

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES, TAMALE

WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN THE WA  
MUNICIPALITY, GHANA

BY

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## DECLARATION

### Student's Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation/thesis 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:

.....

Date .....

ADAMS IDDRISU THIRDMAN

### Supervisor's Declaration

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

.....

Date: .....

DR. BAATAAR CUTHBERT



## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to my family, especially my wife and children.

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I have been fortunate to have as my Supervisor; Dr. Baataar Cuthbert who carefully went through my work and gave me all the necessary comments and encouragement. May God richly bless him for all the support he gave me.

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## ABSTRACT

The historical subordination of women especially in public life has been widely discussed and efforts are being made globally to reverse this trend. Ghana is not insulated from this global trend. Thus, this study selectively focused on examining women's participation in local governance in Ghana, an attempt to find out factors accounting for their low participation and the opportunities that exist to promote their effective involvement. The main objective was to ascertain the level of women participation in local governance in the Wa Municipality. Both probability and non-probability sampling techniques were used to select 180 respondents. The study revealed that out of 13 government appointed members of the Assembly; only 3 were women. Also, 93.3% of the total memberships of the unit committees in the Municipality are men with women constituting only 6.7%. The study further revealed key stumbling blocks preventing women from actively contesting local elections. These include high illiteracy rate among women, lack of interest and faith in politics, cultural barriers, inferiority complex, religious barriers and lack of support from men (husbands). It was also encouraging to note that there exist two major support structures that assist women to participate in local level elections. These structures include National Commission for Civic Education and Action Aid Ghana's Upper West Regional Rights Program. The study therefore recommended among other things; the need for an affirmative action to pave way for increased numbers of women in local government structures, all hands to be on-deck to encourage women to take advantage of the 30% reserve appointed membership of the Municipal Assembly, government should endeavor to appoint a woman as a Municipal Chief Executive, curriculum of basic schools should be revised to include gender issues, build capacities of women to nurture their confidence and provision of credit facilities to support women centered enterprise. Finally, the study recommends the implementation of more poverty alleviation programs such as Village Saving Loans Association, Women in Agriculture, that target women and women groups should be undertaken by government and NGOs to improve the economic situation of women.



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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

BPA	Bureau of Population Agency
CBOs	Community Based Organisations
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CRS	Catholic Relief Service
DA	District Assembly
DCD	District Coordinating Director
DCE	District Chief Executive
DACF	District Assembly Common Fund
FCUBE	Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education
HDR	Human Development Report
IDEA	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
JHS	Junior High School
MASLOC	Microfinance and small loans Centre
MMDA	Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoGCSP	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
MLGRD	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
MPs	Members of Parliament
MSLC	Middle School Leavers Certificate
NBSSI	National Board for Small Scale Industries
NDPC	National Development Planning Commission



NCCE	National Commission for Civic Education
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
RCC	Regional Co-Ordination Councils
PDCs	Peoples Defense Committees
PHC	Population and Housing Census
PNDC	Provisional National Defense Council
SPSS	Statistical Package For Social Science
SHS	Senior High School
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNRISD	United Research Institute for Social Development
USAID	United States Agency for International Development





## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

The quest for pro-poor economic development and democratization have led to a rousing worldwide recognition that good governance requires effective and efficient planning and implementation of policies and programs (Mohammed, 2015; Huq, 2016). This is dependent on the active involvement of its citizens in the process of decision-making. Moreover, active participation in governing process by vulnerable groups such as women is a prerequisite for achieving sustainable development in developing countries (Huq, 2016). Their involvement will lead to local representation of a body based on democratic ideas. This emanates from the belief that a true democratic country must have gender-balanced representation in local governance such that they can all share their experiences and make inputs in the development decision (Ohene-Konadu, 2001:2).

Women constitute slightly more than half of the world's population (Population Reference Bureau, 2011). Their contribution to the social and economic development of societies is also more than half as compared to that of men by virtue of their dual roles in the productive and reproductive spheres (Bari, 2005). Women have different vision and concepts of politics owing to their sex and their gender roles as mothers. Therefore, women political participation is valued not so much for who they are, but for what they can do as a group to enhance their livelihoods and status (Bratton and Mattes, 2000). The overall development of a country therefore, depends upon the maximum utilization of women; such that they can all contribute to the development process based on their experiences (Ohene-Konadu, 2001).





However, in Africa, women participation in formal political structures and processes; and decision making regarding the use of societal resources remains insignificant. Besides, the ineffectiveness of policies is often attributed in parts to the non-participatory approaches that are adopted in the development and implementation of projects and programmes (Mohammed, 2015). One key area of non-participatory approaches that has characterized the development activities of many African states is the marginalization of women in decision making process. Women have traditionally, been marginalized from the structures of state that determine political and legislative priorities (Ndlovu and Mutale, 2013). This has implications for unbalanced development as the views of significant segments of society will not be fairly considered or their potentials not optimally utilized in the development process.

