

Princess Nana Afia Boahemaa

WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND DECISION MAKING

THE ROLE OF NATIONAL GENDER POLICIES IN GHANA AND RWANDA

Master's thesis in MSc Globalisation and Sustainable Development
Supervisor: Associate Professor Hilde Refstie
May 2022



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ABSTRACT

This study examines women participation in political leadership and decision making through a review of the national gender policies of Ghana and Rwanda. While Rwanda is world leading when it comes to women representation in Parliament, Ghana is lagging behind. The objective of the study was therefore to examine how their respective National Gender Policies tackle the issue of women representation in parliament and see how the policies address *practical* and *strategic* gender needs with reference to women participation in political leadership and decision making through a focus on efficiency, equity and empowerment. The study follows a qualitative approach with a policy analysis of the two National Gender policies supported by secondary data provided through grey and academic literature. The findings show that although Ghana has a succinct policy structure, Rwanda has a broader structure in place for women participation in political leadership and decision making, which is more practical and strategically aligned with the activities of government. The findings further show that while the policies are relatively similar, Rwanda has accomplished a lot with its policy, with Ghana have a reduced progressive rate of achievements. This points to how policies might be in place but are not necessarily implemented in full, and that progress in terms of efficiency, equity and empowerment cannot be assessed based on policy analysis alone. Nevertheless, the conclusion draw from this study is that it is important for gender policies to structured, concrete and linked to activities and programmes rather than just stating policy intentions. There is also the need for the policies to define and focus on both the practical and strategic gender needs of women, as focusing mainly on one will not address the status quo.

DECLARATION

I, Princess Nana Afia Boahemaa, declare and that this is my own work and that the materials have not been published before, or presented at any other module, or programmed. The materials contained in this thesis are my own work conducted under the supervision of Associate Professor Hilde Refstie. I bear full responsibility for any limitation that may arise out of this study.

.....

Princess Nana Afia Boahemaa

Student, NTNU.

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(Date)

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Hilde Refstie

(supervisor)

.....

(Date)

DEDICATION

To my late mum, Mad Cynthia Mensah (Akua Addowaah) i dedicate this work of mine.

Thank you for all the sacrifices you made till the last minute.

Also, to my Loving Dad, Nana Kwadwo Boahen II who has been my biggest fan and support and my siblings; Mavis Bossman, Elvis Bossman, Dorcas Adwapa Bossman, Linda Bossman-Yeboah .

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

AU	African Union
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
DRC	Democratic Republic Congo
FDC	Forum for Democratic Change
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
MGCSP	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
NCWD	National Council on women and Development
NGOs	Non-governmental Organisations
NGPR	National Gender Policy of Rwanda
NGPs	National Gender Policies
NRM	National Resistance Movement
PGN	Practical Gender Needs
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SGN	Strategic Gender Needs
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WID	Women in Development

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

According to the UN-Women 2020 Report, an important indicator of women's political involvement is the proportion of women in a country's legislature (UN-Women, 2020). Nearly half of the world's general electorate are women, however, the average percentage of women in national parliaments is not even twenty percent (Blomgren, 2010). Participation in parliamentary bodies is an essential part of democracy as it signifies influence and power in distributing rights and goods in society. Focusing on participation in parliamentary bodies is therefore a key entry point when examining women's political representation (ibid.).

According to the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) (2019), 24.3% of national parliamentarians in the world are women. This is an increase from 1995 when there were only 11.3% women in national parliaments, but it is still far from the global goals set of 50 percent. The national and regional differences are also vast spanning from zero percent in Saudi Arabia to approximately 61.3% in Rwanda (Musau 2019). However, sufficient to note that this number is for the lower government, whilst the upper house only has 38.5% (Atske, et al., 2019). It was also noted in June 2019 that 11 females were serving as Head of State and 12 serving as Head of Government. Also, the Ghanaian parliamentary system only had 13% of women occupying parliamentary seats (Sasu, 2021).

The UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 5 "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls" is an ambitious attempt at setting a global policy framework that, if fully implemented, looks towards achieving gender equality in a transformative manner. Section 5.5 of the SDG is about ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life. The indicators for SDG 5.5 are 1) proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments and (b) local governments and 2) Proportion of women in managerial positions. While this thesis discusses all these three, the main focus is on indicator 5.5.1a; proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments with reference to the two cases Rwanda and Ghana.

As per the United Nations Report on The Sustainable Development Goals (2019), in 103 states, women's representation in parliament varied from less than 1% to 50% with an average of 26% (UN 2019). The number of women elected to parliament, in sub-Saharan Africa, is noted to have risen in 2018, given a regional average of 23.7%, as indicated by the just-delivered 2019 release of the biennial Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Map of Women in Politics (IPU 2019). There are, however, large inter-regional variances. Rwanda, often referred to as a success story with regards to gender equity in Africa comes out on top, not just regionally, but globally with 61,3 percent of women seats in the lower house, and 38,5 percent in the upper house. Other countries such as for example Ghana, is ranked at 147th place with only 14,6 percent of women seats in what is a single house Parliament (IPU, 2021). Its neighbouring country, Nigeria, scores the lowest of the Sub Saharan countries with 3,6 percent and 7,3 percent.

1.2 Problem Statement

Despite the widespread acceptance of and advancement in further meeting the Sustainable Development Goals, considering the socioeconomic development in Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa lags behind most of the world when it comes to the proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments and also local governments. The only region scoring lower is the Middle East. At the same time, there are significant variations between countries. This thesis aims to understand some of the reasons why, by exploring how political representation is treated in national gender policies using the case of Rwanda and Ghana. The study does not seek to compare the countries as full cases but rather aims to see how gender policies in the two countries address political representation in similar or different ways responding to SDG 5.5 on achieving women's participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making with a focus on representation in national parliaments.

1.3 Research Questions

Research questions for the study include the following:

1. How do the National Gender policies of Ghana and Rwanda address women's political participation?
2. How do the policies address *strategic* and *practical* gender needs related to political participation?

3. What are the similarities and differences in how this is treated in the two policies and can it account for some of the difference in how the two countries score on SDG 5.5.1a?

1.4 Organization of the study

This study shall be presented in six chapters. CHAPTER 1 is the introduction. This is made of the background of the study, problem statement, objective and significance of the study. CHAPTER 2 describes the background of the study. It presents the Sustainable Development Goals on gender equality and the role of political representation as both a means and a goal for reaching gender equality. It further discusses the role of national gender policies in this work and introduces the background for choosing the two cases of Rwanda and Ghana. CHAPTER 3 envelopes the theoretical and analytical framework of the study. It discusses concepts such as practical and strategic gender needs of women, gender equity and empowerment and. CHAPTER 4 is the methodology. This section of the study shall be composed of the research approach and methodology, data collection procedure analysis and presentation. CHAPTER 5 is the analysis. This chapter goes through national gender policies in Rwanda and Ghana and discusses how they address practical and strategic gender needs with a focus on political representation. The chapter also presents the similarities and differences between the National Gender policies of both countries. CHAPTER 6 is the discussions and conclusion. It shall present the main finding of the study according to the research questions. The section will also give the summary and conclusion of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

GENDER, POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP AS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT TARGETS

2.1 Gender, political participation and leadership

Women make up 60% of the world's working poor and 70% of the poorest of the poor in terms of financial status, and they frequently face overwhelming legal, institutional, and social barriers to financial empowerment (Koppell, 2010). Simultaneously, women are the best-undiscovered asset for agricultural nations' financial development and rejuvenation. Increases in women's financial well-being may thus have a corresponding impact on social speculation, as women will generally contribute a higher level of individual pay in family government assistance than men (Koppell, 2010).

People in towns where women are in positions of leadership report less gender bias toward women and are more likely to elect female councillors in the future (Beaman et al. 2009). However, male residents' acceptance of women's authority does not necessarily free them from chauvinist attitudes toward women's traditional roles in the family unit and in public life (Beaman et al. 2012). In Rwanda, where gender portions have impelled women into office at all degrees of government, Burnet (2012) finds huge backfire impacts, including male hatred and conjugal strife. These studies propose that women's expanded representation in number have increase, without the necessary change in status; especially under quota frameworks and additionally at the local level, may alter the perspectives about women's public roles—while leaving mentalities about their private roles unblemished. This means that while women's presence in governing bodies may expand citizens' confidence in women's leadership capacity, it does not automatically influence women residents' space for political conduct and participation. Nevertheless, percentage of seats in Parliament awarded to women remains an important indicator of women's political participation, as it says something about women's potential opportunities and access to the highest forms of national governance. Endeavours to choose more women for parliament have regularly included cases that women will change how legislative issues are done, bring new strategy needs, embrace an alternate way of cooperating with constituents, and influence the political culture of parliament itself (Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), 2015).

2.1.2 Representation of women in parliament

The previous 20 years have seen a great ascent in the portion of women in public parliaments around the globe, with the worldwide normal almost multiplying during that time – and all areas gaining considerable ground towards the objective of 30% women in decision-making set by the Beijing Platform for Action at the United Nations (UN) Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. . Depicted as "another plan for women's strengthening," its statement of purpose required the evacuation, everything being equal, "to women's dynamic interest in all circles of public and private life". The Platform set a 30% focus for women in political participation, to be accomplished through a wide scope of methodologies, including positive activity, public discussion, and preparing and tutoring for women as pioneers. In the course of the most recent 20 years, nations around the globe have gained generous ground towards this 30% objective. The global average normal of women in public parliaments has now almost multiplied, from 11.3 percent in 1995 to 26 percent in 2021.

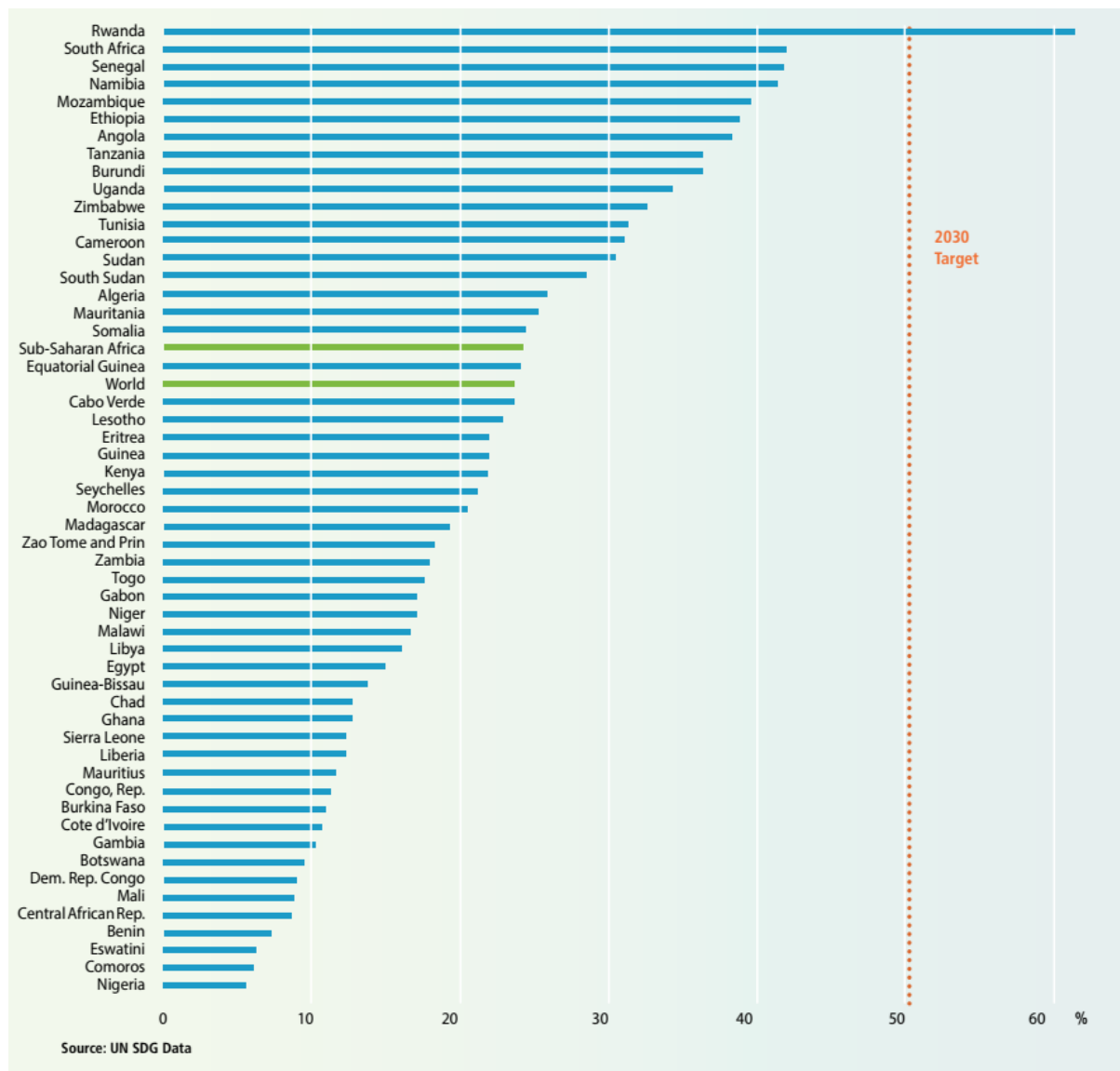


Figure 2. 1: Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments (%) 2017

Source: United Nations (2019)

All countries witnessed some progress on the number of women in parliament, the best strides being made in the Americas. The nations that accomplished the best advancement somewhere in the range between 1995 and 2015 in their single or lower houses are Rwanda (+59.5 focuses, accomplishing 63.8% by 2015), Bolivia (+42.3 focuses with 53.1% in 2015) and Andorra (+46.4 focuses with half in 2015). In 1995, eight of the best 10 nations were European and five of those were Nordic, driving the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) to make a different classification for this sub-area. In 2015, there is a more noteworthy provincial equilibrium: four of the best-performing nations are in Sub-Saharan Africa, and three are in the

Americas. Just three States – Sweden, Seychelles, and Finland– made the top 10 in both 1995 and 2015.

