



Linnaeus University

Department for Social Science

Peace and Development Studies

Master's Thesis



**"Factors Affecting Women's Participation in Politics: A Comparative
Study of Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, and Uganda"**

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Abstract

This paper is a non-experimental descriptive comparative study of factors that affect women's representation in politics at the national level and also covers four countries: Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, and Uganda. The study's primary purpose was to examine and understand factors within each case that affect women's political participation at the national level based on why in some countries, women's political participation is seen as the leader in advocating for gender equality. In contrast, others continue to lag, despite adopting some measures for women's greater participation in politics. It uses deductive logic by framing factors contributing to women's under-representation in politics and capitalizes on the feminist social role. Leadership categorization theory explains factors that promote under-reorientation. Since the study entailed finding information from archive data, such as the constitutions of the four case study countries, it utilized a diagnostic and prognostic analytical framework of problem identification and providing viable solutions.

In all four countries, the study found that gender equality is guaranteed in their constitutions. Those cases have many pieces of legislation and policies adopted to improve gender equality at the national level. However, challenges remain in the implementation coupled with the influence of socio-cultural, political, and economic factors and existing customary laws. Admittedly, those cases have actively fostered women's involvement in politics. However, there are still many challenges to be addressed to achieve the quality of women's participation in Parliament. Even though the number of women in Parliament has reached, it doesn't mean that all women in a country have reached equality. As such, there is a need to concentrate on the effectiveness of women in political positions and promoting women's influence over decision-making processes at all levels, especially in investing and

fixing transformational change in the system of governance concerning institutional norms and values.

The purpose of the central focus was to identify the factors and strategies that have been successful in some countries in enhancing women's political participation at the national level and evaluate whether or not these policy changes and achievements could be replicated in others. Using the case studies, the overall objective was to examine how some countries have achieved higher rates of female representation in parliaments than others. All case studies have the same constitutional commitments to gender equality and have ratified the same instruments relevant to women's Empowerment. The structured, focused comparison and process tracing approaches have been selected and used to assess and analyze the cases. The use of process tracing helped to test and refines the hypothesized causal mechanisms. The structured, focused comparison was utilized to explain and perform the comparative case studies adequately. This study has used a deductive orientation to reach a logical conclusion. Therefore, five different variables and hypotheses were formulated based on the literature review to apply stated choice methods. Furthermore, the analysis of this work was based on the results of tested hypotheses against empirical cases to comprehend the meaning of the results, especially by identifying the similarities and differences among cases. In a word, the analysis was made primarily due to interpreting and understanding the hypothesis test outcomes.

In the end, data triangulation was also utilized to improve the validity of the research. The research shows that where joint efforts from these bodies were made, huge strides were made and women's representation in higher political offices increased. It may encourage young women's zeal to pursue political careers and more active political participation because of seeing their fellow big sisters' efforts in politics and public office.

Keywords: Constitution, Quotas, Factors, Women's political participation.

List of Abbreviations

ACHPR	African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights
ANC	African National Congress
A.U.	African Union
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
EC	European Commission
EGM/EPDM	Report of the Expert Group Meeting/ Equal Participation of Women and Men in Decision-Making
FIDA-K	Federation of Women Lawyers-Kenya
FIDA-U	Federation of Women Lawyers-Uganda
FPTP	First Past the Post
GMO	Gender Monitoring Office
ICASO	International Council of AIDS Service Organizations
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights
ICRW	International Centre for Research on Women
ICRW	International Center for Research on Women
INTERNATIONAL IDEA	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
M.P.s	Members of Parliament
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NRM	National Resistance Movement
PR	Proportional Representation
RPF	Rwandese Patriotic Front
SDGEA	Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa
ULA	Uganda Land Alliance
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UWONET	Uganda Women's Network

Dedication / Acknowledgements

Dedication

I dedicate my thesis work to my deceased family members whose lives would have undoubtedly contributed to this world. Special gratitude to my late father and mother, whose motto "love to study hard first and play later" still inspires my work ethic today. After all this hard work, I intend to rest as I contemplate their love and determination. They have never left my side, and they will always be missed and loved.

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1.0 Introduction

The introduction chapter is divided into different sections: research problem, research objectives, research questions, and importance of the study. Firstly, it provides a broad picture of the problem in reality and a short description of the problem that this study will look into, including the research questions one intends to follow. Second, it portrays the importance of this study and the research methods. Finally, both delimitation and limitation of the study have been considered.

Women's rights worldwide can be seen as one of the critical barometers against which to measure the well-being of the global community. Women's political under-representation and exclusion from important decision-making positions is a failure of today's democracies. Women comprise only 17% of parliamentarians (UNICEF, 2007, p.15). In Africa, women are reluctant to run for public positions due to cultural prohibitions on women actively engaging in community activism or simply holding public offices.

Therefore, those practices and beliefs are still generally hostile to women's political involvement (Kamlongera, 2008, p.474). For instance, Africa had the lowest female participation in politics in the 1960s (Tripp, 2001, p. 142), but today it is seeing the fastest rates of growth of women in politics. When examining the factors of mandated political representation for women representation, the constitution is essential since the constitution is the supreme law, which provides all people equal treatment under its amendments. Despite some significant progress, Africa has made in terms of development. Still, many challenges remain regarding gender equality.

All voted for the constitution, but implementation is a problem. Despite efforts provided by the governments of case studies in adopting their Constitutions and ratified international/regional instruments, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), International Covenant on Economic Social and

Cultural Rights (ICESCR), Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa 2004 (SDGEA), MDGs (Millennium Development Goals) in 2000, (African Protocol) Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women (2004). In a way, some countries promote a more favorable international image than others in women's political representation. Fact about women in politics is that they are still under-represented in governments, which means that their governments do not yet fully implement their Constitutions while they are well established. Furthermore, held (2006, p.13) and Dahl (2007, p.345) argued that several arguments have been mustered to increase women's representation in politics, including one of the pillars of democracy, where everyone is equal and has the right to participate in politics, vote for a candidate and participate in decision-making processes.

The South African Constitution (Chapter 2-Bill of Rights, section 9), which was adopted in 1997, Kenya's new Constitution (Chapter 4- Bill of Rights, section 27 (5) (b) adopted in 2010, (Article 11 of Rwandan Constitution adopted in 2003) and finally Article 32 (b) of Ugandan Constitution. They stipulate that all men and women should be equal and contribute to politics and political decisions. Despite these legal documents, which are in line with international standards and can also be seen as a necessary condition for women, the reality is different as they remain under-represented in political life.

Over the past few decades, the countries mentioned have adopted a series of constitutional reviews. Still, only Rwanda and South Africa seem to have promoted the presence of women in decision-making positions and established effective political participation of women. While Kenya and Uganda have the same constitutional amendments to protect women's rights that guarantee their equal rights and the same women's rights instruments, governments have yet to facilitate their access to national-level decision-making. Those countries' attention and commitment to attaining gender equality are evident, but they

remain problematic and incomplete. Therefore, their commitments to women's political participation are not closely linked to positive outcome expectations. For that reason, this study seeks a deep understanding of this problem. For instance, try to understand why in some countries, women's political participation is seen as the leader in advocating for gender equality. In contrast, others continue to lag, despite adopting some measures for women's greater participation in politics.

1.1 Research Problem

The goal of equal rights between men and women is to participate fully in all aspects of the political process, which is more necessary as demand for transparent justice and democracy (Phillips, 2002, p. 15). One could also add that women's equal political participation is not even a question of academic interest. It seems to be a matter of ensuring that women occupy their rightful positions in all spheres of society, especially in the political field.

Women seem to have equal rights as men, but they remain severely underrepresented in political activity. It could prevent women from participating in the decision-making process within their government and undermine their self-confidence to participate in politics. At the same time, their political participation may positively influence their ability and capacity to make their own decisions independently regarding their own lives. Constitutions are usually set upon equality, but in reality, what is stated in them is not often practiced, particularly in instances of gender equality. Chamley (2011) asserted that many African governments offer minimal or no protection for women inclined to pursue careers and participate in government (17). In effect, women have little progress regarding political and governmental participation. Despite the numerous international laws that have been enacted for observance of equality, women are yet to be recognized and given rights to participate in politics like males.

As a consequence, progress and participation of women in politics and governments in Africa linger behind their male counterparts (Nebolisa, 2009, p.41). According to Nebolisa (2009), this can be attributed to poverty, cultural values, religious beliefs, not knowing their rights, and socio-economic factors (27). Even though there has been a substantial increase in women in legislative bodies and politics, women in Africa are still under-represented in all spheres of decision-making and power (Nebolisa, 2009, p.18; Chuku, 2009, p.35).

For that reason, the researcher's interest was to explore and understand this phenomenon based on why in some countries; women's political participation is seen as the leader in advocating for gender equality while others continue to lag, despite the adoption of some measures for women's greater participation in politics.

1.2 Research Objectives and Research Questions

Based on the research problem above, the study's purpose was to look into the cases and the factors that might determine the differences between cases and find the key factors that facilitate women's political participation in the cases. By doing so, this study will be able to:

- ✓ To examine and understand the factors of each case that affect women's political participation outside the Constitutions and in their constitutional principles concerning protecting females' rights.
- ✓ To contribute with a deeper understanding of case studies, how countries with good legislation ended up having a positive outcome while others do poorly in terms of women's political participation.

To achieve the aim of this study, the only way to catch a better understanding of the following research questions will be answered by the research:

RQ1: What factors are associated with the underrepresentation of women in politics in Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, and Uganda?

RQ2: What strategies can women use in these countries (Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, and Uganda) to enhance women's participation in politics among cases?

1.3 Significance of the Study

The study raises the issues of women's participation in political life and also highlights difficulties encountered in policy implementation. Furthermore, this study is valuable to all stakeholders such as governments, political parties, civil societies, and women aspirants. In so doing, the research would be helpful for many actors, including women activists, community organizers, and policymakers, in identifying weak areas that need appropriate policy responses. In addition, the study will be among publications related to women's participation in politics. It could serve as the basis for future researchers, especially given that women's Empowerment is likely to remain topical for the foreseeable future.

1.4 Research Methods

The study is a non-experimental non-experimental descriptive comparative study. In this study, both primary and secondary sources were utilized. Furthermore, the researcher used a qualitative method to conduct this study because the study intended to explore and understand the under-representation of females in politics among cases that deliver differently on the same international commitment regarding equal rights of men and women.

Therefore, the researcher also used deductive logic because she discovered that a general theory of the data collected could develop a hypothesis and some premises to reach specific conclusions based on generalizations (Holloway, 1997, p.19). It led us to formulate a hypothesis that needs to be tested based on the literature review. This study also employed a Structured, Focused Comparison method to allow the researcher to acquire comparable data from case studies and better understand. The method above was supported by another analytical explanation called "process tracing," which was used as a complementary tool to

understand the details of every case study concerning women's participation in politics. A detailed methodology was explored in chapter 2.

1.5 Delimitations of the Study

The research was delimited to women's participation in Parliament based on the legal and policy frameworks of the four selected case studies. Participation in this study was also strictly delimited to the involvement of women in national politics.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

The research is a desk study with no field work involved, which means the primary data is limited to some extent published before; hence it lacks first-hand data from affected women, policymakers, and respective government departments. The study does not cover and compares the levels of women's involvement in local and national politics because such extensive research would require considerable time.

1.7 Structure

This study is divided into six chapters. *Chapter I* presents the study's introduction, problem, purpose, research questions, significance, delimitation, and limitation. *Chapter II* presents the research methods used in the study's research and writing. *Chapter III* presents different definitions and concepts related to the topic and national legal and policy framework debates around the subject. *Chapter IV* presents this topic's previous work (Literature Review). *Chapter V* presents the findings and the analyses of the study. *Chapter VI* presents the conclusion and some reflections at the end of the study.

2.0 Methodology

This chapter presents the research methodology, meaning the research design and instruments used in the study. The exact steps or methods used to find, choose, process, and evaluate the material on a subject are known as a research methodology (George & Bennett, 2005.p.115). Additionally, the methods or the particular processes aid in my ability to locate, evaluate, compile, and evaluate data on a topic.

2.1 Research Methods in Selection

Firstly, this study was conducted as qualitative research. A qualitative method was recognized and much needed to fully answer my research questions and help interpret the results in this study. Secondly, the deductive approach was applied to this study because the researcher thought about the available evidence and then narrowed it down to a specific hypothesis to form a conclusion. Collecting observations for the hypothesis allowed us to accept or reject the hypothesis we might test. The reason for doing that was to shift our thinking to compare, confirm or reject our original data (Brady & Collier, 2010, p.39). This study also employed the method of Structured, Focused Comparison. Four different variables and hypotheses have been pointed out with respective indicators (Ohlson, 1998, p.45) that were proposed based on the literature review. Four case studies were selected (Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, and South Africa) and combined historical analysis with a given set of questions posed to each case under the study. Different propositions and hypotheses were chosen based on an extensive literature review, which helped investigate and explain the factors affecting women's political participation in Parliament.