In Ghana, available data indicate that women comprise more than half of the total population (GSS, 2010). However, their status is much lower than that of their male counterparts in every sphere of public life. Hitherto, women were identified with domestic life as child bearing and managing household chores, while politics especially is viewed as a male dominated public activity that is typically masculine in nature (Ofei-Aboagye, 2000). Also, discriminatory practices, social norms, and cultural perceptions that women are not well suited for leadership and decision-making positions, combined with family and child-care responsibilities, discourage and limit women's involvement in politics (Asian Development Bank, 2014). Literature (e.g. Ofei-Aboagye, 2000; Ndlovu and Mutale, 2013) suggest that participation, when well-practiced to include women without disparity in governance raise their spirit to actively demand probity and responsiveness from government and also in the pursuit of their civic rights and responsibilities.

Recognizing the significance of women's participation in decision-making, governments the world over, including Ghana, have initiated efforts to widen the scope of women's participation in development process especially, at the local substructures of governance (Baah-Ennumh, 2005). As a strategy of affirmative action for providing the structural framework for women's participation in political decision-making, the government of Ghana made a directive since 1998 that 30% allocation of appointed membership of assemblies should be given to women. This represents a remarkable attempt in meeting the international aspirational target that at least 30% of national parliament should be occupied by women (Asian Development Bank, 2014).

Besides, the last two-decades witnessed a growing recognition of the importance of women participation in decision-making and how they can contribute as a group to politics (Minolette, 2016). This recognition in Ghana has resulted in endeavors in varying degrees by the government, non-governmental organization, as well as civil society groups to promote women's participation in the institutions of power (cited in Ohene-Konadu 2002). Specifically, Ghana started ratifying the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and has endorsed the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action (1995) as well as the Millennium Development Goal (3) with the aim of improving women participation in decision making (Quansah and Essien, 2014). The purpose of these initiatives is to improve upon women participation in the government process of the state.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

One prominent feature of the slow pace of development in Sub-Saharan Africa is the low participation of women in spheres of decision-making (Huq, 2016). Women as a group share a historical deprivation of political rights in the form of taking part in decisions that govern their lives. Throughout the world, women are less represented and less likely to be involved in the formulation and implementation of development planning and policies (Federation of Canadian Municipalities, 2009). On the other hand, their male counterparts have dominated in the structures of decision-making since creation (Ohene-Konadu, 2001; NDPC & UN, 2012; United Nation Women Report, 2013).

Despite the pronounced commitment of the international community to gender equality and to bridging the gender gap in the formal political arena, reinforced by the United Nations Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW, 1979) and the Beijing Platform of Action (1995), women's representation in the legislature remained very low, ranging from 4.6% among the Arab states to 16.8% on the average among European Countries (Lindberg, 2004). In Africa, Idea International, (cited in Lindberg, 2004) posited that, women parliamentarians occupy 12.8% seats in 2002. Rwandan's parliament has women majority in the legislature. Females hold an unprecedented 64% of seats in Rwanda's parliament, more than any other country in the world (Sekemana, 2013). Nevertheless, there is a persistent gender gap in politics with an average of only 18.4% women in the world parliaments (UNDP, 2010).

In Ghana, women comprise 51.3% of the total population (2010, PHC Report). Even though decentralization started before independence, the Provisional National Defense Council (P.N.D.C) Law 207 established Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies



(MMDAs) in Ghana. Initially, 110 MMDAs were created and subsequently 60 more Assemblies were added making it 170 in 2004. Following the 2010 population census, the Ministry of Local Government created additional 51 MMDAs, which consequently increased the number to 216 MMDAs in the country. According to Ofei-Aboagye (2000), the aspirations that underpin the efforts of decentralization were to; provide more responsive, equitable and participatory development; bring government and decision-making nearer to the people and quicken the processes, strengthen financial, human resources and policy management; and serve as a training ground for political activities. Despite these developments, women representation in local government structures continues to be low. Women candidature increases from 384 in 1994 to 547 in 1998 and subsequently 965 in 2002, elected women assembly members also increased to 341 (7.4% of elected assembly members) as compared to 188 (5%) and 124 (2.7%) in 1998 and 1994 respectively' (Ofei Aboagye, 2000 cited in Agyeman-Duah, 2008).