2.1.3 Effects of women in parliaments

Female officials' essence can thusly altogether influence residents' perspectives about the political framework and its leaders. Franceschet et al. (2012) conceptualize the symbolic view that the standards and qualities that administrators reflect—as far as its assorted crowd impacts. Women delegates may alter citizens' perceptions of the system and public authority, Women's quality influences citizens' mentalities in different ways, depending on the results identified with the political framework, gender orientation roles, and political conduct. For example, a study by Konte and Osei (2019) on The Effects of Female Leadership on Gender Discrimination in Social Institutions plots the index of gender discrimination in social institutions on the index of female political leadership to test if there is any correlation. In their figure 2.2 below they show that countries with a higher level of female political influence, record lower levels of gender discrimination in social institutions. Of the countries studied, South Africa recorded the highest female political influence and also the lowest gender discrimination in social institutions. Rwanda comes next, while Ghana is found nearer the middle.

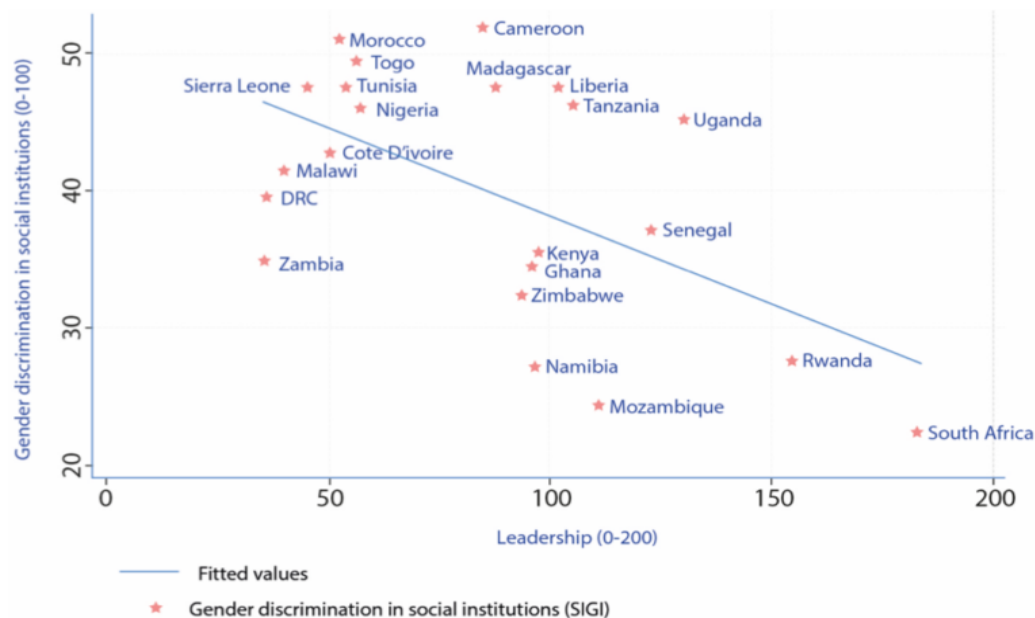


Figure 2. 2: The Effects of Female Leadership on Gender Discrimination in Social Institutions

Source: Konte and Osei (2019).

Considering the Relationship Between Leadership, Family Code, Restricted Physical Integrity, Civil Liberties and Access to Finance, Konte and Osei (2019) expressed that when women have more political influence, there is less discrimination in the family code, and women and girls are less restricted in terms of physical integrity. Similarly, when there is more political influence on women, it decreases restricted civil rights and enhances access to assets and financial services.

2.2 Gender, political participation, and leadership in the SDGs

The main thrust of SDG target 5.5.1 is to "Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life (United Nations, 2017). Indicators areas made known include the following

- Index 5.5.1: Proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments and (b) local government
- Index 5.5.2: Proportion of women in managerial positions (United Nations, 2017).

The targets focus on proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments only, and do not look at women's leadership positions within governments. For the past decade, UN Women has noted that women have served as Heads of State in only 21 countries, and that 119 countries have never had a woman leader. According to UN Women (2020), 21% of government ministers were women, with 14 countries having achieved more women in cabinets. It was also noted that in general there has been an annual increase of 0.52% points, gender parity in ministerial positions. As for parliamentary representativity, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (2020) confirms that just 25% of all national parliamentarians are women, up from 11% in 1995. The most commonly held portfolios by women are vocational training /labour/ Employment, children /Family/ /youth ministers; Social affairs; natural resources / Environment /Energy; and Women affairs/gender equality. Four countries are noted to have about 50% women in parliament in single or lower houses (these are Rwanda (61%), Cuba (53%), Bolivia (53%) and the United Arab Emirates (50%).

A strong and vibrant democracy is possible only when parliament is fully inclusive of the population it represents. Parliaments cannot consider themselves inclusive until they boast the full participation of women. This is about women's right to equality and their contribution to

the conduct of public affairs. It is also about using women's resources and potential to determine political and development priorities (Msuya, 2019).

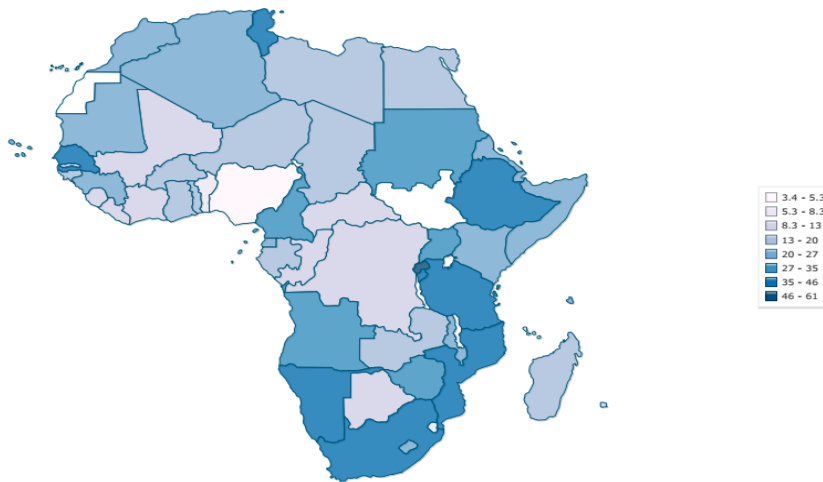


Figure 2. 3: Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments (%) – Africa.

Source; Index Mundi (2021).

In 1995, almost 66% of African nations (61.6%) had under 10% women in their single or lower places of parliament. By 2015, just 20% of African nations had below 10% and 22.1% had 30% or more women Members of Parliament (MPs). For women to gain access to parliament, they must overcome a number of obstacles, including social expectations, gendered divisions of labor, and lack of financial assistance.

2.3 National gender policies as a tool for gender equality

The term policy is a set of principles designed to direct decisions, in the bid to achieve logical outcomes (Gupta, Zwi and Jagnoor, 2020). A policy can be defined as a statement of intent that is implemented as a protocol or procedure (Hicks, Hicks and Beatriz, 2016). They can cover areas such as privacy, education, energy, foreign interactions, health, monetary, and gender, amongst others (Pendleton, Saunders and Shalfer, 2020). Chauraya (2012) asserts that gender policy is a tool or instrument for addressing gender imbalances and deficiencies in a more systematic approach. Gender policies are typically hierarchical in nature at the institutional level, capturing international policies from the UN and AU (Gupta et al., 2020). As a result, national policies are supreme and crucial because they serve as a prerequisite and structural framework for organisational gender policies. Organisational gender policies address

gender imbalances that are specific to the organisation in question, whereas national gender policies address all gendered issues within a country, drawing on, and in conjunction with other relevant national policies.

Studies show that national gender policies can enhance the participation of women in developmental and political decision making, as witnessed in Uganda and South Africa (Chauraya, 2012; Gupta et al., 2020). At the same time, national gender policies do not always translate into practice (Goetz, 1998). A case in point, as indicated by Goetz (1998), is that policies may target increasing the role of women in politics but that doesn't always translate into an adequate depiction of their interest in developmental policies and decisions. As such gender policies should be seen as a tool or a means to an end, but not an end in itself.

A case in point is Ghana's gender policy. According to the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection the main intent of the national gender policy is to ensure that gender equality exists in the provision of access to labour, technology, land, information and capital/finance. Furthermore, the policy framework indicates that the purpose is to "mainstream gender equality and women's empowerment concerns into the national development process to improve the social, legal, civic, political, economic and cultural conditions of the people of Ghana; particularly women and men, boys and girls in an appreciable manner and as required by National and International Framework". This shows the policy framework factors in political development and inclusion for women, however, that has not been effectively actualized. Statistics show that just a handful of women play key roles in the political and leadership decisions of Ghana with 18% and 7% at the national and district levels participation (Odame, 2015). According to Peridleton et al. (2020), gender policies achieve a lot of benefits to women's involvement and participation in politics and decision making. And this is critical, as women face a large group of challenges in accessing parliament: social standards, sexual orientation jobs, absence of monetary help, and a generally manly workplace. These examples have begun to develop as the issue of women's political interest has arrived at the political plan in nations around the globe.

Statistics show that the implementation of gender policies has contributed to an increase in political participation, pointing to how between 1995 and 2015 women's average enrolment in public parliaments almost multiplied, from 11.3% to 22.1% (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2015). Progress in sub-Saharan Africa has been even more sensational, with women's participation developing from 9.8% to 22.3% in a similar period. Among the 174 nations for

which 1995 and 2015 information are accessible, 89.7% saw some level of progress, contrasted with 8% where women's representation diminished and 2.3 percent where there was no change by any stretch of the imagination. With the consequences of races in 2014, the extent of women presently surpasses 30% in a record 42 lower or single places of parliament, contrasted with 39 out of 2013, and 17 upper houses, up from 16 out of 2013. It surpasses 40% in 19 chambers, 13 lower or single houses and six upper houses, and, unexpectedly, have accomplished 50% or more, in four chambers (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2015).

Women's representation gained significant ground in the Sub-Saharan African nations, where their normal portion of parliament developed from 9.8 percent in 1995 to 22.3 percent in 2015 (+12.5 focuses). In 1995, no state in this district had chosen more than 30% women for their single or lower houses. Seychelles and Mozambique fell just underneath that mark, at 27.3 and 25.2 percent, separately. By 2015, the local count had moved significantly: 12 nations have chosen more than 30% women for their lower or single houses; five have chosen more than 40%, and one (Rwanda) has chosen more than 60%. Four of the world's main 10 nations, regarding a lot of single or lower places of parliament, are in Sub-Saharan Africa: Rwanda, with 63.8 percent; Seychelles, with 43.8 percent; Senegal, with 42.7 percent; and South Africa, with 41.5 percent (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2015).

Senegal for instance, expanded a lot of women in parliament from 11.7 percent in 1995 to 42.7 percent in 2015 (+31 focuses). In 2012, it was the nation on the planet that had made the best gains in women's representation in a solitary political race. Revisions to the political race law, endorsed in 2012, order full sexual orientation equality, specifying that all gathering records should be made out of equivalent quantities of women. Records are additionally needed to switch back and forth among women and men; in any case, the rundowns are considered ineligible to challenge the decisions.

Uganda has one seat for every constituent locale for women, and 35 percent of the nation's parliamentarians are women, almost double from 1995. Women have additionally ensured representation among the seats held for different gatherings, including the military, youth, individuals with disabilities, and labourers. Since 1989, after the nation rose up out of long stretches of common war, there have been extra seats saved for women. Kenya has made more moderate progress, rising from 3% in 1995 to 19.7% in 2015 (+16.7 focuses). According to that constitution, nearly 66 percent of individuals in elective or representative bodies may be of the same sex. In order to accomplish this, 47 seats are reserved for women. In Mozambique and Botswana, the proportion of women in parliament has remained relatively

stable. In Mozambique, women's representation increased by 0.4 percentage points to 39.6 percent in 2014, up from 39.2 percent in 2009. In Botswana, women's offers increased slightly, from 7.9 percent in 2009 to 9.5 percent in 2014 (+1.6 percentage points). This humble advancement can be followed, among different variables, by Botswana's "first-past-the-post" appointive framework, social standards with respect to sex jobs, and the challenges, women face in raising effort reserves.

2.4 Chapter Summary

Despite much progress in recent decades, gender inequalities remain pervasive in many dimensions of life - worldwide. But while disparities exist throughout the world, they are most prevalent in developing countries. This section of the research has given presentations on gender, political participation, and leadership; gender, political participation and leadership in the SDGs; and some national gender policies as a tool for gender equality. The ensuing chapter shall give details of the methodologies adopted in undertaking the study.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Theoretical Framework

Gender is a multifaceted construction that is complex in itself, as it borders on both theory and practice (Boerner et al., 2018). Researchers, over the years, have increasingly been concerned that although there have been considerable advancements in gender theories within the past years, how it is approached in practice and policy remains largely trite (Heiskanen, 2008). Furthermore, the lack of consensus between practice and policy consistently leads to the inability of gender institutions to engage in gender planning. As such, researchers and experts in gender-related issues advocate for a merger between theory and practice, to ensure that one is not neglected in place of the other. Based on this, the current study examines how women's participation in political leadership and decision making is reflected in National Gender Policies looking at how the policies treats practical and strategic gender needs - using the equity, empowerment and efficiency approach.

3.1.1 Gender Roles: Triple Role of Women

The study, first and foremost, undertakes a quick examination of the triple role of women within society. Although this is not directly a construct under review, it is critical in determining the gender needs of women within society. Numerous studies have concluded that in several low-income countries (households) women have triple roles to play, which include reproductive work (childbearing and rearing responsibilities), community management roles and productive work (Zohrabi, 2013; Ritchie et al., 2018; Pendleton et al., 2020). That is not to say that women do not have roles like community politics, the issue that exists is that they are not allowed to expressly play such roles, as the dominant roles mostly relate to the three indicated above (Zohrabi, 2013). In line with community management, studies have shown that these roles are mostly associated with women as they tend to be given roles pertaining to assessing limited resources within the community- especially in situations where basic and housing services seem limited in provision (Smith, 2019).

