also stipulated separate election from the districts through the parliament using affirmative action. On this foregoing the research succinctly recommended as follow:

- i. That the political status of women be boosted using either quota and the implementation of affirmative action.
- ii. That campaign, sensitization, public advocacy be employed to educate the public of the social problem and encourage to wake up and lobby for inclusion into public offices.
- iii. Every cultural impediment against women be remove.
- iv. That all affirmative action, quota policies regional and international gender equality treatise be enacted into law.

### **SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This research investigated the political inequality syndrome in Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda Egypt and Kenya on purpose to ascertain the gender gap of African countries comparably to those of Europe, Asia and America. Rwanda and all the countries that entrenches some forms of political equality in their constitutions either as affirmative action, seat reservation or quota system had bridged their gender gap while the other had not. It find

out that just as political inequality is a national problem, it is also an international problem, a human right constitutional problems perpetuated by men against the womenfolk. Out of 46,177 total world parliamentarians, men occupied the whole of 34,971 leaving only 11,206 (24.3%) for women globally. Therefore, from every indication, there is political inequality. Political equality is not a favour but a right and should be constitutionalized irrespective of any country's background, culture, religion and population.

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