Although the participation of women in local governance differs across the country, their participation in local level politics remains a major challenge in the Wa Municipality. This is particularly worrisome especially when one observes that in 2006 there was a reduction in the number of both appointed and elected female members in the Assembly. The reduction is statistically presented as follows: from 3 elected women out of a total of 25 Assemblies in 2006 to 1 elected assembly woman out of a total of forty-four (44) Assembly members in 2010 (Issahaku, 2012). A recent study conducted by Arthur et al. (2016) has identified cultural and socio-economic factors as major drawbacks to women participation in local governance in the Wa Municipality. This is a clear indication that women participation in local government politics in the Wa Municipal has not witnessed any

significant improvement despite the contribution of past studies in line with the factors limiting their active participation in politics. Notwithstanding cultural diversity, institutional dynamics and current trends in development imply that such barriers may vary across space. This brings to the fore, the difficulty for analysts to clearly point out the institutional factors limiting women participation in local governance in the Wa Municipality. A situation where continuous increase in male dominance in the Wa Municipal Assembly among both elected and appointed members becomes the order of the day is worth studying. The study will add to the existing debate on women participation in local governance in the Wa Municipality as espoused by Arthur et al. (2016). The study therefore focused on the institutional factors responsible for the low level of women participation in local governance in the Wa Municipality. The following research questions were therefore asked.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

#### **1.3.1 Main Research Question**

How have institutional factors account for women participation in local governance in the Wa Municipality?

#### **1.3.2 Specific Research Questions**

This research seeks to answer the following questions

1. What factors account for the low level of women participation in local governance in the Wa Municipality?
2. What challenges do women face in their election or appointment to participate in local governance in the Wa Municipality?
3. How does peoples' perception influence women participation in local governance?

4. How do support systems influence women's participation in local governance in the Wa Municipality?

## **1.4 Research Objectives**

### **1.4.1 Main Objective**

The main objective of the study is to analyze the institutional factors that account for the low level of women participation in local governance in the Wa Municipality?

### **1.4.2 Specific Objectives**

This study seeks:

1. To assess the factors that account for women's participation in local governance
2. To examine the challenges that confronts women's election or appointment into the Wa Municipal Assembly
3. To ascertain peoples' perception and how that influence women participation in local government.
4. To evaluate the support structures that exists for women's participation in local governance.

## **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The path to decentralize local government in Ghana, witnessed the overconcentration on men participation without an in-depth analysis of the ramifications that led to fewer elected or appointed women in local government. This underpins the need for the research.

At the heart of this study is to unearth the motives for use of the 30% quota system for appointing women into Assemblies. In the context of gender and development, quotas are mechanisms to compensate minorities and vulnerable members to just be represented in



the Assembly, with their ulterior motive of introducing formal rules for female selection and representation (Mahamadu, 2010). The 30% reserve appointment of females into Ghana's Assemblies appears to be the same.

Also, the study adds on to existing knowledge the position of women in local governance in the Wa Municipality. Based on this, gender related policies; programmes and projects could be designed and implemented by government, non-governmental organizations and other development agencies as well as gender activists to promote women's participation in governance.

The study ends with recommendations, as solutions to the problem of low women's participation in local governance. It serves as an eye-opener to various institutions and their activities aimed at enhancing the positions of women in decision-making at the local level. Again, individual women and women groups can exploit the opportunities, which this study will expose for them to take advantage of in order to enhance their status in local level decision-making, especially utilizing the 30% quota reserved for women.

Finally, the outcome of the study leads to a compilation of a comprehensive research report (thesis) that contributes to existing debate of gender representation in local governance. On that basis the study serves as a source of reference to other studies in many related areas in the field of social science.

### **1.6 Scope of the Study**

Geographically, the study was restricted to the electoral units in the Wa Municipality. The contextual scope of the study was limited to women participation in local governance in the Wa Municipality. It entails an exploration into the influencing of women participation





local government politics in the Wa Municipality. In the process, more attention was given to the institutional factors that influence women participation in politics at the local government level, ways of promoting women participation, and the contribution of women to the development of the Wa Municipality.

### **1.7 Organisation of the Study**

The study was organised into five main chapters. Chapter one comprised of the background, statement of research problem, objectives, questions and significance of the study. Chapter two looked at a critical review of pertinent literature to the research problem undertaken. Chapter Three concentrated on the methodology, which comprised the research design, sampling design, methods of data collection, sources and instruments and data analysis. It also presents a brief description of the study area. Chapter Four discussed the results of the data collected from respondents for the study. Finally, Chapter five dealt with the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.



## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of related studies on women participation in politics. Several concepts are discussed as analyzed by previous studies under broad areas. Specifically, the literature focused on gender and politics, women participation in local governance, the challenges confronting women in politics, the perception of people about women participation in politics and the support systems available for women in politics. Various conclusions were drawn with implications on the objectives of the study.

#### 2.2 Conceptual Review of Literature

The conceptual literature covers the understanding of some key terminologies in the study. They include the concept of gender, gender equity and equality, and the social issues underpinning women role in politics.

##### 2.2.1 Conceptualizing Gender and Sex

In the development parlance, the concept gender has gained grounds since the 1980's. However, it's meaning and implications are not always explicit, as it is with the term sex. To Person *et al.* (1991), gender is the learned behavior, a culture associated with being male or female. Gender is defined as the active roles that men and women play in society and the label attached to those roles signifying which of the roles are feminine and masculine (Stolen, 1991 cited in Ohene-Konadu, 2001). This suggests that the term gender does not connote with the biological element of a human being as being a male or a female. Besides, the definition makes it seem that gender is all about the roles played by men and women in society. However, by assigning these roles to men and women, society holds



some perceptions and expectations of men and women in terms of these roles and acts as a social control mechanism which helps to shape the world view and hence the positions of men and women in society. If the biological aspect is not what is considered in the conceptualization of gender, then it implies that some roles in society (such as leadership) can be played by both male and female.