Furthermore, the triple role of women has been linked to the stereotypical behaviour of their world societies where men are tagged as breadwinners and thus given productive roles (Smith, 2019). Men tend to be assigned these roles by virtue of social norms, as against

practical reality where even women tend to be more productive than men (Msuya, 2019). Additionally, in such societies, men have not been given clearly defined reproductive roles, although in a few instances men assist women when there is the need for them to engage in their domestic role. Also, it has been observed that the role that men play in community activities, is markedly different from women, which further reflects a sexual division of labour strategy. Researchers argue that when it comes to community management, men are given more of a community leadership role (political participation), whilst women are given more community management roles that relate to the provision of consumable items. This further limit the role of women in political participation. Furthermore, this affects the needs of women, as the roles of women within society determine their need for provision.

3.1.2 Practical and Strategic gender needs in policy

The framework that underlies the concept of practical and strategic gender needs indicates that:

“Leading on from the fact that women and men have differing roles based on their gender, they will also have differing gender needs. These needs can be classified as either strategic or practical needs (Jaquette, 2017, p. 243).”

As the roles of men and women, as they coexist, in society has generally been different, it has led to the varying diversity of needs that comes with it (Jaquette, 2017; Lind, 2018; Phillot, 2019). Practical gender needs can in brief be said to be needs women and men identify in their socially accepted role in society, while strategic gender needs refer to what women and men require to improve their position or status. Masson based on the notion of strategic and practical gender needs on the distinction made by Maxine Molyneux in a paper published in 1985 between women’s interest, strategic gender interest, and practical gender interests. (Le Masson 2015)

3.1.2.1 Practical Gender Needs (PGNs)

Practical needs are needs that are said to arise as a result of the actual conditions which men and women experience due to the gender roles that are assigned to them within the social framework (Leuenberger et al., 2021). Studies have identified that PGNs are related to productive roles, reproductive roles and community roles (Boener, Chambers, Gahagan, Keogh, Fillingim and Mogil, 2018). Under the productive roles, women are demanded to make

certain subsistent economic contributions to the family in the form of wages, employment opportunities and income. Evidence supports the fact that over the years, there has been an increase in the economic demands on women due to the global economic crises (Heiskanen, 2008). However, the structure of society doesn't allow women to easily gain meaningful employment, thus leading to increased poverty and nutritional deficiencies, amongst others. Furthermore, in situations where women tend to play a role in agriculture, their inability to own lands, increased technology application and lack of technical know-how tend to create more inadequacies for women (Jaquette, 2017; Leuenberger et al., 2021).

The reproductive roles of women, on the other hand, relate to how women are required to give birth and nurture their children to maturity (Johnson, Gerber and Muhoza, 2019). To achieve this women's roles include health care, nutritional supplement, nutrition, sanitation, child care facilities, safe drinking water and ensuring other related needs. Furthermore, the community roles of women relate to preserving, protecting, and taking care of the community and environment within which they live. Evidence points to the fact that women are expected to take care of the environment and its resources such as forest land and water etc. Research suggests that women need to perform these roles to survive, as such becoming their need (Staffas, 2021). Furthermore, the direction of current studies indicates that the responsibility attached to performing these roles has become a reinforcement for division of labour as they pertain to gender. Women are mostly concerned and restricted to engaging in daily activities that involve taking care of their family, managing menial activities and further earning income for the family.

Numerous studies have argued that PGNs are needs that have been recognized by women in the culturally allowed roles within the community they live (Staffas, 2021). It has been further argued that PGNs refer to issues of access or condition, whilst strategic needs talk about the position of men and women in relation to each other within a given societal structure or community (Lind, 2018). Furthermore, practical needs have been defined as needs that are captured from the actual conditions that men and women experience based on their gender roles assigned by society (Johnson et al., 2019). Additionally, studies suggest that PGS are the response gender has to the perceived and immediate necessity that has been identified within a particular context. PGNs have been observed to be practical and mostly relate to deficiencies in the functional conditions such as employment, health care, and provision of food and water. Examples of practical gender needs include immediate and physical conditions, as it pertains

to shelter, food, water and work- these needs are linked to the concept of access (Leuenberger et al., 2021).

Due to the role of PGNs in gender balance and equity, it has become important that the various indicators that identify PGNs are keenly observed in every community (Gotzmann and Bainton, 2021). Researchers have come up with various indicators including good housing, adequate water for immediate and other domestic consumption, regular employment, adequate lighting, wages, maintenance of sanitation and hygiene, child care facilities, transportation facilities, electricity, regular employment, and availability of provision and income. They observed that the presence of these indicators determines PGN.

3.1.2.2 Strategic Gender Needs (SGNs)

Strategic needs are mostly related to empowerment, and they are needs that are required by women to change the subordinate position of women to men. In order to understand the SGNs of women, there is the need to first identify the roles that are attributed to women within a certain society based on their subordinate position (Phillot, 2019). The roles considered include productive roles, reproductive roles and community roles.

In relation to productive roles, the SGNs are in line with training women to engage in non-traditional activities, like entrepreneurship etc. (Gotzmann and Bainton, 2021). Furthermore, studies have noted that the productive roles of women should come with the provision of ownership of land and other resources within their names. Extant literature conclusively shows that SGNs vary based on specific contexts that are related to power and control, gender division of labour and a large extent includes issues such as domestic violence, legal rights, women's control over their bodies and equal wages (Johnson et al., 2019; Staffas, 2021). Furthermore, SGNs have been noted to be less visible and longer-term as compared to PGNs. Taking such actions is directly linked to allowing women the capacity to choose how their resources and times are spent. This further allows them to plan when to participate in leadership opportunities that have been made available without being limited by their productive role.

The capacity of institutions and society, to help women meet these needs helps them to achieve greater equality, as well as change existing roles, thus challenging the subordinate role of women. SGNs are needs that are necessary to challenge the subordinate positions that are attributed to women, as opposed to men, in society. Thus, women's empowerment relates more

to strategic needs rather than practical needs. Examples of SGNs relate to issues pertaining to access to inheritance, employment, mobility, and social and/or political participation (the emphasis of this study is on the political participation aspect of strategic gender needs) - these needs are also linked to issues of control (Madsen and Scribner, 2017).

In the context of SGNS in community role, the emphasis has mainly been on the capacity of women to extend beyond their domestic-restricted role to play a much large role within the context of society, and to a large extent the nation and continent that they live in, as well as the world as a whole (Phillot, 2019). To accomplish this, it has been observed that for women to find expression within the context of the broader community they need space for freedom of expression, collective organizations, taking up leadership roles and up-graduation of their already existing skills for effective managing of community resources (Leuenberger et al., 2021). Furthermore, studies have shown that gender budgeting, as well as credit for capital assets in the name of females, plays a critical role in supporting women to have a place in community politics. Sufficient to note that for women to be able to campaign for political positions, there is the need for a lot of financing, as it is expensive to engage in campaigning (Haysom, et al. 2018).

The challenge with several African and other countries is that national gender policies do not address such SGNs within the community that would assist women with the needed roles in leadership, the purpose of which is to bring women at par with men in terms of political rights, political power and authority and political participation, amongst others (Husein and Herdiansyah, 2019). On the contrary, the position, activities and rights enjoyed by men at the community political level are formally organized and stipulated within the framework of national policy and politics. What many fail to recognize, is the fact that the more men are given the opportunity and rights to govern and rule, the more they are increased in status and power, and financial capacity within the community. Furthermore, this puts a lot of burden on women, as women have more handling three different gender roles- community, productive, and reproductive work- whilst men undertake the community political roles (Ahmed, Tate, Thrift-Perry and Wait, 2018). Numerous studies have argued that men, on the other hand, can work sequentially in meeting their multiple roles- as they play productive, reproductive and community roles men are mostly allowed to select the easy sections leaving the difficult roles for women (Madsen and Scribner, 2017; Husein and Herdiansyah, 2019).

Juxtaposing the sequential role-play of men to women, women rather perform their roles simultaneously, whilst they balance competing demands on their times and resources. Additionally, the simultaneous role performance strategies used by women to undertake their activities keep them stationary and unable to undertake other activities (Sasu, 2021). Furthermore, the roles and strategies applied, as entrenched by society keeps women positioned; this helps nurture and promote the activities, power structure and authority of men as opposed to women. The structures, implement policies and constituted norms of society often discriminate and divide the roles of women giving women the most disadvantageous roles, making them more vulnerable, and further creating inequality between women and men.

Critical to the challenges women face, in participating in community political roles, is the concept of patriarchy that determines the social and traditional roles of women (Ahmed et al., 2018). The view of this author was that inequality of all forms, perpetrated against women, comes through patriarchy. The author further claimed patriarchy has made a lot of women victims, whilst placing them in detrimental positions over the years. This meek and subtle position further increases the gap between women and men, with the sex ratio declining drastically.

3.1.3 The need for PGN/SGN

The application of the PGNS/SGNS approach allows researchers, practitioners, agents of change and advocates of gender rights and equality to understand the challenges and vulnerabilities of women, in relation to their holist development. Data from several studies suggested and noted the use of PGN/SGN in the context of policy formulation and implementation comes under five major approaches, including welfare, equity, anti-poverty, efficiency and empowerment (Osunmuyiwa & Ahlborg, 2019; Hajdarowicz, 2022). However, one key challenge with practical gender needs and strategic genders needs is the difficulty of differentiating the broad concepts. Also, it was observed that assessing PGN without SGN, vice versa, was not possible, neither were the discreet classification of the various concepts under them. Therefore, the study whilst focusing on mainly equity, empowerment and efficiency approaches, of the PGN/SGN approach, assigned equity and empowerment to SGN, and efficiency to PGN

3.1.3.1 Gender Equity

Extant literature posits that equity has been a key foundation for the Women in Development (WID) project that was declared by the 1976- 85 UN women's Decade program (Heiskanen, 2008; Phillott, 2019). Based on its relevance, it was extended into the subsequent approaches such as the Gender and Development and Culture and Development. The idea of equity is to gain fairness in the social, economic, legal and political interactions of men and women. Again, gender equity relates to fairness, measures and strategies that should be available to make up for the social and historical disadvantages that have prevented and plagued men and women from functioning from a levelled playground.

Equity has gained a lot of attention and critique, and as an important element of gender equality, numerous studies have suggested that equity leads to equality (Lind, 2018). To buttress the point, the authors stated that for equality, both women and men need equal enjoyment of opportunities, socially valued goods, resources and rewards. The emphasis of equity is to ensure that women are not saddled with the triple role of unpaid household activities, but rather based on the SGNs women are given an opportunity of paid wages and salary, as well as more economic and social resources to become somewhat independent. This, many are of the view, can only be achieved through political and economic autonomy, through social and state interventions. Furthermore, gender equity has been seen as a strategy for meeting SGNs through direct government intervention (De Silva, 2018). Thus, its main aim is to challenge the subordinate position of women.

Furthermore, the equity approach calls for the elimination of discrimination, with emphasis on revaluing the contribution of women (Ahmed et al., 2018). When this becomes the baseline, it allows women to be partakers of the benefits that come from development. In addition, many scholars and advocates using the equity approach argue that both the productive and reproductive roles of women come under the responsibility of government, thus making the government accountable for PGN/SGN. One of the key arguments that researchers are making is that government is responsible for the policy restructuring and implementation that supports the contribution of women within the development framework of the country (Phillot, 2019). The authors further maintained that to attain this, the approach emphasizes the use of legal procedures and measures in enforcing equity.

However, the problem with gender equity and developing countries is that many of the countries within this category consider the concept of Western Feminism (Busheikin, 2018).

Western Feminism, a concept that counters the normal culture and norms of these countries, is seen as threatening, as such very much unpopular amongst governments of these countries (De Silva, 2018). The problem that exists is that promoting gender equity requires many changes within the social, economic, and legal structures of a state, changes that may affect the supremacy that has been created by men- the impossibility lies with the fact it is the beneficiaries of these same norms, laws and structures that are required to make the necessary changes.

3.1.3.2 Efficiency

In relation to the efficiency approach, which is a predominant WID approach, the purpose is to ensure that the development of a state is effective and efficient with women playing a critical role. That is to say, this approach considers how national policies toward development are efficient, as they entail the economic roles and contributions of women. The focus of this approach is centred on the flexibility concept of the time of women and the capacity to meet PGNs, whilst achieving the triple role of women (Carella and Ackerly, 2017). Thus, the entirety of the perception of women is captured in their ability to make up for the decline in social services by prolonging their working days.

Again, numerous studies have attributed the efficiency approach to the 1980 economic reforms- which were called the Structural Adjustment Programmes of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank (Esquivel, 2017; Busheikin, 2018). This adjustment program aimed to increase economic growth and production with emphasis on the full application of all human resources available, including women. This approach, however, is contingent on the training and education, which are key strategies for attaining efficiency. The purpose of education and training was also captured under the girl child education policies that were implemented by various developing countries within the 80s to 90s (Busheikin, 2018). Further, the approach promotes the gender analysis model as making economic sense. The national development of every country requires an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of men and women, to effectively infuse the two to ensure that both men and women play their part in development.

Furthermore, the efficiency approach has been noted to bring the concerns of gender into the mainstream of development (Esquivel, 2017). However, the focus is entirely on how women can contribute to development rather than what development can do for women. Thus,

the approach is about the role of women in development, however, a critical look at the reforms that have accompanied this approach shows that trade union activities, as well as wages and salaries that are given to women, have not placed women within the remits of development, as the approach indicates. Furthermore, to achieve this there is the need for an increase in social spending by governments in line with the health and education of women, as a means of achieving strategic gender needs.

3.1.3.3 Empowerment Approach

The empowerment approach was introduced mainly based on Third World women. The empowerment approach centres on the given women the needed tools, resources and skills acquisition to allow them to attain the SGNs and PGNs that they need for personal, social and national development (Njuki et al., 2021). Furthermore, the study aim of the empowerment approach is to improve the rate of self-reliance of women and to influence change at the societal, legislative, policy and economic levels to the needed position to the advantage of women. Again, this approach settles on the triple roles of women and emphasizes on the access, of women, to decision-making. To achieve this, the agreed-upon strategy is awareness creation, and situating women within society as active change agents (Engeli and Mazur, 2018).