The method of structured, focused comparison used the terms "*structured*" and "*focused*" (George & Bennett, 2005.p. 67). To begin with, "Structured" is used according to George & Bennett (2005) to mean that "*the researcher writes general questions that reflect*

the research objective and that these questions are asked to each case under study to guide and standardize data collection" (Ibid) (18). On the other hand, "Focused" is used to mean that the study *"deals selectively with only certain and specific aspects of the historical cases with more clarification"* (Ibid). This study was *structured* so that the same question related to why some selected countries have done slightly higher when compared to women's political participation. Yet, they have had the same constitutional amendments and ratified the same conventions concerning gender equality. Using this standard method helped to gather precise and standard data. Furthermore, this study focused on how it compared women's political participation, specifically at the parliamentary level. In other words, it dealt only with female Parliamentarians at the national level but not women's political participation at each level.

Lastly, the process-tracing method made the researcher sensitive to the historical explanations of each case and examined each case by applying the same set of hypotheses (George & Bennett, 2005.p.224). The process-tracing method has strong roots in the positivist approach, especially when testing or proving the causalities to go into detail of every case. So this can allow it to use the observable deductive implications of hypothesized causal mechanisms within a case to test whether these might explain the case. The study was conducted as a deductive and qualitative complete desk study that applied that method to selected cases under investigation. So, in that case, the researcher studied what others have done, read existing literature reviews related to the phenomenon she is studying, and then tested the formulated hypothesis based on the outlined variables.

Additionally, the researcher tried to prove and explain whether the hypothesis was supportive or unsupportive in each case. Tracing helped to describe the use of evidence from case studies in the sense of making inferences about historical explanations because it is closely connected to them (Roberts, 1996, p.28). Also, as mentioned earlier, a fundamental tool of qualitative analysis that can afford the basis for a comparison with similar situations.

Therefore, in this study, the method of Structured Focused Comparison proceeded hand in hand with process tracing to ensure mission success. Indeed, the study might appear to have a deductive orientation because the researcher used pre- theories to formulate a hypothesis and predict the proposed intervening variables, then tested those predictions to develop a theory (George & Bennett, 2004, p.5).

One could not end up without emphasizing that the cases were chosen due to their ability to be linked to one another during comparison (George & Bennett, 2005, p.83) and the preliminary knowledge of the researcher about the cases. Therefore, the research methods used in this study were chosen again to help the researcher conducting the study by examining linkages between the cases by going into each case's details and evaluating hypotheses by looking at how the links might be causally mediated (Ibid). Then, in the background and literature review chapters, the study provided more detailed information for the readers who don't have any background knowledge about the topic to understand the problem of each case under investigation (George & Bennett, 2005.p.89).

2.2. Sources of Data

The data sources for this desk study were mainly primary and secondary, specifically regarding gender equality and women's political participation. Most data sources were found in online academic reports, journals, articles and books, and other reputable organizations' websites. In a word, ample data opportunities were available to Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), academia, and many others.

The researcher studied the information from both public bodies such as the African Union (A.U.), World Bank reports, European Commission (E.C.), United Nations (U.N.), United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and other official annual reports, newspapers, to name a few- all of which have been considered as primary data

sources for the reason that, they were used through the case studies. Secondary data was further based on electronic library searches, available literature reviews and documents, texts, and government reports (Alvesson & Skölberg, 2007, p.21; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p.121).

However, the researcher was well aware of the pitfalls of using online information; hence, I ensured the sources were credible and used effective data collection, selection, and analysis (Creswell, 1994, p.148). In addition, to get good quality research results, the qualitative method is the key to analyzing the available data to understand better the case studies in question (Stenbacka, 2001, p. 551). This thesis also involved data triangulation in gathering information from different sources to increase the study's validity (Denzin, 1970, p.18). The sources might come from various stakeholders with different fields for different objectives. For instance, different types of authors' purposes, community members, different researchers, even the program staff, and many others.

3.0. Theoretical Framework

Within the bounds of the critical limiting parameters, concepts are developed to interpret, forecast, and comprehend occurrences and, in several circumstances, question and expand known knowledge. The theoretical research framework retains or sustains a research hypothesis, (Denzin,1910, p.49). Also, the study subject undergoing the study's underlying concept is introduced and described in the theoretical framework. For instance, this chapter will discuss theories used in the research, hypothesis testing, analytical frameworks, and data analysis mechanisms.

3.1 Analytical Framework

Analytical frameworks are created to systematically support logical reasoning and provide an adviser's thoughts in some shape. Creswell, (2009, p.10) argued that analytical frameworks constitute, in a nutshell, frameworks intended to direct and aid in the knowledge and learning processes. To define a conceptual framework, researchers must be picky. It implies that researchers must choose the most significant and instructive factors, limiting the quantity of data gathered and analyzed (Creswell, 2009, p.25). Kivunja, (2018, p.12) argued that the influence of choice and procedure distortions is lessened in analysis that utilizes paradigms because it is concentrated on the study questions, systematic, thorough, and accessible. For instance, in this study, the theory used was feminist, social role, and leadership categorization theories for framing an ontological position.

The frames used in the thesis were categorized in the analytical framework. These were the diagnostic frames and the prognostic frames. The diagnostic frame dealt with the problem and the causes of the problem, while the prognostic frame dealt with the solution to the problem of women's under-representation in diplomacy (Varpio et al., 2020, p.16). As such, this research framework uses diagnostic and prognostic framing. Diagnostic framing will explain the problem and factors contributing to women's underrepresentation in politics

and decision-making positions in government. According to Denzin (1910, p.51), the prognostic framing allowed the researcher to offer recommendations and possible solutions to the problem (Ashagrie, 2021, p.27; Denzin, 1910, p.51). The research questions relate to the frames as follows:

RQ1: What factors are associated with the underrepresentation of women in politics in Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, and Uganda?

RQ1 will offer the diagnosis of the problem, for instance, the factors that contribute to the underrepresentation problem.

RQ2: What strategies can women use in these countries (Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, and Uganda) to enhance women's participation in politics among cases?

RQ2 will offer the prognostic frame, like possible recommendations and solutions to the problem of under-representation in politics and government decision-making positions.

3.2. Theories Used for the Deductive Study

There are a variety of feminist theories and perspectives under the feminist theory auspice, (Archer, 2009). Archer (2009, p.150) highlights numerous feminist perspectives on social research methods. Feminist theory is mainly concerned with "the relationships between affect, knowledge, and power", (Pedwell & Whiehead, 2012, p.119). According to the feminist theory, gender-power-order is usually present in society, shapes structures, and affects power relations. A central feature of the feminist political theory is the notion that women and their situations are central to political analysis. Essentially, as Bryson (2003, p.1) highlights, its main interest lies in questioning the fact that men usually appear to have greater power and privileges than women and asking how that can be changed. The main inference from the feminist theory is that men are positioned to have more power over women, which is why they are chosen for political positions at the expense of women.

On the other hand, the social role theory holds that gender differences usually occur due to two related processes: societal power relations behavior and social learning (Kacmar et al., 2011, p.15). Gender-appropriate behavior is usually learned via social interactions and reinforced via society's status and power structures. According to Kacmar et al. (2011), people internalize the gender roles that society has defined (6). Also, they tend to view the world and behave in ways that conform to society's expectations. Kacmar et al. (2011) explained that men and women usually respond to social information predictably, and with time, the processes lead to agentic or communal behavior patterns (22). While communal behavioral patterns are socially oriented and nurturing and emerge more amongst women, agentic are usually more competitive and geared towards behavioral achievement patterns and tend to be more dominant amongst men. In essence, agentic behavior refers to the tendency of the human capability to exert influence over the functioning of another or on the actions of another person. As men are socially wired to offer guidance and influence women, this can be used to explain why they occupy more positions of power in politics and governments compared to women.

Lastly, the leadership categorization theory (LCT), as Ayman and Korabik (2010) highlight, examines the layperson's comprehension of leadership (17). LCT theory postulates that the individual follower's mental prototypes and expectations of an ideal leader play a considerable role in shaping a person's perceptions of their leader's success and contributions (Zacher et al., 2011, p.37). This means that the followers usually form inherent opinions of their leaders' characterization based on their past experiences and interactions with the leaders. As such, the followers' perceptions usually determine how they subsequently judge their leaders, with a premise that people tend to approve of others as leaders as they fit specific mental models. Some barriers prevent women from enjoying equal participation as men in politics and governmental positions (Akpabio, 2009, p.24). Okediran et al. (2006)

highlight that these barriers include restrictions, poverty, and social, religious, and cultural taboos (14). The LCT theory explains that men have been categorized as leaders in society, and that is why they are preferred over women when it comes to leadership, both in politics and decision-making positions.

As such, the LCT, social role, and feminist theories can be integrated into the study as a guide for questioning and explaining gender inequality in political positions in Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, and Uganda (Danesy, 2006, p.16). The three theories suggest that as men and women occupy variant roles, people will have variant perceptions of men and women having different skills in leadership. Thus, it can explain why men hold vital political positions of power as opposed to women.

3.3. Data Analysis and Application of Structured Focused Comparison

This study mainly used data analysis based on the literature review set via a deductive approach. It is critically important to have an overview of each chosen case to deal with crucial research questions and to provide an in-depth analysis of their progress in adopting constitutional reforms that adequately tackle gender inequalities. Ndlovu and Mutale (2013) argued that to develop a more profound understanding of empirical data and apply the method of Structured Focused Comparison, the researcher set up the hypothesis statements to compete with the relevant aspects of evidence (p.113). And see how the causes were connected to the outcome through examination and prove whether the hypothesis was supportive or unsupportive when tested or compared against empirical cases. Based on the observation of constitutional legislation of each case, here are different hypotheses named by numbers from 1- 5.

1. There is a low number of women representatives in Parliament owing to factors attributed to the feminist, social role, and leadership categorization theories.

2. Some research studies indicated that the multiparty systems seemed to be one-factor facilitating women's political participation. Even though this helps ensure the observance of standards and principles of quality and guarantees effective participation in democratic politics (ODIHR, 2011, p. 5), factors attributed to the feminist, social role, and leadership categorization theories hamper the representation of women in political positions.

3. The 30% quota for women in Parliament should be respected constitutionally. The quota systems have been essential in addressing women's exclusion from political participation and decision-making (Ndlovu & Mutale, 2013, p.76) & (Dahlerup, 2005, p.141). Still, factors attributed to the feminist social role and leadership categorization theories hamper the representation of women in political positions.

4. If the constitution prohibits discrimination, though the anti-discrimination law should be applied in reality, especially to understand how it is relevant to different challenges women face, factors attributed to the feminist social role and leadership categorization theories hamper the representation of women in political positions.

5. The Proportional Representation (P.R.) electoral system is one of the best voting systems. Still, even with its incorporation, factors attributed to the feminist social role and leadership categorization theories hamper the representation of women in political positions.

These posed hypotheses were used in examining the selected diagnostic evidence to get a more profound image of selected cases with the same policies regarding women's political participation; some did well in women's political participation, and others were left behind. Due to the all-research methods used, there was no doubt that the cases were linked to one another and that having the same constitutional legislation related to the promotion of women's participation in decision-making. During the analysis, a comparison of the results of

the findings of each case was made, owing to the outcomes of each tested hypothesis. Consequently, this brought us to know the similarities and differences among cases.

This helped the researcher make a good analysis due to the combination of findings and the hypothesis test result to gain a deeper understanding of factors that increase women's political participation and determine the differences between the cases. The analysis results encouraged to show why selected cases in this study had different or similar results to the tested hypothesis. Then, the results of the hypothesis test against empirical cases were briefed in a table (Table 2) and well explained in the findings and analysis chapter 5 as well.

3.3.1 Hypothesis Testing in the Different Variables

Table 1: The table below provides information on countries that applied (and those which did not) their constitutional principles and commitments due to the propositions are given. This means that the researcher outlined them to prove whether the empirical results supported or not the chosen hypotheses. Therefore, I chose four different indicators meant to increase female political participation and understand if they have been implemented or not in chosen cases.

After the hypothesis test, the researcher might have found an answer with a simple "No" or "Yes." The information related to hypothesis test results will be presented in the proceeding chapter, where we focused on comparing the outlined variables and tried to get the outcomes of all tested hypotheses against empirical cases, which will be later presented in chapter 5 in the table. This study will be founded based on the following hypothesis;

Ho (null hypothesis): There is an association between the underrepresentation of women in politics in Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, and Uganda.

H1(alternative hypothesis): There is no link between factors contributing to the underrepresentation of women in African politics.

Ho: Women in Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, and Uganda use strategies to enhance their political participation among cases.

H1: Study will offer the prognostic frame in politics and government decision-making positions

4.0 Background

This background has three sections. Section one will cover an array of international agreements and conventions; the second section will be the Regional Gender Policy Framework and National Legal and Policy Framework for Gender Equality. Furthermore, the third briefly provided the different concepts and terms that might be presented in the analysis chapter.