On the other hand, Wood (1997) perceives the concept of sex as a designation based on biology, whereas Ohene-Konadu (2001) adds that it signifies not only the biological differences between male and female but also the efficacious expectations, constraints and characteristics associated with being a male or female, which have developed over the years and are embedded in cultures. Unlike Wood, Ohene-Konadu recognizes the societal expectations and constraints of being a male or female but fails to take into account how this affects the females in the pursuit of the broad range of activities in society. It must be noted that sex, which is biogenic in nature underpins gender, which constitutes the ascribed roles of society. The two concepts can therefore not be separated from each other. Despite the interrelationship in the conceptualization of gender and sex, the main difference lies on gender which is more associated with social where as sex is natural.



### **2.2.2 Gender Equity and Equality**

In developing countries women are often seen as contributing in significantly development. This thinking resulted in the perpetual subordination of women as homemakers and men as breadwinners (Duvvury, 1989). This suggests an imbalance of gender roles in societies in the developing countries. Issues of gender discrimination may stem from religious and cultural dogma where certain specific roles in society are designated for only one category of gender. There is the need for awareness creation on gender sensitivity that will

encompass different needs and concerns of men and women and the different roles and responsibilities they perform in the society. Ofei-Aboagye (2001) raises several concerns of women that require gender sensitive action but fails to recognize the root causes of women's subordination to encompass cultural and religious barriers and societal perception about women. This may have several implications on women political participation as far as gender differential is concerned.

Equity places much primacy on fairness to both men and women in pursuit of all their endeavors. According to Ofei-Aboagye (2001), gender equity moves beyond the focus of equal treatment and builds upon the importance of results. The aim here is to end inequality and deal with equivalencies of opportunities to both men and women. It is practically impossible to assume that inequality existing between men and women can end. It can only be minimized such that, when justice prevails and human rights guarantees, women will have access to participate fully in male dominated institutions such as politics, industries, commerce among others. This requires that, society should be oriented to recognize women and men as having different needs, interest, talents and potentials that are needed for development.

However, the association of certain cultural roles assigned by gender will have implication of gender inequality as some may be precluded from the participation of certain social roles. In terms of leadership most Ghanaian societies consider males as leaders resulting from the historical antecedent of chieftaincy systems that is normally dominated by men (Nukunya, 2003). This suggests that women engagement in similar activities such participation in the modern political systems can greatly be affected.



Gender equality denotes women having the same opportunities in life as men, including the ability to participate in public sphere (Ofei-Aboagye, 2000). They further acknowledge that, it should give the same entitlements to all aspects of human development such as economic, social and political rights: the same opportunities to make choices: and the same level of power to shape the outcome of these choices. In the traditional political system of Ghana, gender equality has not been given much attention by many patrilineal societies (Nukunya, 2003). This implies that the activities of modern political activities that do not encourage gender discrimination will not thrive well in societies of male dominance. This will affect people participation in politics as far as gender issues are concerned.

### **2.2.3 Gender Inequality**

Gender inequality arises when males and females do not have equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities based on their biological makeup. Meissner cited in Tsikata (2009) argues that this inequality leads to discrimination and social injustice. Most often, gender equality is misconstrued to mean women's issue but it addresses the concerns of both men and women. Gender equality ensures that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration. This principle of non-discrimination on the basis of sex is captured in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as in the 1979 United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights specifically proclaims that “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights and that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, including distinction based

on sex”. This is reaffirmed in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979:1) as follows:

... discrimination against women violates the principles of equality of rights and respect for human dignity, is an obstacle to the participation of women, on equal terms with men, in the political, social, economic and cultural life of their countries, hampers the growth of the prosperity of society and the family and makes more difficult the full development of the potentialities of women in the service of their countries and of humanity.

According to Eide (1995) ‘in principle everyone is a beneficiary of rights’ but in practice some groups are more vulnerable to human rights abuse than others. To address the vulnerability of certain groups, like women, one sometimes calls for affirmative action. Although various legal frameworks provide for equal rights and opportunities, women are underrepresented in political governance because of cultural stereotypes, lack of financial resources, political party restrictions, and sometimes male dominated power structures.

This therefore requires deliberate policy frameworks like affirmative action as suggested by Eide (1995) to promote the participation of women.

