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VIEWS OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS ON WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN THE BUILSA NORTH DISTRICT OF THE UPPER EAST REGION, GHANA

RAYMOND ADANURA

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BY

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AUGUST, 2017

DECLARATION

Student

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere:

Candidate's Signature: …………………………. Date: …………………………………….

Name: Raymond Adanura

Supervisor

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the dissertation were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of dissertation/thesis laid down by the University for Development Studies.

Supervisor's Signature... Date: ....

Name: Prof. Albert Kojo Quainoo

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the question of women's participation in local governance in the Builsa North District. The main objective of the study was to examine the views of community members on the extent to which women participate in local governance in the Builsa North District. A survey design was applied in the study. Questionnaire, Key Informant Interviews guides and Focus Group Discussions guides were the main tool and methods used to collect empirical data respectively. Data analysis was qualitative and quantitative. The quantitative data were classified into themes in line with the research questions and objectives and tables and graphs generated from it using Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) software. The qualitative data were analyzed through narratives and descriptions. Results of the study indicated that in the Builsa North District, women have a low representation and participation in local governance. Only three (3) women were at the Assembly (all appointed) and eight (8) women in the Unit Committees. There was no woman in the Area and Town Councils. This was as a result of the fact that, women are unable to contest and win elections like their male counterparts, tradition and cultural factors that have made women subservient to men, and financial constraints. This did not however, apply to men. The conclusion is that women are prepared to have their voices heard in the decision-making processes of the Builsa North District and other structures that provide the opportunity. Recommendations made were: sensitization of men and women on the negative aspects of culture and tradition; promotion of favorable environment for both men and women; and promoting the education and training of women in the Builsa North District.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated in memory of my mother, Mama Asagiyire Adanura, for her selflessness in ensuring that I had formal education.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

BNDA	Builsa North District Assembly
CFM	Canadian Federation of Municipalities
CHRAJ	Commission of Human Rights and Administrative Justice
CPP	Convention People's Party
DA	District Assembly
DAC	District Assembly Concept
DCE	District Chief Executive
DFID	Department for International Development
DOVVSU	Domestic Violence and Victims' Support Unit
EC	Electoral Commission
EOM	ECOWAS Observation Mission
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
GNA	Ghana News Agency
HE	His Excellency
ICT	Information Communication Technology
ILGS	Institute of Local Government Studies
KIIs	Key Informant Interviews
LI	Legislative Instrument
MLGRD	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
MMDAs	Metropolitan, Municipal and Districts Assemblies

MOFA	Ministry of Food and Agriculture
MP	Member of Parliament
MSR	Male Sex Ratio
NCCE	National Commission for Civic Education
ND	No Date
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
PNDCL	Provisional National Defense Council Law
RCC	Regional Coordinating Council
SLF	Sustainable Livelihoods Framework
TMA	Tamale Metropolitan Assembly
U.S	United States
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UK	United Kingdom
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background

The first global effort at liberating women from political deprivation was the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948, which proclaimed equity in the enjoyment of political rights by both women and men (United Nations, 2000). Also, the Beijing Declaration remained the milestone in history that brought with it dramatic change in the style and efforts pursued by governments and other bodies across the world towards empowerment of women in all facets of human existence (UN Women, 2014). Interestingly, however, the Economic Commission for Africa (2011) indicates that available statistics show that the world is still far from achieving gender equality in the decision-making process and would require concerted efforts in a multi-dimensional form. Globally, women lag behind men in terms of participation in structures that provide the opportunity for them to influence policies that affect their lives. Ocran (2014), for instance, captures succinctly that the world average of women in all national parliaments stands at 21.8 percent. A figure which he describes as not being near the threshold of 30% (included in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action at the Fourth World Conference on women) of women parliamentarians although women were significantly exercising their right to vote and to be voted for during the nineteenth century.

Earlier work by Shamim and Kumari (2002) show that women had and have been occupying high positions in government in South Asia, ranging from Indira Gandhi,

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Sheikh Hasina, Khaleda Zia and Benazir Bhutto to Sirimavo Bandaranaike and Chandrika Kumaratunga. The reality of the statistics however, tell a different story altogether because women in South Asia have lower rates of political participation in governance structures except for India which surpassed the "critical majority" point of 33 percent in local government. Similarly, the Canadian Federation of Municipalities (CFM, 2015), notes with concern that women are under-represented in local governments in areas such as Canada. Women represent 17 per cent of mayors and 28 per cent of councilors for an average of 26 per cent of municipal council members in that country. Recent statistics compiled by the Inter-Parliamentary Union indicated that Canadian women were also under-represented at all levels of the governance process. More specifically, Canada is 55th out of 156 countries for its low representation of women in local governance. Their men counterparts were, however, advantageous. Writing on her experiences of the Latin American situation of women and men political participation in local level governance, Loyola (n.d) asserts that in 16 Latin American countries, only 5.3% of governments at the local level were headed by women mayors which to a large extent suggests that in most Latin American Municipalities, women's participation in decision making at the local level is still highly underrepresented. She further stated that the situation is even more worrying in Turkey where only 2% of women participate in local level elections.

Thus, the issue of women participation in local governance has over the past few decades received international attention because of the perceived and acknowledged contributions of women in local, regional and national development. Minoletti (2014) recognizes that women's participation in governance has received increasing attention from

international policy makers and researchers as a highly important issue on the grounds of both equity and improving the performance of governance.

Ihemeje (2013) argues that cementing women with governance is quite relevant to ongoing debates on their role in nation building. Basu (2004), therefore, rightly accentuates that the need and desirability for the participation of women in the political processes has widely been proclaimed over the years by many writers and philosophers. Research by the Government of India and UN Women Programme (2012) states that, there is a growing recognition among governments and civil society to promote the participation of women in the political arena, especially in local government structures.

The Asian Development Bank (2014) report argues that there has been a substantial improvement in women's political participation and representation in national and local level governance structures over the last decade. There are now an increased number of women in parliament, local decision making structures and more local women leaders in Asia and the Pacific.

Ihemeje (2013), however, notes that women are yet to attain the 30% threshold representation in decision making globally, nationally and at the local level. Agbalajobi's (2009) study corroborates Ihemeje's (2013) assessment when he opined that the underrepresentation of women especially at the local level decision making structures clearly is not a continental issue but a global challenge. Nath (2013) shares a similar view with the above when she stated that "At local government level, women account for only

20% of elected councilors; and they hold mayoral positions in only 10 of the world's 195 capital cities".

The World Bank (2001) opines that, in developing countries most women are yet to obtain legal, social and economic rights as their men counterparts. Similarly, there is also evidence to show gaps in their access to and control over resources, economic opportunities, power and political voice especially at the local level. The situation is particularly much worrying in Africa as rightly noted by the World Bank (2001). As Mc. Greal (1994, P.6) observes, "In Africa, the demand for democratization of society, honest and efficient government and participation of the populace and women in particular had become a new phenomenon." The United Nations (1990, P.2) notes that, as the demand for democratization increased, the nature of participation for women has rather increased for women entering public life than issues concerning their rights and participation in decision making. It particularly notes "The liberal forms of democracy re-introduced by this democratic wave narrowed the political space and assigned it to the privileged few leaving out the marginalized majority most of whom are women."

Bratton and associates (1999) particularly cites Mali as having registered the lowest percentages worldwide in enhancing women's participation especially at the local level. Perhaps, the situation abounds in much of the African continent.

In Ghana, Baveng (2011) notes with much concern that, despite all efforts internationally and locally to have women equal representation in decision making at all levels, women's participation in local level politics has remained abysmally low. Abubakar

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and his associates (2014) lament that, Ghana stands out as one of the least admirable countries relative to other countries when it comes to women participation in governance. Ghana has a very low rate of women participation and representation in both local and national government structures (Parliamentary Centre, 2009). Notably, only 6.5% of the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Chief Executives in the local government structures as of 2012 were women. Also, local governance in the area of District Assembly elections as of 2006 also recorded only 9.4% of the total candidates being women (Abubakar *et al.* 2014).

The Women's Manifesto for Ghana (2004) captures vividly that the low representation of women in local government is an age old problem which existed since and as far back as 1988 when the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) made provisions for decentralized government system in the country where only 196 women were seen among the 4,820 elected candidates for the district assemblies. In 2002, only 341 had been identified out of 4,583 elected candidates.

In Northern Ghana, Mahamadu (2010) sees the participation of women in local governance as both a problem and a puzzle. A problem because of their low participation and a puzzle because of the factors involved. For instance, it was observed in 2006 that there was a reduction in the number of both appointed and elected female members from eleven (11) to six (6) in the Tamale Metropolitan Assembly. "Comparatively, females are about eight (8%) per cent of the seventy eight (78) members in the Tamale Metropolitan Assembly with the remaining ninety two (92%) per cent being male" (Mahamadu, 2010).

The empowerment of women and the elimination of gender disparities is still a burning phenomenon in the world today. It has been established that women are still seriously under-represented in the decision-making process both at the national and local levels in Ghana (Gyimah & Thompson, 2008; Abubakari *et al*, 2014; and Quansah & Essien, 2014). This issue deserves an attention not because it is a human rights issue but for the fact that women possess potentials which could be tapped to enhance the development of the country.

The situation is not better in the Upper East Region of Ghana. For example, in 2016, the region could boost of just two women Chief Executives out of the 13 Municipal and District Assemblies (MLGRD, 2015). Again, in the 2010 District Assembly Elections, the Upper East Region, for instance, recorded 70 women out of 894 candidates who contested in the elections (GNA, 2010). Considerable evidence indicates that, in the current 13 Assemblies in the region, five of the districts have no elected Assembly Woman and all the Assemblies except Bongo District Assembly failed to appoint the 30% women quota to the Assemblies (Ghana Business News, 2015).

The Builsa North District is also saddled with low women participation at the local level. The phenomenon is even made worse with the problem of inadequate data on the field particularly on women and local governance in the district. The problem would be well understood and interventions formulated to address the situation if available data captures the issue well. It is this that has generated the curiosity for this study and is therefore, to examine the above lacunae by interrogating the issue of the low participation

of women in local governance in the District, bringing out the factors involved and the way forward.

1.1 Problem Statement

Ghana has enjoyed relative stability and deepening democratic governance in the sub-region of Africa which has made it gain prominence in the continent as the beacon of hope and peace. Since 1992, Ghana has had six (6) successful democratic elections: 1992, 1996, 2000, 2004, 2008 and 2012, showing continuous progress of consolidation of Ghana's democracy and giving effectiveness to national institutions, such as the Electoral Commission (EC), National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), among others, and thereby enhancing the confidence and interest levels of investors (Allah-Mensah, 2005).

There is evidence to suggest that, although Ghana has made some amount of success in the area of good governance as compared to other countries in the sub-region, Allah-Mensah (2005) and the Women's Manifesto for Ghana (2004) have argued that there are still some critical challenges that need urgent attention to sustain the gains and progress made so far. These include among others the low representation of women especially in local governance. Allah-Mensah (2005), therefore, states that one of the current burning governance issues in Ghana is the participation of women in politics and public life because of their acknowledged and perceived contributions which they have made since independence till date towards national and local level development. The contribution of women to the sustainable development of Ghana is indispensable and cannot be compromised. Women have contributed enormously in many ways to bring Ghana to this

current level of development and given the right opportunity, they can do better. There are women with the necessary competence that can propel Ghana along the path of the much needed development.

The political terrain in Ghana, both at the national and local levels however, continue to be male-centric irrespective of the fact that women form more than half of the population (see the 2010 Population and Housing Census figures). In Ghana, politics portray women as supporters of the ideas of men and are often brought out to win votes for the men on political campaigns. The political system and culture in Ghana has failed to properly include women in the decision making process and this is attested to by the low representation of women in Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs), Parliament, and Cabinet (MacDougall, 2012).

Studies (Ofei-Aboagye, 2000 and Abubakari, *et al,* 2014) have shown that while the visibility of women at the national and local levels of governance in Ghana has seen marginal increases in recent times, the numbers are still woefully inadequate despite the increasing recognition of international and local strong rights-based frameworks which call for the equal participation of women and men in politics and decision- making. Progress has been uneven and slow so far.

Boateng and Kosi (2015) subsumed the causes of low women participation into two supply-sided factors. The first is what they described as the 'political glass ceiling.' For a woman to become a potential aspirant, compared to a man, the female is more likely to

rescind her decision to engage in electoral process and second, the political process of a country.

In the Builsa North District particularly, the proportion of women representation in local governance keeps reducing for some time now. For instance, in the 2010 local level election, only four (4) women were elected and one appointed, making the number of women five in the Assembly. During the recent inauguration of the Builsa North District Assembly on the 7th of October, 2015, out of the 31 elected Assembly Members, none was a woman. The common thinking could have been that concerted efforts should have been made to ensure that, at least, half of the 30% appointees should have been women as demanded by the Beijing Platform for Action and other international and local conventions to which Ghana is signatory. However, this did not materialize as only three out of the 14 Government Appointees were women showing a classic case of under-representation of women at that level (Builsa North District Assembly Medium Term Development Plan, 2015-2020). This study, therefore, examined the extent of women's participation in local level governance in the Builsa North District of Ghana. The situation is better understood with concrete data available about the situation so that policy and programming interventions could properly be designed to tackle the issue. This research therefore, examines the views of community members about women's participation in local governance in the Builsa North District.

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1.2 Research Questions

1.2.1 Main Research Question

The main research question of the study was: what is the extent of women's participation in local governance in the Builsa North District?

1.2.2 Sub-research Questions

The research objectives of the study were accomplished by seeking answers to the following research questions:

1. What is the role of women in the local governance process in the Builsa North District?

2. Are there any barriers to women's participation in local governance in the Builsa North District?

3. What is the role of literacy in increasing the participation of women in local governance in the Builsa North District?

4. How can women's participation in local governance be enhanced in the Builsa North District?

1.3 Research Objectives

1.3.1 Main Research Objective

The main research objective of this study was to examine the extent of women's participation in local governance in the Builsa North District.

1.3.2 Sub Research Objectives

To facilitate the achievement of the main objective of the study, some sub-research objectives were set as follow:

1. To explore the contributions of women in the local governance process in the Builsa North District.

2. To examine whether there are any barriers to women's participation in local governance in the Builsa North District.

3. To find out the role of literacy in increasing the participation of women in local governance in the Builsa North District.

4. To identify ways that can enhance the participation of women in the local governance system in the Builsa North District.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study hinges on the fact that it has become abundantly clear that increasing women's participation in the decentralization and local governance system in Ghana is the most

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viable way to achieve sustainable democracy and development. This is because; it has been generally acknowledged that, women possess talents which could help propel Ghana towards a much needed path of development. To achieve this, then true meaning ought to be given to democracy in Ghana by providing equal opportunities to women and men in the decision-making process especially at the local level. This would enable the few women leaders in decision making structures at the local level to influence policy directions that would address women's concerns.

Statistics show especially in the case of the Builsa North District that women's participation in local governance process is low. This study, therefore, in intended to provide empirical data to civic educators to help raise awareness about the need for more women representation in the local governance system in the District. In addition, it is intended to draw the attention of various stakeholders to strategize their activities towards increasing women participation in local governance that would bring about total development in the Builsa North District. This would help achieve gender parity in decision-making and eliminate the historical marginalization of women in the District and Ghana as a whole.

Existing literature (Allah-Mensah, 2005, A Women's Manifesto for Ghana, 2004 and Amoako, 2011) proved that there is serious gender imbalance in the representation of Ghanaian women in local and national governance structures. Against this backdrop, it became imperative to establish and update the records more specifically about the Builsa North District rather the feeble attempts made generally about the situation in Ghana as a whole. The gender disparity in local governance, especially at the Builsa North District

needs to be isolated and interrogated. This would help to bring on board new trends, to enhance women's participation in local governance especially in this dynamic and complex world. Therefore, this research seeks to update the existing literature on women's participation in local governance especially, in the Builsa North District. It would thus provide policy makers with recommendations to incorporate recent trends in policy options for active women's participation in local governance specifically in the Builsa North District and Ghana as a whole.

Finally, this study may stimulate further studies in the area of women's participation in decision-making at the local level in the Builsa North District. It would therefore, serve as a relevant reference material for future researchers who may venture into this field of study in the Builsa North District and in Ghana.

1.5 Operationalization of Key Concepts

1.5.1 Women

Women are adult female human beings. The term 'women' is, therefore, used to refer to any female of eighteen years or above as stated in article 42 of the Constitution of Ghana (1992). This is because, it is only at age eighteen or above that the constitution guarantees the right to vote and be voted for in Ghana.