4.1 International Agreements and Conventions

It seems that there are many different ways to increase women's participation in political life. But one could say that without supporting international cooperation and commitments, many countries would not recognize and protect women's rights. This is why international conventions and agreements have been vital in raising women's political participation, especially by sharing their knowledge on women's rights and improving policy-making in different African countries (Tripp,2001, p.4). The selected cases have ratified several international agreements and conventions on women's rights, such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Convention on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR), Equal Remuneration Convention (ERC), Dakar Platform for Action, Beijing Declaration of 1995, Southern African Development Community Declaration on Gender and Development (1997) with its addendum on Prevention and Eradication of Violence against Women and Children (1998) and The Millennium Declaration of 2000, and many others (18).

The progress of these conventions has been made in bringing gender equality issues to the forefront based on political participation (Ndlovu & Mutale, 2013.p.75). Furthermore, this has brought us to understand that these millions of women across the globe have been helped to receive foreign funds from international donors to support their political participation. It shows how international cooperation played a crucial role in supporting women's political

participation through NGOs, religious organizations, Embassies, and international foundations (Tripp, 1999, p.92).

4.2 Africa's Policy Commitments to Gender Equality

In putting things into the regional context, it should be noted that the ratification of regional agreements and several commitments to promote gender equality and women's Empowerment have been some of the many encouraging steps by African governments. According to Sida (2010), the African Union (A.U.) has prioritized women's rights and ratified many declarations on gender equality (96). Its member states are supposed to regularly report their commitments' progress to provide information within two years on how to implement said recommendations. However, the number of countries that send the reports periodically is still very few, and the poor popularization of the Protocol at national and regional levels still undermines its potential. A case like this may stop women and men from claiming any of their rights enumerated in the Protocol, (Sida, 2010, p.17). One could not deny that the failure of the Protocol is due to the Member States' accountability for its implementation because there are the ones that have a legal obligation to integrate the Protocol's provisions into their domestic legal system or to amend their domestic laws.

The A.U. adopted the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa in 2003 and the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA), adopted in 2004 by all the Heads of State. These are essential instruments in promoting gender equality and women's Empowerment. It further states that the state parties shall intensify efforts to encourage and enact clear legal clauses in decision-making and women's participation in the politics of their republics on an equal footing with men. Through this affirmative action, national legislation and other measures should ensure that women are entitled to vote in all elections on equal terms without discrimination and to choose their candidates free from cohesion (Protocol to the African Charter, 2003, p.10-11).

As for the SDGGEA, it was meant to reaffirm the commitment of African States to promote opportunities for all people, which is obviously at the center of gender equality and women's Empowerment (African Union, 2005. p.2). Article 4 (1) of the constitutive act of the A.U. highlights such commitment by urging countries to take women's rights laws very seriously through awareness of all anti-discrimination legislation (A.U. Gender Policy, 2009. p.14). This is, therefore, in the spirit of implementing and upholding the principle of gender parity at national and regional levels.

4.2.1 Legislative Framework

Today over 20 nations have prospered in meeting the 30% critical mass target concerning women's representation in their national parliaments (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2000, p.27) due to the constitution, opening up doors for women to enter politics (Sirleaf, 2010, p.4). Most of these countries have emphasized the equality of rights and justice of all people in their Constitutional laws. However, the implementation process is still slow or non-existent in some cases, although this does not undermine positive development in a few countries. For instance, Sub-Saharan Africa is trying to improve its political image, specifically at the regional level, concerning increasing women in parliaments.

According to the current IPU rankings, Kenya stands at position 113 globally with only 9.8 % women representation in Parliament. Rwanda still leads the world in the highest level of women's participation in Parliament, presently set at 56.3 %, South Africa at 42.3% at position 8, and Uganda in position 19 with 35.0 % (Nzomo, 2013, p. 9). The above picture shows that more needs to be done, although there are signs of improvements.

4.3 National Context

4.3.1 Constitutional Quotas

The use of quotas is expanding and playing an essential part in the African story. In short, Constitutional quotas are provisions enshrined in the constitution, while legislative quotas are enshrined in a country's election law, political party law, and other comparable laws (Dahlerup, Freidenvall, 2005, p.32). This quota system is mandatory and binding to all parties and the government of the day. The question is how these principles can be implemented in reality. Is there any enforcement mechanism, for example? The answer is that sanctions are applied in some instances of non-compliance (Freidnvall & Dahlerup, 2003, p.13). In this spirit, applying quotas has proven to be the most effective tool to accelerate women's political participation. The system has helped SubSaharan Africa understand the importance of promoting women's rights and political participation at the national level. Data from the IPU shows that, on average, women comprised 17% of the members of Parliament in sub-Saharan Africa in 2007, which is about the same as the global average (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs & the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2007, p.4).

On top of that, statistics from the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) indicate that more than 20 African countries have adopted and are using either mandatory or voluntary quotas as a means by which to address gender inequality in the Parliament (Ballington, 2004, p.43). This highlights that although some countries may use Constitutional quotas, others have opted for voluntary quotas. The latter is most prevalent and adopted by political parties, and eventually, all are geared to increase women's representation.

4.3.2 Voluntary Political Party Quotas

Voluntary party quotas are only adopted voluntarily by political parties in a country, and these quotas are not legally binding. They are decided by the parties to ensure a certain number of women's representation (Dahlerup, 1988, p.142). However, there are disagreements in some cases where some political parties reject even considering such an option, as they see affirmative action as an encroachment into their patriarchal space. This approach, therefore, requires a serious commitment from political leaders. Fortunately, some African countries have successfully implemented voluntary party quotas, and some 30% of women's representation has been achieved without being compelled by legislation. Political will is key to succeeding in the battle against gender discrimination. In this regard, South Africa and Mozambique have been exemplary (Nzomo, 2012, p.12) in implementing mandatory or voluntary quota systems. Overall, the legal gender quotas mandated by the constitution and the voluntary quota system required by political parties serve the same purpose: to free political space for women and respect the gender quota requirements provided by law. For example, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Uganda have enacted constitutional quotas, while numerous Latin American nations have enacted legislative quotas.

4.3.3 African Customary Law

What is African customary law? Is it law or not? There have been many debates among socialists and jurists about the nature of this law, and no consensus has been achieved. According to Austin (2008), the law, in the most general sense, is "a rule laid down for the guidance of an intelligent being and by an intelligent being having power over him (Austin, 2008, p.16). It is what he calls positive law, and, in his view, the law should be the appropriate focus for jurisprudence. In the context of African customary law, the law is put in place by intelligent people in their constituencies, in this case, individual countries. The communities respect and follow the written and unwritten rules derived from social practices

based on their traditions and customs. To note, the African customary law has to handle the issues related to intimate relationships and family values (Lehnert, 2005, p.241-7). One's conclusion is that African customary law is indeed law even though it is in constant conflict with today's democratic Constitutions and their routine amendments, especially towards women.

4.4. Definition of terms used in the study

4.4.1 What is Political Participation?

This term refers to the provision of equal opportunity for women to participate in the crucial decision-making process of top political leadership. In theory, women's equal rights would mean unhindered participation in national politics at all levels; but this can only occur in practical terms when their cause is promoted and facilitated. The crucial point is about enabling people to change their destiny. It is well-known that "empowered individuals are more likely to participate in organizations" (Bakshi, 2002, p.53), striving to bring out the necessary equality in this case. One could say that participation and Empowerment are essential to forming an accurate and uniform approach to establishing equality among people. Therefore, participation is only the first step that brings some positive initial changes, but no doubt it also leads to more long-term positive outcomes in different ways. As Almond and Powell (1975, p.98) put it, "political participation is the involvement of the members of the society in the decision-making process of the system." The statement echoes the need for women's participation not only in the decision-making body to advance their causes but also to entirely shape the debate on the issues of equality and democracy that affect all citizens.

4.4.2 Affirmative Action

It is a policy intended to address continuing discrimination problems to achieve non-discriminatory practice that permits the consideration of race, national origin, sex, and

disability, to name a few, along with other criteria. It should be known that this policy remains hotly contested. However, it is also well established in Brazil and the United States, where racial discrimination has a long history. It is generally used in government and educational settings to ensure that minority groups are not excluded but are included and allowed to fully participate in all spheres of society (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1995, p.3). One can view this policy positively given that it calls for the often-ignored minorities, including women, to have equal opportunity and access to employment and education.

4.4.3 Proportional Representation (P.R.)

P.R. is concerned with the number of electoral systems. In other words, this voting system is wholly given power in numbers. Admittedly, it is based on the fact that the population chooses an individual to hold the public office, and every vote is counted. The PR allows voters to choose between the lists of many electoral candidates representing different political parties. In addition, there are no electoral districts (Chege et al., 2007, p.5).

4.4.4 First Past the Post (FPTP)

FPTP is the voting system used for the election of M.P.s to seats in the U.K. Parliament, and it is also found primarily in countries that were part of the British Empire (International IDEA, 2005, p.35). This system uses single-member districts, and the voters elect candidates rather than political parties, meaning the candidates have to receive a plurality or majority vote to win the election. In other words, the candidate who wins the seat in the legislature from a single-member district is the one who obtains the highest total vote (Ibid).

5.0 Literature Review

This chapter helped the researcher look at the existing research, which was significant to the work under investigation, to understand the cases in their broader context (Creswell, 2009, p.25). The chapter presented an extensive literature review to answer the research questions and help define the research design and purpose.

5.1 Table 2: The main Hindrances for Women's Political Participation

Here presented a helpful summary of the key barriers to women's involvement in politics produced by Shvedova (2005) globally at the three different 'stages' of a journey (9). These obstacles fall into three categories: structural, situational, and social. "Structural, social and situational "explanations are frequently referred to in the literature about women's comparative lack of engagement in politics. 'Structural' explains that, despite female educational attainment and female employment participation in the labor market regarding socioeconomic status (education, job, power), women are still disadvantaged compared to men (Mestre & Marin, 2012, p.31). While the "social" explanation further highlights the unequal sharing of unpaid work between women and men, the burden of family responsibilities still falls largely to women, which might retard their involvement in the political process and public affairs. Ultimately, the "situational" explanation looks at the importance of different beliefs, attitudes, and values 'transmitted' by society according to gender (Burns et al., 2012, p.72); Mestre & Marin, 2001, 31).

Table 1: The main obstacles to women's participation in politics

Political Obstacles	Explanation
The prevalence of the 'masculine model' of political life and elected government bodies	political life is organized by male norms, values and lifestyles, and working patterns
Lack of party support for women	Women are rarely decision-makers in political parties, even though they play essential roles in campaigning.

Lack of sustained contact and cooperation with public organizations such as trade (labor) unions and women's groups	although women's organizations can help women parliamentarians overcome barriers, and there is a less contact between politicians and these groups, compared to other interest groups.
The nature of the electoral system	Different systems produce different numbers of female parliamentarians. The PR system is most conducive to high numbers of women elected politicians.
Socio-economic Obstacles	The low socio-economic status of women compared to men means women have fewer power and material resources to support their move into politics
Women's lack of time resources,	Women carry a disproportionate share of domestic work, despite high numbers of women in paid employment. Women's additional work burden prevents them from having the time necessary to engage in politics.
Education and Training	Lack of education still hurts women as an obstacle to their political participation, and many women lack the political training required to participate effectively in the political arena.
Ideological and Psychological Obstacles	Male values dominate politics in many countries, and women's roles are culturally viewed as being in the home rather than in politics. This impacts women's confidence to engage in politics, attitudinal prejudice against women, and women's lack of trust and confidence in politics.
Traditional roles	Traditions continue to emphasize women's primary roles as mothers and homemakers, which still restricts them from losing their political roles.
The role of the mass media	Women politicians are covered less by the mass media than their male counterparts, and events and issues of importance to women are not covered as much as other issues. This reduces women's interest in politics. Mass media also reinforces gender cultural stereotypes about women's roles, which prevent women from engaging in politics.
The Perception of Politics as 'Dirty'	one of the significant obstacles preventing women from getting involved in politics is the perception among women that it is a "dirty game" due to the lack of funds and resources in politics or as stigmatization against female politicians.

Source: Summarised from Shvedova (2005)

According to Milsania de Sousa, one participant pointed out the challenges faced by women in her country during the online discussion on Women, political participation, and

decision-making in Africa in 2007 (Bari, 2005, p.20; Inglehart & Norris, 2001, p.22) argue that men make better political leaders than women which probably explains this disproportional rate of 70% in men's parliamentary representation in politics. Furthermore, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM, 2007, p.5) assessment report points out that the reasons that prevent many women from pursuing a political career are: culture, traditions, stereotypes, and social and economic factors (Lovenduski & Karam, 2007, p.21). But the tide is shifting as more people are opening up to the possibility of having women in key leadership positions. Here, one tries to categorize the problems into three areas: political, socio-economic, and ideological and psychological hindrances or socio-cultural from different authors with the same ideas as Shvedova's analysis.