Furthermore, the empowerment approach looks at building women up by enhancing their organizational skills, self-esteem, confidence and capacity (Nkuji et al., 2021). These attainments have increased the opportunities that are available to women, as well as allowed them to determine their needs. Contrarily, many scholars argue that empowerment has been misunderstood as an end, as opposed to it being a means (Esquivel, 2017). This results in poor women gaining a lot of knowledge about social, economic, legal and national issues but not being able to apply the knowledge to enhance their material situation. Thus, the purpose of empowerment is to reduce poverty but many a time that seems not to be the issue or situation.

3.4 Analytical framework for the thesis

The analytical framework for the study indicates the procedure, methods and/or strategies that are applied by the researcher in conducting the study. Due to the scoping review nature of the research, with intention of examining the national gender policies of Ghana and Rwanda. Also, the review was conducted within the remits of literature and theory, as available in extant literature. The researcher intended to conduct a scoping review of national gender policies in Ghana and Rwanda. The main purpose was to generally compare the two policies

based on certain indicators such as the nature of the policies that is if it is practical or theoretical in nature, the focus of the policies and the structure of the policies. Thus, the first section of the review was to critically examine the nature of the policies that is if they are more practical or theoretical. Critical to note that some of the policies are just theoretical, in a way that it reports what needs to be done or what has been done by the country.

The challenge is that when a policy only becomes theoretical or reports what needs to be done or has been done, it does not provide any information on how the nation achieved its gender equality or intends to achieve it. Furthermore, it makes critical examination difficult, as the basis is to compare the strategies and methods applied by the various countries, against what they have been able to achieve. That is the study delved into assessing the similarities and differences that exist between the policies. This also considers how one policy is better than the other using the balancing approach to determine which one is better at implementation.

In addition, after the researcher conducted a general review of the theories, the researcher then examined policies on political participation and the representation of women in parliament. The purpose of this section was to examine the policies implemented by the government and another major stakeholders in ensuring that women are well represented in parliament and in politics. Thus, the researcher concentrated on the policies that have been implemented in those areas. That is to say, after the examination of the direction of the general gender policy, the study delved into the examination of the direction of policies that were in line with the political representation of women in government and parliament.

Furthermore, the study examines the policies on the way they approach practical gender needs and strategic gender needs. That is the similarities and differences that exist in the ways that they approach gender needs. The study intended to identify, based on the approach of the gender policy, the target of gender policies either to promote strategic or practical gender policies or both. Furthermore, to examine if one policy handles a particular gender need better than the other. Again, due to the insufficient data and information on gender representation in politics the researcher adopted the use of literature to support the gaps in the policies. This was because most of the policies fail to capture the needed details that are needed in examining the practical steps that have been undertaken to promote gender balance, and specifically gender representation in the context of politics

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The methodology of the study presents information on the strategies and methods that were applied in conducting the study. Thus, this chapter focused on elaborating on how the study was conducted, and the underpinning assumptions, activities and processes followed in accordance with acceptable research methodologies and methods. More specifically I defined and illustrated the kind of research design employed and how it is relevant and applicable to this study. I also elaborated on the specific methodologies used in data collection, analysis, presentation and discussion of the outcome of the study.

4.2 Research Design

Research design provided the strategy that underpins and is used to integrate the various activities of the research coherently and consistently to address the study problem (Creswell, 2014). There are different types of research designs but for this study, the case study research design was employed. The application of the case study design, is due the intention to conduct a critical and in-depth analysis of a particular phenomenon (National Gender Policies) within its real-world context and boundaries (Rashid et al., 2019). The case for examination was more than one, which placed it in the category of a cross-case research or multiple case study designs (Gustafsson, 2017). In employing the case study design I started by identifying the cases of interest, setting boundaries for the cases, and collecting and analysis of data/information through in-depth and robust methodologies.

Additionally, there are certain contexts within which case study design becomes the most appropriate. In regards to the current circumstance the purpose of the current study is to gain concrete, contextual and in-depth exposition of specific real-life issues (Gerring, 2017). This ground for case study research was the main rationale for which I employed case study design in this study. As I tried to understand and analyse women's participation in political representation, I figured out the best approach is to narrow down specific national contexts with Rwanda and Ghana in focus. In this case, the case study design provided an opportunity for an in-depth study of how gender policies in the two countries address women's political

participation, address the strategic and practical gender needs of women in Ghana and Rwanda and the similarities and differences within the NGP of both countries all within the framework of SDG 5.5.

4.3 Research Methodology and methods

After the overall design of the study was established, it was important to specify the methodologies and methods that I applied in data collection and analysis. In line with literature, the research design provides the “blueprint” of the study (Kothari, 2017), as such it was pertinent that the remaining processes and approaches were compatible with the chosen design. Research methodologies are the embodiment of the practical strategy or the “how” data collection process will follow to ensure the validity and reliability of data generated to address research problems (Hernandez and Dringus, 2021). Generally, three (3) methods govern research methodologies namely quantitative methods or approach, qualitative as well as mixed-method/approach (Hay and Cope, 2021). However, based on the nature of the study, the qualitative methods were applied.

Qualitative methods involve the collection and analysis of qualitative or non-numeric measurements (Lobe et al., 2020). Here the researcher collects data in the form of texts/words, pictures, diagrams, drawings and anything other than numbers. These types of data usually are rich, in-depth, comprehensive, and contextual (Hay, et al., 2016). In deciding to use qualitative methods, I considered the purpose of the research, the context, research questions, the extent of existing knowledge available, time availability and the overall philosophical underpinnings of the study. With these in mind, I recognized that the qualitative methods provide the best avenue to consider all issues regarding how the NGP of Ghana and Rwanda address women political participation, the strategic and practical gender needs of women and note the similarities and differences within the NGP of both countries in a comprehensive and in-depth manner as the purpose of the study required. With the qualitative method also, the study benefits from the use of non-comparable observations that pertain to different aspects of the study and therefore enrich the evidence gathered (Gerring, 2017).

4.4 Types and Sources of data

Due to the nature of the study, as a scoping review, only secondary data was collected. The main documents of reference and examination were the Ghana National Gender Policy and that of the Rwandan National Gender Policy. Additionally, I applied secondary data, mainly published studies, from online databases like Google Scholar and Emerald. The Ghana National Gender Policy is a document prepared in 2015 under the theme “Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment into Ghana’s Development Efforts”. Topical among the issues in the policy include inequalities between women and men in sharing of power and decision making at all levels which is the main focus of this study. The data for this study from this policy document were derived from the situation analysis presented in the document as well as the proposed policy framework, commitment, and strategies with a specific focus on policy commitment 3 (Women’s leadership and Accountable Governance). Likewise, the Rwanda Revised National Gender Policy prepared in February 2021 on the theme “Accelerating the Effectiveness of Gender Mainstreaming and Accountability for National Transformation” was relied on for data on how the NGP of Ghana and Rwanda address women's political participation, the strategic and practical gender needs of women and note the similarities and differences within the NGP of Ghana and Rwanda.

4.5 Data Collection and Information Gathering

Having established the types and sources of data the study employed; it is necessary to elaborate on how data from the stated sources are going to be collected. In determining the data and information gathering methods, I considered several issues. First, the source of data and types of data collected determines the methods of data collection and tools used. Noting the needed data are secondary data available in policy documents and literature, document analysis became the method of choice for the data collection.

Also, I applied a set of inclusion and exclusion criteria in selecting the relevant data source, apart from the main gender policies used. The scope of information and data sought included data on how NGP of Ghana and Rwanda address women's political participation, the strategic and practical gender needs of women and note the similarities and differences within the NGP of Ghana and Rwanda.

4.5.1 Document analysis

Document analysis is the most common method of data collection for studies that involve secondary data or archival Studies. Document analysis as a method of data collection that involves perusal and review of data to collect information related to a predefined or identified items (Morgan, 2022). The main document analysed were the gender policies, with supporting documents being extant literature published on the subject.

The approach I employed in the document analysis was to create examine the content of each document and code relevant content into predefined themes on women's participation in political representation and leadership at all levels of decision-making. The principal steps I took in the process of document analysis listing all available resources and deciding on how to organise the information from the documents. Furthermore, I cross-checking the documents obtained, from multiple sources including the official state website and that of the ILO. After authenticating the documents, I then evaluated the document for the needed data.

To make the process easy, I design a rubric upon which the national policy documents as the main data for the study were assessed. The rubric covers themes on the SDG 5.5 targets and how the NGP of Ghana and Rwanda address women's political participation, and the strategic and practical gender needs of women and notes the similarities and differences within the NGP of Ghana and Rwanda. The rubrics helped provide a comparison of the documents analysed and also ensure important points are not missed in the document review process. The use of rubrics also kept the process of data collection focused.

4.6 Data preparation and Analysis

After the data was collected from the Ghana National Gender Policy and the Rwanda Revised National Gender Policy, the next stage involves analysing and presenting the findings in a manner that is clear and appropriate. In qualitative studies such as this, the data analysis process often requires diligently breaking down, ordering, contextualising and assembling rich and comprehensive information gathered into forms that can easily be grasped and assimilated (Sutton and Austin, 2015). Generally, the approach I followed in the analysis was that of the inductive content analysis approach. This approach involves the identification of themes or patterns by examining documents, recordings, and records among other qualitative data types. In most cases, this approach is used by researchers to develop theories and identify themes from qualitative data and by so doing reduce the bulk of qualitative data to a limited number

of themes, patterns or categories. The inductive content analysis approach relies on inductive reasoning principles, which means raw data is repeated and examined thoroughly and comparisons are made across the sources of data.

I started the whole process of the inductive content analysis with open coding which involves the process of attaching concepts underpinning the study with the raw information observed from the data or information gathered. This stage enabled me to focus on the aim of the research without being dragged away from it by the voluminous information contained in the policy document analysed. In the next stage, I engaged in a “read and reflect” process by reviewing each material carefully, taking notes and key points. This process of “read and reflect” was repeated till a point of saturation was achieved, that is a stage where further writing and notes were taken did not produce any new information (Saunders et al., 2018). After this, I grouped the data into fewer categories as much as possible making sure to capture the heterogeneous information in each material. Guided by the concepts within which the research questions are addressed, the categories, themes and patterns under which the data collected are organised are further regrouped and discussed. Through this methodical process of the analysis, repeated reading and reflection I managed to eliminate biases on my part that could influence the findings.

4.7 Limitation of the study

As with any research, there are limitations to this study that were beyond my control. While some of the limitations are embedded in the context within which the study was conducted, the majority of them became apparent in the design and operationalisation of the research work. The first limitation is inherent in the type of research conducted (qualitative research). There is a high level of subjectivity in qualitative research approaches as the researcher influence the set boundaries and decides on the measurement to use. This is a limitation that almost all qualitative research are subject to (Aspers and Corte, 2019). While I could not eliminate this limitation, I made efforts to reduce the effect of subjectivity on the research findings by allowing other people to code the data as well, verifying the meaning I drew from the data with that of others. Having this work reviewed by experts (supervisor) also adds another layout to address the limitation of subjectivity.

The other limitations I see in this study are connected with the use of secondary data. The policy documents as the main data for the study were compiled by individuals with

possibly different views of issues from myself. What this means is that certain points or phrases in these documents may not mean exactly how they appear on the document. This is because there are possible underlying contexts to certain points that may be hard to see “on the face” of the documents. If this is the case then an interview with the developers of the policy documents would have added clarity and context to the content of the reports. Contextual limitations such as resources, time and lack of access to the developers of the policy documents did not allow for a more elaborate triangulation and cross-validation of information obtained for the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS OF THE NATIONAL GENDER POLICIES OF RWANDA AND GHANA

5.1 Introduction

Chapter five analyse and discuss the history leading up to, and the format of the National Gender Policies (NGPs) of Ghana and Rwanda. The chapter focuses in particular on how the NGPs pertain to advancing the participation of women in political decision making, and the emphasis on practical versus strategic gender needs in the policies in terms of how to achieve this.

5.2 The National Gender Policy of Rwanda (NGPR)

The Rwandan National Gender Policy was first developed in 2004 and later revised in 2010. It states firmly the need to mainstream gender as the overarching component of the developmental project, policies and programs, with emphasis on ensuring that the unique concerns of women and girls, men and boys, are addressed and accounted for and is trans-sectoral (Ministry of Gender and Family Protection, 2010). The policy document is an overarching policy framework that captures the national policies and programmes that have been presented by the government of Rwanda to handle gender-related challenges in Rwanda. It includes policies and laws relating to women's rights to inheritance, girls' education policy, and women's right to live free from violence amongst others.

The policy document starts with an introductory statement from the president of Rwanda, H.E Paul Kagame. The statement first is to show that it is a national policy and also to show the importance that is placed on gender and women empowerment by the president of Rwanda. The policy itself is divided into five subsections. The sections capture introduction, general orientations, national gender policy presentation, programmes of the national gender policy, and the institutional framework for the policy implementation (NGPR, 2019). Furthermore, the NGP of Rwanda consists of 10 key components which range from gender mainstreaming and institutional capacity development programmes to the provision of infrastructure to support gender-based activities and development. The components are paired with structured programmes and are thus not passive policies but practical. The study reviews the direct policies as components, whilst the sub-components are the structural programmes that are captured under the direct policy statements.

5.2.1 Historical Antecedents of the National Gender Policy (2019)

As maintained by (Nsanziimana et al.2020), in decades past, Rwanda has had a patriarchal social system that has since presented unequal social power relations between women and men. According to Uworwagayeho et al. (2021), gender inequality was a general social norm, but during the colonial period, the supremacy of men was reinforced. As the economy shifted from subsistence to more monetary based the position of women became more vulnerable (Ekeocha, 2018). This was evident by the fact that women were paid less or earned no income for their work done (Ministry of Gender and Family Protec, 2010; UNDP-Rwanda, 2019). Furthermore, women had less access and control over money and key economic resources. This was also emphasized, when studies have posited the fact that there exists gender-based bias and discrimination in land tenure systems and practices in Rwanda (Daley and Englet, 2010; Djurfeldt, 2020; Claesens et al., 2021). This followed through to the period of independence and post-independence era, which further emphasized the power and dominance of men within the political echelons of society.