1.5.2 Participation

In this research, participation is used in line with Khan and Ara (2006) who have stated that the term 'participation' is one of the development approaches. They see participation as the need to involve the vulnerable, marginalized, and disadvantaged segment of the population in the design and implementation of policies that concern their wellbeing.

1.5.3 Local Governance

Local governance is defined in this research according to Shar (2005) who defined the concept as "the formulation and execution of collective action at the local level. Thus, it encompasses the direct and indirect roles of formal institutions of local government and government hierarchies, as well as the roles of informal norms, networks, community organizations, and neighborhood associations in pursuing collective action by defining the framework for citizen-citizen and citizen-state interactions, collective decision making, and delivery of local public services."

1.6 Organization of Chapters

Chapter One introduces the research while Chapter Two reviews relevant literature on the research. Chapter three discusses the Research Methodology while Chapter Four presents the results and analyses of the research. Chapter Five presents the summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter explored literature on the conceptual and theoretical issues on local governance, political participation and women's participation in local governance. Attempts were made to fill the lacunae in the literature that was reviewed.

2.1 Conceptual Frameworks

2.1.1 Women

Women are adult female human beings. The term 'women' is, therefore, used to refer to any female of eighteen years or above as stated in article 42 of the Constitution of Ghana (1992). This is because, it is only at age eighteen or above that the constitution guarantees the right to vote and be voted for in Ghana.

2.1.2 Participation

Yartey (2012) opines that the concept of participation is very important in the social, economic and political dispensation of every society whether it is big or small, oligarchy or democracy. Decisions must be taken if society must progress. It is instructive to emphasize that, the right to participation is an essential element of democratic governance and goes

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hand-in-hand with other democratic virtues like consent, accountability, majority rule, equality and popular sovereignty (Yartey, 2012).

Khan and Ara (2006) have stated that the term 'participation' is one of the development approaches, which sees the need to involve vulnerable, marginalized and disadvantaged segment of the population in the design and implementation of policies that concern their wellbeing.

According to Rahman (1991), all forms of actions through which citizens take part in the operation of administration may be termed as 'participation'. Here, 'taking part' refers to any level from micro to macro region or it may be of any type such as advisory or in decision-making or in implementation among others.

Parry, *et al* (1992) defined participation as taking part in the process of formation, passage and implementation of public policies. Allah-Mensah (2005) states in line with Parry, *et al* (1992) that participation involves partaking in the formulation, passage and implementation of public policies with more emphasis on representative democracy. It is therefore, an empowering process that allows people to do their own analysis.

She draws from Nelson and Chowdhury (1994) to distinguish between two forms of participation: Participation as a means and participation as an end. As a means, participation in her view is used to accomplish the aims of a project more efficiently, effectively or cheaply; and as an end, it has to do with a community setting up a process to

control its own development. In spite of its diversity, it implies power relations between members of a community on one hand and between them and the state and its institutions on the other hand.

Khan and Ara (2006) identified four main kinds of participation, which are distinct but interrelated. They are as follow: participation in decision making, in identifying problems, formulating alternative planning activities, allocating resources etc. Participation in implementation in carrying out activities, managing and operating programmes. Participation in economic, social, political or other benefits individually or collectively; Participation in evaluation of the activity and its outcomes for feedback purposes.

Sills (1972, P.253) classifies the meaning of participation into six major axioms:

(a)   "Participation must begin at the very lowest level. There must be real opportunities for participative decision-making for the poorest, and decisions must relate to the aspirations of the poor more than to the 'wispy musings' of those who will not identify with them.

(b)   Participation must take place at all stages of the development process, from the earliest pre- planning exercise, to the development of plans, the design of implementation mechanisms and the actual implementation.

(c)   It must be recognized that a solitary vote is not participation. If people do not participate as members of relatively powerful groups, which serve their interests, then they participate only for the benefits of their masters.

(d)   Participation must have substance and usually political clubs and cooperatives do not have substance. Participative process must deal with the allocation and control of goods and services related to production process.

(e)   Participation must somehow deal with existing loyalties. If the result is merely to strengthen existing inter-class groupings, it will just strengthen existing leadership.

(f)   It must be accepted that the development of effective participation will cause conflict in some form."

Thus, in the view of Yartey (2012, P.24), "participation requires a moral aspect, according to the ethically defined nature of the goals it pursues. It is generally associated with moral or desirable goals and as such, given possible connotations."

According to Momtaz (1986, P.46), "the term participation has a simple meaning – taking part or having share with others. It is the action by which citizens take part in the operation of any process from micro to macro levels".

Participation refers to the vehicle which community can assure members the opportunity of contributing to the creation of community's goals and services (Baetz, 1975). It is a process by which people, especially the disadvantaged, influence decisions which affect them and get a more equitable share of power (World Bank, 1992). Participation is also looked at as enabling to have a voice in designing and shaping development interventions (Ali, 2003).

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Amin and Akhter (2005) even go as far as asserting that, in the face of no consensus as to its definition, the wide and diversified meanings of participation include empowerment, institution building, community development, target group involvement, involvement by contribution, mobilization, a system, a process, means to an end and philosophy of development and management. 'The all-pervasive nature of participation leads us to define it as taking part and involving to act in any process in politico-economic and socio-cultural arenas of life and the interaction of individuals with others through time in the organizational process is participation' (Amin and Akhter, 2005, P.3).

From the above, all the conceptualizations of 'participation' can be subsumed as: the involvement of vulnerable, marginalized and disadvantaged population in the formulation, passage and implementation of public policies that directly or indirectly affect their lives.

However, Chambers (1997) and Mosse (2004, 2007) have argued that the concept of 'participation' is still saddled with many setbacks, biases and limitations which hamper the effectiveness of the participatory practice. They note with concern that, while considerable efforts are made by development practitioners and facilitators to address these setbacks, biases and limitations, the missing links in participation have been conspicuously absent in these efforts. They observe that, issues, such as societal norms, cultural practices, tribal and intertribal conflicts, are still predominant and persist in most African societies, but absent in most development and community participatory literature.

It is notable that, in many African societies, norms and some cultural practices either directly or indirectly affect the way some individuals participate in community decision making and participatory activities, yet development literature seem to neglect such issues that affect participatory decision-making. Hence, there is the need to address these issues if participation should fulfill its promise.

Agbaje (1999, P.193) states that, "political participation is one of the fundamental ideas of a democratic society. It is the sine qua non of democracy because democracy involves a commitment to equal opportunity for men and women to develop their individual capacities."

Political Participation, in the view of Odame (2010), is the equal involvement in decision-making, whether in policy making, planning or administration. Within a political context, this could mean involvement in needs assessment, project formulation, implementation or evaluation. It requires the involvement of the women of the community affected by the decisions taken. For example, within a local administration setting, this relates to ensuring equality of opportunity for both men and women, in terms of staff development, opportunities and promotion procedures, or equal voice for workers in the district assembly.

Verba and Nie (1972, P.2), quoted in Allah-Mensah (2005, P.26), see political participation "as legal activities which directly or indirectly point to influencing the selection of and the actions of government officials." In addition, Allah-Mensah (2005), states that, it involves partaking in the formulation, passage and implementation of public

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policies with more emphasis on representative democracy. It is therefore, an empowering process that allows people to do their own analysis. She draws from Nelson and Chowdhury (1994) to distinguish between two forms of participation: Participation as a means and participation as an end. As a means, participation in her view is used to accomplish the aims of a project more efficiently, effectively or cheaply; and as an end, it has to do with a community setting up a process to control its own development. In spite of its diversity, it implies power relations between members of a community on one hand and between them and the state and its institutions on the other hand.

Yartey (2012, P.26) also indicates that, "any democratization process will be incomplete without the active involvement and participation of the two sexes. Notwithstanding how the society perceives women, no matter the societal constraints, if politically educated and made aware of their rights, women's level of political contribution can be enhanced…"

For instance, earlier work by Udombana (2003) corroborates Yartey's (2012) opinion. Udombana (2003, P.70) asserts that, "The presence of women makes the political process broader and richer as well as more honest and transparent. There can be no meaningful and sustainable democracy in this country, if women are not given the fair opportunity of working in partnership with the men in determining the political progress and consequently the development of this nation".

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According to Anarwat and Longi (2007), in Ghana, the low involvement of women in politics and decision making dates back to the colonial era. The only woman in the Gold Coast Assembly was Miss Mabel Dove Danquah who was elected to the Assembly in 1954. Allah-Mensah (2005) argues, however, that Ghana is one of the first African countries to introduce a quota system for women in 1960. In that year, the CPP passed a law allowing for the nomination of ten women to the National Assembly (Tamale, 1999 as cited in Allah-Mensah, 2005). Tsikata (2001) equally states that, in 1960, 10 women were elected into parliament by a special ballot box organized by the Convention People's Party (CPP) government.

Anarwat and Longi (2007) also observe that it is interesting to note that the 1960 Women Members Act did not go without opposition from the male counterparts in parliament. According to them, one of the male members wanted no 'Pancake' ladies and 'Lipstick' women in their august Assembly. Notwithstanding these negative protests, Anarwat and Longi (2007) argue that the pancake-women demonstrated to the dismay of the Assembly their worth by their immeasurable captivating and inspiring contributions to policy formulation that changed public life in Ghana.

Similarly, Abdul-Razak (2010, P.5) notes that "the woman in Ghana hews the wood, carries the water, satisfies the man, produces and takes care of the child to continue the family tree and manages all house chores." By this, it means that the only thing the woman is capable of doing in Ghana is to take care of domestic affairs.

However, this opinion is contestable as women in Ghana have demonstrated beyond measure that, given the opportunity, they could contribute massively to the development of Ghana. The contribution of women to the sustainable development of Ghana is indispensable and cannot be compromised. Women have contributed enormously in many ways to bring Ghana to this current level of development and given the right opportunity, they can do better. There are women with the necessary competence that can propel Ghana along the path of the much needed development.

It is, therefore, clear from The ECOWAS Observation Mission (EOM) led by H.E. Chief Olusegun Obasanjo to monitor the conduct of Presidential and Parliamentary elections in Ghana on 7th December, 2012, which reported that, while women's participation as voters in the electoral process was massively impressive, their aspirations for elective positions in the Presidential and Parliamentary Elections were severely limited. There were no women among the seven candidates in the Presidential election and out of the 1,332 candidates that contested for the 275 parliamentary seats, only 133 were women, constituting a paltry 10 percent. Out of the 133 women who contested the parliamentary elections, only 29 were elected (EOM, 2012). See Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1: Number of Women in Parliament in Ghana by Election Years

Year	1960	1965	1969	1979	1992	1996	2000	2004	2008	2012
No. of Seats	104	104	140	140	200	200	200	230	230	275
Women	10	19	1	5	15	18	19	25	20*	29
% of total	9.6	18.2	0.7	3.5	8	9	9.5	10.9	9	10.5

Source: Adapted and updated from Allah-Mensah (2005), and Myjoyonline.com (2012).

*The number of women was reduced to 19 when the female MP for Chereponi died and the seat was won by a man.

Deku (2005, P.120) captures succinctly that "women seem to be caught in a dependency triad where they are dependent on men in formal politics at the local, national and international levels which have become increasingly interrelated. They are ravaged by illiteracy, fertility and environmental crisis leading to poverty, diseases and malnutrition. It is more than three decades since the United Nations Development Decade was launched and more than a decade since the declaration of the Women's Year but the plight of women in the country seems to be deteriorating." In effect, it reflects to some extent, the transformation that is taking place along the various cultural, social, economic, and political dimensions. The situation is further exacerbated by the rate at which the population grows and the attendant consequences in both the urban and rural areas of the country. Time has now come when the concept that 'every woman is inferior to any man' must receive change. Right from birth, the Ghanaian society instills superiority to males and female inferiority in the mind of the child. Even women themselves have imbibed such things and accepted the situation and so mistake absolute male protection for a privilege. A women's social position depends on her husband who has been the influencing factor since

women are seen as not capable of achieving anything on their own except with the support of her husband. Most of these women are bogged down by child care and domestic chores from dawn to dusk.

2.1.3 Local Governance

Shar (2005) argues that although the concept of local governance is as old as the history of humanity, it is only in recent times that it entered the broad discourse of academic and practice literature. Local governance is, therefore, defined as "the formulation and execution of collective action at the local level. Thus, it encompasses the direct and indirect roles of formal institutions of local government and government hierarchies, as well as the roles of informal norms, networks, community organizations, and neighborhood associations in pursuing collective action by defining the framework for citizen-citizen and citizen-state interactions, collective decision making, and delivery of local public services. Local governance, therefore, includes the diverse objectives of vibrant, living, working, and environmentally preserved self-governing communities" (Shar, 2005).

Fukuyama (2012) defines local governance as the ability of a government to make and enforce rules, and to deliver services, regardless of whether that government is democratic or subject to the rule of law. Thus, in his view, governance is about the performance of agents in carrying out the wishes of principals, and not about the goals that principals set. Hyden, Court, and Mease (2003) have defined local governance in line with Fukuyama (2012) as the formation and stewardship of the rules that regulate the public

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realm; it is the space where state, as well as economic and societal actors interact to make decisions.

Siyabonga and his associates (2008) further concur that local governance is not just about how a government and social organizations interact, and how they relate to citizens, but it concerns the state's ability to serve citizens and other actors, as well as the manner in which public functions are carried out, public resources are managed and public regulatory powers are exercised.

Evertzen (2001) defines local governance to concern the processes through which local stakeholders interact in determining the local development agenda and in managing resources to implement the development priorities.

Abubakar, and his associates (2014) in summing up the above assertion, state that the scope of governance goes beyond technical (the simple delivery of basic services, such as health, water supply, education) and political dimensions to civil society empowerment, processes of collective action, collective bargaining and social expression. It includes a bottom-up process of participation in decision making which becomes meaningful as a system operating on democratic principles with values and practices that stress people's empowerment and participation, gender equality, legitimacy, transparency, accountability and effectiveness in which the civil society is an important actor. The quality of governance, therefore, is measured in terms of how well various actors handle the rules that make up the basic dimensions of the political regime. Thus, governance is a decision making process undertaken by an organized body of persons either elected or appointed or

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by any means to represent and manage the views of the people upon which it rules. Women representation in this regard is thus, very important as it would afford them the opportunity to articulate the concerns of women in formulating policies to bring about holistic development.

Underpinning the overall strategy of local governance is the hope that by bringing citizens and institutions closer to one another and allowing the citizens more agency in decision-making processes, there would be improved service delivery, social services, primary health, education, and municipal services, to name a few. This concept assumes that devolution is taking place within an environment that provides clear political, administrative, and fiscal authority to local governments and effective channels of accountability (Jawziya, 2007). Randal (2004) asserts that, local governance links the processes of democratization and decentralization at a sub-national level. Although, strictly local governance does not require local democracy, it is believed that decentralization without local democracy is quite simply less effective. United Nations Development Programme (1999), notes that, local governance is a form of decentralized governance.

Abubakar *et al.,* (2014) explain that, in view of the above assertions therefore, local governance could be seen as a means to spreading authority and responsibility among all even to the local interest groupings towards ensuring the representation of the views of all concerned.

Dwivedi (2002), Pugh (2002), and Johnston and Gudergan (2007) note that, the meaning, interpretation and application of the concept of governance is complex and so the

understanding and application of the concept makes it very complex and difficult for institutions to implement. However, in a decentralized administrative system, governance can be divided into two main dimensions: to decongest state power and spread it among many individuals so that they can address the unilateralism and traditional roles of the government and second, to increase the involvement of those at the grassroots, so eliminating the dominance of the few individuals and interest groups involved in decision-making, and enhancing the support and commitment of those at the grassroots.

There is evidence (see Ofei-Aboagye, 2000) to suggest that the Structure of Local Government showed that, until the PNDC changed the administrative structures through the introduction of the District Assembly Concept (DAC), there were few opportunities for people at the grassroots to actively participate in development decision-making and in some areas there was no such opportunity at all. The development of Ghana's vision 2020 policy document strengthened the work of the establishment of the district assembly system and the creation of the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD) in order to develop a vibrant and well-resourced decentralized system of local government for the people of Ghana to ensure good governance and balanced rural based development (MLGRD, 2005). This created a participatory opportunity through the DAC where local people could also contribute in ideas-sharing regarding the development of their communities.

A decentralization system of governance improves democratization, enhances decision-making at the grassroots level, and promotes efficiency (UNESCO, 2004 cited in Dunne *et al.,* 2008). However, it could be argued that the creation of a decentralized

system of governance does not only create the opportunity for local people to participate in governance but it was also a way of creating essential rural development structures that provided supplementary employment for those who were destined to spend the rest of their lives in those communities (Johnston and Kilby, 1995).