5.1.1 Cultural and Social Context

Cultural factors correlate with women's ability to carry out certain functions, especially in the cultural context of Africa. African women still face socio-cultural challenges through participation in public political space, although there are variations from one country to another. However, the cultural dimension remains one of the vital detrimental factors (Bari, 2005, p.6), and women are practically seen as subordinate and unequal to men. Consequently, women themselves lose confidence in their ability, doubt their role in society, and most believe they deserve no political offices. It, in turn, limits their options to participate in anything else, let alone getting involved in politics.

Some cultural practices still marginalize and discriminate against women, precisely in Kenya, due to the lack of economy, lack of infrastructure, lack of confidence, and poverty in one word, among others (Young, 2012, p.9; Onsongo, 2004, p.11; Federation of Women Entrepreneur Associations, Pamoja, tuungane, Tushamiri, p.18). Report under the Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), scheduled for review during its 41st session (Nov. 3-21, 2008).

In Rwanda, many women also think that men are the ones who work. In other words, this world is made by men's work, and women just let it happen like that as if nothing's wrong, and some men still live with the idea that women should stay at home, take care of the kids and serve men by keeping themselves inside (Vis, 2012, p.66; Eisenstein, 1984, p.19). It has been found that some cultural and social barriers are reasonably perceived as obstacles to women's advancement to leadership positions due to lack of knowledge about financial management and lack of market information, due to the lack of ambitious women who may sustain the role of men as breadwinners (Goslin, 2006.p.6; Moorosi, 2007, p.509; Mathipa & Tsoka, 2001, p.324; Shvedova, 1994, p.44). In Uganda, the social and cultural biases still prevent women from women's advancement, which are passed on to generations and continuously renewed through the patriarchal system (Ellis et al., 2006, p. 65; Asimwe et al., 2003.p.9; Vaughn et al., 2009, p.67).

These are mainly manifested in misleading socio-cultural beliefs, prejudices, and stereotypes, which are evident in male-dominated societies. These traditional beliefs are hard to overcome, but with more progressive policies coupled with Constitutional amendments, women are progressively propelling themselves into positions that would eventually allow them to go beyond traditional roles and family responsibilities. Cultural factors still limit women's rights and engagement in politics. Religion still plays a vital role in determining gender norms in many cultures, and fundamentalist views deny women's rights (Bradshaw et al., 2013, p.7). One's assumption is not totally against women's choice to be primary caregivers in any society, but instead to give them the same choice to be something else. This freedom of choice would not primarily put them into parliaments. Still, it will assist them in fighting many injustices, including domestic abuse and sexual violence that are endemic in some countries.

5.1.2 Economic Factors

It could be argued that in most patriarchal societies, men are usually in charge of the household's finances, including controlling their wives' income. It raises an obvious question as to whether women who cannot have a say in their households should be expected to take charge of local and national political offices. Without financial independence, women are naturally left to depend on men, so they are kept from politics and encouraged to stay on their family care duties (Chowdhury, 2009, p. 6-8; EGM and EPDM Report, 2005, p.17). In Kenya, women's low economic and social status limits their power to negotiate political positions, despite the large number of women in their society. So, this can limit women's increased participation in decision-making (Institute of Economic Affairs, 2008, p.36; FIDA-Kenya, 2008, p.22). More money is needed to make women more united and politically powerful to see them participating in the political process. However, women's lower access to resources and the lack of attention to gender equality may limit the scope of their political work. They may even fail to recognize their voices' importance in decision-making (Bari, 2005, p.5).

In today's context, politics is increasingly becoming more commercialized, and one's financial capital dictates the decision of whether one wins or loses an election. In reality, many women in Africa face tougher challenges as they not only have the favorable condition to contest but also lack the financial resources to engage in political activities. Money is required and needed for one's political career; without it, political ambition can only be a distant dream, as mentioned earlier. Women will likely remain underrepresented without structural adjustments in social, economic, and political spheres. To avoid wasting such a vast pool of talents, however, governments need to get a grip on a few things such as 'inequality, political and economic instability, discrimination, the male domination of political institutions and high costs elections' (Ranjal& Yousuf, 2001, p.4; Ajroudi, 2012, p.28).

Women are not getting the chance to lead their communities, tribes, or kinship groups, and this lack of constituency does not only limit their political engagement. Also, forbids them from participating in activities such as education and training and other access to information and income-generating projects (Bari, 2005, p.6). Who should be blamed for this state of affairs? Quite simply, those who perpetuate the idea that women lack entrepreneurial skills continue to deny them equal rights, and some women believe they have no place in the public role. This self-deprecating attitude by some women renders them low achievers and economically disabled (Kariuki, 2005, p.5; Shvedova, 1994, p.39), resulting in fewer women getting into positions of influence and decision-making at all political levels.

5.1.3 Political Factors

Concerning case studies, the participation of women in politics is hindered by various reasons, as previously discussed. Still, common and practical challenges exist, such as voter registration processes and voting rules. The nature of politics in place is an important tool and can be used in dissimilar. For instance, the system and its machinery (i.e., practical means) can persuade, dissuade, include, and exclude a targeted group- in this case, women in politics. As Vicky Randall rightly puts it, “politics is an articulation or working of relationships within an already given power structure” (Bari, 2005, p.4). which opposes the traditional view of politics and calls it an activity, conscious, thoughtful participation in the course by which resource allocation arises among citizens (Ibid 1999, p.5). Promoting equality requires strengthening different dimensions of women’s autonomy, such as economic and political autonomy. In a way, full citizenship and freedom should be given from all forms of violence against women, (Alpízar Durán, 2010, p.29).

The restriction on political activity in public and private spaces is considered nonpolitical. Linked with public/private is the political/ apolitical dichotomy which puts women into difficult positions and excludes women from the public political sphere, even

though women are brought into politics with a rightful status as mothers (Ibid). In 2007 Kenya's post-election violence, many women were targeted and violently and sexually attacked, as many pieces of evidence suggest. It inevitably knocked on women's prospects, especially those who experienced physical and mental injuries. Referring to the cultural dimension, some women, especially those raped, can no longer actively seek political office due to trauma, but the stigma is still attached to them. A case in point is Alice Wahome (a politician who competed for a parliamentary seat in central Kenya in 2007) but completely pulled out after she was physically attacked and admitted to hospital (Kariuki, 2010, p.4). Such incidents can be attributed to many things, including the lack of freedom, demeaning attitudes towards women activists, male domination in politics and political parties, and existing structural inequalities, all of which still discriminate against women.

Here, Rwanda may stand as a country that is not free with a downward trend in political rights and civil liberties (Freedom in the World, 2004, p.18). It may place Rwandan women and the women's movement into a difficult position, as they owe their parliamentary seats to a single and dominant political party (Hogg, 2009, p.44). One could say that no one knows whether or to what extent they are truly independent in Rwanda (Powley, 2007, p.6). It means that it may not exist any substantial changes in policy outcomes that may come to oppose the RPF agenda. The article "Rwanda: Women Hold Up Half the Parliament" states that the RPF's leadership gave Rwandan women the right to exercise. The RPF has linked gender equality to nationalism due to its host country, Uganda, where they found themselves a time of exile.

Furthermore, Ugandan Constitution provides for a reserved woman's parliamentary seat in each district (Powley, 2003, p.159). Therefore, women and men in the RPF were familiar with that system of promoting women's advancement in politics. Especially, they

were inspired and attracted by the successful South African women in the African National Congress party with their contribution towards the liberation of their country.

Lack of political education for women and interest in politics are other major stumbling blocks that require lots of effort from governments and citizens. Overall, it is clear that women face financial and legal challenges to compete with men on equal footing. Progress is being achieved, but many African countries remain where men control the political scene. Men's perspectives on issues of national importance still are considered superior to those of women. Allowing lead the narratives, both examples have shown how women could not be elected due to party structures and gender biases that favor men over women leaders (Bari, 2005, p.4). In sum, having an increased number of women's participation in politics is not only an ideal thing to do but rather the right course of action for women to influence and participate in decision-making. It can only be healthy for these countries' development and democracy.

5.1.4 Electoral System

Despite the right to participate in public affairs found in all cases with women, like having voting rights, being eligible for any election, or appointment to public functions, their political participation exists, and decision-making remains slow. The struggle for women's rights to vote and be elected to the political office began in the 18th Century. New Zealand was the first to acknowledge women's right to vote in 1893. Until 1940, there was no female Head of State or President. It took another 34 years before the first executive female President was elected in 1974. Since then, the World has only had 35 female presidents, and two are from Africa. There have been 44 Women Prime Ministers, 6 (six) from Africa. The numbers remain small, and progress has been slow in many countries.

The literature indicates that women continue to be marginally represented, especially at the highest levels (Stead, 1985, p.29). As the table above in the introduction chapter shows,

the electoral system influences women's political representation, like Proportional Representation (PR). Some researchers claim this is the strongest reason for women's under-representation in the parliament. Previous research shows that countries with a majority system have fewer women represented in Parliament (Unicameral or, if bicameral, the lower house) than countries using the proportional system. It is due to the little chance given to women of being elected. Therefore, men are the enormous majority of people presented as candidates in majority systems (Wide, 2006, p.53).

Moreover, the PR systems are better suited than majoritarian systems to increasing women in national parliaments (Ballington, 2009, p.27). Therefore, South Africa and Rwanda adopted the electoral system of PR, which is good in helping the representation of the most marginalized interest groups like women (Proceedings report, Lodge, 2012, p.8; Powley, 2003, p.156). In the other two cases, Kenya and Uganda have a system called the First Past the Post (FPTP), where the candidates are chosen by a majoritarian. In other words, the system is one of several plurality voting systems where the winner is the candidate with more votes than any others (Chege et al., 2007, p.5), (Friedrich Ebert Foundation, 2003, p.8) & (Nzomo, 2012. p.5-6). First, Uganda is under the FPTP system divided into 214 constituencies. Moreover, among these 214 constituencies, the elected members represent a specific geographic area of the country, the way each district elects one woman representative. Second, Kenya is currently under the same system. Despite years of discussion about PR in Kenya, the system for all parliamentary, governmental, and county assembly elections in the new Constitution of Kenya is still ruled by the FPTP system (Africa Report N°197 / 17 January 2013, p.7). However, FPTP is frequently criticized for creating electoral districts (constituencies, as called in Kenya) of unequal populations.

One previous study has proved that women are almost twice as likely to be elected under PR systems as they are under majoritarian electoral systems (Norris, 2006, p.5). This

sound like the PR system may be the main rival to plurality-majority voting in parliamentary. Not only that, it has been proven that women's representation in government has increased by at least 10 percent in countries that use the PR electoral system than under majoritarian electoral systems (Matland & Studlar, 1996, p.85), (Warioba, 2011, p. 13; Norris, 1985, p.26; Matland, 1998, p.17; Reynolds, 1999, p.38; Kenworthy and Malami, 1999, p.24; Siaroff, 2000, p.1; Moser, 2001, p.33). It is right to say that despite the challenges, African governments have made gender parity a priority, and significant results have been recorded over the past few years. Due to the unwavering support and efforts of global research on women's political representation, things such as gender quotas, electoral systems, and democratic status have been made possible (Paxton 1997, p.28; Paxton et al., 2010, p.76, Tripp and Kang, 2008, p.53; Goetz and Hassim 2003, p56; Tamale 1999, p.24, Tripp, 2000, p.589). It is argued that gender quotas have significantly affected the number of women elected to parliament (Inglehart and Norris, 2003, p.24). Consequently, despite their different forms (like voluntary party quotas, compulsory party quotas, and reserved seats, among others), the quota systems are generally accepted to increase women's involvement in politics (Reynolds, 1999, p.34).

5.1.5 Resources

Women's studies used to be known as feminist studies, and their lack of resources is commonly debated in theories of gender and feminism. The LCT, social role, and feminist theories can be integrated into the study as a guide for questioning and explaining gender inequality in political positions in Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, and Uganda. Derive from feminist ideology is founded on the impression that men are the ones who discriminate against women, which would partially explain the paradox of women's low representation. From this theory, it is understood that women have always been more deprived than men due to the lack of access to certain resources that would help develop their political careers. Thus,

they are left behind. There is another theory on women's low representation that has been used. Looking at the obstacles women face in male-dominated fields due to sex-role socialization, this seems to be evidence of differences between men's and women's roles.

From a feminist perspective, these questions view men as more dominant and assertive in politics and public life, and women's primary areas of influence and responsibility are at home. This argument is biased against women because it ignores that family responsibilities and child-bearing hinder women from accessing, engaging, and actively participating in politics. Limiting women's access to political and public spaces is part of 'the sex-role socialization notion, as Clark (1991, p.70-75) puts it, but also is a way of keeping them away from politics (Chohdhury, 2009, p.9). The feminist argument that women should equally benefit from society's opportunities and financial resources is a compelling one because, without financial clout, there is little or no chance for anyone participating in politics, let alone women who start from an already weakened position (Ghaji, 2007, Bawa, et al., 2013, Ranjha, et al., 2011). Most women are turned off by politics of male domination and the lack of resources and opportunities, which affect even the well-educated women who can potentially do a great job than men in a position of leadership (Badawi, 2007.p.5). This sense of hopelessness has consequently reached the level whereby some women have given up aspiring for higher offices.