Despite this development, history shows that women have played a critical role in the Rwandan culture (Uwonwabayeho et al., 2021). Instances are cited when women played pivotal roles in the monarchy of Rwanda, where the Queen mother of the monarchy is a woman, showing that women have played critical leadership roles in the country. Additionally, after the post-independence era, there were progressive changes that were introduced after the legalisation of the multiparty system in 1991. This was due to the fact that women were allowed to participate in political decisions based on the liberation war that was fought by the Rwanda Patriotic Front, leading to the involvement of women in development. This led to the first prime minister of Rwanda being a woman in 1993. The sheer political will of this first female prime minister of Rwanda and the 1995 4th World Conference on Women held in Beijing 1995 is often cited as an important reason why Rwanda has developed and implemented progressive gender policies (Ministry of Gender and Family Protec, 2010; UNDP-Rwanda, 2019).

According to Debusscher & Ansoms (2013) and Rutaremara (2018), two main factors had particular transformative effects on Rwanda's gender-inclusive politics, and these were: 1) the social and physical reconstruction of the nation after the genocide, with women becoming key players. 2) The recommendations from the Beijing Convention which was effectively applied in terms of how women should be given more opportunities to participate in decision

making, politically, socially and economically within higher ranking places of power (Ministry of Gender and Family Protec, 2010; UNDP-Rwanda, 2019). Furthermore, the government adhered to the COMESA, the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948, and the CEDAW amongst others.

The role of regional and national institutions, including the Ministry of Gender and Family Protection, also needs to be acknowledged, as they promoted and set Rwanda on the right path towards an inclusive political, economic and social system that included women. Although the emphasis of this study is on political participation, these collective areas of development all contribute holistically to political promotion (Kellow et al., 1998). NGOs have also played a central role in advocating for women's rights in Rwanda (Hopkins, 2020). All these and many other steps, and actions led to the drafting and implementation of the NGPR

Due to the above-mentioned steps, actions and decisions that were taken by the government of Rwanda, the country is often described as having taken giant strides in curbing the issue of gender inequality within its borders. Efforts undertaken by Rwanda led for example to the country becoming one out of only 6 countries to have their UNDP office receive a Gold Gender Seal Certificate in 2017 (Ministry of Gender and Family Protec, 2010; UNDP-Rwanda, 2019).

Statistics show that Rwanda is currently one of the most gender-equal countries when it comes to women's participation in politics. From women making up only 18% of parliamentary seats in the 1990s, they currently make up 64% (Newton, 2021). Compared to the global average of 23.8% Rwanda, therefore, has the highest percentage of women in parliament in the world (Hopkins, 2020). Additionally, Rwanda has made key achievements, with regard to poverty reduction, increased access to education and health, reduced violence against women and involvement of women in the economy, to mention but a few (NGPR, 2019). Although, these achievements have been met with considerable admiration, the persistent rise in authoritarianism sometimes myrrh these accomplishments.

5.2.2 Political Participation in the Rwandan National Gender Policy

The focus of this thesis is how gender equality policies pertain to promoting political participation amongst women. In my analysis, I will focus on 7 key components in the NGP of Rwanda that directly or indirectly affects the political participation of women at different

levels. These are gender mainstreaming and institutional capacity development, economic empowerment, health and population, education and vocational training, good governance and justice, environmental protection and land use management and empowerment of the most vulnerable. The focus is on these because I believe they are directly or indirectly related to gender empowerment and political participation.

5.2.2.1 Gender Mainstreaming and Institutional Capacity Development Programme

In the bid to promote gender representativity in politics a key component that has been adopted by the Rwandan government has been gender mainstreaming and institutional capacity development programmes. Gender mainstreaming and institutional capacity development programs in the National Gender Policy are captured under section 4.1 and are broken down into three main subcomponents. These sub-components include *raising gender awareness, training on gender analysis and planning skills, and equipping public, private and civil society institutions with the necessary instruments for effective gender mainstreaming processes*. As maintained by the policy document gender mainstreaming is to be achieved, first and foremost, by *raising gender awareness*. Policy direction in this regard is to ensure that there is sufficient elevation of gender awareness amongst members of various communities and decision-makers in Rwanda. Furthermore, this sub-component is geared towards achieving the goals of people being sensitive to gender needs (Mwambarangwe, 2020). Sufficient to note that the gender needs of women due to assigned roles in society relate to practical gender needs.

The second subcomponent is said to be tailored towards addressing strategic gender needs as it aims to *empower women with the needed resources to participate in political activities*. This includes setting a 30% quota for women to be elected into political positions, and requiring all political parties to sponsor female political leaders in their parties. The third sub-component asserts that the Rwanda government intends *to train public, private and civil society organizations in gender planning skills and analysis* and that this is intended for promoting systematic and effective gender mainstreaming in all projects, programmes and policies at all levels. To achieve this, the gender policy states that private, civil society and public institutions should be equipped with the needed instrument and tools, such as training and equipment, that help achieve such set mains and objectives. This includes providing organizations with policies, strategies, and guidelines that they need to promote political participation in Rwanda. Also, this sub-component stresses the need for systematic integration

of gender dimensions in planning gender projects, and integrating gender policies and strategies, with critical emphasis on budget considerations.

In conclusion, the policy states that the government intends to promote gender participation in politics by, creating awareness, redistributing political resources, enhancing the image of women, and providing training, as well as opportunities for women within the field of politics. The main idea behind this section of the policy thus goes beyond meeting the practical gender needs of women. It does not only pertain to helping women engage in their socially accepted roles but aims to address relative power dynamics. The policy aims to achieve this by raising gender awareness about the role and rights of women beyond the household and also strategically positioning them into political leadership and decision-making. Additionally, giving women control or having access to political positions or empowerment through training, education and political quota intends to empower them and strategically position women to have increased political influence (Kimani, Okemwa, & Aura, 2018). The policy also aims to support women across several social and economic spectrums, thus taking into account intersectional challenges that have to do with the unequal economic position between women and men, but also within groups of women as will be elaborated more upon in the next section.

5.2.2.2 Economic Empowerment for Employment, Growth and Markets

An important component of the Rwandan National Gender Policy captured under section 4.2, is that of gender and economic empowerment for employment, growth and markets. This part of the policy is divided into five key sections including *food security*, *improving supply chain for export and local markets*, *access to agricultural finance*, *empowering rural women* and *promoting care economy*.

Generally, in development literature, the concept of economic empowerment is often associated with issues of *food security* (Kimani et al., 2018; Dagarage and Lovelook, 2019). Similarly, stated in the Rwandan National Gender Policy, is the intention to eradicate food security by promoting agricultural productivity, and improving the capacity to enhance food surplus amongst both men and women. Additionally, the provision of necessary facilities for efficient food distribution is a key strategy to be applied by the government in ensuring gender equality. Important initiatives include ensuring that adequate market information is made available, as well as *access to transportation and provision of security* for the risks that are associated with agricultural activities. Additionally, the policy puts in place the *provision of*

finance, through microfinance institutions, for the promotion of gender-related agricultural activities. Critical to note is that the main purpose of these proposed activities is to *economically empower rural women* by improving their entrepreneurial skills, knowledge of adding value to products and having the capacity to partner with various institutions.

The component of economic empowerment is intended to serve the purpose of providing women with resources that promote their practical needs such as work, food security and shelter (Cruz & Ahmed, 2018). As maintained by Loichinger et al. (2017), putting women in a place of economic power allows them to get the financial resources to meet their practical needs (gender roles), which might have limited them to their traditionally assigned gender role. Also, this policy is intended to reduce the dependency ratio (Loichinger et al., 2017)- where women rely on men for upkeep among others. On the other hand, the strategic gender needs of women will also be met, with the effective implementation of this policy. According to Newton (2021), a fundamental problem with gender inequality is the distribution of economic resources, as women are mostly restricted to reproductive roles. But with an improved economic capacity, they can gain the power to participate in decision making. Furthermore, having access and control over economic resources can enable them to support the political ambition that they may have. This is because standing for political office requires access to a lot of funds, most especially for women who require a lot of exposure (Wang et al., 2019).

5.2.2.3 Health and Population

Another important dimension of the Rwandan National Gender Policy relates to Health and Population. The policy targets health and the population are broadly categorized into two and was captured under section 4.3. Firstly, the policy intends to *promote and advocate family planning education* amongst women and men, boys and girls, as a means of giving women more control over their reproductive role within society. Furthermore, the policy intends to *promote sensitivity and accessibility to reproductive health services for both men and women*. With this, the government seeks to achieve effective population measures and also gives women more choices than society allows them to have when it comes to reproduction. On the other hand, the policy also targets rural health systems and referrals in that the policy ensures that both women and men have equal quality access to the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, with emphasis on HIV. In so doing, the policy programme intends to facilitate access to health programs, facilities, personnel and medical supplies for people living in the rural communities.

This policy mainly intends to empower women, giving them the capacity to have control over their health and reproductive activities. A report published by Abbott and Malunda (2016), indicated that the reproductive roles of women continue to curtail their ability to participate in economic and leadership roles in society. They were of the view that such roles put them in a subordinate role and this policy intends to give women control over their health, enabling them to participate more in leadership and political role (strategic gender roles). That is, being able to give women control over their reproductive roles allows them to take advantage of the opportunities that are made available in society.

5.2.2.4 Education and Vocational Training

The education and vocational training policy was captured in section 4.4 of the NGP and is based on numerous reports that have concluded that education and training should not be overlooked in the bid to promote gender equality and empowerment (Ministry of Gender and Family Protec, 2010; UNDP-Rwanda, 2019- 2022). Informal and formal education become the emphasis upon which the gap between males and females can be bridged and this is contingent on accessibility to functional technical, vocational and professional education and training. Thus, the government, through this policy intends to emphasize Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics studies, quality education and promote higher levels of education within the female population. Additionally, and keenly emphasized, is that gender sensitivity should be actively enhanced in all education curricula.

According to Cruz and Ahmed (2012), education plays an important role in gender equality, and this pertains to the capacity of women to compete with men in economic and leadership roles. This policy intends to target the empowerment, efficiency and equity of women at the same time by providing women with skills, knowledge and training that are relevant to their participation in both practical and strategic interests. As maintained by (Reilly, 2021), without the required training and knowledge, when political opportunities are presented to women, they cannot take advantage of. That is to say, the policy intends to increase gender inclusion in policy decision making, with emphasis on capacity building. This is supported by Reilly (2021), as the author noted that gendered leadership in African and other developing countries is mainly due low level of educational training of women in such countries.

5.2.2.5 Good Governance and Justice

Good governance and justice were captured under section 4.5 and conceptualized under five main subcomponents including participation in the decision, human rights and the rule of law, peacebuilding and reconciliation, public finance management, and key issues that have always been raised pertaining to governance relates to lack of participation in decision-making and promotion of gender right- within the context of human rights (Phillot, 2019). The policy states that these problems will be solved by creating awareness, implementing rules for prevention and quick response to gender-related violence and ensuring women are well captured within the decision-making framework.

Additionally, this subcomponent targets building peace between women and men and creating an environment where there is equal participation amongst women and men in developing, implementing and assessing public policies and programmes (Malachias et al., 2018). Furthermore, the role of women in budgeting allocation, public administration and transparency all to ensure there is a gender-fair environment that promotes equality and empowerment. In addition, the policy promotes a decentralized participation system that allows for active participation- this allows for more representativeness (Moodly and Toni, 2017).

5.2.2.6 Environment Protection and Land Use Management

Under the environmental protection and land use management policy, as captured in section 4.6, the gender framework intends to achieve effective land use management and environment protection system. As noted in the introduction, before the development of an effective gender policy framework, the systems were not more effective for women to own land, than to talk of planning and managing their lands owned. Thus, the policy programme is to ensure that women were trained and included in environmental and land management systems. Additionally, the policy promotes the idea of a gender-sensitive administration system, effective implementation of land rights and improved land sustainability use.

5.2.2.7 Empowerment of the Most Vulnerable

The seventh policy subcomponent captured under section 4.7 under the Rwandan Gender Policy Programme is that of empowering vulnerable people. This policy is divided into two main categories including economic empowerment and social protection schemes. In relation to economic empowerment, the policy states that vulnerable women and men should be provided with equal access to modern agricultural services and assets. Furthermore, the

policy targets equality in participation in government schemes that are redirected toward training and providing vulnerable people with the skills and knowledge needed in participating in economic activities. The difference between this policy and other policies is that the target group is vulnerable people living in rural areas and not just men and women or gender-based. Furthermore, the focus on social protection schemes strategizes on effective budgetary allocation, improving food security and sustainable self-support. Also, the policy targets gender-sensitive programmes in the area of preparedness in disaster scenarios amongst others.

5.2.3 Practical and Strategic needs in the National Gender Policy of Rwanda

This section of the review intends to examine the seven policy directions presented above to examine how they relate to practical and strategic national gender policies tailored toward improving women's participation in political discourse. This is relevant as pertaining to the theoretical framework, which has hinged on three cardinal approaches including gender equity (strategic gender needs), efficiency (practical needs) and empowerment (strategic needs).

5.2.3.1 Practical National Gender Policies (Efficiency)

The concept of efficiency captures the idea that gender policies should target how women can be effective and efficient to meet their practical gender needs. This approach and policies that are centred around this approach are critical to gender equality. This is because women are constrained by their traditional gender roles, such as reproduction, which is detailed in chapter three, leading to their inability to reach political leadership positions. However, with policies such as vocational and technical education and gender mainstreaming, the government aims to enable women to meet their practical needs, to allow them to meet their strategic needs. Thus, the focus of meeting the practical gender needs of women is to allow women to have the flexibility of time of women, as they meet PGNs, whilst targeting the strategic interest of women (Carella & Ackerly, 2017).