Despite all these efforts, it is evident that the lofty ideals of the local governance system are yet to materialize as majority of Ghana's population (women) are yet to have sufficient representation in local governance in the country.

As Offei-Aboagye (2000, P.4) indicates, *Women constitute 32% of the entire civil service and 24% of those in local government with most being in the secretarial and clerical classes. Only 12% of the decision-influencing category – the administrative class – is female. In 1999, there were only 3 women amongst the 110 District Coordinating Directors (3.6%). This low representation is disturbing given that the District Coordinating Directors provide technical guidance to the assemblies. They are, therefore, responsible for providing inputs for planning, ensuring equity in implementation, monitoring for efficiency and effectiveness, and evaluating for impacts.*

Table 2.1 gives a clear picture of the low numbers of female representation in District Assemblies in Ghana (1994-2015)

Table 2.2: Female Representation in District Assemblies in Ghana (1994-2015)

	Contested			Elected				
Year	Female	Male	Total	Female	%	Male	%	Total
2015	1182	17756	18938	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2010	1376	15939	17315	412	7.95	5681	92.05	6093
2006	1772	13084	14856	478	10.1	4254	89.9	4732
2002	965	12625	13590	341	7.4	4241	92.6	4582
1998	547	14696	15243	196	4.1	4624	95.9	4820
1994	N/A	N/A	N/A	122	2.9	4082	97.1	4204

Source: Adopted from ABANTU, (2003), Tsikata, (2009), Yobo, (2012 b), Boateng and Kosi, (2015).

2.1.4 Local Governance System in Ghana

The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana (Article 240, clause 1) provides for "Decentralization and Local Government" that creates a framework for citizens' participation in decision-making and in local governance. The Decentralization Policy of Ghana entrusts power, functions and responsibility, as well as human and financial resources, from the Central Government to the district level. It also establishes major areas of relationship between the Local and Central Government.

Local Government in Ghana has a long history, which predates colonialism. During the Colonial era however, the native authorities were used to facilitate communication and decision-making in their areas of jurisdiction. After independence, successive governments implemented various forms of Decentralization and Local Government Policies. However, the current Decentralization Policy was initiated in 1988.

Ghana's decentralization process as enshrined in the 1992 Constitution designates District Assemblies as the highest political, legislating, budgeting and planning authority at the local level. The Local Government Act (Act 462) of 1993 reinforces these constitutional provisions. To facilitate a holistic approach to the decentralization process, various structures have been created at the sub-national level with the Regional Coordinating Council (RCC) as a coordinating body of local authorities. Below the RCC are the Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies (MMDAs) and the Sub-district structures (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Ghana, n.d).

2.1.5 Structures of the Decentralized System in Ghana

Bebelleh and Nobabumah (2013) asserted that the Local Governance Act of 1993 (Act 462) provides for Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies which are key players of development at their respective local areas through an elaborate administrative structure to ensure popular and authentic participation of their constituents in the development process. Consequently, the Assemblies are entrusted with the political, administrative and

legislative powers under the law to initiate, facilitate and execute development activities in their respective areas.

Similarly, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Ghana (n.d) states that, conventionally, Ghana's sub-national governance structures are characterized as a three-tier structure created initially by PNDC Law 207 and subsequently refined by the 1992 Constitution and Local Government Act, 462 of 1993. These structures operate at the regional, district and sub-district levels and consist of Regional Coordinating Councils on the first tier, Metropolitan or Municipal or District Assemblies on the second tier, and Urban or Town or Zonal or Area Councils in addition to Unit Committees on the third tier. However, the Unit Committees represent the lowest and basic unit in the subsidiarity chain upon which all the other structures, including the Urban or Town or Area Councils are built, thus making the local governance arrangement a four-tier structure instead of the three.

Below is the local government structure in Ghana.
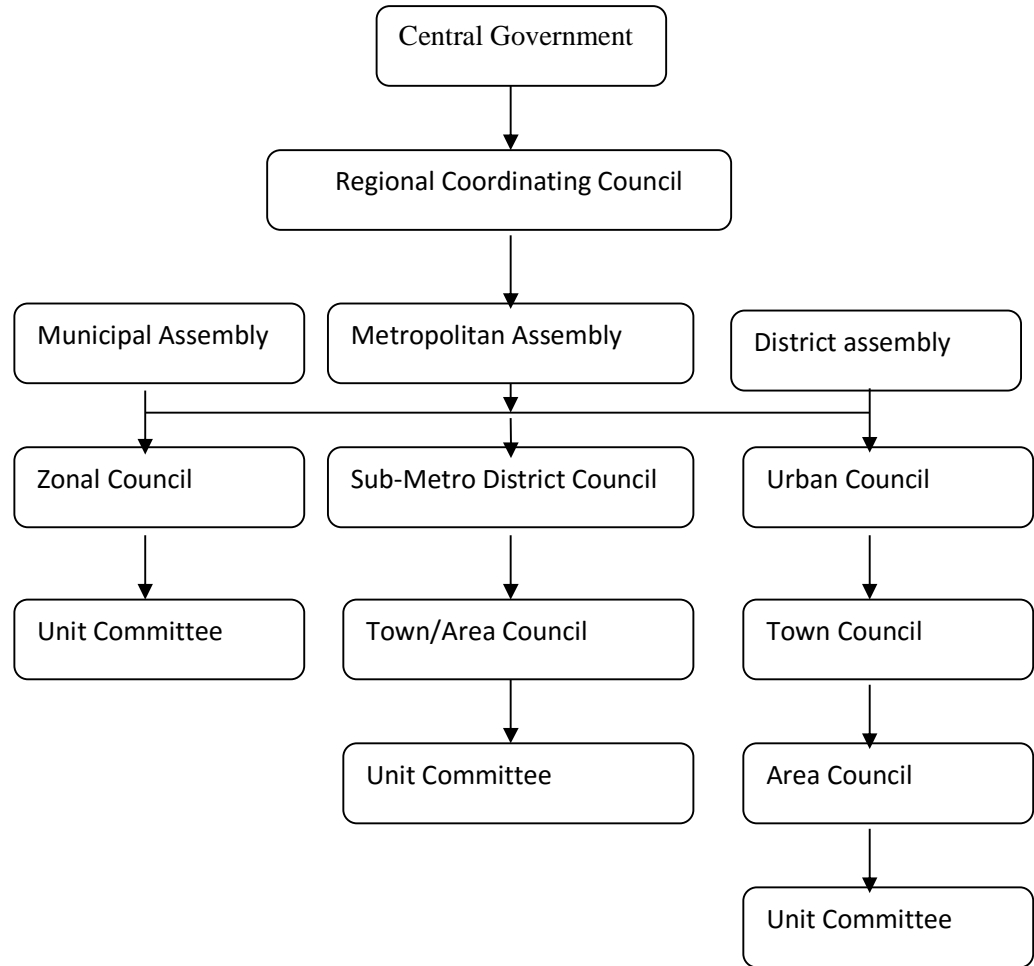
Fig. 2.1 Local Government Structure in Ghana

Source: Adopted and modified from (Ahwoi, 2010 and Boateng and Kosi, 2015)

The Local Government system in Ghana, therefore, has the following structure:

Regional Coordinating Council

Four-tier Metropolitan Assembly

Three-tier Municipal or District Assembly

Urban or Town or Area or Zonal Council

Unit Committee

2.1.5.1 Regional Coordinating Councils

The Regional Coordinating Councils represent the highest level of Local Government in Ghana and are established in each of the 10 regions of the country (Zanu, 1997). The RCC consists of the Regional Minister (the chairperson), his deputies, the Presiding Member of each District Assembly (DA) and the Chief Executive of each district in the region, as well as two chiefs from the regional house of chiefs and the regional heads of decentralized departments who have no voting rights (Local Government Act 462 of 1993).

According to Act 462, the RCC is an administrative and coordinating body rather than political or policy-making body. As stated in the Act, its functions are to:

- Monitor, coordinate and evaluate the performance of the MMDAs in the region;

- Monitor the use of all monies allocated to the MMDAs by any agency of the Central Government;

- Review and coordinate public service generally in the region;

- Resolve any conflict between MMDAs and any agency of Central Government, public corporation, statutory body, Non-governmental Organizations and individuals;

- Provide security, including managing conflicts within the region, settling chieftaincy, tribal, land and religious disputes;

- Coordinate district development plans and programmes and ensure that these plans and programmes are compatible with national development objectives; and

- Integrate economic, spatial and sectoral plans of ministries and sector agencies and ensure that these plans are compatible with national development objectives (Zanu, 1997).

The last stipulation creates opportunity for the RCC to exercise power, albeit implicitly, over the assemblies in the formulation of plans for the provision of basic infrastructure, under the remit of integrating sectoral and spatial plans (Zanu, 1997).

2.1.5.2 The Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs)

According to the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Ghana (n.d), below the Regional Coordinating Council is the District Assemblies, variously called the Metropolitan or Municipal or District Assemblies. The Local Government Act of 1993, Act 462 empowers district assemblies in Ghana as the fulcrum of local governance.

On the basis of demographic conditions and settlement characteristics, local authorities are distinguished between Metropolitan or Municipal or District Assemblies. The Act

stipulates the classification on population and constitutive settlement characteristics as follows:

- A Metropolitan Assembly is a Local Government unit or areas with population over 250,000,

- A Municipal Assembly is a one town assembly with population over 95,000 and a District Assembly is a group settlement with a minimum population of 75,000 and a maximum of 95,000. Therefore, as these demographic and settlement characteristics change, the President is empowered by Act 462 to make appropriate changes. As a result, since the inception of this decentralization concept in 1988, the numbers of districts and their characterizations have changed. At the start, there were a total of 110 local authorities comprising 3 Metropolitan, 4 Municipal and 103 District Assemblies (Zanu, 1997).

A Metropolitan or Municipal or District Assembly is:

- Created as the pivot of administrative and developmental decision-making in the district and is the basic unit of government administration;

- Assigned with deliberative, legislative as well as executive functions;

- Established as a monolithic structure to which is assigned the responsibility of bringing about integration of political, administrative and development support needed to achieve a more equitable allocation of power, wealth and geographically-dispersed development in Ghana; and

- Constituted as the planning authority for the district (Zanu, 1997).

According to the Local Government Act 462 of 1993, a District Assembly consists of the following members:

- The District Chief Executive,

- Two-third of the members directly elected by universal adult suffrage,

- The Members of Parliament (MPs) representing constituencies within the district,

- Not less than 30% of the members appointed by the President in consultation with traditional authorities and interest groups in the district (Zanu, 1997).

According to Zanu (1997), Section 10 (3) of the Local Government Act of 1993, Act 462 summarizes the functions of a District Assembly as administrative, legislative, executive, planning and rating authority.

2.1.5.3 Sub-district Political and Administrative Structures

The Sub-district structures constitute the last tier of Ghana's Local Government system. Zanu (1997) describes these structures as subordinate bodies of the District Assemblies. They are constituted by the Sub-metropolitan District Councils, Urban or Town or Zonal or Area Councils, and Unit Committees. The components of the Sub-district structures as discussed by Act 462 are as follow:

2.1.5.3.1 Sub-metropolitan District Councils

Zanu (1997) stipulates that, the Sub-metropolitan District Councils are structures immediately below the Metropolitan Assemblies. Their conception is based on the

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principle of subsidiarity and in recognition of the large size of the metropolitan local authorities. It enables the city administrators to become more effective. The Sub-metropolitan Councils, which are divided into electoral areas, consist of not less than 25 and not more than 30 members, made up of all elected members of the Assembly in that Sub-metropolitan District and as such other persons resident in the Sub-metropolitan District appointed by the President. Table 1 below shows the various Sub-metropolitan District Structures in Ghana established by law.

2.1.5.3.2 Urban Councils

Zanu (1997) asserts that, Urban Councils are created for settlements with populations above 15,000. They consist of not less than 25 and not more than 30 members made up of not more than 8 persons elected from among the members of the relevant DA, not more than 12 representatives from the Unit Committee in the area of authority of the Urban Council and not more than 10 persons ordinarily resident in the urban area. Zanu (1997) puts forward that such settlements are usually cosmopolitan in character, with urbanization and management problems, though not of the same scale associated with the metropolis. The problem with this nomenclature is that it blurs the lines in defining what is urban and what is not.

2.1.5.3.3 Zonal Councils

Zonal Councils are established for settlements with population of 3,000. Zanu (1997) adds that they are based on the Electoral Commission's criteria of commonality of interest which include population of 3,000 and identifiable streets, landmarks, as boundaries.

The Zonal Council consists of not less than 15 and not more than 20 members made up of not more than 5 persons elected from among the members of the relevant Municipal Assembly, not more than 10 representatives from the Unit Committees and not more than 5 persons ordinarily resident in the zone (Zanu, 1997).

2.1.5.3.4 Town and Area Councils

Zanu (1997) asserts that the Town and Area Councils are found in the Metropolitan Assemblies and District Assemblies. In the District Assemblies, Town Councils are established for settlements with populations between 5,000 and 15,000. Area Councils exist for a number of settlements or villages which are grouped together but whose individual settlements have populations of less than 5,000. They cover areas with predominantly rural populations and in some cases can be identified with spheres of influence of a particular traditional authority. They are essentially rallying points of local enthusiasm in support of a new Local Government system.

The Town and Area Councils consist of not less than 15 and not more than 20 members and they are made up of not more than 5 persons elected from among the

members of the relevant Assembly, not more than 10 representatives from the Unit Committees and not more than 5 persons ordinarily resident in the town or area (Zanu, 1997).

2.1.5.3.5 Functions of the Urban, Town, Zonal or Area Councils

The functions of the Urban or Town or Zonal or Area Councils include the following: to enumerate and keep records of all ratable persons and properties in the urban area, zone or town; to assist any person authorized by the District Assembly to collect revenues due to the Assembly; to recommend to the Assembly, the naming of all streets in its area of authority and all buildings to be numbered; to plant trees and to erect tree guards to protect them so that streets are not unduly obstructed; to prevent and control fire outbreaks including bushfires; and to prepare annual budgets of revenue and recurrent, as well as, prepare development budget of the Urban or Town Council for the approval by the assemblies (Zanu, 1997).

2.1.5.3.6 Unit Committees

The Unit Committees are at the lowest level and form the basic unit of the Local Government structure. A unit is normally a settlement or a group of settlements with a population of between 500 –1,000 in the rural areas, and a higher population (1,500) for the urban areas. Unit Committees play the important roles for enforcement and mobilization matters since they are closer to the people. In theory, the Unit Committees provide structured mechanisms of representation, participation and accountability from

village levels upwards (Zanu, 1997). The Unit Committee consists of not more than 15 persons made up of 10 elected persons ordinarily resident in the unit and not more than 5 other persons resident in the unit and nominated by the District Chief Executive, acting on behalf of the President.

2.1.6 The Structure of the District Assembly

The structure of a District Assembly is made up of the General Assembly, the Executive Committee and Sub-committees as well as the Coordinating Directorate and the Decentralized Departments of the District Assembly (ILGS, 2008).

2.1.6.1 The General Assembly

According to the ILGS (2008), the Assembly is the highest decision-making body of the district. They perform deliberative, legislative and executive functions and these functions are performed under the leadership of the Presiding Member.

2.1.6.2 Committees of District Assemblies

In the performance of its functions, the DA works through the Executive Committee and its subsidiary committees of development planning, social services, works, finance and administration, justice and security and others. The respective functions of these committees are discussed below (ILGS, 2008).

2.1.6.3 The Coordinating Directorate of the District Assembly

As spelt out in the Local Government Service Act of 2003 (Act 656), the office of the coordinating directorate is the administrative and technical unit of the District Assembly. The office is headed by the District Coordinating Director and it is responsible for assisting the Assembly in the performance of its duties such as coordinating and harmonizing the work programmes of the decentralized departments of the Assembly (ILGS, 2008).

2.1.6.4 Decentralized Departments of the District Assembly

The Local Government Act 462 of 1993 establishes 16 departments of Metropolitan Assemblies, 13 departments of Municipal Assemblies and 11 departments of District Assembly. The decentralized departments perform the technical function and therefore provide the technical expertise for local level development (ILGS, 2008). Post (2001), is of the view that decentralized structures offer greater opportunities for participation and subject public officials to popular control.

2.1.7 Qualification

For an ordinary citizen to be elected, he or she must be a citizen of Ghana, 18 years old, ordinarily a resident in the district and paid up on the taxes and rates. By law, individuals must also stand without association to any political party (ILGS, 2008). Elections to the District Assemblies are conducted by secret ballot using the first-past-the-post system.