In short, if women cannot have the same equal rights as men, why would anyone expect to see huge numbers in the parliaments? The simple arithmetic is obvious. Women need rights, better socio-economic conditions, and political leverage to change today's dilemma. Getting an opportunity because of one's connections to powerful male elites cannot be the remedy to gender injustices that affect these countries, but an overhaul strategy is required to enable women financially (Women's International Network News, 1997) and

intellectually so they can free themselves, and ultimately contribute to the overall development plan of the countries in question.

5.2 Strategies for Enhancing Women's Participation in Political Life

Several influences have been found in promoting the equitable political participation of women both in the case studies and in the general context. So, the identified best practices were aligned with the available literature review.

5.2.1 The Introduction of Quota Systems

The use of gender quotas has been the key to global fast track strategies of redressing historical exclusion and bias against women in the political arena. In strengthening this vision, many countries have adopted gender quotas either voluntarily or through legislation over the past few decades (Bari, 2005, p.6). The gender quotas method has arguably reduced extreme injustice and democratic deficiencies, and the situation remains difficult in many countries. This approach can therefore be seen as one of the ways to support and implement affirmative action (Nzomo, 2012, p.1).

When improving gender equality in parliament, the quotas were used to increase the number of women legislatures, which eventually led to positive gains in the political realm. Despite these achievements, the quota systems still come under heavy criticism from those who argue that increasing women in politics does not necessarily bring about an equitable system. In other words, some women are brought into politics not because they are qualified for the positions but because of political expediency for the day's leaders. In this vein, the gender gap in politics cannot be addressed by simply getting more women in the system but by combining the quota systems with other efforts, including civil and economic redistributive justice. As mentioned earlier, women who lack civil and economic rights will not have the opportunity to exercise their political rights (Bara, 2005, p. 6, Paxton, Hughes

and Painter, 2010, Gouvs, 2008, p.542). For instance, some women from rural areas would find politics overwhelming due to a lack of education and political experience, leading to hopelessness and disempowerment, (Lowe-Morna, 2004, p. 72).

5.2.2 Legislation and Policy Priorities

Today's priority for lawmakers is more than simply increasing the number of women in politics. But it is about effective policies, networks, and legislative contexts that focus on gender equality and women's equality (Wallace, 2011, p 14). Therefore, governments should have the political will to implement those gender legislation in general and specific policies in particular such as education and employment. Also, it should implement health services, social security, and other resources for all citizens (Bill, 2000, Chapter 45 and Bureau of Women's Affairs & Gender Advisory Committee, 2011, p. 16). To apply a gender perspective to policymaking, governments must also put more effort into gender-responsive budgeting and planning as this requires a commitment to this policy area and guarantees the protection of women's fundamental rights. Why doesn't this result in practice when the constitution is taken as the supreme law? These principles enshrined in documents have the potential to end all forms of discrimination against women if and only each country would comply with the national and international legal instruments for which they ratified (Strathan et al., 2000, p.10; Silva de Alwis, 2007, p.6).

5.2.3 Networking of Women

International exchange programs bring new knowledge and opportunities for women, especially those in developing countries. For example, educational institutions specializing in women's rights are used as platforms to voice up and challenge the status quo by campaigning and advocating for their causes (Goslin, 2006, p.6). Furthermore, the network enables women to build and strengthen solidarity and facilitates exchanging information

among peers and external partners. To be effective in this environment, women learn the skills necessary to build strong relationships, create constituencies, and sustain their campaigns for a long period. Consequently, they can assert their legitimacy convincingly and are also able to show their commitment by building alliances. These enable them to reinforce their positions and protect their interests (Report of Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2007, p. 24; Bari, 2005, p.7). In this case, women's ability to network and build alliances will determine whether they can effectively handle the pressure of campaigning for any political change, let alone gender equality. It is simply because women in the parliaments represent the interests of all sections of society.

5.3 Research Gap from the Literature Review

There are few academic or empirical studies on women 's involvement in Kenya's politics. The current research findings demonstrate that a comparable strategy is genuine for boosting women in corporate management. Robinso and Gottlieb (2021) recommend that supporting economic growth in middle-income nations must obey various tactics than established economic systems (16). According to Enaifoghe (2018), women have achieved considerable strides in several fields, including academia and economic work, but they remain underrepresented in politics (20).

Aside from the extent of women 's political involvement, little is recognized regarding their personal experience accessing local politics. One 's interactions as voted into office officials, the municipal judgment procedures that affect their leadership positions, and their preconceptions of the variables that will either hinder or facilitate their prospective political involvement, (Robinso & Gottlieb, 2021, p.14). Enaifoghe (2018) argued that little could be stated concerning the problems of sexual imbalance or the possibilities that emerge in connection to females and political engagement in Africa is the lack of documented

information (17). It is frequently challenging to assess the true influence of elements impacting women's political engagement for them to be prospective subsequently or appointed to women leadership by various national political organisations in the presence of empirical research. This educational gap has to be filled.

According to Enaifoghe (2018), several organizations were centered on union workers, communities, churches, and academic groups. Their main goal was to raise its membership's socio-political standing and physical health. Women got involved in politics during and after freedom by performing for political figures and guests at special events (Enaifoghe, 2018, p.26). The research consequently examined how women participated in Kenya's, Rwanda, South Africa and Uganda's political process, encompassing pre-election, installation as community officials, perceptions of becoming leaders, and a certain degree of leadership. It also examined the paths of individuals who campaigned for office. It was intended that the information gained through this research would close this knowledge imbalance and identify potential tactics for raising women's political involvement levels.

6.0 Findings and Analysis

The findings agree with the literature about women's positions in politics. The study determines the factors that influence the participation of women in politics. At the same time, this chapter provides information related to the hypothesis test, which is presented below.

6.1 Results of a Hypothesis Test

TABLE N°2: The table below provides more information about the hypothesis test results, fully supported by the given hypotheses and literature review.

TABLE 1: Results of Hypothesis Test

Necessary to Establish Causal Inference: Constitutional Legislation + Current % of women in Parliament	KENYA (18.6%)	RWANDA (56.3%)	SOUTH AFRICA (42.3%)	UGANDA (35%)
Multi-Party System in practice.	YES	NO	NO	NO
Respect the Constitutional quota, which means that in some countries, for instance, the constitution may call for a 30% quota for women. So, women's political participation may be higher.	NO	YES	NO	YES
Discrimination is constitutionally prohibited and punishable by law	NO	YES	YES	NO
The Proportional Representation (PR) electoral system	NO	YES	YES	NO
RESULTS	NO (Reject Hypothesis)	YES (Accept Hypothesis)	YES (Accept Hypothesis)	NO (Accept Hypothesis)

(Source: Adapted from IPU, 2013)

The table above shows the journey that Rwanda and South Africa have experienced in increasing women in parliament (Drude & Freidenvall, 2005, p. 26-48). For instance, now, women hold 56.3% of the seats in Rwanda's parliament, and South Africa represents 42.3% of the seats in its national parliament. In comparison, in Kenya, women hold 18.6% of seats in parliament, and then in Uganda, the percentage of women in parliament in Uganda is 35% (Inter- Parliamentary Union, 2013, p.21). It helped to understand the differences between historical and law-like propositions. More importantly, the relationship between the propositions and the hypothesis matters, not the number of pieces of evidence.

6.1.1 Hypothesis Results for Kenya:

On August 4, 2010, Kenyans voted for a new Constitution. Indeed, the Constitution has been praised as one of the most progressive in the world (Landy Mrashui, 2011, p.3). For that, Kenyans expected some new changes in their society because the old Constitution (Independence Constitution) did not reserve seats in the parliament for special groups such as women. The only provision that came close was in (section 33 (1) of the (old) Constitution regarding the procedure of filling up the twelve seats in Parliament by nomination. Under this provision (Section 33 (3), the political parties were requested to bear in mind the principle of gender equality. Still, there was no mechanism to check if their nominations reflected this principle. Further, no entity was responsible for ensuring that this provision was well complied with (Musembi et al. 2010, p.8).

It should also be noted that (chapter II, section 14 of the old constitution) protected people's rights and freedoms, regardless of race, skin color, gender, and political opinion. The new one displaced it to see Kenyans expected some new changes in their society. The old Constitution of Kenya (independence Constitution) did not have reserved seats for special groups such as women. Therefore, as the old Constitution did not pay much attention to women in politics, we moved to the new one.

Since independence, Kenya has used only the majoritarian system known as First-Past-The-Post (FPTP). Under Kenya's electoral system, the candidate who gets the most votes becomes the election's winner (ThinkAfricanPress, accessed August 28, 2013, p.8). One could say that Kenya has already experienced the negative consequences of FPTP; especially the study of the world's electoral systems has consistently proved that this system is the worst possible voting system for women. Therefore, Kenyan parliamentary elections may need to introduce the PR system so that the system may allow ethnic groups to be represented in parliament (Shah, 2013, p.34).

Although Kenya has sometimes ratified some international/regional women's human rights instruments, the reality showed that something had been done theoretically. Article 27(4) of the Constitution of Kenya 2010 prohibits discrimination on an extensive list of specified grounds. In other words, Kenya is committed to protecting women from all forms of violence, but women's issues are still given second priority in development, (Nyaundi, 2002, p.16). Despite all the efforts made by Kenya's government toward women's political participation, several issues need resolving (FIDAKenya. 2002, p.5). The fact was that it was still too early to determine precisely the new constitutional impacts in practice. But what is known is that its implementation has been given much attention.

Furthermore, Article 27(8) of the Kenyan Constitution states: *"In addition to the measures contemplated in clause (6), the State shall take legislative and other measures to implement the principle that not more than two-thirds of the members of elective or appointive bodies shall be of the same gender. Then Article 81 states: The electoral system shall comply with the following principles-(b) not more than two-thirds of the members of elective public bodies shall be of the same gender.* It may mean that the two-thirds gender principle could bring significant gain in women's representation, but the country still has far to go. Since 1992, Kenya had many parties, and from that time, no single party couldn't still

rule Kenya over the years because the Kenya African National Union (KANU) was no longer strong. As a result, the 2002 Kenya elections were the most peaceful and successful Kenya ever had (Carter Center, 2002, p.18), especially since all of Kenya's political parties could form a government coalition (Nzomo, 2015, p.36).

By testing the hypotheses, the outcome was likely to show that Kenya has few numbers of women in parliament, and it has not yet achieved the goal of respecting the principles of its Constitution. Hence, concluding that the country needs to do more in the fight against women's discrimination in political life.

6.1.2 Hypothesis results for Rwanda:

Rwanda is perhaps best known for the 1994 genocide, in which more than 800,000 people lost their lives (Powley, 2006.p.4). In October 2003, just nine years after the post-genocide transitional government, Rwanda already had 48.8% of lower house seats held by women. Unsurprisingly, the country was being applauded internationally for being the first to have women elected to parliament, (IPU, 2003, p.17). Rwanda has a multi-party system; however, huge challenges remain in practice. For instance, RPF remains the dominant political party and keeps expanding its control over political space in Rwanda (England, 2006, p. 1). Therefore, its government has treated many opposition party members badly , (Hayman, 2008, p.9). In Rwanda, the issue of women's rights seemed to be a national one. In its Constitution amendment, (Article 11) prohibits discrimination based on sex, while (Article 26) states that wife and husband have equal rights. Furthermore, the (Article 9) makes clear the principle of equality between women and men, which was well established in the constitution itself.

That principle was mainly supported by a guarantee that at least 30 % of all posts in decision-making organs must be given to women, as mentioned early on (Article 9 (4). Therefore, the amended Constitution of 2003 is fully committed to ensuring equal rights for

all citizens without prejudice and adhering to gender equality and complementarily in national development (Preamble to the Rwandan Constitution 2003, p.10). Furthermore, the PR voting system has been a key element of concern when it comes to examining Rwanda's institution's policy, where it is found that 80 members in total serve five-year terms, with 53 elected directly under the current system of PR (Powley, 2003, p.156). Furthermore, this PR electoral system is provided in the Constitution with a mandatory minimum 30 % gender quota in all decision-making positions.

Despite the system that has been seen as an integral element of building an inclusive democratic society (like Lijphart, 2008, p.19; Reynolds, 1995, p.38; Doorenspleet, 2005, p.356, Bos and Schmidt, 1997, p.18). when electoral politics is under authoritarian rule, this could cause a fundamental difference between electoral politics and outcomes in democratic regimes' (Lust-Okar, 2006, p. 458). Different positions favoring majoritarian formulas are prominently represented in the debate (Barkan, 1995, p.17; Reilly, 2001, p.17; Horowitz, 2002, p.45). However, the point here is that the Rwandan government itself proclaims PR as the most suitable pro-democratic institution for its divided society (Stroh, 2007, p.42). So this could also bring us to envisage the possibility that PR systems may cause unintended undemocratic effects under authoritarian regimes. Again, the most powerful party may take the form of authoritarianism by giving disproportionate power to small parties due to its strategic interests. Rwanda has also ratified most international and regional instruments relating to gender equality and women's empowerment (GMO, 2011, p.5). After testing the hypotheses in this case, it is clear that Rwanda has done tremendously well in implementing the amendments to its constitution. Consequently, it has the highest percentage of women in the national parliament.