A key component of the National Gender Policy that targets practical gender needs is the economic empowerment of women for employment, growth and markets. This policy aims to enhance the ability of women to meet their basic needs. According to Reilly (2021), giving women information, training and knowledge about how to take advantage of and have control over economic resources available to them within the society, can enable women to become

more efficient in meeting their practical gender needs, leading their capacity to allocate more time to other strategic interest like leadership in decision making. This, further, indicates how the practical and strategic gender needs of women are interrelated.

Providing women with the required information pertaining to how to take care of their wards, provide food for the family and have more power over reproduction decisions, puts women in a control position, thereby potentially liberating them at the micro-level (Djurfeldt, 2020). Intuitively, this may be the best way of liberating women from the subordinative roles given to them in society because women can now use the remainder of their time and resources to participate in politics and pursue leadership positions. Furthermore, reducing the dependency of women on men makes them free to make choices they believe would benefit them (Abbott & Malunda, 2016). This also comes in the form of training and educating women, so they do not lack the information and skillset to take active participation in their choices rather than be passive.

Again, numerous studies have pointed to the fact that in the 80s women did not have access to capital and land, making them more vulnerable, with considerable changes occurring since the '90s (Lind, 2018; Boener et al., 2018). This lack of accessibility to resources limited women in their capacity to meet their practical needs, as such becoming subordinated to men (Niyonkuru & Barrett, 2021). This subordination, in general, has limited women in their capacity to participate in political and leadership decision making, as well as their capacity to campaign for political positions. As culture always assume that women have nothing to offer because they rely on men in meeting even their basic needs (Malachias et al., 2018). However, the National Policy intends to tackle this by introducing the environmental protection and land use management policy. Many may argue how this is a relevant policy, especially in relation to political participation but this study argues that is a key policy in that direction. Firstly, having access to land in most African countries is a form of capital, therefore allowing women to have control over land resources puts them in the capacity to compete directly with men over the available resource (Abbott and Malunda, 2016). This makes it possible for women to attain better positions in society and to a larger extent engage freely in social, environmental and political activities. Again, the aim of the environmental and protection and land use management policy program is to increase economic growth and production with emphasis on the full application of all human resources available, including women.

The efficiency approach focused on practical gender needs has been noted to bring the concerns of gender into the mainstream of development (Esquivel, 2017). However, I believe, focus is entirely on how women can contribute to political decisions rather than what political decisions can do for women. Thus, the approach is about the role of women in political participation, not how politics can solve the gaps in gender representativeness.

5.2.3.2 Strategic Gender Needs in National Gender Policy of Rwanda (Equity and Empowerment)

As indicated in the previous chapter equity is about promoting fairness in the social, economic, legal and political interactions of men and women (Jaquette, 2017; Leuenberger et al., 2021). It is thus about addressing strategic gender needs. As such, equity is also about representativeness and influence in political decision making.

A critical examination of the national policies shows that the Rwanda NGP intends to target Gender Mainstreaming and institutional capacity development. And this undertaking by the Rwandan government is geared toward the strategic needs of women. This includes developing a sense of self-worth and dignity, which in the policy is addressed through training and education. Due to the subordination of women to men over a long period of time, such changes in values and beliefs are necessary (Esquivel, 2017). A review conducted by Niyonkuru and Barrett (2021), showed redistribution of resources played a critical role in Rwanda attaining its current status as the country with the highest number of women in parliament.

Having access to resources ensures that women can sponsor their campaigns and support their political interests. Also, the study notices that in raising gender awareness women are being made aware of their opportunities and they are being empowered to take advantage of such opportunities. This comes in the form of equipping institutions that are in charge of making both women and men aware of the capability of women and the need to allow them to express such capacity in decision making and political influence. Furthermore, this awareness creation, not only, gives women the knowledge of what they can do but also provides them with the skills set to do so. Thus, the component of the NGP focused on institutional capacity aims to achieve equity and empowerment which are components of strategic gender needs.

Again, the policy intends to target education and vocational training and this is intended to enhance the strategic needs of women (Abbott & Malunda, 2016). This subcomponent

intends to provide women with the needed education and training, both formal and informal, that would enhance their ability to take part in political decision-making- as these processes require skills that contribute to making informed decisions. Additionally, training and education open women up to various positions at the local and national levels, which improves the opportunities available to women. This is said to improve fairness, as it levels the playground for both men and women. Furthermore, this prevents discrimination against women and emphasizes their political contributions. In addition, this policy exposes women to political education, thus providing them with the needed political foundation to participate politically within the Rwandan community.

Another subcomponent of the National Policy is good governance and justice. As captured under equity and empowerment, for women to participate in political decisions there is the need for an effective rule of law and that is the intention of this policy. Under this same component is captured the idea of promoting sensitive representation of women and men at all levels of decision making. This creates fairness and stability within the political arena, as well as reduces discrimination against women as potential political options to rule and make decisions for a group of people. Additionally, this policy covers the legal framework that allows for peacebuilding and reconciliation as a gender-sensitive construct that requires the efforts of both men and women.

Finally, another subcomponent that was observed to assess and contribute to the SGNs of women in Rwanda was empowering the most vulnerable. This policy targets promoting economic empowerment and social protection schemes, as they put women within strategic positions to participate in community political activities. Empowering women so that they do not depend on men, puts them in the capacity to participate. Also, empowering women to be independent means that women can use their resources to their benefit, and this includes taking political roles and campaigning for such roles. Additionally, this policy requires that budgetary allocations are structured in a way that supports women's representativeness in decision making. Additionally, ensuring food security and disaster readiness ensures that women become less vulnerable and promotes political participation.

5.3 The National Gender Policy of Ghana

The National Gender Policy (NGP) of Ghana was developed under the auspices of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSPP). The main theme of the NGP of

Ghana is the “mainstreaming of gender equality and women’s empowerment into Ghana’s development efforts” (MGCSP, 2015). As maintained by the policy document, the history of the NGP of Ghana dates back to 2004 when the Government of Ghana drafted a policy document to address gender and children’s issues in the country. From the executive summary, it can be observed that the policy holistically captures the strategies, with the overarching goal of promoting the political, civic, economic, social and socio-cultural situation of Ghanaians, particularly of women, children and other vulnerable members of the population (MGCSP, 2015). Additionally, the policy targets poverty, social protection of marginalized people, education and skill training, ensuring access to resources, as well as preventing inequality to macro-level resources, among other key undertakings.

As a national document, the NGP of Ghana has an image of the then, president of Ghana, H. E. John Dramani Mahama. Additionally, the document has a foreword statement by the Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection. This is to show the commitment of the government towards supporting the document and also the seriousness of the government of Ghana in ensuring gender equality and the empowerment of women. The policy document is broadly divided into seven-chapter: 1) introduction; 2) situational analysis; 3) challenges to gender equality and women’s empowerment; 4) policy goal, objective and principles; 5) policy framework, commitments and strategies; 6) institutional and implementation framework; and 7) monitoring and evaluation (NGPG, 2015). Again, the NGP of Ghana is made up of 5 key components (in the form of commitments) that capture gender and how it is related to empowerment and livelihood, rights and access to justice, leadership and accountable governance, and economic opportunities for women and gender roles and relations. These five key commitments have sub commitments under them. Thus, this review considers the policy document makes it clear that these five key commitments, overarchingly targets the main goal of “Mainstreaming gender equality, women empowerment concerns into national development processes for equitable livelihood for women and men, boys and girls”.

5.3.1 Historical Antecedents of the National Gender Policy of Ghana (2015)

Sikweyiya, et al (2020) maintains in most developing countries, like Ghana, gender-related issues are to be examined based on the canvas of patriarchy. It is based on patriarchy that Ghana has defined the roles, opportunities and expectations of women (Osunmuyiwa and Ahlborg, 2019). Although, in most of these scenarios women are limited, as patriarchy is limited to women. This is further captured in the history of political participation, notably the

fight for independence where the grand achievement of independence was attributed to the fight of male figures such as Dr Kwame Nkrumah, J. B. Danquah, and other notable members. Although women played a critical part in Ghana's independence, the likes of Ama Nkrumah, Sophia Oboshie Doku (who was the first female parliamentarian under the First Republic of Ghana) and Rebecca Naa Dedei Aryeetey (a businesswoman, feminist and political activist) (Sackeyfio-Lenoch, 2018). However, the struggle of women was not captured, and this alludes to a popular adage in Ghana, that says "behind every successful man, there is a woman". That is to say, men are allowed to be heroes, but women can only be deemed as supporters. Also, history posits that women, both during the pre-colonial and post-colonial eras, have had limited access to resources such as land, and capital, coupled with unequal social power relations with men (Sackeyfio-Lenoch, 2018). Additionally, women were given roles in society that were more subsistence prone, rather than economic prone endeavours. These, and more, are social, economic and political injustices, meted

Ghana traces her fight to ensure women's empowerment to their independence in 1957 (Sikweyiya et al., 2020). Commitment to this was shown when the government appointed 10 women to the legislature as a result of the 1960 Representation of the People (Women Members) Bill (NGPG, 2015). The policy document indicates that passing this bill and making such an appointment positioned Ghana, right after independence, to the consciousness of women's empowerment and gender equality. Following these appointments and the first UN conference on women, the country set up a National Council on women and Development (NCWD) (NGPG, 2015). However, the first-ever Affirmative Action and Gender Mainstreaming proposal submitted by NCWD to be enacted into law were in 1995- this shows a gap of 20 years of inactiveness by the council and this was even done after the Beijing conference.

After these steps and activities, and although several activities were ongoing pertaining to gender empowerment and equality (mainly the First Medium Term Development Plan, which addressed gender-related issues), it only remains in obscurity. This was until 2001 when the government of Ghana, through an executive instrument created a full functional Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (Bauer, 2019). The ministry, after its inception, then launched the National Gender and Children Policy- the main concept behind this was to ensure gender mainstreaming through the improvement of the legal/civic, social, cultural and economic conditions of women and children. The ministry advocated for the establishment of

institutions like the Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit, Legal Aid Scheme and Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice, in the bid to protect the interest of women and children (Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection, 2015). However, in 2013 the government through another executive instrument created replaced the old ministry with a new one, to expand the vision of mainstreaming gender through an all-inclusive society that supports empowerment across the spectrum.

Sikweyiya et al. (2020) argue that the status of women has changed within the Ghanaian community, however, these changes have been slow. The author argues that although women have been given rights for political participation, under the 1992 constitution, there is still a major gap in the level of representation. Statistics show that as of 2012 there were only 19 seats occupied by women in parliament, with an increase to 40 seats as of 2021. The percentage, which stands at 13.09% puts Ghana at 185 in the world grouping, which currently stands at 23.80%. Additionally, as of 2018, only 25% of the supreme court judges were women. Furthermore, a report by the UNWomen organization website shows that Ghana falls within the margin of low performing countries even in the data available on gender empowerment. This confirms the view of Sikweyiya et al. (2020) and indicates that although the country has made considerable efforts there is more room for improvement (Westminster Foundation for Democracy, 2016).

5.3.2 National Gender Policy of Ghana

The main intention of this review is to examine the role of the gender policies of Ghana in enhancing political participation amongst women. My analysis will focus on the five policy commitments as the subcomponents of the policy, whilst the main policy theme, which is gender mainstreaming is considered the policy itself. The subcomponents of the policies are outlined as women's empowerment and livelihood, women's rights and access to justice, women's leadership and accountable governance, economic opportunities for women and gender roles and relations.

5.3.2.1 Women's Empowerment and livelihoods

This component of the policy intends to channel the commitments and efforts of the government in empowering women through secure and safe livelihood, improved earnings and access to economic activities. This policy commitment is captured under section 5.2.1. The government intends to achieve this based on six strategic measures and areas including strategic

partnerships and support for women, women's education, health and nutrition, employment, access to productive resources, and access to basic services and infrastructure (NGPG, 2015). Firstly, this subcomponent examines the strategic partnership and support for women and this can be seen in ten key implementations. Government intentions to provide budgetary support, media attention and interactions with traditional authorities to address the issue of gender and women empowerment. The government also intends to apply to engage the corporate society, by mobilising funding from the private sector and development partners. These subcomponents also address the socio-cultural issues that hinder women's empowerment, including harmful practices like female genital mutilation, human trafficking and child marriages (Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection, 2015).

Also, education is a subcomponent, the government intends to provide educational opportunities to both men and women, whilst promoting school attendance, allowing re-entry for pregnant girls and providing scholarship schemes for girls. This subcomponent is intended to help women acquire skills and knowledge in fields such as STEM, decision making, organization and management among others (Ayentimi et al., 2020). The intention is to allow women to gain the right education to contribute to society and take advantage of opportunities, that hitherto would have been only available to men. Another sub-component has to do with health and nutrition. This subcomponent intends to improve access to reproductive health for women, as well as promote health programmes in schools. This also targets issues pertaining to maternal mortality. Additionally, the provision of employment opportunities falls under this component. This subcomponent intends to create an equal platform for both women and men in terms of employment opportunities available to them. And comes in the form of reviewing the skills of women and equipping them with skills for job creation and also fitting into already existing roles. Furthermore, this subcomponent looks at how to ensure job security for men and women on maternity leave (Madse et al., 2021).

The policy also intends to provide women access to productive resources in relation to agriculture, food and fisheries. Implementing and reviewing programs that would ensure equitable access to natural resources, including land for the agricultural-related purpose, as well as other business activities (Ayentimi et al., 2020). Access to basic infrastructure and services is also a subcomponent under this policy. The subcomponent intends to ensure women have access to transportation, housing and ICT, to facilitate their capacity to compete with men for social and economic activities. Key activities, to achieve this, includes arranging with

transport service agencies to give priority to pregnant women, the aged, people with disability and children. Also, the government intends to promote an ICT friendly environment in schools and workplaces, especially for women.