2.1.8 Disqualification

Members of the District Electorate can make a complaint about the conduct of a DA member or official, which is then considered by the Public Relations and Complaints Committee, chaired by the Presiding Member. If upheld, such complaints can lead to a district referendum, organized by the Electoral Commission to decide whether the DA member should be stripped off his or her position (ILGS, 2008).

2.1.9 Declaration of Vacancy

According to the ILGS (2008), as specified in the Model Standing Order No. 15(5), the seat of the DCE is declared vacant as a result of a vote of no confidence passed against him or her. Under the Standing Orders No. 17, the DCE may be removed from the office at any time by a vote of no confidence supported by the votes of not less than two-third of all the members of the District Assembly passed against him or her. A vote of no confidence shall be a secret ballot and the ballot shall be conducted by the Electoral Commission.

2.1.9.1 Termination of Membership of District Chief Executive (DCE)

The District Chief Executive (DCE) terminates his or her membership if he or she is removed, resigns or dies during his or her tenure of office. In accordance with Standing Order No. 18, the District Chief Executive may be removed from office at any time by the President. Again, as specified in Standing Order No. 19, the DCE may, at any time during

his or her tenure of office, in writing addressed to the President resign his or her post (ILGS, 2008).

2.2 Challenges of the Local Governance System

2.2.1 Demand and Supply-Side Factors

Boateng and Kosi (2015), employed Norris and Lovenduski's (1995) supply-side and demand-side factors to explain the low representation and participation of female in local level structures that provide the opportunity for women to represent and participate in decision making.

According to Boanteng and Kosi (2015), the major challenges of women representation and participation in decision making structures can be subsumed into two: demand and supply-side factors. These factors were employed from Norris and Lovenduski (1995). According to Norris and Lovenduski (1995), the supply-side factors are the two key factors that shape the supply of aspirants: namely: resources such as time, money, skills, talent and experience and second, motivation, such as drive, training, networking, mentoring, ambition and interest in participating in politics or campaigns to be elected (Krook, 2010; Paxton et al., 2007). Norris and Lovenduski (1995) argued that the potential candidates who willingly come forward to contest for political office are influenced by the supply-factors. These factors might have come to play to shape an aspirant for her to convince herself that she is capable to compete against any contender; be it male or female to enhance female representation in elected office. The supply-side factors therefore, have

a strategic influence to enhance women's representation in elective office (Krook, 2010). Ghanaian women who have been trained, educated, mentored, resourced, networked, have more capacity to engage in politics (Boateng and Kosi, 2015). Thus, women's representation will not increase without improvement in their resources and motivation to engage in campaigns (Krook, 2010).

On the other hand, the demand-side factors include features of countries such as the electoral systems, or political parties that influence the probability that a woman will be drawn to engage in political activities from the supply-side and the willing candidates (Krook, 2010; Paxton *et al*., 2007). Thus, aspirants who are desired by political elites are influenced by the demand-side factors (Krook, 2010). In other words, these factors shape the rules of the game in a country.

According to Boateng and Kosi (2015), the argument has been that a woman's ability to succeed in breaking the 'political glass ceiling' to become a potential aspirant, compared to a man, the female is more likely to rescind her decision to engage in electoral process. This is because gender affects political ambition (Lawles and Fox, 2012; Norris and Lovenduski, 1995). For the reason that the enduring nature of traditional gender socialization, gender-specific family roles and expectation like household responsibilities and reproductive roles of caring for a child, continue to be an obstacle to a woman's opportunity to engage well in public spheres of life (Lawles and Fox, 2012; Norris and Lovenduski, 1995).

They further argued that, the supply of women available for political office is determined partly by gender socialization, which influences women's interest, knowledge, and ambition regarding politics. Gender is a socially constructed relationship between women and men in a society. The gendered social and cultural norms determine the rights, resources and decision-making power that women and men have. These constructed relationships make men and women play different roles at home and in society (Kabeer, 2001). The result is that the two persons are being valued differently and the female experience unequal opportunities and life chances (Kabeer, 2001). There are discriminatory practices and many informal systems such as customs, traditions, adages and institutional relationships that are deeply patriarchal, which cut across local government (Beall, 2004 and Allah-Mensah, 2005).

As a result of how gender has been constructed to position women and men in terms of their roles and responsibilities in patriarchal societies resulting in inequality in the gender, there are several calls for the increase in the representation of women in both local and national government. The participation of women therefore can mostly be the result of a process of socialization that leads them to think of political activity in a different way than men (Chhibber, 2003).

Paxton *et al.* (2007) assert that gender socialization influences women's interest, knowledge and ambition regarding politics. Thus, seeing that political participation requires supply-side factors; personal characteristics such as interest, ambition, and knowledge as well as other resources like networks, civic skills, education and economic resources, women's availability to engage in politics will depend partly on these supply-

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side factors. Women's availability to be in politics can also be influenced by the demand-side factors; social structures, which improve or limit women's opportunities for education and employment (Roza, 2010a).

Simply put, as women have access to these supply-side factors and or resources, they are empowered to resist any obstacles to their participation and representation in politics. It is therefore, explicable that as women continue to grow, they are more likely to be empowered to resist any hindrance to their socio-economic development in society and participate in decision-making positions at the local level of governance. In general, the levels of women's political representation within a country and across the globe are determined by the supply-side and demand-side factors (Boateng and Kosi, 2015). Supply-side factors contribute in bringing more women into the political landscape as women express the willingness and committed experience to compete against men for political position (Roza, 2010 b).

Boateng and Kosi (2015) also note that, one must not lose sight of the fact that culture, beliefs and attitudes influence both the supply-side and demand-side factors for female candidates. For instance, a patriarchal society is likely to negatively influence women's political representation as the structures in these societies are endemic with traditional and cultural barriers to women's decision to engage in politics (Bauer and Britton, 2006).

2.3 Women Representation in Local Governance in Ghana

According to Abubakar and his associates (2014), considerable efforts for the participation of women in Ghana are visible nationally and locally. For instance, ABANTU for Development, United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), Gender Studies and Human Rights Documentation Centre, Women in Law and Development in Africa (WiLDAF)-Ghana, CEDAW and the 'We Know Politics' project amongst others, seem to be organized mouth pieces and the propellers of women involvement in decision making and political life in Ghana.

Many legal instruments, such as the Constitution of the Republic of Ghana (1992) which established the local governance and its service, the Local Governance Act of 1993 (Act 462) and other related acts and legislative instruments of the country did not specifically stipulate the inclusion of women as a necessity for certain positions. The Parliamentary Centre (2009) identifies that there exists a gender strategy (i.e. Ghana Parliamentary Committee Support Project) whose phases I & II aim at raising awareness among all members of parliament, men and women, of the importance of taking gender into account, understanding how a society's concept of man and woman leads to inequalities in all actions, from policy-making to budget preparation through implementation and evaluation (Abubakar *et al*, 2014).

2.3.1 Challenges to Women's Representation and Participation in Local Governance in Ghana

The Women's Manifesto for Ghana (2004), notes that the problem of low representation of women in local governance had existed since and as far back as 1988. Thus, the issue of women participation in local governance has remained and will continue to be of top priority in Ghana if the deepening and consolidation of Ghana's democracy is to be achieved and if the development of the country must be accelerated at a rapid pace.

Offei-Aboagye (2000) also notes that various provisions in the design of the decentralization process should have made the participation of women in public decision-making easier. These provisions include those for a non-partisan local government system, the freedom to use the local language for the business of the District Assembly and the discretion in creating additional sub-committees. The latter could have provided a sharper focus on responding to the concerns of various sections of the population, including women.

Offei-Aboagye (2000), Allah Mensah (2005) and Amoako (2011) have all lamented that women have been constrained from entering local level politics by the lack of finances for campaigning and time constraints needed to manage domestic responsibilities, income-generation activities and political work. The widely held perception that politics is "dirty" game and therefore, not for decent women is also a major barrier to women's participation in local governance. Women have also not been voted for because politics is often viewed as belonging to an arena which is best managed by men. Husbands and families are reluctant to have their women in the public eye. Women lack

public arena skills and some complain of intimidation by male opponents. Allah-Mensah (2005) and Offei-Aboagye (2000) conclude that, while the visibility of women in local government has increased, the numbers are still very low – both as administrators and as assembly members/counselors/ representatives. The issue is not the numbers of women alone, but their self-knowledge, confidence, clarity of purpose, priorities, commitment and ability to skillfully present their perspectives. Their multiple roles as wives, mothers, daughters, community workers and income-generators severely limit their time for community interaction and mobilization.

In spite of the challenges that have bedeviled women in their representation, one would have thought that the few who are represented would have been given ample opportunity to participate effectively in the decision making processes. This is however, not the case as Offei-Aboagye (2000:4) observes that *inside the assembly, women have yet to make their presence felt. In spite of the increases in their numbers provided for by the government directive, their performance has been muted. This has been attributed to lack of self-confidence, a limited capacity to communicate in English and a lack of understanding of assembly procedures. Other problems include being shouted at in assembly proceedings or being ignored by presiding members when they (women members) want to make interventions. The short notices for meetings and transportation costs incurred during assembly work have also been indicated as constraints for them. Women members employed in the formal sector also identify difficulties in combining assembly responsibilities with their jobs such as getting time off to attend to assembly and community business. Elected women also worry about being able to undertake development activities to justify their selection.*

The Builsa North District is also replete with examples of local governance structures without a full representation of women and participation thereof. Table 2.2 shows the number of women in District Assembly and the number assigned to leadership positions in the Builsa North District for the 2015 local level election

Table 2.3 Number of women at the Builsa North District Assembly and the number assigned to leadership positions for the 2015 local level election

Local Government Structure	Female	Percentage	Male	Percentage	Total	Total percentage
Assembly	3	6.7	42	93.3	45	100
Elected	0	0	31	100	31	100
Appointed	3	23.1	10	76.9	13	100
With responsibility	1	11.1	8	88.9	9	100

Source: Adopted and Modified from Builsa North District Assembly (2016)

Table 2.2 shows that the total number of women in the Builsa North District is three (3), all of whom were appointed than elected and only one woman has been given a responsibility as a sub-committee chairperson out of the total of nine (9) available sub-committees.

At the Town and Area Councils, the number of women is equally very low. Table 2.3 show the number of women and men in the two town councils (2), three (3) area councils and five (5) unit committees in the Builsa North District for the 2015 election period.

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Table 2.4 Women and men in town councils, area councils and unit committees in the Builsa North District for the 2015 election period

Structure	Female	Percentage %	Male	Percentage %	Total	Total Percentage
Town Councils	1	8.3	11	91.7	12	100
Area Councils	2	16.7	10	83.3	12	100
Unit Committees	8	6.7	111	93.3	119	100
Total	11		132		143	

Source: Adopted and Modified from Builsa North District Assembly (2016)

The above table shows that in the town, area councils and unit committees in the Builsa North District, there are only eight (8) women present at those levels. The women are only at the unit committee and not the town and area councils.

2.3.2 Literacy and Women Participation in Local Governance

Scholars and writers, such as Apusigah (2004), Allah-Mensah (2005), Amoako (2011) and Adatuu (2015) have all shown that there is a direct correlation between a woman's literacy and her level of participation in local and national governance. UN (2007), Khan and Ara (2006) and Medoff (1986) all suggest in line with Apusigah (2004), Allah-Mensah (2005), Amoako (2011) and Adatuu (2015) that there is a strong

relationship between women's literacy and their participation in the governance process. Medoff (1986) for instance stated that there is 'a positive relationship between women's educational attainment and their political attitudes and beliefs regarding women's political participation: the greater the educational level of women the more likely they will support women candidates'.

Amoako (2011) noted that, low literacy among women affects their participation at the district assembly level negatively. She asserted that 'The low educational level of most of the women candidates was also identified as a major setback in leadership, hence, the poor performances of women'.

Similarly, in his study, Adatuu (2015) noted in the Wa municipality that illiterate women do not vie for positions at the Municipal and District levels. In a Focus Group Discussion in Wa with illiterate women, they asserted that, '*How can we aspire for a political position when we are not educated? It is only the educated ones that can vie for political positions in this region. If we do, no one would listen to us.*'

The Builsa North District is not different from the above situation. Most illiterate women feel incapacitated and lack self confidence that will ginger them to contest local level elections in the district. As a result, their voices are hardly heard in the local governance structures in the district as compared to their literate women counterparts.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

A theory refers to a set of interrelated concepts, definitions and propositions which present a systematic view of a phenomenon by specifying the relationships among variables with the purpose of explaining and predicting the phenomenon as it is.

According to Shar (2006, P.3), 'Several accepted theories provide a strong rationale for decentralized decision making and a strong role for local governments on the grounds of efficiency, accountability, manageability, and autonomy.' Shar (2006) provides five theories related to citizen's participation in governance: Stigler's menu, which refers to two principles of jurisdictional design; the principle of fiscal equivalency; the correspondence principle; the decentralization theorem; and the subsidiarity principle. This research is based on one of Shar's theories, Stigler's menu, which espouses a positive correlation between citizen's participation and governance.

2.4.1 Stigler's Menu

Stigler (1957) presents two principles which are related to local governance and women participation. The first principle stipulates that the closer a representative government is to the people, the better it works. This principle suggests that, the closer local governance is to women, the higher their chance of participating in it, all things being equal. In real sense, this theory suggests that, women would be better positioned to influence policies at the local level to serve their interest better, which is in harmony with the core principles of local governance.

The second principle proposes that, people should have the right to vote for the kind and amount of public services they want. This principle contends that, decision making at the local level should comply with "allocative efficiency". The principle of allocative efficiency requires that, the distribution of goods and services should take into consideration the preferences of consumers. Thus, women would actively participate in local governance if they believe that their priorities or most cherished needs would be catered for in the design and implementation of policies. In addition, it ensures that resources are allocated to the right people at the right places in line with their choices. Again, the participation of women in local governance comes with cost and women would only actively participate in it if they are sure that, the marginal benefit of participation is at least equal to the marginal cost of participation.

2.5 Conclusion

From the literature above, there seem to be some problem on local governance, political participation, women's political participation, literacy and women's participation in local governance. Seminal studies in these fields have found themselves in a "conceptual quicksand". This has led to the emergence of divergent views on the concepts, making it extremely difficult for any meaningful reconciliation on the bourgeoning literature. I have attempted to fill some of the lacunae in the literature while at the same time agreeing with some of the conceptualizations that have stood the test of time. It is my hope that other researchers in the field will find this academic piece useful and will build on it.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research methodology employed in this research. It encompasses the specific research methods used in the study and the overall research methodological framework employed.

3.1 The Research Location

The Builsa North District is located in the Upper East Region and lies between longitudes 1^0 05' West and 1^0 35' West and latitude 10^0 20' North. The North of the Builsa North District is bordered by the Kassena-Nankana West District, to the South is the Builsa South District, to the West is the Sissala East District of the Upper West Region, and to the East is the Kassena-Nankana East Municipality. The estimated land area occupied by the District is said to be 816.44030 km^2 which constitute about 10% of the land area in the Upper East Region (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014).

3.1.1 Establishment

The Builsa North District Assembly was established on the 15th of March, 2012 by an Act of Parliament, 1993 (Act 462), with Sandema as its administrative capital. The Legislative

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Instrument (LI) that established it is LI 2148. The rationale behind carving out the Builsa North District from Builsa South was to ensure that governance was further brought closer to the doorsteps of the local people. The District currently has about ninety-eight (98) communities with a population size of about 56,477.

3.1.2 District Economy

The Builsa North District is endowed with very rich natural resources. Preliminary exploratory work carried out in the District indicates that Builsa North abounds in large quantities of several mineral deposits ranging from gold, chromites, rutile jasper talc, lime, feldspars, nepheline syenite and varied types of clay (The Composite Budget of the Builsa North District Assembly, 2015).

It is known that several of the soil associations found in the District have large quantities of good clay deposits. In particular, the Pusiga association of soils found in and around Wiaga has large amounts of fine, sandy clays at depths of 30-35cm below the top-soil up to over 120cm of the sub-soil. Clay is also found in Sandema (The Composite Budget of the Builsa North District Assembly, 2015).

Granite constitutes the dominant geological formation in the District and covers over 70% (approx. 153, 300 ha) of the land area occurring mostly in the northern section. Excellent exposures of granitic rocks are therefore found in the northern parts of the District, stretching from Chuchuliga across Sandema to Bachonsa area. These rocks can easily be quarried for road and housing construction. Some of these rocks have fine

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crevices and can be shaped into ornamental and design blocks commonly used in housing construction. It is important to note that a detailed mineralogical test is required to establish the actual quantity and quality of the various mineral deposits in the District for industrial use (The Composite Budget of the Builsa North District Assembly, 2015).