Tsikata (2009) points out that very few countries around the world have equitable representation of women and men in decision making positions. Ghana is certainly not part of these few countries. First, out of the 275 seat parliament, women occupy only 30 seats representing 11%. Also, at the executive level, there are only 7 women (30%) who are ministers of state out of a total of 23. Sendukas (2010) argues that many developed countries have elected a large proportion of women to political office. There are notably higher





proportions of women in the appointed executive posts in these countries. This is not the case in Ghana since males dominate the executive appointments. The situation is compounded by the Constitutional requirement that majority of ministers shall be appointed from Parliament. Obviously, women are the most disadvantaged in these executive appointments because their representation in Parliament is abysmally low. Meanwhile, the contribution of women in the economic, social, political and educational development of the continent of Africa is highly recognized (Allah-Mensah, 2005). Before colonialism, Allah-Mensah (2005) argues that gender inequality was not an issue for discourse because both men and women had their traditional roles to play in the family as well as in the larger society. These roles were respected and considered important regardless of whether a woman or a man performed it. Thus, the phenomenon of gender inequality is the legacy of colonialism.

In the views of O'Barr and Firmin-Sellers (1995), African women had varied political positions with some commanding extensive authority than others. But their political positions were weakened with the advent of colonialism. To them, the existing gender inequality is a result of the imposition of legal and cultural apparatus by the colonialist and this undermined woman's traditional bases of power thereby subordinating them both politically and economically.

Using the educational system as an example, Konde (1992) explains how the colonial administration succeeded in widening the gender gap between men and women. From Konde's account, when education was introduced to the colonies, girls were excused because of the interest of the colonial administration in training and equipping young men to be prepared in the art of governance and statesmanship. Eventually when the girl child

was allowed access to education, they were more likely to pursue courses like home economics that relate to homemaking than courses that introduced them to the art of governance and politics.

Manu (1991) and Tsikata (1999) observe that the structure of the educational system for both men and women highlighted gender discrimination against women. The study argues that the course structure of the educational system for women underscored feminine skills like needlework, crocheting and cooking which aimed at producing a human resource pool of “better wives”. It follows that once women did not have the requisite training, they could not occupy important positions in the political and public spheres. Supporting the above assertion, Allah-Mensah (2005) maintains that women were visibly missing in the process of constitution making in Ghana since the initial efforts in 1916. While this was considered a process of constructing a political consensus around constitutionalism where the latter was viewed as the art of providing a system of effective restraints on the existence of governmental power, women’s participation was hardly noticed.



This was peculiar to women alone because other social groups were represented. For example, Allah-Mensah (2005) recounts that from 1916, there were two chiefs and three educated Ghanaians in a twenty-one member legislative council. According to him, this qualification based representation continued throughout the colonial period and that meant women were systematically and formally excluded because of the gendered educational system and the patriarchal traditional ruling system.



#### 2.2.4 Local Governance System

The local governance system is a decentralized process that aims at bringing decision-making closer to the people. The system guarantees the full participation of both men and women in the structures of local governance. Ohene-Konadu (2001) asserts that local governance is the natural extension of democracy, encouraging in a gender-neutral manner the maximum participation of all citizens in the affairs of local government.

The traditional approach to development planning in Ghana had been centralized not only in scope but also sectoral in nature. Often described as ‘top-down’ and highly centralized, this planning approach defined national goals and objectives and hence formulated national development plans from the perspectives of a few staff of Ministries and Central Government Agencies without any consultation with or participation of the people who were supposed to be the ultimate beneficiaries of the plan (Kwamena, 2010). A contributory factor to these harrowing experiences of development planning in Ghana according to Botchie *et al.* (2000), has been the highly centralized and sectoral approach to national development planning. There has been little or no participation from the local communities whose interest the planning system seeks to serve. Policy decisions and development actions have suffered excessive control and direction from the center. This ineffective and non-participatory system can be improved when development planning is decentralized to increase particularly informal community stakeholders’ determination of and participation in the issues that are of development concerns to them (Edwards, 1999).

Decentralized development brings the government closer to the people, enabling them to take decisions that respond to their needs much more effectively. The existence of local political structures makes it easier for ordinary citizens to participate and exert influence



(Hadenius, 2003). There is a general consensus among analysts of Ghana's decentralization, from literature that the programme has led to improvement in the flow of resources and increased access of people living in previously neglected areas to central government resources and institutions (Ayee, 1997; Crook and Manor, 1998; Thomi, 2000; Yankson, 2000).

In addition, the decentralization programme has resulted in several initiatives from government, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and donor agencies as a way of enhancing participatory democratic development and the capacity of local institutions (GSS, 1995; Acheampong, 1996). According to the annual report of SEND Ghana, 'making decentralization work for the poor', access to information on and community participation in DACF projects have become very problematic to the extent that responsiveness of MMDAs to the local needs of citizens has been affected (SEND, 2010). Olthelen (1999) states that participatory planning is initial step in the definition of a common agenda for development by a local community and external entity or entities.

Thomas and Bendepuli (2003) in their contribution added that participatory planning is part of the decentralization process and it aims to identify the critical problems, joint priorities, and the adoption of development strategies. District Assemblies should increase community participation at all stages of the project since communities are currently dissatisfied with their level of participation in DACF projects (SEND Ghana, 2010).