6.13 Hypothesis results for South Africa:

Since its first democratic election in 1994, women have been in politics. With the acknowledgement of women's role in the freedom struggle against Apartheid, South Africa has consequently increased awareness of legislative processes, which now provides a constitutional framework for participatory democracy (Hicks, 2011, p.1). In 2004 with the quota system, South Africa jumped to 13th place globally, with 32.8% of women elected to its lower house in the parliament (Hendricks., 2005, p.82). Surprisingly, South Africa does not have constitutional quotas for women's representation in politics (Ahikire, 2009, p.7).

Chapter 2 (Section 4) of the constitution of South Africa, which is a bill of rights, states that *"No person may unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds in terms of subsection (3). National legislation must be enacted to prevent or prohibit unfair discrimination"*. It showed how the South African state understood the right of every citizen without discrimination. Therefore, the government has decided to eliminate the rules and practices that discriminated against women by modifying or removing unlawful discriminatory practices through its constitution. Since 1994, South Africa has had a multi-party political system. Despite this, the African National Congress (ANC) has been so dominant until now and still is the only dominant party that keeps shaping the country through its policies (Brooks, 2004, p.2). It helps it to stay in power.

The most effective strategy for achieving gender balance, South Africa has used a voluntary party quota in the PR system to vote for parliament and provincial legislatures. The main advantage is that it focuses on the party rather than the individual and has voluntarily adopted 30%. Due to this combination of factors, every third person on the party list has to be a woman (Kethusegile-Juru, 2013, p. 3). However, one could not deny that the most powerful party may stay in power due to its strategic interests even though the system has been seen as fair and simple (Bartolini, 1995, p.23). This kind of system exists in countries where the

ruling parties have their history in the liberation struggle and where gender equality was manifested as struggles for national liberation (IDEA, 2003.p.4).

After examining the South African case based on the hypotheses posed by the researcher, it was obvious that the country has also done well in increasing women's political participation, especially in advancing women's rights in general. Therefore, the results predicted by the given hypotheses are confirmed by showing the high percentage of female representatives in South Africa's parliament.

6.1.4 Hypothesis results for Uganda:

The hypotheses test results were equal to the percentage of women in Ugandan parliament. Most countries in the developing world recognize the need for gender equality to remedy the loss in human development (World Bank Gender and Development Group, 2005, p.6). Uganda ratified numerous international and regional, and national instruments relating to the protection of women's lawful rights, such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the United Nations Human Rights Conventions, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 1987, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention Against Torture, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol). Yet women are still denied their human rights to make decisions (International Center for Research on Women, 2010, p.2). They are perceived as a vulnerable group, even though the Ugandan Constitution contains key provisions that could be used to protect them, specifically in Article 32 (on affirmative action) and Article 33 (on women's rights).

The Ugandan Constitution (Article 78(1) provides for every district to elect one woman representative, this may mean that women get the opportunity to gain in open

competition with men in their constituencies. In other words, Uganda does not use a PR system. But instead, it uses the FPTP voting method where women can only be brought into the political field through affirmative action policy due to this political system. Therefore, Uganda may need to introduce the concept of PR, where the proportion of votes may determine parliamentary representation and government participation.

Uganda is now under a multi-party system, and its ruling party is the National Resistance Movement (NRM). However, the government did not allow a multiparty system in practice and kept retaining its superior position over all other parties to remain in power as the ruling party (Kiranda & Kamp, 2010, p.21). Despite the provisions for equality within the Ugandan Constitution, Article 32(b) *“prohibits laws, cultures, customs, or traditions which are against the dignity, welfare, or interest of women or which undermines their status.”* However, this principle has been slowly implemented (Sarah & Wendy, 2005, p.15). Furthermore, Uganda has introduced a constitutional quota for women in National Parliament since 1995, meaning a quota system whereby one seat is reserved for a women representative in every district (Uganda Constitution, (1995), Chapter IV, (Section .78) & (Dahlerup, 1998, p.96). As Uganda has signed numerous national, regional, and international legal instruments that promote women’s access to politics, as mentioned earlier, the evidence pointed to the contrary as women are often denied their rights in general; hence the low women representation in the parliament.

6.2 Country Specific Analysis of Research Questions

TABLE 3 below clearly shows the similarities and different factors between cases as part of the hypotheses testing outcomes. Then the analysis of other factors outside of the constitutions that might affect women in politics based on a literature review was used to better understand this topic without including any of the hypotheses. Therefore, it was critically important to have an overview of each case study in the discussion.

Case studies	Kenya	Rwanda	South Africa	Uganda
Obstacles to the implementation of women's statutory rights (Constitution)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deeply entrenched political interests Lack of political cohesion The lack of clarity and precision in Constitution Elite groups are keen to maintain <i>the</i> status quo. FPTP system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customary system. Lack of political freedom or lack of media freedom (no room for criticism or no room for comments). Authoritarian ruling party or Fake multi-party system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Authoritarian ruling party or Fake multi-party system. The provision of customary law which is subject to the Bill of Rights. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Authoritarian ruling party or Fake multi-party system. Customary law
Factors that contribute to women's effective participation in politics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kenya's new Constitution. Affirmative Action such as gender quota. Women's movements, such as the National Committee on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political will. National gender policy. Vision 2020 Women's movement groups. MDGs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voluntary political party quotas. The work of the women in the (ANC) Political Will Women's movement groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women's organizations (under the umbrella Body Uganda Women's Network (UWONET). Political wi

	the Status of Women.			
Common challenges on women's political participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> } Socio- cultural factors } Economic and political factors } Ideological factors mean the problems of patriarchal systems, attitudes and stereotypes. } The application of customary law 			

6.2.1 Analysis in Kenya

The new Kenyan Constitution on Articles 27 (6&8) and 81 (b) has increased women's political participation through constitutional gender quotas. The constitutional gender quotas have been recognized as a highly effective instrument for women's participation in political life (Ibid, p.20). Nevertheless, Kenya women 's experience with political governance could reveal similar patterns of women's political participation like other selected cases, especially concerning determining the patriarchal and undemocratic systems.

Despite the progress of legislated gender quotas, Kenyan women still face numerous obstacles in leadership positions; they have not yet fully achieved 30% of their representation in parliament due to the male-dominated political elites. It could delay the execution of the two-thirds gender law (Articles 27(6 & 8), 81(b) of the Constitution). Since its independence in 1992, Kenya has had many political parties (Patel, 2001, p.155-156). Therefore, Kenya has no single-party-dominant system like other countries reviewed above; thus, women tend not to put their efforts into one party. Despite this, many women who were more politically engaged and active in governance have operated mostly outside the State due to Kenya's

political history, as mentioned earlier, such as the patriarchal socio-cultural practices and undemocratic institutions, and many others.

Some researchers also found that affirmative action strategy could be an important and strategic tool to increase women's participation and leadership in political life. But it still can't replace the political work needed to influence governance processes to help women become better leaders who practice and fight for their rights in a friendly manner (Nzomo: 2011, p.74; Wanyande, 2003, p.32; Omtatah, 2008, p.41). Furthermore, most challenges to implementing the new Constitution will emanate from deep-rooted political interests, lack of political cohesion, ineffectual institutional structures, and some elite groups. With this state of affairs, the question in one's mind is whether the Constitution is, or should indeed be, the only venue to allow and guarantee women's representation and full participation in politics. Bearing that there was only 10% representation under the old Constitution with no mandatory regulation, it could be argued that these minimal achievements were made by women's sheer motivation to be politically active. With the amended Constitution that mandates a quota of 30% women representation, does it mean Kenya is on the road to achieving women's equal rights?

The obvious answer to that may be a certain yes or no. One argued that some texts in the new Constitution are confusing, leaving space for different interpretations. The new Bill of Rights includes a wide array of rights, such as socio-economic rights, and its Para 35 (5) (a) states, "*The state shall provide reasonable facilities and opportunities to enhance the welfare of women.*" The use of language needs examining here, and the word 'reasonable' is very confusing as one cannot understand it in this context, let alone evaluate its usability and validity (Mbote et al., 2003, p.12). Specific terms such as 'adequate' would be more preferred as they give precise meaning, avoid vagueness, and maintain clarity regarding women's rights and entitlements. The lack of clarity, precision, and contradictions in the

Constitution at the beginning may be hard to get its successful implementation, which might become frustrating to citizens and obstacles to the Constitution's spirit and implementation. As the implementation of Kenya's new Constitution is still in its infancy, gender equality for Kenyans may take some time. The sooner the government acts on the implementation strategy, the better for the country to transform some undemocratic socio-economic and political environment that still exists now.

In answering yes to the question above, one could only hope that the quota system has led to a substantial increase in women's political representation in other cases. Still, one could add that this may be a great opportunity for Kenyan women to negotiate for their position in leadership to get their promised 30% representation in public service. But the point here is not about whether women win or lose seats in the parliament. The issue is about having a female representative in the first place. However, small numbers may incentivize other women to aspire and contest future elections rather than relying on a quota system. One could not forget that the Kenya women 's movements have played a key role outside the State in promoting and ensuring respect for women's rights for the past century. Through civil society organizations, they made most of the significant gains regarding their rights and formal political participation, despite the minimal support from their patriarchal state. No more progress could be made despite many remnants of discriminatory laws in the current Constitution. For example, section 82 (4) allows the use of Kenyan customary law concerning family and property matters when it is known that African customary law might be less favorable to women than men (Mbote, 2001, p.3). In addition, exist a host of other reasons, such as socio-cultural, economic, ideological, and political factors, all of which typically easily flourish more in patriarchal societies due to existing attitudes and stereotypes which keep limiting women's access to political offices (ICASO International Council of AIDS Service Organizations, 2007, p. 4; UNDP, 2012, p.42-43) and (Njogu, 2005, p. 3-8).

This research also found out that Kenya, concerning determining the differences among cases was that Kenya hasn't yet reached the 30% quota of women in parliament despite the adoption of it in its Constitution. In brief, the new Constitution provides a legal framework for women's political representation. However, this guarantee is not a magic bullet as women are still discriminated against, partly due to a lack of effective implementation of existing legislation and partly due to misguided interpretations of the legislation (Echaria, 2007, p.12). This reality continues to make women feel uncomfortable and not dignified in the political field, and this is also a bad reading for an objective observer.

6.2.2 Analysis in Rwanda

To quote the Rwandan President: *“In Rwanda today, the debate is not about women’s role or whether they should be empowered or not. That is a given. For us, ensuring gender equality is not just a moral issue. It is a right issue and a shared responsibility that concerns every member of our society. We have always regarded the equal participation of women in all aspects of national life, including the liberation struggle, as an indispensable contribution to the social-economic transformation of our country.”*

For Rwanda, this is a public statement from the President and this shows a clear and strong political will that goes beyond the rhetoric. The country’s record on gender equality speaks for itself. Rwanda became the country with the highest female legislative representation in 2008, where women's seats account for 56.3% (Quota Project, Global Database of Quotas for Women, 2009, 56) & (Sirleaf, 2010, p.35). Rwanda emerged from one of the most difficult phases of its history with a strong political commitment to gender mainstreaming by involving more women in politics. It would not have been possible without the global support and the strong political commitment of the current government of Rwanda (Mutamba, 2005, p.12).

Consequently, women have been credited with many things by gaining qualitative change in institutions, laws, and policies (Molokomme, 2001, p.47). For example, article 76 states that 24 of the 80 members of the Chamber of Deputies must be held by women (Ballington, 2004, p.79), giving them the platform needed to contribute to the country's development. Was this done for a more qualitative reason (Like, quota requirement), or was it also for a more gender-sensitive and good governance approach? Given Rwanda's recent history, some may say that the government eagerly promotes women's empowerment to create an inclusive society. Critics argue, however, that the system is not meritocratic, and some women in higher positions are not necessarily the best qualified for the jobs, hence opening up speculations that some are hired because of their ethnicity. One cannot dismiss that women are firmly involved in all areas of national life and hold powerful positions in the army, police, civil society, and politics. For instance, the speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, the Vice President of the Senate, and the Foreign Affairs Minister, to name a few- are all women. Most of them are genocide victims and one could ask if all of them are well informed in policymaking.

One should know that there are still challenges that need to be addressed. For instance, the customary systems continue to govern how land is accessed by the family, which discriminates against women's property and inheritance rights (Chronic Poverty-Research Center, 2011, p.3). Many women have no protection under the law related to women's inheritance rights and property because there is no legal recognition of mutual consent cohabiting and polygamous unions (unregistered marriages). As such, most adult women in Rwanda in cohabitation have not been put on equal footing with registered marriage because they cannot have women's equal property and inheritance rights under Rwanda's laws. One cannot deny that cohabiting relationships are like marriages in many ways, such as sharing sexual intimacy and having children.