The District is also blessed with dams and dug-outs. These dams serve as sources of drinking water for a wide range of livestock besides being used for dry season vegetable production. Water is also fetched from these facilities for constructional work by contractors and the local people (The Composite Budget of the Builsa North District Assembly, 2015).

3.1.3 Occupation

Agriculture is the main occupation of the people of Builsa land; with about 67.4% of the people engage in it. Other occupations such as production/processing and transport equipment work (13.5%), sales work (8.6%), and services (4.5%) and Professional and technical work (3.8%) (The Composite Budget of the Builsa North District Assembly, 2015).

3.1.4 Industry

In terms of industrial classification, the major economic activities are agriculture including hunting, forestry and fishing (69%); manufacturing including small scale processing activities (10.5%) and wholesale and retail trade (8.6%). Social Services including public

administration, education, health, community services and private household services constitute 6.5% of gainful work. Real estate business (housing development), construction, financial services, commercial transport, storage and communication, hotel and restaurants are all not well developed in the district and employ a small fraction of those who work (The Composite Budget of the Builsa North District Assembly, 2015).

3.1.5 Population

The population of the District as indicated by 2010 Population and Housing Census is 56,477 with a growth rate of 1.1%. The population consists of 27,792 (49.2%) males and 28,685(50.8%) females (Ghana Statistical Service, October, 2014) clearly indicating that, majority of the population are females. This however, contradicts the fact that, women's participation in local governance in the area is low notwithstanding women being the majority. It is this phenomenon that makes the study area unique and suitable for an examination of the community member's views on women's participation in local governance.

3.1.6 Employment Status

It is observed that nearly 72.5% of the economically active population in the district is self-employed workers with no employees, with an additional 18.4% as unpaid family workers, apprentices and house helps in the private informal sector (both agriculture and non-agriculture). Large-scale businesses are few in the district hence the self-employed with

employees constitute a very small proportion of those in active work (2.5%) (The Composite Budget of the Builsa North District Assembly, 2015).

Employees mostly of the public services and the few relatively large businesses constitute 5.7% of the economically active population. It is important to note that of all those in gainful employment in the district only 8.2% could be taxed at source. Such an employment structure poses a challenge for the effective mobilization of tax revenue and the implications for any policy on taxation would need to be carefully considered. The private sector (private formal + Informal) provides employment to 90.5% of the working population in the District (The Composite Budget of the Builsa North District Assembly, 2015).

3.1.7 Religion

The dominant mode of worship is the Traditional African Religion, which makes up 46% of the population followed by the Christian Religion, 28%, Moslems 23%, with the rest constituting a small minority of about 3% of the total population. In terms of ethnic composition, the District can be said to be a homogeneous one. The Builsa's constitute about 83% of the entire population. The remaining 17% is made up of minority groups comprising the Kantosi, Mamprusi, Sissala, Nankani and Mossi (Ghana Statistical Service, October, 2014).

3.1.8 Education

Though the District is divided in to two, data concerning the District has not been segregated. At present, it has 28 Junior High Schools and 71 Primary Schools and 6 private schools as well as 3 Senior High School and 1 newly opened private school. There is a higher proportion of male literates (52.6%) than that of female literates (47.4%) in the district (Ghana Statistical Service, October, 2014).

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3.1.9 Health Infrastructure

The District has 1 hospital located at the capital Sandema; 6 health centers, 1 private clinic, 13 CHPS compounds and two currently under construction as well as 1 GHAG which are spread throughout the District (Builsa North District Assembly, 2015).

DISTRICT MAP OF BUILSA NORTH
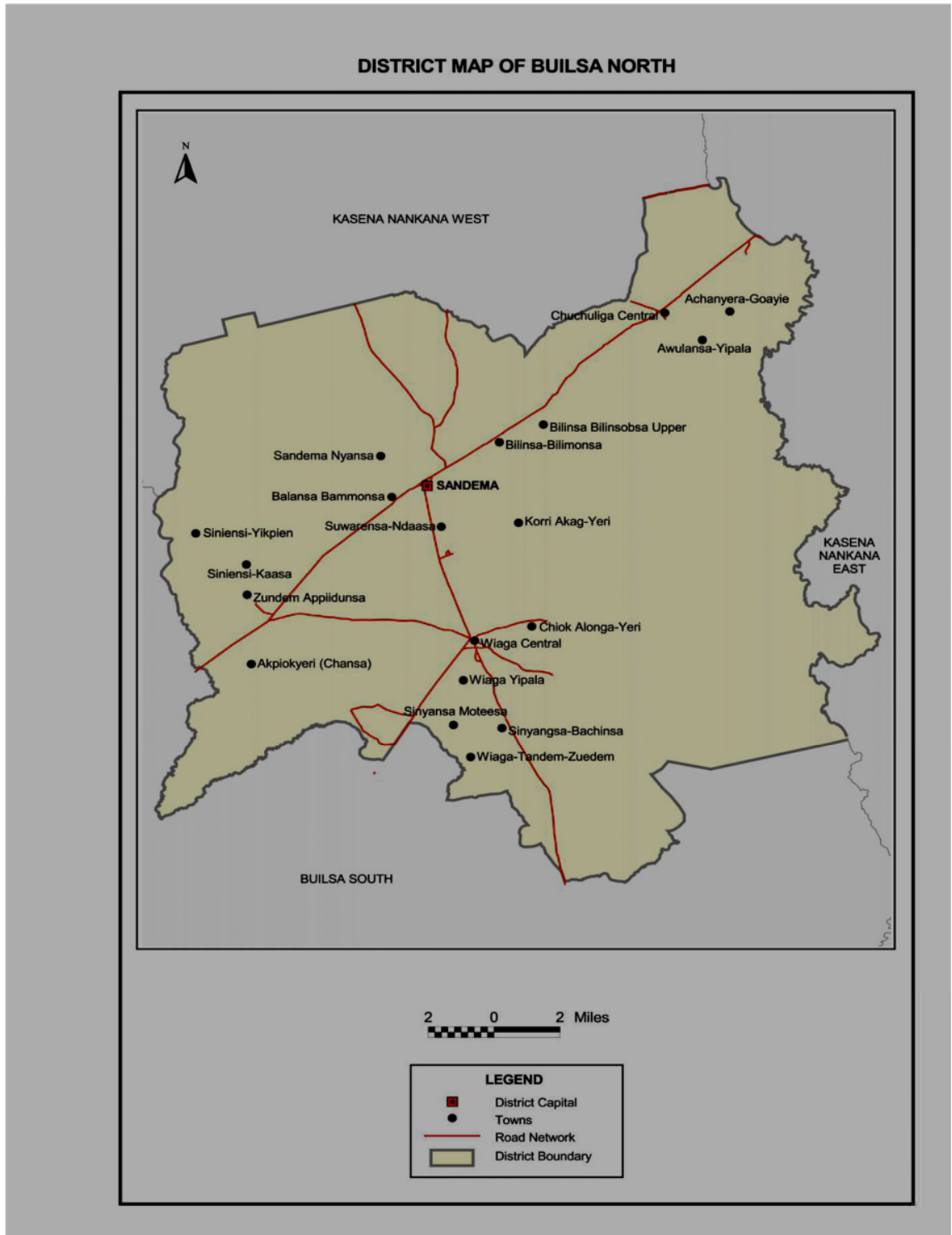
Figure 3.1 Administrative Map of Builsa North District

Source: Builsa North District Assembly (2015)

3.2 Political Administration

There are 98 communities clustered into five (5) Town and Area Councils in the District. These include: the Sandema Town Council, Wiaga Town Council, Chuchuliga Area Council, Siniensi Area Council, and Kadema Area Council.

There are also 31 Electoral Areas in the District. Currently the District Assembly has a total number of forty five (45) Assembly Members including one Member of Parliament. Out of the (45) members of the General Assembly, three are women and the rest are men (The Composite Budget of the Builsa North District Assembly, 2015).

There are administrative departments that operate under the District Coordinating Directorate which include: Ghana Education Service (GES), Births and Deaths Registry, Health Service Directorate, Department of Agriculture, Department of Community Development, and District Environmental Health Unit (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014).

3.2.1 Committees of the Assembly

Under the Executive Committee, various sub-committees have been set up to complement the Executive Committee in carrying out its political and administrative functions. These sub-committees are: Finance and Administration, Works, Justice and Security, Development Planning, Health and Environment, Education, Agriculture, Women and Children. The other committees in the district are: District HIV/AIDS Committee, District Security Council, District Tender Committee, District Tender Review Board, Audit Report

Implementation Committee, and District Budget Committee (Builsa North District Assembly, 2015).

3.3 Research Strategy or Approach

The study depended largely on qualitative data interspersed with quantitative data in the data collection and analysis. The two approaches differ markedly from each other in several ways but complement each other (Neuman, 2006). The nature of the data determines the differences between the two approaches. In the view of Neuman (2006), quantitative research often relies on interpretative or critical social science. It emphasizes on measuring variables and testing hypothesis that are linked. It involves the use of numerical and statistical procedures in a manner that facilitates the quantitative measurement of the research results (Kane, 1995 cited in Abagre, 2012). Quantitative research is facilitated by the use of tools such as questionnaires and structured interviews to obtain data that can easily be expressed in absolute numbers and percentages, numerical and statistical forms such as charts, arithmetic mean, modes, median and other measures of central tendencies and dispersions (Kane, 1995 and Twumasi, 2001 all in Abagre, 2012).

Qualitative research on the other hand for Corban and Straus (2008), allows a researcher to get an inner experience of participants and to determine how meanings are formed through culture and to discover rather than testing variables, depending largely on narratives, descriptions and explanations (Corban and Straus, 2008).

The Questionnaire, Key Informant Interview Guide and Focus Groups Discussions in the study areas facilitated the collection of qualitative and quantitative data which aided the analysis thereof that the study sought to do in the Builsa North District.

The justification for the use of both qualitative and quantitative data goes in line with Osuala's (2007 cited in Abagre, 2012) assertion that one approach cannot answer all questions and provide insights on all issues. In fact, whereas quantitative data expressed the findings in mathematical impressive forms as in numbers and tables, qualitative data complements and enriched the analytical process by providing detailed interpretations and explanations that added more meaning to the results and discussions.

3.3.1 The Research Process

An outline of the research was done which allowed the researcher to undertake the study systematically. Below is a step-by-step outline of how the research was done by the researcher.

1. Specification of the research problem.

2. Contact with research supervisor.

3. Review of relevant literature on women's participation in local governance.

4. Determining the sampling design.

5. Determining the sources and techniques of data collection.

6. Contact with research supervisor.

7. Preparation of research tools.

8. Contact with research supervisor.

9. A research budget preparation.

10. Recruitment and training of research assistants.

11. Field visits and data collection.

12. Presentation and analysis of the data collected.

13. Contact with research supervisor.

3.4 Study Design

This study employed a survey design. According to Johnson and Josslyn (1995 cited in Nzioki, 2007), survey has the virtue of allowing observation of a phenomenon in its natural settings. According to Manheim and Rich (1991), survey designs give a snap shot of the respondents and the issue at hand for study. This study, which is an inquiry into women participation in local governance, entailed the examination of the views of community members on the extent of participation of women in local governance in the Builsa North District. As Bhattacherjee (2012, P.48) observed, "Field surveys capture snapshots of practices, beliefs, or situations from a random sample of subjects in field settings. The strengths of field surveys are their external validity (since data is collected in field settings), their ability to capture and control for a large number of variables, and their ability to study a problem from multiple perspectives or using multiple theories." It is therefore, these strengths of the survey design that make it an appropriate design for this particular research.

3.5 Sources and Techniques of Data Collection

The data for the study were generated through two main sources: primary and secondary data. In the generation of the primary data, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were employed. A structured interview guide was used for the key informant interviews where audio recordings were made of responses as well as notes taking. The audio recordings were later transcribed into notes. A checklist of questions was also used for the focus group discussions where responses were also taped as well as notes taken. Questionnaires were also used to gather information from the individual respondents. All these helped in collecting primary data from the respondents. The secondary data were collected from various documents comprising published and unpublished documents of the Builsa North District which had direct or indirect relevance to the study. These documents were sorted and notes made from them and were all sought and critically cited.

3.5.1 Data Collection Methods and Tools

Quandt and Arcury (1997) have argued that the most widely used method in the collection of data in social, behavioral, and psychological research is interview. They assert that there are several types of interviews that can be used to collect qualitative data. These can be divided into two broad groups: group interviews and individual interviews. The various categories under group interviews include: Focus group interview, Consensus group interview, Natural group interview and Community interview. Those under the individual interview categories include: Ethnographic or key-informant interview, In-depth interview,

Oral history interview, Life-history interview and Open-ended short response question. This study employed focus group discussions and key informant interviews in the collection of data.

3.5.2 Focus Group Discussions

Adebo (2000) states that focus group interviews/discussions (FDGs) are useful for obtaining general information about a community. FGDs are a useful method for cross checking information. Group interviews require very careful preparation. The ideal group, according to Adebo (2000), should comprise between eight and fifteen people. Dawson (2002) adds that the meeting should be held in a pleasant place with refreshments served to create a relaxed environment. The moderator needs objectivity and knowledge of the subject. The moderator starts with a broad question before moving to more specific issues, encouraging open and easy discussion to bring out true feelings and thoughts. This study had set up seven (7) FGDs comprising eight (8) women each for women in and outside local government structures in the Builsa North District. All the participants were interviewed on the same questions. The discussions were guided by a checklist of questions. A facilitator moderated the discussions whiles the researcher audio recorded responses with a tape recorder in addition to notes taking. This method was used for the collection of the qualitative data and was best suited for the study based on the main research objective which sought to; examine views of community members on women's participation in local governance.

3.5.3 Key Informant Interviews

Chambers (1992) stipulates that key informant interviews involve enquiring who the experts are and seeking them out to obtain the desired information from them. In this study, seven (7) key informant interviews were conducted among women and men in local governance in the Builsa North District. A structured interview guide was used to moderate the interviews in order to keep the discussion on focus. The researcher recorded all interviews with a tape recorder which were later transcribed. This method was used to collect qualitative data in line with the nature of the research objective which was an inquiry into women's participation in local governance.

3.5.4 Questionnaire

For Dawson (2002), a questionnaire consists of a set of questions presented to a respondent for answers. The respondents read the questions, interpret what is expected and then write down the answers themselves. It is called an Interview Schedule when the researcher asks the questions (and if necessary, explains them) and records the respondent's reply on the interview schedule (Dawson, 2002). Because there are many ways to ask questions, the questionnaire is very flexible (Dawson, 2002). Dawson posits that the questionnaire allows the respondent to give answers to the questions raised which facilitate the easy collection of the data. According to Dawson (2002), there are three basic types of questionnaire: closed –ended, open-ended and combination of both.

Closed–ended Questionnaire: closed-ended questions include all possible answers or prewritten response categories, and respondents are asked to choose among them. As these follow a set format, and most responses can be entered easily into a computer for easy analysis, greater numbers can be distributed (Dawson, 2002).

Open-ended Questionnaire: open-ended questions allow respondents to answer in their own words. Open-ended questionnaire does not contain boxes to tick but instead leaves a blank section for the respondents to write in an answer. The advantage of this type of questionnaire is that it allows respondents to give more detailed answers to the questions (Dawson, 2002)

Combination of both: this way it is possible to find out how many people use a service and what they think of the service in the same form. It begins with a series of closed –ended questions, with boxes to tick or scales to rank, and then finish with a section of open-ended questions for more detailed responses (Dawson, 2002).

One Hundred and Fifty questionnaires comprising both open-ended and closed-ended questions were issued for the study. The questionnaires were administered to both males and females in and outside local government structures in the Builsa North District. The major reason for the use of questionnaire in this study was its flexibility and the fact that, it afforded respondents the opportunity to give more detailed responses to questions. Furthermore, the study employed mixed methods approach and therefore, this instrument was more appropriate in gathering both quantitative and qualitative data from the respondents.

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3.6 Population and Sampling Procedure

According to Kumepkor (2003), the purpose of research is to be able to draw inferences or make generalizations based on samples of the parameters of the population from which the samples are taken. Sampling is thus a process of selecting a few from a bigger group to become the basis for predicting a fact, situation or outcome regarding the bigger group. Millar (2003) argued that researchers need to select only a few units from the universe for the purpose of their study in order to generalize for the population as this is often better than the whole population.