The increasing transfer of resources and authority to the district and sub district levels under Ghana's decentralization programme is expected to enhance district development and, in particular popular grass root participation of the beneficiaries of these interventions (GSS, 1995; Owusu, 2004; Owusu and Lund, 2004). It is argued that decentralization



enable popular participation and feeling of participation is desirable even if the net result in terms of economic efficiency in the short run was neutral or even marginally reduced (CEMPA, 562).

**Structure of Local Government in Ghana**

The structures of local government in the fourth Republic of Ghana is made up of a Regional Coordinating Council and a four –tie Metropolitan and a three-tier Municipal, District Assembly system (Ahwoi, 2010). These components form the structure of the local government system of Ghana as shown in Figure 2.1.

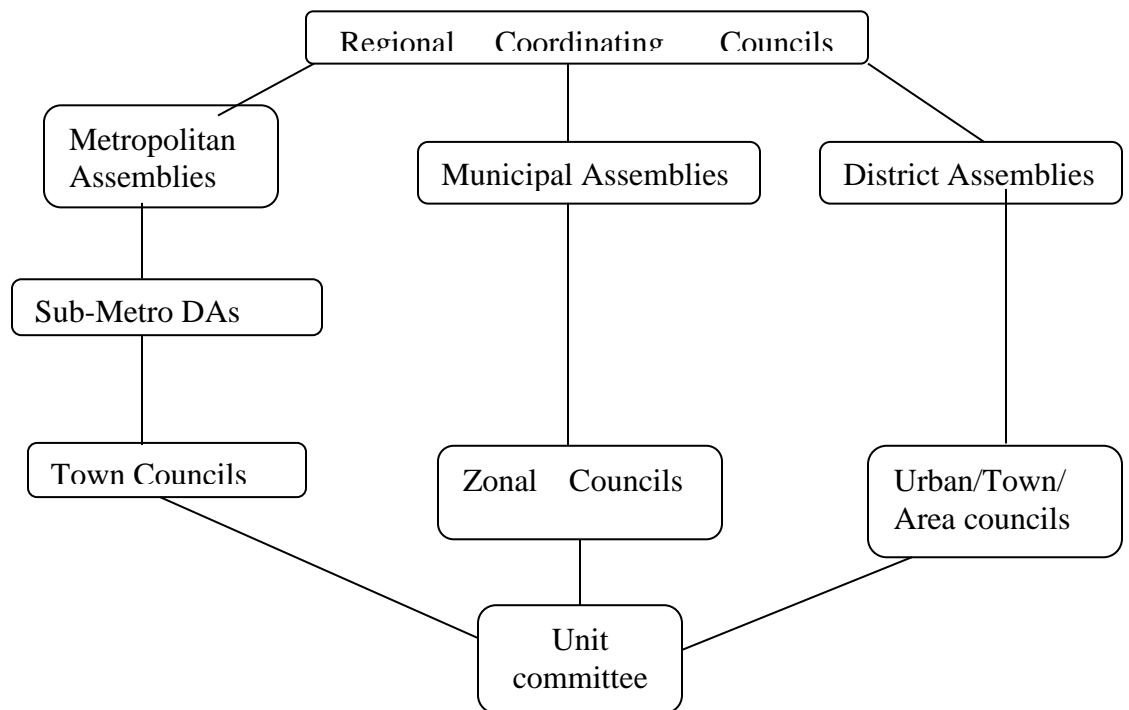


Figure 2. 1: The Local Government Structure in Ghana

Source: Adopted from Ahwoi (2010)

The decentralized planning system is therefore participatory and integrative, and it is designed to ensure the active involvement of the community and service providers in the



provision of services and the planning and implementation of development programmes. In fact both the Local government Act and the National Development Planning (System) Act clearly identify political and bureaucratic bodies and assign them with authority, responsibility and roles in ways that promote partnerships in planning. They identify the functions; decentralize the planning system and effect integration and effectiveness in the formulation and implementation of development policies and programmes at national, regional, district, sub-district and sectoral levels (Kwamina, 2010).

The major objectives of the new decentralized development planning system are to:

1. Create an institutional framework for public and community participation in national development to ensure optimal resource mobilization, allocation and utilization for development;
2. Provide opportunities for greater participation of local people in development planning and efficient management of local resources;
3. Establish effective channels of communication between the national government and local communities and increase administrative effectiveness at both levels.

Despite the specific objectives as outlined by the decentralized planning system, participation in local governance at the grassroots level remains a challenge in terms of gender.



### ***Metropolitan/Municipal/District Level Structures***

The Metropolitan Assembly is created for districts with a population threshold of 250,000 and above. Metropolis in Ghana had increased from three to currently eight. The Municipal is established for single compact settlement with population of 95,000 and above. These are usually ‘One –Town Assemblies’. A District Assembly is created for geographically contiguous areas with population of 75,000 and above. The District Assemblies are the highest administrative and political authority in the district which is therefore regarded as the pillars upon which people’s power is erected. There are currently 270 District Assemblies in Ghana.