Rwanda has gone a long way to promote gender equality and women's participation, but this participation has not always translated into equality. As mentioned earlier, concerns regarding freedom of speech and political space have been raised over the last few years. The government has been accused of being overly sensitive concerning the mention of ethnic divisions in Rwanda (Powley, 2003, p.155). It seemed to mean that freedom of speech is strictly limited in Rwanda, which would discourage Rwandan women who are generally unable or unwilling to express their ideas and feelings. At the same time, the freedom of speech/expression is, needed and relevant in promoting women's advancement in politics and can benefit the country's socio-economic transformation. Despite these great strides by Rwanda, there is no doubt that President Kagame's ruling party-Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), has prioritized and supported women's access to and presence in government service. However, some research indicates, such as Powley (2003 & 2005), Longman (2006), McCrummen (2008), and Wilber (2010), that it could be a way of drawing attention to the combination of factors like the international environment, regime interests. Some critics added that the increase in women's political participation was just a window dressing.

In contrast, others argued that the government used the 'women card' to cover its authoritarian stand (O'Reilly, 2013, p.19). Especially, the majority of seats in a 30% quota reserved for women are members of RPF, which controls 70% of the seats in parliament. Hence, those women politicians could be more interested in representing the party's interests than in women 's constituency on behalf of women's interests.

There may be many women in politics, but it does not mean that the gender or power relations have changed much because men still hold power in the country where patriarchal attitudes still marginalize women. Consequently, many Rwandan women have less access than men to education, legal rights, health, and resources (Powley, 2005, p.161). Owing to this, the government needs to improve on the political front. In brief, Rwanda is well known

today not only for the 1994 genocide but, more importantly, for its impressive recovery from the ruins and its economic performance. Since there is a Ministry for Gender that works closely with women's civil society organizations, there is no reason to doubt that this progress will be sustainable. So, this might give women an opportunity to hold the powerful posts of foreign minister, education minister, police commissioner-general, and Supreme Court head (McCrummen, 2008, p.45).

Rwanda has been inspired by the philosophy behind the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which it ratified in 1981, committed to translating the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action into action and achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), has put in place national instruments and mechanisms to ensure that existing gender inequalities are successfully addressed. Despite important progress in promoting gender equality, Rwanda is like other countries. Still, it has many socio-economic obstacles and other challenges of cultural and political nature that limit women's access to political life, as motioned earlier (Shvedova, 2005, p.344). For example, the beginning of the post-genocide reconstruction of Rwanda coincided with the coming into force of the 1995 Beijing Platform of Action, which required governments to attain a minimum of 30% women in political decision-making posts. Thus, western donors supporting Rwanda's reconstruction expected compliance with BPA. By contextualizing Rwanda's case, however, one cannot fail to acknowledge that the country has taken a leadership role in bringing gender and equality to the heart of the political process and has led the revolution in rights for women.

6.2.3 Analysis in South Africa

South Africa revealed a similar experience to Uganda and Rwanda in terms of the political representation of women in parliament. For instance, some latest research analysis has shown that the use of quotas to enhance women's political participation in these three

countries could be used often to disguise authoritarian rule to keep any form of undemocratic political systems in the country (Tripp, 2000) and (Tamale, 1999 & 2003, p.35). Consequently, under the authoritarian dominant-party system, both female and male MPs seem to have connived with the ruling party to restrict the opponents' political speech in the context of rising authoritarian forms of government (Nzomo, 2015, p.34).

In the last few years, the customary law in South Africa has been under the Constitution in a subordinate position because it is a part of the Bill of Rights. Further, the Bill of Rights was approved by the South African Constitution (Morandi, 2010, p.57). Section 9 in the Bill of Rights of the Constitution prohibits unequal treatment and unfair discrimination. At the same time, it guarantees full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms (Customary Law, 2000, p.28). South Africa has one of the most progressive Constitutions. It guarantees life, dignity, and equality to all its citizens. It is not to say that injustice doesn't exist. There is a huge gap between the rights contained in the Constitution and women's everyday experiences in South Africa. South Africa has ratified several landmark international and regional treaties related to gender equality. Its Constitution recognizes a Bill of Rights that provides the legal framework guaranteeing the human rights of all South Africans (Eastman et al. 2005, p.13). The Bill of Rights usually includes civil, political, economic, social and cultural, and environmental rights, meaning that even the customary law is respected under the Constitution and statutory legislation.

Under the customary law, women are not allowed to take an active role in political bodies as the customary practices deny them such rights. This state of affairs implies that women are often put into subordinate positions and are slightly viewed as unable to perform duties at the highest levels as their husbands do. Therefore, a person whose rights have been violated by that law will have the right to apply to a court for a remedy. It was why the constitutional Court was established and required to interpret the law to advance the values of

an open democratic society based on human dignity, equality, and freedom (Ibid). In doing so, the Constitutional Court was created to enforce the South African Constitution. For instance, the Constitutional Court has provisions under the customary law; only men could inherit, not females (primogeniture), which is unconstitutional. The constitutional Court assisted women's advocacy organizations by helping them understand changes and developments in court jurisprudence and their implications on promoting women's rights. It is evident how South Africa's Constitutional Court has given numerous opportunities to women by allowing them to participate in politics. When the African National Congress (ANC) was formed in 1912, women were disallowed South African Constitution to be full members of the organization. But today, women can and are somehow encouraged to voice their concerns and campaign for their rights.

Furthermore, the ANC was the only party in South Africa to introduce quotas to increase women's political representation (Manzini, 2003, p.1). The South African Constitution does not mandate proportional representation (PR). The PR system gives women much greater chances of being elected to parliament (Meintjes, 2002, p.231) & (Morna, 2003, p.5-6). It means that the number of seats that might win by the candidate's political party might be proportionate to the number of votes that have been received. However, the system is often criticized for abusing the relationship between voters and their members of parliament, especially since the seats are usually allocated nationwide.

The country has voluntarily adopted 30% political party quotas and has successfully used them without being obliged to do so through legislation or constitutional provision (Nzomo, 2012, p.12). It may prove a political will to implement gender quotas in South Africa. Most political parties worldwide do not employ any quota system (Ballington, 2004, p.18). Despite the absence of effective quota legislation in the South African Constitution, the government has been applauded for its efforts with voluntary party quotas adopted by

political parties combined with a proportion electoral system. In addition, South Africa played a significant role in promoting women's participation at the national level, as evidenced by various regional and international conventions ratified (Kethusegile & Jure, 2002, p.5).

It leads to conclude that the increase in women's political participation in South Africa was mainly attributed to the great work of women in the ANC, who have been (still are) actively determined to advocate and campaign for women's rights; and also fight other struggles of social and national emancipation. However, some people consider ANC an authoritarian dominant-party system, and one could imagine 19 years in political power (1994-2013). It sounds like too much power, which can be so dangerous. As evidence, President Jacob Zuma said, "the ANC will rule South Africa until Jesus comes back" (Butler, 2013). In this way, one could analyze that Jacob Zuma sounded like an authoritarian and unaccountable leader under the ANC shadow.

On the other hand, the ANC still has a strong power in South Africa due to its remarkable event of 1994 as the party of liberation. So, one could sum up by emphasizing that quotas may provide a fast track to women's parliamentary representation, but they could not attain as much as they desire (Hassim, 2010, p.14). In other words, where a gender quota is adopted within the undemocratic regime, this would likely produce negative effects on democracy rather than seeking to deepen and reform democracy (Hassim, Ibid, p.8). But still, it is worth remembering that the ANC worked hard for decades to achieve the gains already achieved, and some of the mechanisms and policies adopted, such as 'affirmative action, proved successful in ensuring women's representation (International IDEA, 2002, p.1). With this, it is vital to note that quotas do not remove all problems preventing women from entering political institutions, especially cultural ones in patriarchal societies. Ultimately, women face other socio-economic challenges which alienate them further, limiting their

access to this political space that men almost dominate. Finally, the case study shows that the women's empowerment plan has been successful due to the voluntary political party quotas, as said before, but more importantly, the visionary leadership and political will to see change.

6.2.4 Analysis in Uganda

The 1995 Constitution of Uganda contains several fairly progressive provisions on the principle of nondiscrimination and equal rights for women and men. It allows affirmative action programs to redress past discrimination against marginalized groups, including women. For instance, articles 21 and 33 ensure full equality before the law (Benedetti et al. 2012, p.7). Despite these provisions in this Constitution, in most areas, some families are currently regulated by discriminatory customary and religious laws (Ibid), for example, marriage and divorce. Furthermore, polygamy is prohibited in civil marriages but authorized under customary and Islamic law, which should be declared unconstitutional. Many women in polygamous relationships have no legal protection in case of divorce (Association of Women Lawyers in Uganda (FIDA-U, 2002), while (article 33 of the Ugandan Constitution) makes clear that the laws and customs which contravene the Constitutional guarantees on equality are considered to be void.

In the meantime, Uganda is not unique; women still suffer due to extreme gender inequality, while gender equality is more relevant in all sectors and disciplines in many ways. Ugandans went to the polls under a multiparty system on 23 February 2006 for the first time since 1986 (Dagne, 2011, p. 7). Yet, women's rights are still denied in practice even though they have the same rights as men under the Constitution. It might be especially true when it comes to women's rights to land and property, which are closely tied to cultural traditions in the country. It sounds like due to customary law, women do not have the right to own or inherit property.

In contrast, their access to and control over land and property rights may empower them economically. In doing so, it may even help them to create more opportunities to earn income through work, which might be one of the best ways for women to enter the political arena. For instance, when women have income and feel secure, they used to think that they can make important decisions because they are in a much stronger position to advocate for their rights and in their communities (International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) & Uganda Land Alliance (ULA, 2010, p.1).

Therefore, it is important to point out the obstacle that continues to restrict women's access to land and natural other natural resources as a part of a wider lack of equality in public and private life. One could urge more that the obstacles to access and control in the customary systems remain the primary avenue for redress. Even more, the formal legal system of statutory laws might be clearly articulated so that there will be clear legal protection of women's inheritance and land rights. Even though the Constitution prohibits discrimination on the ground of sex, it does not contain a specific article devoted to land. For instance, only (Article 26 of the Constitution) confirms the right of every person has the right to own property, either individually or in association with others. So, this combination of statutory and customary laws seems to disadvantage women's rights to own land in Uganda.

It might mean that the government might have paid little attention to that issue. Furthermore, it might have failed to pass gender quota legislation in practice due to the faulty design and implementation. In 1989, President Museveni introduced Uganda's first female affirmative action system. Furthermore, the Constitution of Uganda clarifies in its Articles 32 (1) that affirmative action policies should favor marginalized groups in society, particularly women, to address imbalances that exist against them (Tamale, 2003, p.2). This electoral model was established to allow women to enter their parliament easily with great numbers, even if their cultures were not ready for the leap. In other words, this “add-on” affirmative

action system has provided many women with the opportunity to stand in elections on the national level by choosing one woman member of parliament for every district in Uganda. However, this system has not yet been fully implemented.

On the contrary, it still inhibits women's ability to get involved in politics on an equal footing with men. In addition, despite the affirmative action of gender quotas and the good constitution of the country, these female representatives have been high on the government's agenda. Still, substantial gains have not been obtained, and the government has yet to stand on its policies toward women's political participation (Nzomo, 2015, p.35). It might not be an easy task for them. One woman MP from the Soroti District who was interviewed tried to brief the situation that made them look professionally incompetent:

“Affirmative action has stopped being affirmative. My constituents want me to be more involved, and the expectations are greater for me than for the constituency MPs. Again, my challenge is bigger. I have 17 sub-counties [in five constituencies]; the males only have 2 or 3 each [in one constituency]. It is not affirmative; it is not an easier form and a much harder job. And you look at our staff? We have to hire our personnel and assistants to keep up. Parliament doesn't do this for me. Responding to their mail, their letters, and their requests? For 17 sub-counties? Compare this to my friends who have four sub-counties. My constituency doesn't understand it this way, though. They expect me to be the super MP, and the parliament thinks that without so many offices, staffers, gas money, babysitters, and other resources that I need, I can still be a good MP. It does not work that way.” (Costantini, 2009).

It might prove how the female MPs still complain about the affirmation action system and how this model has been implemented without a proper explanation of its mandate, which might confuse them. Not only that, one could add that a patriarchal and unequal country like Uganda was not prepared yet to have women MPs who might act politically for

their interest, especially at the national level, especially in a country where the rulers have power over the ruled. So, see the points above. The government might put the measures to ensure that the affirmative action system might become a reality for all in the political arena, instead of seeing the Ugandan parliament composed of women representatives without their full participation or emancipation in decision-making.