3.6.1 Target Population

According to Kumar (1999), the population is the class/city/electorates from which you select a few students/families/electors, etc., to sample. The target population of the research was made up women and men in and outside local government structures in the Builsa North District. These local government structures included two Town Council, three Area Councils, and Unit Committees. However, due to the large numbers, twenty-five electoral areas were drawn from the thirty-one electoral areas in the District for the study.

3.6.2 Sampling Techniques

A combination of probability and non-probability sampling techniques were used in this study. These included the following:

3.6.2.1 Simple random sampling

According to Johnson and Josslyn (1995) and Creswell (1994), simple random sampling is where every individual in the population stands an equal chance of being selected. All the 31 electoral areas in the Builsa North District constituted the sampling frame for this study. Due to the large numbers however, 25 electoral areas were selected for the study using simple random sampling technique in order to avoid sampling biases. The names of the 31 electoral areas in the Builsa North District were written on pieces of paper, folded and put in a bowl. Twenty-five people were made to select any of the folded papers randomly from the bowl at a time. The names of the electoral areas contained in the 25 papers then formed the electoral areas the research was based on. The rest of the six left in the bowl were excluded.

3.6.2.2 Non-probability Sampling Techniques

Non-probability sampling technique was also applied in the research. Non-probability sampling means the use of the researcher's discretion in selecting individual or class, etc., for the study based on the researcher's conviction that, such group(s) could provide the best possible information needed in the research. In this study, purposive sampling technique was specifically used under non-probability sampling.

3.6.2.3 Purposive Sampling

First, purposive sampling was used to select the Builsa North District because of its geographical proximity for the researcher and its ability to rightly show the low participation of women in local governance. Second, purposive sampling was used to select women and men who were in local governance and who the researcher deemed knowledgeable on women's participation in local governance, for the focus group discussions and key informant interviews. One Hundred and Fifty (150) women and men in local governance in the study area were purposively selected to answer the questionnaire. The 150 women and men in local government were selected from the 25 electoral areas that were randomly selected out of the 31 electoral areas in the District. Again, Fifty-six (56) women in and outside local government structures in the study area, whom the researcher deemed to have knowledge in local governance were selected for the focus group discussions. Seven (7) women and men under the same category were selected for the key informant interviews.

To ensure that women were offered the most opportunity to tell their own story, all the three women in the current assembly were purposively selected for the key informant interviews.

3.6.3 Sample Size

In all, 150 women and men were selected for the questionnaire, seven (7) key informant interviews made up of three men and four women were held while seven (7) FGDs

comprising eight women each giving a total of 56 women for the FGDs. Table 3.1 shows the research tools and respondents covered in the sample.

Table 3.1: Research tools/methods and respondents covered in the sample.

Research Tool/method	Male	Female	Total
Questionnaire	139	11	150
FGDs	0	7	56
KIIs	3	4	7

Source: Field Data (2016).

3.7 Data Analysis Techniques

Krueger and Neuman (2006) opine that, data or information is what one gathers carefully according to rules or procedures which can be qualitatively expressed as words, pictures or objects or quantitatively expressed as numbers.

3.7.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

The quantitative data was analyzed through computer software. The data were classified into themes and sub-themes in line with the research objectives. The Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) software version 16 was used to facilitate the generation of tables and figures through the graphical interface which was then transported into Microsoft excel and word. The software generated the tables and figures while descriptive explanations

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were done by the researcher. The generation of these tables and figures were guided by the identifiable themes that were drawn from the research questions and objectives. The justification for this choice is founded on the fact that, it would ensure a vivid impression of the data using pictorial forms such as tables and graphs while at the same time give the researcher the opportunity to explain the tables and figures generated.

3.7.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

The qualitative data of which much of the primary data depended on were analyzed through narratives and descriptions. The primary data, much of which was in audio recordings were transcribed and classified under the various research questions and objectives. This was then presented alongside the data obtained from the quantitative analysis to either confirm or otherwise of it.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

The researcher adopted appropriate methodological procedures to avoid bias in the selection of samples and reporting the findings of the study. Thus findings were reported as they are and not as the researcher thinks they should be, regarding women's participation in local governance in the Builsa North District.

Additionally, the researcher took the pain to acquaint himself with adequate methodological procedures that helped to ensure professionalism in the implementation of the research process. This was to ensure orderly and systematic execution of the study, and

also accuracy and reliability of the findings. The reporting approach involved frantic efforts which ensured that they were correct and by this, the researcher did not make any attempt to change or slant primary information to suit his personal interest. The information from the field was presented in such a way that any direct or indirect possible adverse effects on the respondents were totally avoided.

An Informed Consent Form was administered to the respondents seeking their consent and explaining the rationale of the study and the confidentiality of the responses that they would give. Each respondent was seriously assured that any information given would only be for the purpose of academic work and that their names would not be attached to the responses they give.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents detailed discussion of the findings of the study. Findings of investigations from the Builsa North District were considered and analyzed. The presentation has taken the form of cross-tabulation, narrative discussions, and tables and figures following identifiable themes derived from the research questions and objectives. The pattern of presentation is largely guided by the conceptual and theoretical frameworks adopted for the study. The analytical approach was quantitative and qualitative analysis drawn from the questionnaire, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs). The questionnaire respondents were 150; the KIIs were seven (7) while the FGDs were also seven (7) sessions. As a result of the small number of women in the local governance structures in the district, all the women were interviewed for the questionnaire, four for the KIIs and all of them were involved in the FGDs. This was done in order to seek more views from women. The analysis and presentation below are drawn from them.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

4.1.1 Sex

The male respondents for the questionnaire were 139 (92.7%) while the female were 11 (7.3%), making a total of 150 respondents. The respondents for the KIIs were seven, comprising three men, four women while there were seven FGD sessions all of whom were women. It is worthy of note that the total number of females in local governance: assembly, town council, area council and unit committee were only 11 in the Builsa North District. All these females (3 at the assembly level and 8 in the unit committee level) were involved in the questionnaire, KIIs and FGDs.

4.1.2 Age

Due to the set criteria, all the respondents were 18 years and above. This was necessary because in Ghana, it is from 18 years on that one is allowed to exercise one's franchise. Hence, this study on women's political participation in local governance in the Builsa North District warranted a concentration on that age bracket. The upper limits of 24, 34, 44, 54, 64 and 65+ facilitated the classification of the sample population into youthful (24 and 34), middle age (44 and 54) but economically active, and the aged and dependent groups (64 and 65+). The youthful group comprised 54 participants constituting 36%, the economically active were 58 (38.7%) while the aged were 38 (25.3%) for the questionnaire. This shows that majority of the respondents in local governance: assembly, town council, area council, and unit committee in the Builsa North District were in the

economically active group, followed by the youthful group and then the aged group. Figure 4.1 shows the age distribution of the respondents.
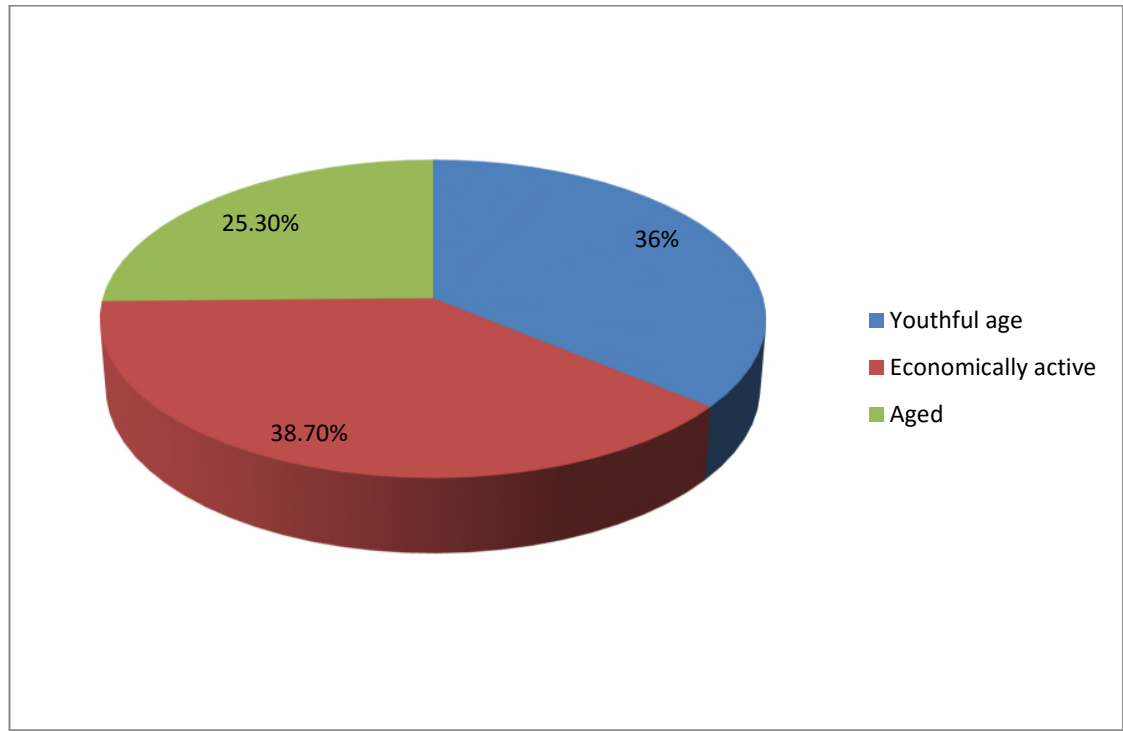
Figure 4.1 Age Distribution of the respondents

Source: Field Data (2016)

4.1.3 Level of Education

The number of respondents who did not have any formal schooling at all were 19 (12.7%), those who had primary education were 22 (14.7%), those who had Junior High School (JHS) education were 16 (10.7%), those who had Senior High School education (SHS) were 29 (19.3%), those who had pre-tertiary education were 20 (13.3%) while those that had tertiary level of education were 44 (29.3%). This implies that the number of

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respondents who had at least SHS education in local governance in the Builsa North District was 93 (62%); showing that majority of the respondents could read and write. Table 4.1 shows the level of education of the respondents from the questionnaire.

Table 4.1 Level of education of respondents

Level of education	Number of respondents	Percentage %
No school	19	12.7
Primary	22	14.7
JHS	16	10.7
SHS	29	19.3
Pre-tertiary	20	13.3
Tertiary	44	29.3
Total	150	100

Source: Field Data (2016)

4.1.4 Local Governance Structures Respondents Belonged

The number of respondents who were Assembly Members was 45 (30%), those who belonged to Town Councils were 10 (6.7%), and those who belonged to Area Councils were 25 (16.7%) while Unit Committee Members were 70 (46.7%). This shows that majority of the respondents belonged to the Unit Committee followed by Assembly Members, Area Councils and then the Town Councils. The town and area councils have less membership than the assembly and unit committee membership because the elected assembly members were selected to form the town and area council members. This is

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confirmed by the Builsa North District Assembly List of Assembly Members, Town Councils, Area Councils, and Unit Committee Members (2016). Figure 4.2 indicates membership of assembly, town council, area council, and unit committees.
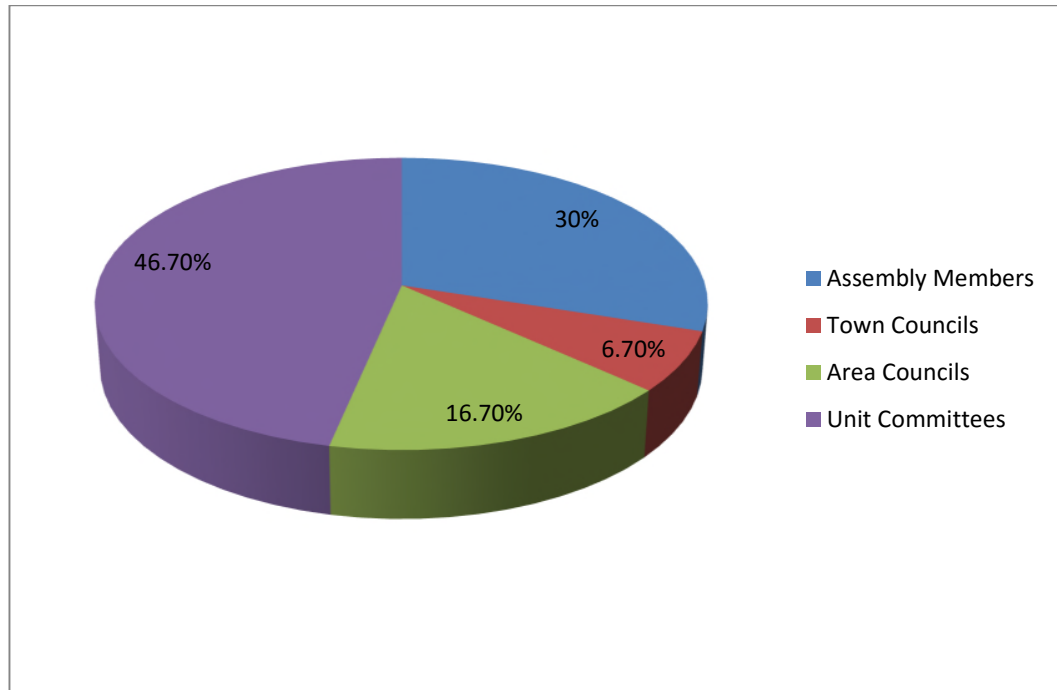
Figure 4.2 Membership of assembly, town, area and unit committees

Field Data (2016)

4.1.5 Main Occupations of Respondents

Respondents who earned formal salary were 80 (53.3%), those who were into farming were 35 (23.3%), those who were trading were 30 (20%), and those who did other activities were 5 (3.3%). This means that majority of the respondents were salary workers, followed by farmers, traders, and others who were engaged in different forms of occupations. Figure 4.3 shows the main occupations of the respondents.
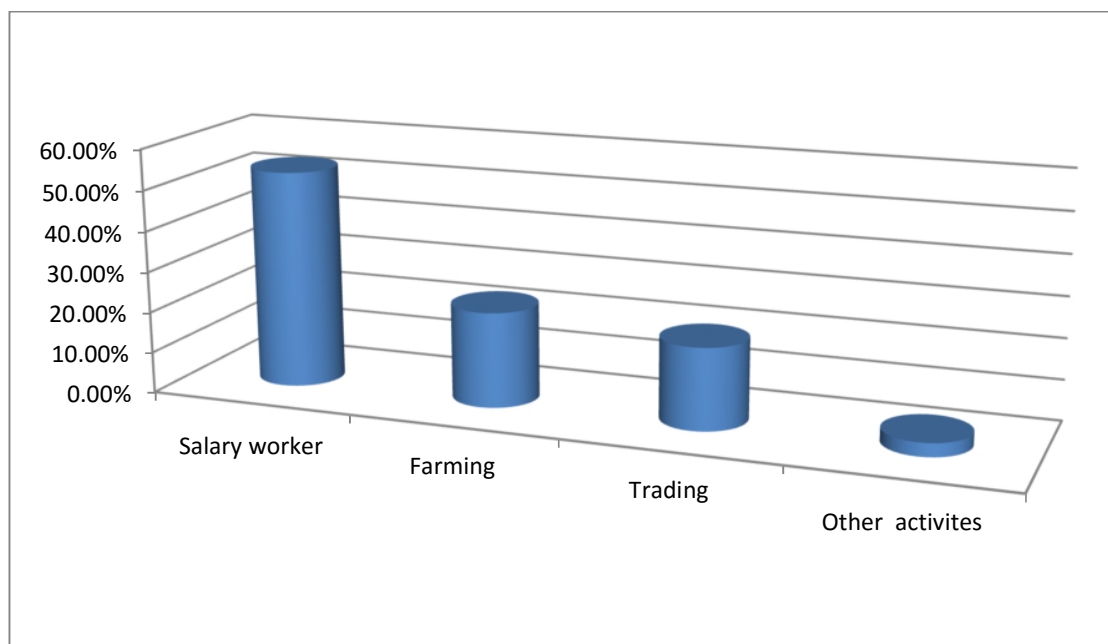
Figure 4.3 Main occupations of respondents

Source: Field Data (2016)

4.1.6 Marital Status of Respondents

The respondents that were single were 6 (4%), those who were married were 138 (92%), those who were divorced were only 1 (0.7%), those that separated were 2 (1.3%), and those who were widowed were 1 (0.7%). Table 4.2 presents the marital status of the respondents.