### ***Sub-District Level Structures***

Legislative Instrument 1589 instituted and defined the operations and functions of sub-district structures consisting of Urban, Area, and Town Councils and Unit Committees. The Sub Metropolitan Council structures are immediately below the Metropolitan Assemblies. The Sub-Metropolitan Council arrangement has been dictated by the complex and peculiar socio-economic, urbanization and management problems that confront the Metropolises. There are currently 33 Sub-Metropolitan Assemblies in Ghana (Ahwoi, Kwamena, and 2010: 102). Urban Councils are found in District Assemblies and are created for settlements with population above 15,000 with cosmopolitan characteristics. There are currently 69 Urban Councils in Ghana. Zonal Councils are in the ‘one-town’ Municipal Assemblies for which the establishment of Town/Area Councils will raise problems of parallel administrative structures.



Town/Area Councils are found in both Metropolitan and District Assemblies. Town councils in the District Assemblies are established for settlements with population between 5,000 and 15,000 while Area Councils for a number of settlements/villages which are grouped together but whose individual settlements have population of less than 5,000. However, Town Councils usually found in Metropolitan Assemblies are markedly different in sizes, sometimes even exceeding 50,000.

The functions of the Urban, Zonal, Area and Town Councils include the following:

- To take over as appropriate all the functions previously performed by the Town/Village Development Committees
- To enumerate and keep records of all ratable persons and properties in the Urban, Area or Town Councils
- To assist any person authorized by the Assembly in the collection of revenue due the Assembly.
- To be responsible for the day-to-day administration of the Urban, Area, Zonal and Town Council.
- To organize with any other relevant organization annual congresses of the people for the purpose of discussing the development of the Urban, Zone, Area Council or Town including the raising of voluntary or other contributions to fund such development.

The Unit Committees constitute the basic structure of the New Local Government structure. A unit is usually a settlement or a group of settlement with a population of between 500 and 100 in rural areas and a higher population of about 1,500 for the urban



areas. The closeness of unit committees to the people justifies the important roles played in terms of community sensitization on policies, organization of communal labour, revenue mobilization, ensuring environmental cleanliness, implementation and monitoring of self-help projects. In addition, they provide a focal point for the discussion of local problems and take remedial measures where necessary or even make recommendations to the Assembly where appropriate. Under the current Local Government Reforms, the unit committees have not only been reduced to five members but also made conterminous with the electoral areas in order to make them effective. (Ahwoi, Kwamena, and 2010:103).

### **2.3 The Concept of Participation and Community Development**

Participation is conceived as ‘generally devoting the involvement of a significant number of persons in situations or actions which enhance their well-being’ (Cohen and Up-Hoff, 1980). To the view of Paul (1987), it ‘refers to an active process whereby beneficiaries influence the direction and execution of development projects rather than merely receive a share of project benefits’. Other perspectives consider participation as efforts to bring together empowered groups, often community level stakeholders, to the table for engagement in intelligent and shared decision making (Fetterman, 2005). This view considers participation as a development process where the right human resource should be included in the development process. Despite the use of different terminologies to conceptualize the term participation, there is a consensus of involvement in decision making. The involvement thus connotes with inclusive governance where each group of people (beneficiary) needs to be represented.

Involving the local communities’ and local stakeholders should constitute the bedrock of the current direction in development parlance, which place great emphasis on total



mobilization of the available resources especially within the local milieu aimed at energizing their own internal momentum, and structures and in the process meet the basic developmental needs confronting the local communities (Okafor, 1982). Local participation in relation to both the established decentralized structures and the individuals is very essential for all people centered intervention. To this end, Cooney (2000) posits that involvement concerns the right of persons to obtain information and be consulted about development plans or activities, which may directly or indirectly impinge on them.

Kapoor (2001) in solemn agreement with Cooney (2000) indicates that involvement provides incentives for local action and establishes trust amongst the parties. It could therefore be stated that local participation provides communal support and sustainability. Zazueta (1995) asserts that involvement helps the local level to ‘buy into’ development programmes and makes the people feel empowered and accountable in their endeavours to encourage local ownership and commitment. Local participation enables full utilization of the decentralized structures of planning and also the contribution of important insights into each phase of development planning, implementation and evaluation (Ayee, 2000).

Kurebwa (2014) concludes that participation of women in local governance should be enhanced in all three essential areas: as voters, policy-makers, and as members of decision making bodies. In his attempt to defend this position, he proposed the need for effective collaboration with local universities, research institutions, and academia, media and women movements in undertaking in-depth research on gender issues. Similarly, Ahebwa (2006) considers participation as part of formulating institutional framework and empowerment of women organisations. This implies that the examples given by Kurebwa (2014) as main stakeholders of ensuring women participation in decision making should





be responsible for the enforcement of the legal and institutional framework needed to ensure effective participation in the development process. The Gender Center for Empowering Development [GenCED] (2014) suggests that these stakeholders should advocate for all-inclusive local governance system. In its submission, women involvement in decision making should be encouraging before effective participation can be obtained.