However, women have been instrumental in creating positive change in Uganda's ongoing transition to multiparty democracy because they have been given a minimum of 30% quota for national and local elections, enshrined in the 1995 Constitution. It has pushed Uganda to attain a mass of women in political governance institutions concerning women's participation as political representatives. Although this situation reveals a similar experience to Rwanda, a country that has reached 30% female representation in its parliament may have worked best in these two countries. Female political participation might be used to disguise and legitimize an authoritarian regime to maintain the ruling party's dominance (NRM) in undemocratic governance (Nzomo, 2012, p.17).

Uganda is considered a country with many representations of women, but still, when one steps back to the grassroots, women do not improve as expected. In this study, Uganda has been taken as a country with a low number of women representatives in Parliament. The study has also pointed out some major contributing factors to low female political participation, such as a country with a patriarchal culture, a traditionally male-dominated political scene, and severe gender biases. Another factor that hinders women's political participation in Uganda is the electoral system based on the FPTP. Unfortunately, one of the reasons why women do not run to the FPTP system is that it is difficult for them to afford big money to market their campaigns than men, especially women, who make less money than men globally (Todaro et al., 2012, p.22). Furthermore, another limitation states in constitutional amendments that every candidate should have quality standards concerning

high education, which might be only benefited and privileged by the political elite (Tamale, 2003, p.7). Thus, women hold fewer seats than men in the Ugandan parliament.

Furthermore, there is another positive aspect that has increased women in politics; it is the way women are committed to working with all parties to improve their gender responsiveness, including women's organizations under the umbrella of Body Uganda Women's Network (UWONET), (Ahikire, 2009, p.2). Obviously, due to female organizations have helped women to enter formal politics because when women engage in civil society, in particular non-governmental organizations, they might feel like people who have a larger impact. Through them, corruption can be stopped (REPORT, Online discussion on Women, political participation and decision-making in Africa, 2007, p.22).

In other words, the women's networks and non-governmental organizations have played a big role in providing women's political participation opportunities in this country. In short, it might have been through women's organizations or political parties that women have learned about politics and its impacts and positive consequences. By ending this case, one could conclude that numbers do not matter as far as women's presence in parliament is well received and concerned. Without women MPs being active in political affairs, one could say that the laws that discriminate against them may always be allowed and sadly ratified by their parliament. So, it is vital to see the Ugandan government strengthen the women's confidence to satisfy the district's demands.

It might not be worth ending with the factors usually found in many developing countries, including Uganda, that stop getting women engaged in politics, such as socio-economic dependence, socio-cultural, lacking good governance, patriarchal values, and even lack of solidarity amongst women as mentioned earlier. Lastly, one of the biggest contributing factors to women's political participation in the country was political willpower

(Ndlovu & Mutale, 2013, p.76), government legislation, gender policies, and programs promoting gender equality.

7.0 Conclusion and Reflections

This chapter aims to enable a review of data generated from the findings, data analysis, and literature review to draw a conclusion and make some reflections. In all four countries, some improvement has been made to increase women's political participation. Thus, these countries have a good quality of gender-sensitive constitutions, with legislation and policies relating to gender equality. After comparing the constitutional amendments within four countries, the researcher found that women's access to the national parliaments is strongly limited and in some way impeded in some countries. In contrast, others remained committed to women's political participation at the national level. However, the major challenge has been found in the presence of women in constitutional principles. The hardest task remains at the implementation level.

After interpreting the results of a hypotheses test, the analysis made by various international commitments and other indicators, Rwanda and South Africa is increasingly promoting women's participation in politics. For instance, Rwanda didn't give much attention to important issues, such as the limit of free speech, particularly around issues of ethnicity. It might be due to its - single-party rule called the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) since 1994 to manipulate the political process and maintain power under its authoritarian government. One would also think this deserves further study because it would be interesting to know whether Rwanda's three ethnic groups still exist or if people pretend they no longer exist. One should ask whether these women in the parliament could contribute to Rwandan politics, especially since the RPF's party still controls almost every political space in the country. The same could be said for South Africa, where the ANC party still dominated South African politics since 1994; consequently, there is no political room to engage or disagree with the ANC.

However, the major success I have observed was that the reality revealed how Rwanda and South Africa have tremendously played a significant role in seeking women's

political participation. Through the quota system's constitutional guarantee, legal and policy frameworks for gender equality, and finally, the use of a good voting system at the national level. Therefore, the two countries chose a PR system combined with a legislated and party-based quota for women. It means there would be a powerful influence on women's representation, especially in ensuring their effective involvement in all phases of political life.

The leadership in both countries ought to be acknowledged for their ability to emerge from horrific events (Genocide and Apartheid) and yet still put women's advancement as one of their top priorities. As mentioned, implementing gender quota systems in both countries has proven remarkably successful, with a strong political will to promote women's political participation. In the case of Uganda, it seems that Uganda also has similar patterns to

other named cases above in terms of political domination by one party and how women are viewed and treated in the parliament. For instance, most women representatives in the parliament belonging to the ruling party NRM, which is an obvious sign that these three countries may have the same practice, if not the same political culture. In one's conclusion, it is arguable that authoritarian regimes can lead to the transformation of political identity in some ways, which could be seen as a dramatic strategy to introduce a degree of competitive democracy somewhat. Uganda's ruling party allows women's political participation but may not always allow them to represent their interest group.

Today in Kenya, women's rights are recognized thanks to their constant and effective activism and the new Constitution. Overall, Kenyan women have been exceptionally active compared to those in Rwanda and South Africa due to the qualitative nature of women's representation in politics. In this way, it becomes more obvious that making a difference does not necessarily require numbers but quality to achieve the aimed objectives. Therefore, putting more women in parliament may not necessarily mean that more importance may be

placed on women's needs and human rights. Still, more importantly, it is the transition from focusing on representation to transformation. As a result, Kenyan women went through difficult times. They learned to exercise their rights, including the right to political participation outside of the state, which was taken as one of the channels that helped them raise their voices to be heard. From the understanding of the new constitution, no doubt that women's movements, women's rights NGOs, and leaders still have a big role to play in the new constitutional implementation process in collaboration with women MPs and some male gender equality champions. One could say that apart from Kenya, the other three countries have been using women leaders to participate in governance both within and outside the state to achieve change.

By comparing the main results and answering the first research question of this study as presented in chapter 5, it could be concluded that to boost women's access to decision-making at the national level, the need for constitutional opportunity was needed and was found in all cases. However, this affirmative action has not been successful in helping to overcome the obstacles to women's political participation in some cases, especially in Kenya and Uganda. Furthermore, this research has sought to demonstrate that the laws, policies, and constitutional amendments relating to women's rights were put in place. Still, somewhat they remained on paper in some cases. Another important aspect of this thesis is the deepened approach to causal factors leading to women's under-representation in politics; they are almost similar to the findings of this research study in many aspects except for some particular factors that exist in each case study. Some have argued that these existing stumbling blocks have discouraged women from participating in politics. It would imply that even those in the parliaments are merely symbolic, as they are not as active and vocal as they should be (Kofi, FGD, 2010, p.45).

The LCT, social role, and feminist theories can be integrated into the study as a guide for questioning and explaining gender inequality in political positions in Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, and Uganda. The three theories suggest that as men and women occupy variant roles, people have variant perceptions of men and women having different skills in leadership. Thus, it can explain why men hold key political positions of power as opposed to women.

Furthermore, this study has provided information related to the second research question about the identified factors that enhance women's participation in politics in each case study, such: as quotas for women at the national level, constitution, political party quotas, women's organizations, political will, and the constitutional court. Despite great differences in historical and political contexts in the countries of concern, each case study showed a political will to increase women in national governance. The leadership understands the importance of adequate legal frameworks to succeed. However, these legal changes are rarely implemented; hence one hopes that these good intentions will be translated into real actions quicker than before. For example, these countries have now introduced electoral gender quotas in their constitution, which is an effective mechanism for increasing women's numerical representation in parliament. However, it would be more productive if quotas were utilized as a temporary measure until the obstacles to women's entry into politics are lowered or removed. Many studies on the gender dimension of political governance in Africa have found that most obstacles that hinder women from politics seem mainly due to embedded patriarchal social-cultural values and undemocratic governments. Therefore, many women do not enjoy competing with men for such top positions. So, one should say those female quotas are still needed to make things happen.

Another point, if many women have made in accessing decision-making positions within political parties that elect candidates, no doubt more women could be elected. But this

issue remains problematic because very few women still hold the lead in the political parties. As mentioned earlier, it could be caused by patriarchal structures in society throughout the country's history. In terms of increasing women's representation in Parliament, South Africa's African National Congress (ANC) and Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) have made significant strides in increasing women's entrance to political power. However, one could point out that despite many women in national parliaments, women still haven't made substantial gains because those dominant parties are still considered undemocratic. In other words, women are in power but still deprived of exercising their power (McCrummen, 2008, p.41). It may mean no woman in power could disagree with the ruling party. The best thing to do is to keep quiet. Otherwise, one could receive a bad decision that might end their political career (Hassim, 2010, p. 20).

One important issue that has not been raised in this study, however, is the ethnic dimension in politics and to what extent ethnicity can be used to impede women's political participation, especially in nations with a history of ethnic conflicts. It would have been fascinating to learn how and if ethnicity can be implicitly or explicitly used against women due to their ethnic belonging. More importantly, what impact this would have on the general population. Moreover, the study focused on politics at the national level. Hence the analysis of local-level politics is very limited. From this perspective, exploring factors that may hinder women's political participation at the local level would be very useful in informing and giving us a full picture of why women cannot break the ceiling at the national level. There is clear evidence why some countries are more successful in opening opportunities to women than others. It is a combination of both political will and good legislation. Today, Rwanda and South Africa provide a good environment for women to participate in politics. Still, there is a long way to go before women can be treated as full equals to their male counterparts. In Kenya and Uganda, on the other hand, the number of women representatives remains

relatively small, as the study has indicated. Still, the signs show positive trends and political will to empower women in politics. In early hypothesis testing outcomes, the study found that South Africa and Rwanda have a better representation of women in parliament. It confirms the researcher's hypothesis tests results given the data gathered. Both cases opted for the electoral system of PR, which is good at helping the representation of the most marginalized interest groups like women (International IDEA, 2005, p.103). Therefore, this would provide a voice to many oppressed and marginalized women once they have representatives in the parliament.

As for Kenya and Uganda, which use the FPTP system, it could be said that the system does not allow enough women's representation, as both countries have fewer female parliamentarians. Some of the barriers found during this study result from social, political, cultural and economic realities entrenched in the countries examined. Others are weak legal frameworks and lack mechanisms for implementation, which are still limiting and putting women at a disadvantageous position in their journey for full equal access and participation in the political arena. Such as a lack of mechanisms for implementation on legal obstacles, despite small efforts by Kenyan women to ensure their political representation in parliament. They have played a big role and strived to take up their leadership positions and compete with the men because their Old Constitution did not support their political participation. So, one could say that Kenyan parliamentarians could pride themselves and clap their hands due to their volunteer efforts. Therefore, one could conclude that both countries need the other system of PR that makes things easier for women in the way they get nominated and presented at the national level with a fairer chance of being elected. In sum, the role of women is extremely important, and one firmly believes that any society that does not use the talents of its women, it might eventually lose out. In a situation where men do not allow

women to emerge, people may need a positive action to bring women to the front, and in those situations, one could support a quota for women.

Finally, in the areas case studies are conducted, it is found that in all four countries, no doubt there is important progress that has been made in women's representation in parliament. By including their quotas in the country's national parliament, there are still barriers to overcome, such as experience, networks, time, and funds, to name a few. One could reasonably conclude that it is time to shift from quantitative to qualitative women's political participation and the decision-making process of women's participation. Yes, occupying a seat in Parliament is the greatest achievement in politics, but there is a need to improve and enhance women's effective participation in political office. In particular, this has to be based on women's competence with meritocratic standards by increasing their impact in decision-making bodies such as government, legislation, and cabinets. Also, local government, political parties, civil society, NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations), and media as it has been seen in some parts of Africa that some authorities do not allow the media to operate freely.

For the study, various recommendations can be adopted from a predictive perspective of addressing the underrepresentation of women in politics and government decision-making positions. Firstly, there needs to be a change in how social roles are adopted in that society should support the inclusion of women in leadership positions, politics, and government. Secondly, women should be categorized as leaders in society and preferred when it comes to leadership in politics and decision-making positions. It entails supporting women's participation in post-conflict and political transitions. Thirdly, there needs to be a paradigm shift in that men are positioned to have more power over women. Thus, people should exercise equality when positioning people for leadership positions. It means that the practicality of the constitution and other gender equality documents must be exercised.

Fourthly, providing training for women is paramount, especially in leadership, as well as supporting their development. It should be coupled with providing skill-building and leadership training for women civil society members, journalists, and organizations. Also, this should include building civil societies' capacity to advocate for women's participation in governance and political transition processes.

Furthermore, women should grow and increase their ability to network and build alliances to effectively handle the pressure of campaigning for any political change and represent the interests of all sections of society. The governments should implement gender legislation in general and specific policies in particular such as education, employment, health services, social security, and other resources for all citizens so that equality is promoted, which will guarantee an increase of women in politics.

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