Table 4.2 Marital status of respondents

Marital Status	Number of respondents	Percentage %
Single	6	4
Married	138	92
Divorced	1	0.7
Widowed	1	0.7
Separated	2	1.3
Total	150	100

Source: Field Data (2016)

4.2 Women's Participation in Local Governance

This sub-section examines whether or not women participate in local governance, the number of women in local governance, the local governance structure women participated in more and whether in terms of women and men which group participated more in local governance in the Builsa North District.

An overwhelming majority, 143 (95.3%), of the respondents stated that women participated in local governance in the Builsa North District while only 7 (4.7%) stated that women did not participate in local governance. This indicates that women participated in local governance in the district. In a KII with an assembly woman, she stated:

I will say yes, in my view, women participate in local governance in this district.

Those who said women did not participate stated that, women lack confidence to participate in the various local government structures.

The number of respondents who stated that the number of women who participated in local governance ranged from 1-3 were 59 (39.3%), those who mentioned from 4-6 were 50 (33.3%), no respondent mentioned between 7-9 while those who mentioned 10+ were 41 (27.3%) respondents. This indicates that majority of the respondents 109 (72.7%) did not know the exact number of women in local governance. Only those who mentioned 10+ were right because, according to the Builsa North District List of Assembly, Town, Area, and Unit Committee Members (2016), there were three appointed women in the Assembly and eight in the Unit Committees.

All the respondents, 150 (100%), indicated that it was at the Assembly and Unit Committee levels that women participated more in the local governance structures. This again is confirmed by the Builsa North District List of Assembly, Town, Area and Unit Committee Members (2016) that, in the five Town and Area Councils, there were only three women. The reason was because the Councils were made up of the elected Assembly Members and few Unit Committee Members of whom there was no single elected woman in the District. In a KII interview with an assembly woman, she said:

It is the Assembly because currently there are three appointees who are women in the Assembly.

In a FGD with women, they asserted:

There are women in both the Assembly and Unit Committees. Only that they are not many. We don't know why it is like that but we think it is because these concepts are still new to

us. Most of us think it is only the domain of men but there are women participating actively.

More men participated in local governance than women. All the respondents, 150 (100%), agreed that men participate more than women. This confirms Baveng's (2011) study when she noted that despite all efforts internationally and locally to have women equal representation in decision making at all levels, women's participation in local level politics has remained abysmally low. The Builsa North District Assembly Medium Term Development Plan, 2015-2020 also shows that the proportion of women representation in local governance keeps reducing for some time now. For instance, in the 2010 local level election, only four (4) women were elected and one appointed, making the number of women five in the Assembly. During the recent inauguration of the Builsa North District Assembly on the 7th of October, 2015, out of the 31 elected Assembly Members, none was a woman. This further confirms Anarwat and Longi's (2007) observation that, in Ghana, the low involvement of women in politics and decision making dates back to the colonial era where the only woman in the Gold Coast Assembly was Miss Mabel Dove Danquah who was elected to the Assembly in 1954.

The respondents gave two reasons for their assertion. Ninety respondents, that is, 60%, stated that more men than women contested and won elections while 60 (40%) respondents mentioned that, culture and financial issues prevented more women from contesting and involving themselves in local governance. Figure 4.4 indicates the reasons why more men than women participated in local governance.
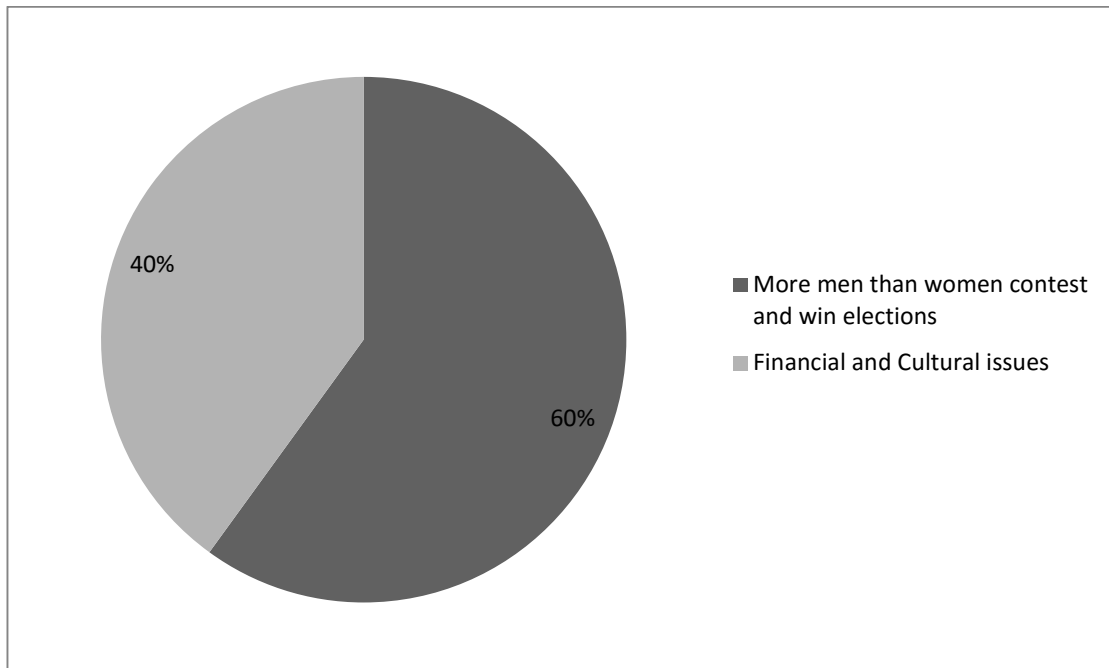
Figure 4.4 why more men than women participate in local governance.

4.3 Contributions of Women in the Local Governance Process

The respondents indicated the contributions of women in the local governance process in the Builsa North District. Seventy (70) of them representing 46.7%, indicated that women contributed much in the area of women and children welfare in the district. Forty (40), (26.7%) mentioned that it was in the areas of gender and finance issues that women contributed much. Twenty-five, (16.7%) stated that women contributed much in terms of their rights, while 15 (10%) agreed that women contributed much in the areas of transparency and accountability. This shows that women contributed much on women and children welfare issues followed by gender and finance issues, women's rights, and then transparency and accountability.

In a KII with a woman, one of the government appointees to the assembly, she said:

The contribution of women in local governance included: ensuring that women issues were addressed; and that they also go out to sensitize other women.

The specific examples where women contributed much are domestic violence against women, child labour, teenage pregnancy, and girl child education. Ninety of the respondents that is 60% mentioned domestic violence, 20 (13.3%) of the respondents mentioned child labour, 30 (20%) respondents stated teenage pregnancy while 10 (6.7%) respondents mentioned girl child education. This shows that women contribute more on the fight against domestic violence against women when they contribute at the local governance level in the Builsa North District.

In terms of men and women, men contributed much at the local governance structures in the Builsa North District. One Hundred and Forty- four that is 96% stated that men contribute much than women while only 6 (4%) stated that it was women. Numerically, men were more than women in the local governance structures in the Builsa North District. While the total number of men in the local governance structures was 178, women were only 11. In the Town and Area Councils while the men were 22, there were only three women. This confirms existing literature (Allah-Mensah 2005, A Women's Manifesto for Ghana, 2004 and Amoako, 2011) which proved that there was a serious gender imbalance in the representation and participation of Ghanaian women in the local governance system.

Women contributed much at the Assembly and Unit Committee levels. Seventy five of the respondents representing 50% mentioned that it was at the Assembly level that

women contributed much while the rest of the respondents, 75 (50%) mentioned that it was at the Unit Committee level. Although there were more women in the Unit Committee than at the Assembly level, none of the women at the Unit Committee level held a leadership position. However, at the sub-committee level of the Assembly, one woman was a chairperson of the Women and Child Survival Sub-committee (Builsa North District Assembly Medium Term Development Plan, 2015-2020). It is therefore, justified for the balance of responses for where women contribute much.

There are barriers to the contribution of women in local governance. All the respondents, that is, 100% stated that there were barriers to the contribution of women in local governance. The respondents stated that there were various barriers to women's contributions such as intimidation and discrimination by men, 45 (30%), 35 (23.3%) respondents mentioned cultural barriers, the general perception of men that women are not fit for leadership positions and are not given the chance. Forty-one (27.3%) mentioned that women were not self-confident and therefore shy, 9 (6%) stated that women lacked knowledge of the local governance system while 20 (13.3%) respondents said that, it was finance that posed as a barrier to the contribution of women. Figure 4.4 shows the barriers to the contribution of women in local governance in the Builsa North District.
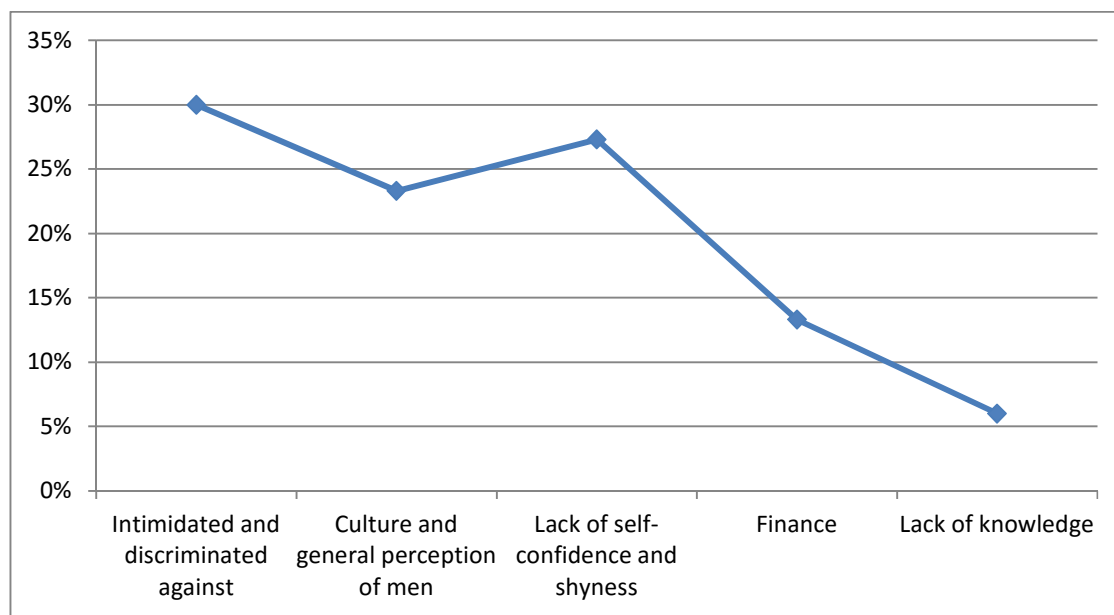
Figure 4.5 Barriers to the contribution of women in local governance

Source: Field Data (2016)

In a KII with a unit committee woman, she said;

That one is yes; there are some barriers that women face in contributing in local governance in this district. There is gender discrimination against women. Women also face financial difficulties and to make things worse, some political parties secretly finance male contestants against women contestants. Political parties interfere a lot in the district assembly elections and some of these parties do not support women at all. In fact, lip service is paid to the issue of women inclusion in local governance in this country.

4.4 Barriers to Women's Participation in Local Governance

The respondents indicated that there were barriers to the participation of women in local governance in the Builsa North District. All the respondents, 100% stated that there were barriers to women participating in local governance. The barriers to women's participation in local governance in the Builsa North District are finance, 40 (26.7%) respondents, low level of confidence of women, 30 (20%), culture resulting in discrimination against women, 40 (26.7%), illiteracy on the part of women, 30 (20%), and fear of women losing elections and being insulted by their colleagues, 10 (6.7%). Table 4.3 indicates the barriers to women's participation in local governance.

Table 4.3 Barriers to women's participation in local governance

Barrier	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Finance	40	26.7
Low level of confidence of women	30	20
Culture resulting in discrimination against women	40	26.7
Illiteracy on the part of women	30	20
Fear of women losing elections and being insulted by their colleagues	10	6.7
Total	150	100

Source: Field Data (2016)

In a KII with a unit committee woman, she said:

There are socio-cultural barriers. For instance, women who are married cannot contest for elections in their husband's homes and when they go to their parents' homes too, they are told they don't belong there. Some husbands do not also allow their wives to contest for assembly elections because their husbands feel their wives will dominate them in the long run.

However, in another KII with a man, the chairman of the Finance and Administration Committee of the Assembly, he said:

We acknowledge women are not many at the assembly and the other structures but that is not our fault. Most women do not have the courage and confidence to come out and contest positions, they feel they will be laughed at and seen as wayward. Most of them too here have no good education and so makes them shy to come out and contest local level elections.

The barriers to the participation of women in local governance are more both at the local and national levels. The respondents who mentioned this were 100 (66.7%), those who mentioned the national level were 25 (16.7%) while those who mentioned the local level were also 25 (16.7%). All those who stated that it occurs at both levels argued that statistics are there to prove the point and falls in tandem with the assertion of Abubakar, *et al.,* (2014), that Ghana remains one of the least admirable countries relative to other countries when it comes to women participating in local governance. Ghana has a very low rate of women participation and representation in both local and national government structures.

4.5 Role of Literacy in Increasing the Participation of Women in Local Governance

All the Assembly Members, 45 (30%) indicated that there were three literate government appointees that were women at the Assembly level while among the Unit Committees, there were two (2) literate women. Literacy played a significant role in increasing the participation and contribution of women in local governance in the Builsa District. All the respondents, 150 (100%) stated that literacy gives women confidence and allows them to comprehend proceedings during debates to contribute meaningfully thereof. This confirms Apusigah (2004), Allah-Mensah (2005), Amoako (2011) and Adatuu (2015) that there is a direct correlation between a woman's literacy and her level of participation in local and national governance. Again, Medoff (1986) also stated that there is "a positive relationship between women's educational attainment and their political attitudes and beliefs regarding women's political participation: the greater the educational level of women the more likely they will support women candidates."

Literate women participated more than illiterate women in the Builsa North District. One hundred and forty seven respondents, that is 98%, stated that literate women participated more than illiterate women. Only 3 (2%) respondents did not agree that literate women participated more than illiterate women. Figure 4.6 shows responses from respondents which indicate that literate women participate in local governance more than illiterate women in the Builsa North District.
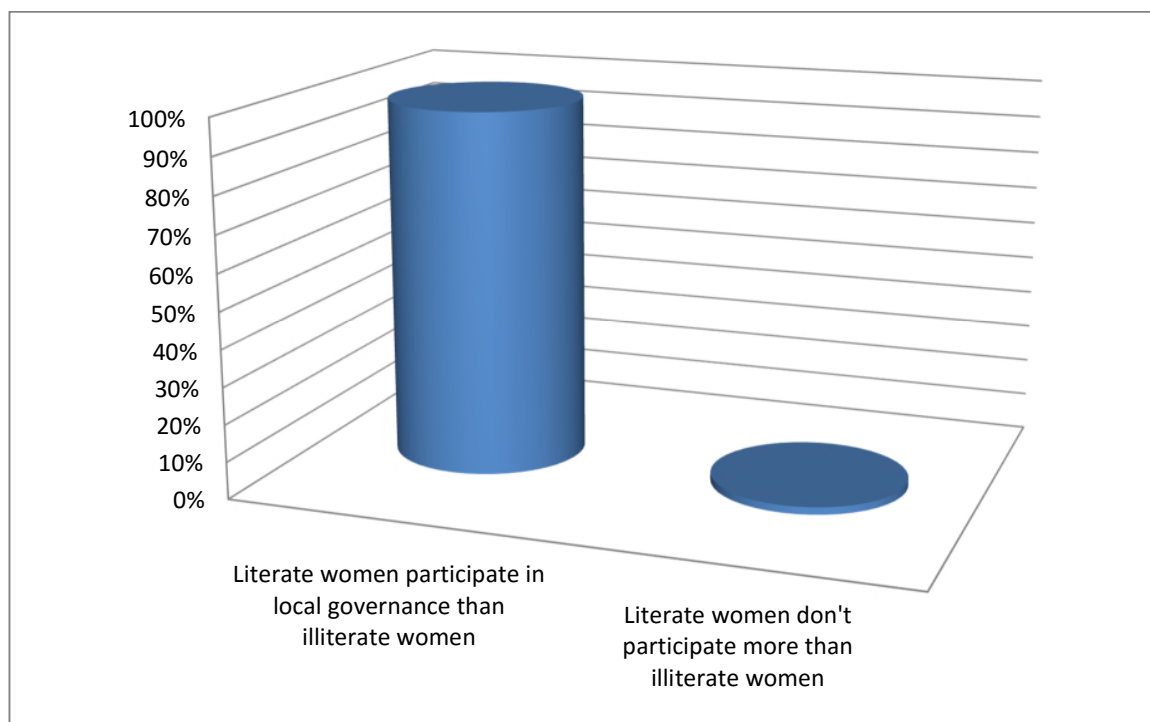
Figure 4.6 Responses from respondents showing literate women participate in local governance than illiterate women.