In summary, the main intention behind this component is to empower women and provide them with stable livelihoods. Therefore, the component tackles both practical and strategic gender needs of women. The component intends to tackle the health and nutrition-related issues, and also problems pertaining to food, agriculture, fisheries and access to productive resources, access to basic services and infrastructure that plague woman and limit them from harnessing their skills and acquiring knowledge. Thus, these subcomponents tackle the practical gender needs of women by helping women efficiently handle the subordinate roles presented by society, whilst freeing them up to attend to other roles that meet their strategic gender needs. By providing strategic partnership and support for women, education and employment government intend to give women an opportunity to participate beyond the limiting roles assigned to them by society (UN-Women, 2020). Additionally, women would have the capacity to acquire skills like management, organization, and starting businesses amongst others that broaden their horizons. I believe that this is the needed basis and platform for political participation. Empowerment through access to livelihood opportunities allows for women to provide themselves with what they need rather than relying on men for their practical and strategic gender needs.

5.3.2.2 Gender-Based Violence

The commitment of the government to tackle gender-based violence is captured under the National Gender Policy of Ghana. The objective, as stated by the NGP, is to increase the capacity of implementing and localizing the International Treaties strategies and policies that have been adopted by the government to prevent discrimination, promote gender equality and tackle violence against women. To accomplish this the government considers the enforcement of women's rights key. An example of this is the enactment of the Affirmative Action Law which is to increase the representation of women to 40% in decision making and political participation. Also, the Political Parties Act to make sure it conforms to the Affirmative Action Law. Although this has been the intention of the government, that has not been achieved as the number of women in parliament remains below 20% (Madsen et al., 2021). Additionally, the government intends to promote the participation of women within the legal system by providing access to legal education for women, facilitating the capacity of women to be

guaranteed the right to their spouses estates when they are deceased (Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection, 2015).

Other issues of concern under this commitment are gender-based violence, human trafficking and migration. The efforts of the government in relation to gender-based violence include setting up institutions like the Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit and implementing the policy of the Domestic Violence Act. In the prevention of human trafficking, the government intends to support the implementation of the Human Tracking Act, as well as setting up and supporting the Human Trafficking Secretariat. The government also intends to set up shelters for housing such victims (Sikweyiya et al., 2020). Finally, the government is committed to promoting accurate documentation of migration of women, especially to ensure that women are not misled to become victims of servitude in other countries.

This policy commitment can be directly linked to helping women attain a certain height in society that exceeds that of the subordinative role that is assigned to them (Bauer, 2019). According to Ayentimi et al. (2020), having an affirmative action that intends to promote political participation and enforcing that at the political party level would help promote women's representation in decision making and political participation. If this policy commitment is well implemented, the target is to provide women with the security that they require, which falls under the practical gender needs of women, to achieve effective and unhindered participation in political, social and economic activities of the Ghanaian society. Additionally, supporting rights, promoting women within the legal system, and preventing gender-based violence and human trafficking, ensure that women are not consistently subordinated to men against their will (Sikweyiya et al., 2020). As maintained by Bauer (2019), in situations where women do not want to be subordinated, men sometimes forcefully engage them using violence. This is why it is relevant to set up institutions that enforce the laws on violence prevention. Also, by making women aware of their rights they can take advantage of such laws and the institutions that enforce them. Additionally,

5.3.2.3 Women's Leadership and Accountable Governance

The policy commitment has the objective of enhancing the role women play in leadership, decision-making and governance at all level of government (Sackeyfio-Lenoch, 2018). This policy commitment is to provide women with a healthy political environment, as well as a well-developed institutional capacity based on rule of law and promotion of

conditions that affirm the rights and interests of women. The government also intends to provide accountable governance based on control of corruption and government effectiveness (Westminster Foundation for Democracy, 2016). To achieve these the policy intends to review common barriers that prevent women from participating in government processes, enhance compliance with gender mainstreaming programmes and policies and also the promotion of an enabling political environment that increases the opportunities for women within the political frame of the Ghanaian society. Furthermore, the policy commitment is to campaign toward an effective understanding of women empowerment and gender concepts, which is underpinned in socio-economic development. Furthermore, this committee seeks to come up with guidelines for building the capacity of women so they can take advantage of political opportunities within the public structures. The component is also committed to increasing the percentage of women's inclusion to 40% across the board. Sackeyfio-Lenoch (2018) was of the view the policy targets promoted channels that support leadership development through mentoring and social accountability across citizens' representation structures (Sikweyiya et al., 2020).

Amongst all the five policy commitments, this policy seems to be the one that directly impacts political participation. This is because of the actions and activities outlined under the commitment. Thus, the policy is more in line with achieving the strategic gender needs of women, than their practical gender needs. The capacity of the government to meet the 40% increase would go a long way to assisting women to meet their strategic gender needs. However, statistics show that this hasn't been achieved (Bauer, 2019). The number of women in political participation is low, lest talking about women in other realms of leadership positions in Ghana (Ahmed et al., 2018).

However, the policy intends to enable women to have both access and the capacity to participate in leadership and political positions. Firstly, having access comes in the form of the implementation of affirmative action and social-accountability networks. This is very important for political participation and leadership decision making, as women are most disadvantaged in their ability to compete with men. Therefore, putting in place such actions will ensure the level of competition is made equal for women to also participate. However, this is not enough, as having the opportunities without capacity can compromise the position of women, even further (Minister of Gender Children and Social Protection, 2015). And this is answered by, the promotion of leadership mentoring for women, implementation of leadership

development channels and leadership training geared towards improving the capacity of women to enable them to fit within these roles made available.

5.3.2.4 Economic Opportunities for Women

The objective of this policy commitment is to enhance the economic opportunities of women, namely trade and macro-economic policies to ensure that the strategic and practical needs of women and men are handled (Sackeyfio-Lenoch, 2018). This component has subcomponents such as women and the economy, economic empowerment and development and trade and industry, which are critically examined below. Firstly, the women and the economy subcomponent examine how government can ensure there is gender-responsive budgeting to include women in all aspects of the economy. This also comes with the provision of taxation and trade literacy to people within the informal sector to inform women about how to engage in trading activities, as well as contribute their taxes to national development. The intention is also to implement and enforce policies and legislations that help women participate in the economy.

On the other hand, economic empowerment, and development, is a subcomponent that promotes women-specific needs in terms of financial management and development, through efficient and effective fiscal policy management. Also, under this, the policy intends to ensure there is equitable access to income and economic and social resources in the bid to accelerate poverty reduction amongst women. Also, putting in measures to promote gender inclusion in entrepreneurial activities. Again, the subcomponents look at issues pertaining to access to finance and other economic resources like land and capital (Newton, 2021). That is to say, the intention is to look at how to involve women in economic participation by making available the needed resources to them (Sikweyiya et al, 2020).

Finally, under the subcomponent of trade and industry, the intention is to revamp the informal sector based on the challenges that face women and hinder them from participating effectively in trade and industry. The components of international trade and industry would also be examined under this subcomponent in the bid to increase the number of women that participate in such trades. Also, the government intends to increase the representativeness of women on the Regional and International Trade Organization boards.

As maintained in chapter three, any activity or action that assists women in meeting the needs that make them subordinated to men counts as a practical gender need. As such a critical look

at this component reveals that the intention is to help women meet their economic needs. But also this component intends to assist them to become economically independent, thus liberating them from the subordinative roles that have been assigned to them (Claessens et al., 2021). Therefore, the policy targets both practical and strategic gender needs. Also, when it comes to political participation and leadership decision making, economic empowerment plays a critical role. This is because campaigning for political positions requires access to finances, which is provided by economic empowerment. Additionally, men's control of economic empowerment puts them above women in the arena of politics, therefore the capacity of women to also have such resources helps them effectively compete with men for such positions.

5.3.2.5 Gender Roles and Relations

The objective of this commitment is to change the inequitable gender relation in the bid to enhance the status of women in relation to that of men. To achieve the government of Ghana has divided this component into two main subcomponents including gender roles and gender relations. In relation to gender roles, the sub-commitment is to ensure that the ministry gathers gender-related statistics on the role of both women and men pertaining to gender differences, as shaped by educational, historical, political, ideological, economic, religious and cultural factors. This sub-commitment also intends to expedite the allocation of resources by private and public section institutions to develop gender sensitization and awareness programmes (Daley and Englert, 2010). Also, this policy intends to improve the culture and social foundations upon which gender roles are assigned. This is to help make changes in the gender roles, in relation to the informal and formal decision making roles that are assigned to women. Additionally, this sub-component is contingent on the terms as detailed by the 4th Women's Conference in 1995.

Whilst gender relations, on the other hand, focus on transforming gender stereotypes, norms, unequal power relations and socialization issues. To achieve this, the policy intends to transform the education system, media, as well as the labour market that imposes these negative feminine and masculine behaviour. The educational aspect looks at gender stereotype transformation by encouraging girls to take up a course in STEM-related research and activities. The labour component is targeted to improve the work-life balance for women, which includes providing a child-friendly working environment for them.

According to Desrosiers (2020), gender roles and relations are the key determinates of the practical gender roles that have been assigned to women by society. Women are given these role-based on social norms and structure. As such this policy intends to redefine these social norms, that facilitate the practical roles, thus allowing women to be given more leadership-oriented roles rather than the subordinated role that are assigned to them. Wang et al. (2019) maintain that having these roles limit women from taking up political and leadership roles, as women are considered inappropriate for such roles. Furthermore, the girl child grows up having these stereotypic projections in her mind and this limits her capacity to dream about taking up such roles in society. This subcomponent intends to tackle the concept of limiting women only to practical gender roles, thus opening them up for more strategic gender roles. Redefining these roles and breaking the barriers created by social norms, will ensure that both men and women become aware that anybody in society can take up political and leadership roles, notwithstanding their gender (Ayentimi et al., 2020).

5.3.3 Practical and Strategic Needs in the National Gender Policy of Ghana

This section of the review intends to examine the five policy subcomponents presented above with the intention of examining how they relate to practical and strategic national gender policies tailored toward improving women's participation in political discourse. This is relevant as pertaining to the theoretical framework, which has hinged on three cardinal approaches including gender equity (strategic gender needs), efficiency (practical needs) and empowerment (strategic needs).

5.3.3.1 Practical National Gender Policies (Efficiency)

The component of Efficiency pertains to the capacity of women to manage their time and resources in meeting the practical gender roles that have been allocated to them, whilst freeing them up for other activities that are not related to the practical gender roles (Bauer, 2019). Thus, policies that intend to achieve this look at enhancing the economic, skills and knowledge capacity of women to be efficient at achieving the subordinative roles given to women. This is because if women are not able to achieve these roles, they are not allowed to engage in other roles.

Based on the policy commitments outlined by the government of Ghana, a key component that can be captured under efficiency relates to creating economic opportunities for women (Ayentimi et al., 2020). Under this policy commitment, the government intends to

create opportunities for women through education and skill development to ensure women can have access to economic resources, as well as efficiently manage such resources (Djurfeldt, 2020). The policy intends to teach women how to meet their practical gender needs as they pertain to economic activities in society. The capacity of women to be efficient in engaging in economic activities will further provide them with economic resources that will support any political activities they also intend to engage in mostly the cost that is associated with campaigning for a parliamentary position.

Additionally, the policy commitment that intends to promote women's empowerment and livelihood also plays a critical part in inefficiency. The measure put in place by the policy is to provide strategic partnership and support for women, educate women, as well as provide them with employment, health and nutrition, access to productive resources and other infrastructure. These measures put in place can contribute to women engaging efficiently in their social roles, with further possibilities of achieving their strategic needs (Daley and Englert, 2010). This policy commitment intends to allow women to have control over their life, rather than having society or their biological make-up determine what they can and cannot do—a case in point related to the reproductive roles of women. In situations where women can decide when to give birth, can help them decide when to also take up certain political roles. Also, education about childbearing and rearing can help women have control over the limited time and economic resources that they have, to be able to allocate some for political participation.

Additionally, the intention of policy to redefine gender roles and relations can also contribute to efficiency. In this regard, women knowing the skills that they possess can efficiently leverage their skills in taking up political and leadership roles, without being subjected or restricted to a certain set of roles as defined by society (Claessens et al, 2021). Also, it can be said that clamping down on gender-based violence can also facilitate the ability of women to meet their practical gender needs. I believe that when women are allowed to have control over their lives without fear of retribution will allow them to build their capacity, through experience, in resource allocation that pertains to the subordinate roles that they are given. With such experience, in micro-management, women can then scale up their skills to take up more roles that come with political participation. That is to say, if women are trained to effectively and efficiently use the little resources that they have to attain results, they can

leverage that on political platforms to indicate how they can effectively handle state or public funds.

Again, the main purpose of this policy is to create gender mainstreaming and I believe to achieve this women have to be made to realize what their strengths are in order to build on these strengths. Although the intentions of the policy have been made clear, I believe the capacity to accomplish them is actually what is relevant. This is because putting a policy in place just because it is a policy doesn't tend to achieve anything. Furthermore, in line with achieving the practical gender needs of women, the policy tends to not directly focus on helping women achieve such needs but rather the focus is mostly on strategic gender needs.

5.3.3.2 Strategic Gender Needs in National Gender Policy of Rwanda (Equity and Empowerment)

As maintained above, the main purpose of the policy is gender mainstreaming and I believe has a certain connotation to achieving the strategic gender needs of women. This was also supported by (Ahmed et al., 2018), when the researcher asserted that it can be observed that all the five policy commitment targets the strategic gender needs of women (Newton, 2021). This section examines the policy commitments and how they relate to equity and empowerment. With the main theme of the policy, it shows that government is bent on tackling the problem of strategic gender needs of women and this is examined based on the individual policy commitments that have been discussed.

Firstly, the policy commitments outlined by government indicated the intention to promote women's empowerment and livelihood. This policy commitment is intended to support the strategic needs of women by improving their earnings, providing them with access to economic opportunities and also helping them secure their livelihood. Also, the intention of the government to promote economic opportunities for women supports the view of empowering women by giving them economic and social resources. These activities are intended to give women the freedom of choice and to elevate them from the subordinate roles that they are given. Also, if achieved, these commitments will ensure that women have the financial resources and leverage to support political activities such as buying forms for participation, campaigning and organizing party members to get their votes. Statistics show that in 2016 the average candidate expenditure on political activities amounted to 156, 134 Ghana Cedis (Westminster Foundation for Democracy, 2018) and without access to economic resources, women would not have the capacity to participate (Boerner et al., 2018). Sufficient

to note that although political parties support women during campaigning periods, it is necessary for them to also contribute their resources.