Twenty (20) respondents representing 13.3% of the respondents stated that literate women were capable of being nominated as leaders of sub-committees as in the case of the Women and Child Survival Sub-committee, while illiterates do not get that chance to lead. One hundred (66.7%) of the respondents said that literate women were able to understand issues on the floor of the house, make inputs and take informed decisions, while 30 (20%) respondents mentioned that, literate women were able to write proposals to solicit for funding for development projects because they were confident doing so. This shows that literacy increases the chances of women participation in local governance.

In a KII with a unit committee woman, she stated:

Yes, literacy plays a role in women participating in local governance. You see, when you are a literate, you understand the issues and contribute during discussions in the house. You are also bold to talk on any issue. As for the non-literates, they feel it is a no go area.

In another KII with a woman, she stated clearly:

Yes, literacy plays a big role. You know the language of the house is English and non-literates have a problem understanding the issues during the meetings. Sometimes too, the constituents do not trust that the non-literates can represent them very well so they don't vote for them.

A FGD with women also showed that level of literacy correlated positively with level of participation in local governance. They said:

These days it is difficult for women who cannot read and write to contest for elections. They know very well that when they contest with someone who can read and write, they will lose the election. Even now every electoral area wants to present someone who can read and write so that she/he can fight for their share of the national cake. We have heard some of the illiterates cannot even raise their hands and talk during assembly meetings so how do they represent us, how will they voice out our concerns?

In FGD with the Unit Committee women who were illiterates, they said:

We accepted to be members at this level because we cannot contest to go to the Assembly and the pressure at this level is not much as compared to the Assembly. The problem is that, we cannot read and write, when we attempt to contest to the Assembly, no one will mind us.

4.6 Ways to Enhance the Active Participation of Women in Local Governance

All the women, 11 (7.3%), indicated that one impediment that should be removed to increase women's participation in local governance was to support women in terms of resources, campaigns and votes during local government elections. All the women, 11 (7.3%), indicated again that they would promote girl child education so as to provide a pool of educated women to contest in local level elections to represent women's interest in those structures. Seven of the women, that is, 4.7% mentioned that women in the local government structures will sensitize all women in the District on the procedures and importance of vying for positions at the local governance structures.

The respondents gave some recommendations to increase the number of women participating and contributing in local governance structures in the Builsa North District. Forty respondents, representing 26.7% stated that 30% of government appointees should be women, 35 (23.3%) stated that women should be given quotas at the Assembly, 30 (20%) said women should be sensitized to boost their confidence level to contest for positions at the local level. Twenty-five (16.7%) respondents mentioned that men should encourage and support their wives to contest for positions at the local level while 30 (20%) respondents called for financial support and the promotion of women's education to enable them have a level pegging with their male counterparts.

In a KII with an assembly woman, she said:

Yes, the women themselves can remove some of the barriers. You see, women sometimes are their own enemies; they don't support each other during elections. We are the majority and elections are about numbers and so we need to work together as a team. We should

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also sensitize our husbands to understand that women can lead. We should also talk to opinion leaders in our communities especially the chiefs, to support the women during elections.

4.7 Conclusion

In summing up, the main research question of the study was: what are the views of community members on the extent of women's participation in local governance in the Builsa North District? In finding answers to this question, the main research objective was: to examine the views of community members on the extent of women's participation in local governance in the District. The findings revealed that, women's participation in local governance in the District was low. The results further showed that, the few women in local governance in the District participated more at the Unit Committee level followed by the Assembly level.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This Chapter sums up the outcomes of the study by presenting the summary of the major findings, conclusions and recommendations. It provides direct answers to the research questions by drawing on the relevant data to furnish each question. For the purpose of simplicity, the concluding section was also arrived at by revisiting and answering the research questions.

5.1 Summary of Major Findings

5.1.1 Women's Participation in Local Governance

In finding answers to the research question: *to what extent do women participate in local governance in the Builsa North District,* it was realized that a great majority of the respondents, 95.3%, agreed that women participated in local governance in the Builsa North District. Also, all the respondents, 150, agreed that women participate at the Assembly and at Unit Committee levels. However, more men than women participate in local governance in the Builsa North District as all the respondents, 150 (100%) agreed that men participate more than women.

Thus, women participate in the local governance process in the Builsa North District. However, the extent of women's participation in local governance is quite low and they mostly participate at the Unit Committee level of the local governance structures.

5.1.2 Contributions of Women in the Local Governance System

The second research question was: *What are the contributions of women in the local governance process in the Builsa North District?* In finding answers to this question, it was clear that women contributed in local governance in the areas of: women and children welfare; gender and finance; fighting for the rights of women; and on issues of transparency and accountability.

Thus women contributed more at the Assembly and Unit Committee levels as half of the respondents, 75 (50%) mentioned that, it was at these levels that women contributed more. Thus, women contributed in local governance in the areas that provide an opportunity for a just and equitable society in the Builsa North District and they do so at the Assembly and Unit Committee levels.

5.1.3 Barriers to Women's Participation in the Local Governance System

In finding answers to the third research question: *are there barriers to women's participation in local governance in the Builsa North District,* it was clear that women encountered barriers to their participation in local governance. These barriers were finance,

low level of confidence, culture, resulting in discrimination against women, illiteracy and fear of losing elections and being insulted by their colleagues.

These barriers are not only at the local level, but at the national level as well. Hundred (66.7%) of the respondents stated this. Thus, women face barriers to their participation in local governance in the Builsa North District.

5.1.4 Role of Literacy in Increasing Participation of Women in Local Governance

In answering this question: *what is the role of literacy in increasing the participation of women in local governance in the Builsa North District,* it was clear that literacy played a significant role in increasing the participation of women in local governance. Respondents stated that, literacy gives women confidence and allows them to comprehend proceedings during debates assembly meetings and positions women better to contribute meaningfully in the local governance process.

Literate women participated more in local governance in the Builsa North District than illiterate women as an overwhelming majority, 147 (98%) of the respondents stated that literate women participate more than illiterate women.

Literacy thus, increases the chances of women to participate in local governance in the Builsa North District than non-literates.

5.1.5 Ways to Enhance the Active Participation of Women in the Local Governance

The last research question sought to find out: *what ways can enhance the active participation of women in local governance in the Builsa North District?* The study revealed that one important to enhance the active participation of women in local governance is for women themselves to support each other in terms of resources, campaigns and votes. During local government elections women should not see each other as enemies. Second, it was also revealed that there was the need to promote the education of the girl child to provide a pool of literate candidates to contest elections at the local level in the future. There was equally the need to encourage the girl child in schools and among religious organizations to take up leadership roles as a way of grooming them for the future.

Thus, the active participation of women in local governance in the Builsa North could be enhanced by women themselves and by society in general.

5.2 Conclusions

The concluding section of this study revisited the major research question: *to what extent do women participate in local governance in the Builsa North District?* Women's participation in local governance in the Builsa North is low and they participate more at two levels: Assembly and Unit Committee levels.

Women contributed to local governance in the areas of women and children welfare; gender and finance; fighting for the rights of women; and on issues of transparency and accountability. They made much of these contributions at the assembly and unit committee levels.

Women encountered barriers to their participation in local governance. These barriers are finance, low level of confidence, culture, resulting in discrimination against women, illiteracy and fear of losing elections and being insulted by their colleagues. These barriers exist both at the local and national levels.

Literacy played a significant role in increasing the participation of women in local governance. It gives women confidence and allows them to comprehend proceedings during debates to contribute meaningfully. More literate women than illiterate women participated in local governance in the Builsa North District.

Women's active participation in local governance can be enhanced by supporting them with resources, campaigning and voting for them during local government elections. Women should not see each other as enemies and we should also promote the education of the girl child to provide a pool of literate candidates to contest elections at the local level in the future to improve their level of participation in local governance.

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5.3 Recommendations

5.3.1 Sensitization of Men and Women on the Negative Aspects of Culture and Tradition

The government, through the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP) and NGOs, should organize and intensify sensitization programmes that address the negative aspects of culture and tradition, such as the notion that the woman's place is the kitchen. This could be done through the formation of advocacy groups of prominent women and men to create awareness on the need to involve women in the decision making process at all levels in the Builsa North District.

**5.3.2 Promote Favourable Environment for Both Men and women**

Political parties should create an enabling political environment for both men and women to be able to contest elections at the local level. Political parties should not just support men to contest against women but look out for competence irrespective of whether the candidate is male or female. Government, on the other hand, should ensure that the laws that pertain to electoral process are duly followed so that those who will violate them especially, using abusive language and violent behaviours in intimidating women face the full rigors of the law.

5.3.3 Promoting the Education and Training of Women in Builsa North District

Illiteracy, with its accompanying tenet, ignorance, are the basic contributory factors to social, economic and political inequality and underdevelopment among the women folk albeit their male counterparts. Since this study revealed that the majority of women in the study area could not participate in local governance because they were illiterates, it is recommended that adequate education and training programmes should be implemented for them by Government, the MGCSP, NGOs, academic institutions and other civic educators. General but especially political literacy is paramount for effective political participation.

Also, the gender desk officer in the district should identify women role models to mentor the girl child at the basic and second cycle educational institutions in the district. This could be done through the formation of girls' clubs at the various educational institutions. Through these clubs, the girls would be mentored to appreciate the significant role they can play in the decision making process to bring about sustainable development in the district.

5.3.4 Affirmative Action should be used to Increase the Number of Women at the Local Level

Government should ensure that women are given a 30% representation as appointees at the district assembly level. This can be done by making sure District Chief Executives do proper and broad consultation of stakeholders like chiefs, youth groups, women

organizations, NGOs, religious organizations, etc., to help identify competent women for appointment to the assembly. Also, quotas should be given to women who have the capabilities of helping to formulate good policies for the accelerated development of the Builsa North District.

5.3.5 Build the Capacity of the Few Women in Local Government Structures

Well-designed programmes should be put in place to build the capacities and skills of the few women in the local governance system and other decentralized structures in the district. These programmes will to equip the women with knowledge and leadership skills that will boost their confidence and ensure effective participation in the decision making process in the Builsa North District.

In conclusion, the foundation of Ghana's democracy is grass root participation in the decision making process and this will be a mirage if there is low women participation at the local level since women form the majority of the population. On this basis, it is strongly believed that, the implementation of the above recommendations will promote and sustain the active participation of women in local governance to bring about lasting development. It is, therefore, imperative that all stakeholders work relentlessly to bring about an increase in the participation of women in decision making process at the local level in the Builsa North District and Ghana as a whole.

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APPENDIX I

CONSENT FORM

This research investigates Women Participation in Local Governance in the Builsa North District of the Upper East Region, Ghana. You are therefore required to answer the questions as honest as possible. If for any reason, you are not interested in participating after knowing what this research is about, you are at liberty to opt out as a participant of the study.

Respondent   Researcher

………………..   ……………….

Sign/Thumbprint   Sign/Thumbprint

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APPENDIX II

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR WOMEN AND MEN IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES, GHANA

GRADUATE SCHOOL, TAMALE

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

TOPIC: VIEWS OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS ON WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN THE BUILSA NORTH DISTRICT OF THE UPPER EAST REGION OF GHANA

This questionnaire seeks to obtain information about Views of Community Members on Women's Participation in Local Governance in the Builsa North District of the Upper East Region of Ghana. This study is purely for academic purposes. You are therefore, required to answer the questions below as honest as possible.

 Date……………………..   Time…...……………

Name of Research Assistant……………………………………………..

A. Demographic characteristics of respondents

1. Sex: Male ☐   Female ☐

3. Age: 18-24 ☐ 25-34 ☐ 35-44 ☐ 45-54 ☐ 55-64 ☐ 65+ ☐

4. Level of education: No education at all ☐ Primary Level☐ Junior High ☐

Senior High ☐ Pre-tertiary ☐ Tertiary ☐

5. Which of the following do you belong?

Assembly member ☐

Urban Council member ☐

Town Council member ☐

Area council member ☐

Unit committee Member ☐

6. Main occupation: Farming☐ Trading☐ Formal salary worker ☐

 If other, state………..

7. Marital Status: Unmarried☐ Married ☐ Divorced ☐ Widowed ☐Separated ☐

B. Women participation in local governance in the Builsa North District

1. In your view, do women participate in local governance in this district? Yes☐ No ☐

2. If no, skip to question 5.

3. If yes, how many women do you know participating in local governance in this district?...

4. Which of the following units do you think women participate more? Tick the appropriate response:

Assembly member ☐

Urban council member ☐

Town council member ☐

Area council member ☐

Unit committee Member ☐

5. If no in question 1, what do you think accounts for their lack of participation?..

…………………………………………………………………………………………

6. In terms of men and women, who do you think participate more in local governance in this district and why?..

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

C. The contributions of women in the local governance process in the Builsa North District

7. What do you think are the contributions women make when they participate in local governance in this district?..

8. Can you give specific examples where women have contributed much in their participation in local governance in this district?...

9. If you are a woman, can you give your own contributions when participating in local governance in this district?..

10. In terms of women and men who do you think contribute much in their participation in local governance in this district?...

11. In which of these areas do you think women contribute much?

Assembly member ☐

Urban Council member ☐

Town Council member ☐

Area council member ☐

Unit committee Member ☐

12. Are there barriers to the contribution of women in local governance in this district?

Yes ☐   No ☐

13. If yes, what are the barriers?...

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

D. **Barriers to women's participation in local governance in the Builsa North District**

14. Do you think there are barriers women face in participating in local governance in the

Builsa District?   Yes ☐   No. ☐

15. If yes, mention and explain them to the best of your ability……………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

16. Do these barriers exist at the local or national level?..

17. What informs your answer in question 16?..

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

E. **The role of literacy in increasing the participation of women in local governance in**

the Builsa North District

18. How many literate women do you know to be participating in local governance in this

district?......................

19. Does literacy play any role in increasing the participation of women in local

governance in the Builsa North District?   Yes ☐   No ☐

20. If yes, in what way?..

………………………………………………………………………………………………………

21. Do you think the literate women in local governance in this district participate more than the non-literate?   Yes ☐   No ☐

22. a. If yes, how?...

   b. If no, why?...

F. Ways to enhance the active participation of women in local governance in the Builsa North District

23. If you are a woman, do you think women can help in removing the impediments to their participation?   Yes ☐   No ☐

24. If yes, in what ways can women help in removing the impediments to their participation in local governance in the Builsa North District?...

………………………………………………………………………………………………………

25. If no, why do you think women cannot help?...

………………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………………………

26. What will you recommend for the increased participation of women in local governance in the Builsa North District?..

………………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………………………

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APPENDIX III

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES, GHANA

GRADUATE SCHOOL, TAMALE

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

TOPIC: VIEWS OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS ON WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN THE BUILSA NORTH DISTRICT OF THE UPPER EAST REGION OF GHANA

These questions seek to obtain information on Views of Community Members on Women's Participation in Local Governance in the Builsa North District of the Upper East Region of Ghana. This study is purely for academic purposes. You are therefore, required to answer the questions below as honest as possible.

1. In your view, do women participate in local governance in this district?

2. Which of the following units do you think women participate more? Response:

Assembly member

Urban council member

Town council member

Area council member

Unit committee Member

3. What do you think are the contributions women make when they participate in local governance in this district?

4. Do you think there are barriers that women face in participating in local governance in the Builsa District?

5. Does literacy play any role in increasing the participation of women in local governance in the Builsa North District?

6. If you are woman/women, do you think women can help in removing the impediments to their participation in local governance in this District?   And in what ways?

7. How can the active participation of women in local governance in the Builsa North District be enhanced?

APPENDIX IV

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES, GHANA

GRADUATE SCHOOL, TAMALE

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

TOPIC: VIEWS OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS ON WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN THE BUILSA NORTH DISTRICT OF THE UPPER EAST REGION OF GHANA

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1. In your view, do women participate in local governance in this District?

2. Which of the following units do you think women participate more? Response:

Assembly member

Urban council member

Town council member

Area council member

Unit committee Member

3. What do you think are the contributions women make when they participate in local governance in this district?

4. Do you think there are barriers that women face in participating in local governance in the Builsa District?

5. Does literacy play any role in increasing the participation of women in local governance in the Builsa North District?

6. If you are woman/women, do you think women can help in removing the impediments to their participation?   And in what ways?

7. How can the active participation of women in local governance in the Builsa North District be enhanced?

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