Furthermore, empowerment and promoting equity comes with the intention of educating women to enable them to acquire the needed skills and knowledge in areas such as STEM. This is geared towards capacity building. With skill and knowledge, acquisition women are put in the position to participate in political decision making. As they are able to take up political roles, as well as meet the knowledge and skill obligations that come with these roles. That is to say, the availability of financial and economic leverage alone cannot solve the problem of empowerment and equity, but they need to prepare women for such positions by getting them to acquire the right knowledge and skills. Additionally, the policies outlined for helping women acquire the skills and knowledge intends to support them to gain the needed experience as the affirmative action of government is to ensure women get into leadership positions too.

In addition, the gender-based violence aspect captures the need to reduce the violence against women and the prevention of discrimination against women. Again, the policy commitment intends to increase the representation of women to 40% in parliament. This policy commitment, I believe is directly linked to political participation, as the intention of the government is to force political parties to increase the number of women within their ranks. Also, in line with this policy commitment is that of women's leadership and accountable governance. This policy comes with the enforcement of laws that promote and empower women to take up a leadership role, both in the realm of politics and other spheres of economic and social interactions (Desrosiers, 2020). These two policy commitments are geared towards giving women opportunities to participate and that is important because without the right opportunities capacity building becomes unimportant.

5.4 Similarities and Differences Exists between the Ghana and Rwanda National Policy

This section deals with the similarities and differences that exist between the Ghana and Rwanda National policies. Although all of them can be considered national policies, it should be observed that the approaches and purposes may be in tandem at a point and vary at other points. Firstly, it was observed that the two policies presented a historical background and information that were precedent to the development and implementation of the policies. This helped provides a basis upon which current achievement could be measured and also showed

the need for the policy to be developed. Also, the documents indicated the role of women during pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods. These showed that although women have played critical roles, alongside men, these roles have not been given the right that it deserves. The policy documents are similar in several ways and the key among them is that they focus on gender mainstreaming. The two policy documents were all geared towards achieving gender mainstreaming with a focus on women's empowerment. Additionally, the policies were not only focused on women's empowerment but also on members of the vulnerable population. This shows that not only women may be within such brackets but children and sometimes men (Carella and Ackerly, 2017). Also, to a certain large extent the policies covered the same components, including education, skill and knowledge acquisition, domestic violence, economic and social empowerment, and other legal related issues. However, the perspectives that they covered these matters are what makes the difference in the two policy documents.

Additionally, it can be observed the language carried by the two policy documents were mainly tailored toward what government intends to do and has put in structures to accomplish. However, these documents failed to indicate what the government may have already accomplished or statistics on prevailing issues. This made it very difficult to because comparing the policy achievement to the problems they are to solve. Furthermore, most of the policy statements lacked action or how the government intends to achieve them. They only refer to what government intends to implement and the policies that they intend to put in place to achieve them (Busheikin, 2018). Furthermore, from my observations, I can assert that the two policies were more geared towards achieving the strategic gender needs of women rather than their practical gender needs. This is because the policies emphasized more of empowerment and equity, rather than women's efficiency.

In relation to the differences there exists a lot of difference in the policy statements that were outlined. Firstly, whilst the Rwanda National Gender Policy was written and implemented in 2019, the gender policy from Ghana was in 2015. Additionally, the structure of the policy documents was generally different. Whereas the Rwandan policy started with a statement and commitment from the president, whilst the Ghanaian policy started with a statement from the minister of gender. Although they both show commitment from the government, the statement from the president gives the Rwandan policy more government commitment as opposed to the Ghanaian policy which was signed by the minister of Gender. Additionally, the Rwandan National Gender policy had a total of 10 policy commitments, whilst the Ghanaian National

Gender Policy had a total of 5 policies. Also, the Ghanaian policy begins with a policy commitment statement and these statements summarize the intentions of the government in line with the component of the policy. This I believe was important as it captured the purpose of every policy subcomponent and that makes it measurable.

Another point of difference is the achievements that have been carried out by the government. Statistics show that the government of Rwanda has done a great job of ensuring women's participation. As stated above, it was indicated that the country boasts of about 64% of participation in parliament; this is compared to the global average of 23% Rwanda has female participation of about These statistics show that the policies put in place have materialized and contributed to putting Rwanda as one of the topmost countries when it comes to women participation (Esquivel, 2017). This is contrary to Ghana, where the statistics show that the number still stands at 13.09. Additionally, in Ghana women make up only 25% of the supreme court judges whilst the number for Rwanda stands at almost 50% (Westminster Foundation for Democracy, 2018). Looking at these figures, it can be asserted that the National Gender Policy of Rwanda, has achieved most of its policy components as compared to Ghana.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

6.0 Introduction

Chapter five of the study presents the discussion and conclusions of the study. That is the chapter serves as somewhat of a summary of the entire study conducted, taken from the view of what the researcher intended to do and what was achieved. The chapter presents two main sections, and these are the discussion and conclusion of the study.

6.1 Discussion

The study was a light review that examine the National Gender Policies of Rwanda and Ghana. The study compared the two policies against each other in a bid to examine the differences and similarities between the two. Furthermore, the study explored these policies based on practical and gender needs and roles that have been assigned to women in society and the components of efficiency, equity and empowerment. Furthermore, the discussion of the study centres around the objectives of the study, as outlined in chapter one.

6.1.1 Political Participation of Women in Rwanda and Ghana

The first objective was to examine the political participation of women in Rwanda and Ghana. To achieve the first objective, the study examines the figures on women's representation in parliament in the individual countries, as well as juxtaposing them against each other. Rwanda, by far has one of the highest women's representations in parliament even exceeding that of the global average (CEDAW, 2014). According to Index Mundi (2021), Rwanda tops countries like Nigeria (3.38%), amongst others. This shows that the country has accomplished a lot in meeting SDG 5.5, as compared to Ghana.

The review found that Rwanda started as a country with very few women in parliament (Daley and Englet, 2010). These changes can be attributed to the role of the first female Prime Minister in 1993 and other instances like the Beijing Convention which bought up recommendations for the participation of women in decision making. Furthermore, this was followed by the government constituting the Ministry of Gender and Family Protection, which has the mandate of promoting women's rights and ensuring that their needs are met (Daley and Englet, 2010).

However, the figures for Ghana show that it is well below the global average. And although there has been an improvement over the years, these improvements have been at a very low pace (Sikweyiya et al., 2020). They maintained that before and after colonization, Ghanaian women have played a critical role in politics and leadership, but their contributions have not been acknowledged, as should be. The current percentage of women in parliament shows 13.09% is about 10 points below the global average, which is abysmal. The study asserts that although Ghana has made a lot of efforts, on paper, this has not been translated into practical solutions to the gender gaps that exist in political participation (Westminster Foundation for Democracy, 2016).

Comparatively, Ghana and Rwanda, have similar institutional setups, coupled with each nation putting in place a national gender policy to help tackle the gaps in women's leadership. Furthermore, it should be noted that Rwanda has a more tumultuous history, smeared with civil unrest and military regimes; although Ghana may share such a history, its woes cannot be compared to that of Rwanda. Thus, much has been expected of Ghana, but that has not been achieved. Also, the National Gender Policy of Ghana dates back to 2015, whilst that of Rwanda dates back to 2019- this is contrary to the fact that other documents were in place and served as the foundation for the current gender policies.

6.1.2 How the National Gender Policies address women's representation in Parliament

The second objective was to examine how the National Gender Policies tackled the problem of women's representation in parliament, as associated with their practical and strategic gender needs. This objective was intended to examine how the policies that were reviewed intended to solve the problem of gender in political participation from the perspective of meeting the practical and strategic gender needs of women. A review of the Rwandan Gender Policy showed that it tackled the gender gap in women participation from 7 main policy components and these included gender mainstreaming and institutional capacity development programme, economic empowerment for employment, growth and markets, health and population, education and vocational training, good governance and justice, environmental protection and land use management, and empowerment of the most vulnerable. These policies have been tailored by the government to help tackle the gender gaps in political participation in Rwanda and the study examined how they tackled the practical and strategic gender needs of women in doing so.

The findings showed that although the policy tackles both practical and strategic gender needs, the key emphasis has been on meeting the strategic gender needs of women. Although many argue that meeting the strategic gender needs of women promotes political participation (Burnet, 2012; Beaman et al., 2012; Clayton, 2015), I argue that without their practical gender needs being met, it becomes difficult to meet the strategic gender needs. Additionally, it is relevant to observe that amongst the policies outlined, only good governance and justice, directly refer to the political participation of women, whilst the others indirectly refer to political participation.

On the part of Ghana, the study findings showed that the country tackled gender gaps in political participation from all the five policy commitments that have been outlined by the government. These policy commitments included women's empowerment and livelihood, women's rights and access to justice, women's leadership and accountable governance, economic opportunities for women and gender roles and relations. The gender policy of Ghana, on the face value, is succinct as each policy commitment starts with a summary of what the commitment is about, making it easier to measure (Madse et al., 2021). However, the policy commitment lacks direct linkages with women empowerment (Ayentimi, et al. 2020). Sufficient to note that the policy has outlined its intention but the associated activities to accomplish these intentions are somewhat lacking. This can be linked to the fact that the country still lags behind both Rwanda and the global average of women representations in parliament.

Furthermore, just like the Rwanda Gender Policy, the Ghana Gender Policy focuses more on meeting the strategic gender needs of women, as opposed to the practical gender needs of women. Although, it is sufficient to also note that both policies failed to define or interpret the practical and strategic gender needs of women in order to capture which policies fall under which category. The policy implemented by Ghana has also only one key policy that focuses on the political participation of women and that is the Gender-Based Violence policy, whilst the others can be indirectly interpreted as political participation. The study argues that the Ghana National Gender Policy needs to be strengthened in terms of how the government intends to achieve most of the commitments that have been outlined, as well as determining which yardsticks will be used in measuring government performance.

6.1.3 Similarities and Differences Between the Policy Documents

The third was to examine the wide variations between the National Gender Policies in Ghana and Rwanda. Critically observing the two policies, it can be understood that the policies had a structural and content differences, however, several similarities were observed. The study findings showed that the policies both acknowledged the role of women in national development, from the pre-colonial to the post-colonial era. Furthermore, the two policies maintained the need to focus on gender mainstreaming and women empowerment. Furthermore, the policies did not only focus on women but on the vulnerable population in society, thus showing that the policies were not biased. Furthermore, the language of the policy documents captured the intentions of the government and not what they have already accomplished or how they intend to accomplish these components or commitments. Also, it has been established that both policies targeted strategic gender needs, as opposed to practical gender needs of women.

On the other hand, several differences have been captured between the two policies. As asserted earlier, the Rwandan National Gender Policy had more than 7 policy components but only 7 were in line with the political participation of women. This was different from the Ghana gender policy which had 5 key commitments outlined, with all of them being either directly or indirectly in line with promoting political participation. Additionally, the policy by the Ghanaian government had short summaries of what the commitments were intended to capture, whilst that of Rwanda did not have such summaries. These summaries to a certain large extent can be measured by measuring policy achievement and this puts Ghana on a better measuring scale (Westminster Foundation for Democracy, 2018) than Rwanda. However, the Rwanda Government signed the policy from Rwanda (NGPR, 2019), whilst that of Ghana was signed by the Minister of Gender (Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection, 2015). Although this difference may not account for a lot but having the government sign the document from Rwanda can pass as the government showing how important the document is to national development, as opposed to Ghana.

Again, this review cannot be achieved without juxtaposing the two policies based on their current achievement. By far it can be acknowledged that Rwanda has achieved a lot, whilst Ghana remains in the early stages of achievement. Furthermore, globally Rwanda stands tall amongst other nations in terms of its accomplishments (Abbott and Malunda, 2016), and this is something that Ghana can learn from. However, for Ghana to make such tremendous

achievements as made by Rwanda, the country has to endeavour to put into practice the policies that have been outlined (Westminster Foundation for Democracy, 2018). The country still lags behind both regionally and globally and this has hindered its economic growth and development of the country (Newton, 2021).

These difference has led to Rwanda having a head start on Ghana on the number of women in Parliament. Based on the review, it can be asserted that the National Gender Policy of Rwanda has been well defined, with the government specifying what needs to be achieved- this can be observed as the policy document has 12 direct policy component, although only 10 can be linked to political participation. On the other hand, the other for Ghana has only 5 broad categorizations, which have not been clearly defined. Furthermore, the findings of the study showed that difference exists in the attached activities, as the one for Rwanda is clearly defined, the Ghana Gender Policy had well defined objectives.

6.2 Conclusion

In conclusion, the study engaged in a light scoping review of the gender policies of Rwanda and Ghana. The review was conducted based on three key objectives and to answer research questions pertaining to these objectives: 1) The first objective was to examine the political participation of women in Rwanda and Ghana.; 2) to examine how the National Gender Policies tackled the problem of women representation in parliament, as associated with their practical and strategic gender needs; 3) to examine the wide variations between the National Gender Policies Ghana and Rwanda.

These objectives were examined based on the policy documents of Ghana and Rwanda, including literature that exists on the subject matter. The theoretical basis that underpins the study were the practical and strategic gender needs of women, as captured under the components of efficiency, equity and empowerment. The findings of the study showed that although Ghana has a succinct policy structure, Rwanda has a broader structure in place. Also, Rwanda has accomplished a lot with its policy, with Ghana having a reduced progressive rate of achievements. Also, the study concludes that it's important for the policies to be more structured based on activities and programmes rather than policy intentions. Additionally, there is the need for the policies to define the practical and strategic gender needs of women, whilst focusing on both rather than mainly on the strategic gender needs of women.

Additionally, it was observed that the policies addressed broad categorizations of gender issues in the country, with only a few policy components targeting gender representativeness within the political space. And as important as women in leadership position is, it is critical that the government of the two countries ensure that special attention is given to gender representativeness.

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