The various conceptualization of participation suggests that the term connotes with inclusive governance in a form of involvement in planning, implementation and monitoring of development activities that are geared towards changing their lives. It also means that all beneficiaries of a particular development projects should be involved in the process such that the outcome of the intervention will represent their expected outcomes. In the context of this study, women participation in local governance implies their involvement in decision making and or ability to represents their people in decision making with the sub-structures of the Ghana local government system.

## **2.4 Theoretical Framework**

### **2.4.1 The Feminist Theory**

The theoretical underpinning of the study is rooted in the Feminist Theory. The feminist philosophy originated from the Latin word ‘femina’ and it is a term that describes women’s issues. The term may mean different things to different people depending on one’s political or sociological observations and goals, one’s understanding or interpretation of the word ‘woman’ and several other factors. Feminism may be a perspective, a world-view, a political theory, or a kind of activism.





Feminism is an ideology which seeks not only to place women on a higher pedestal, but also portrays the contributions of women in society (Banks, 1986). The feminists' movement is linked with the enlightenment doctrine of natural rights which delineates the contribution of women in society. Feminism as a social movement began in the 16th century (Banks, 1986). This movement sought to oppose women's domination at work places as well as the denial of women's access to right to participate in public and political offices. The central thesis of the feminist theory is that the difference regarding participation and representation in public and political offices between men and women is viewed to be caused by social and economic conditions as opposed to natural conditions (Ramazanoglu, 1989).

Feminist theory is categorized into three perspectives namely the Liberal feminist perspective, Radical feminist perspective, and Marxist feminist perspective. The common thread underlying the three perspectives is how to end the gender inequality, because gender inequality violates fundamental human rights, thwarts developments and fosters social, economic and political injustices and instability in society. Liberal feminism perspective is the first feminist social movement which began to champion the improvement of the rights and liberties of women in society. The liberal feminist movement focused much on justice and equality of women with men in both public and political life. According to the liberal feminists, women suffer a great deal of social, economic and political injustices due to sex segregation. Arguably, the liberal feminist belief had existed for long time, before it became widespread in Europe and the United States in the mid-1880s (Ramazanoglu, 1989). Although, liberal feminism was the first movement which sought to fight injustice against women in public and political life in

ensuring that women are brought at par with men in society, nonetheless, the liberal feminist perspective only criticized the practices that discriminate against women in liberal democratic environment without critically examining the sources of inequalities that exist between the sexes. Moreover, scholars of the liberal feminist perspective also failed to appreciate the fact that the relationships that exist between the sexes in society have specific power relations (Cunningham, 2008).

Another perspective of the feminist theory is radical feminism. This perspective criticizes the conventional wisdom by redefining the most intimate of human relations as political rather than private in society. Scholars of radical feminism persistently do not accept the liberal feminist perspective which seeks to get justice through the use of existing social order in society. Radical feminism argues that women are generally oppressed, controlled and physically subjugated by men regardless of whether these can affect women's advancement in society (Ramazanoglu, 1989). In view of this, radical feminists believe that the key strategy to women's empowerment is to get rid of all the restrictions on women that intensify their domination by men. In particular, the radical feminists seek to oust the patriarchal system, which subjugate women into positions that intensify their vulnerability.

In the view of radical feminists, this variant of feminism could stop if organizations especially Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other women organizations begin to campaign against the restrictions being placed on women in societies (Cunningham, 2008). In essence, although, the radical feminists recognized the role of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and women groups in helping to addressing the injustices confronting women in societies, the demand for separation between the sexes in



society is criticized by other scholars in the field of feminist studies, because it is seen as an orientation towards the western culture.

Thirdly, as noted by Ramazanoglu (1989), the Marxist perspective of feminism relates to power difference that exists among men and women in society. According to Ramazanoglu (1989), women subordination to their men counterparts is seen as a class struggle between the sexes in society. For example, Marxist feminists argue that, capitalism is the underlying cause of women's oppression in society. In explaining the point, Ramazanoglu (1989) indicates that the capitalist system contributes to the creation of economic inequality, in which a particular category of people especially women in the working class are economically exploited in ways that their men counterparts are not treated in the work environment. This capitalist system, according to the Marxist feminists has intensified women vulnerability and thereby creating bias against women in holding positions in public and political offices. According to Marxist feminist scholars, such biases are readily apparent in societies, but the underlying mechanism to erase these biases against women in holding positions in societies remain opaque. The dominant view is that many men in the developed and developing world do not accept the feminist case regarding women's social, economic and political empowerment. In addition, even among the women groups, those who are championing the cause of women's empowerment in both the developed and developing world are still in the minority and this further explains the low level of women's participation in governance system in most parts of the world.

According to Sotunsa (2008), feminism is a cross cutting theory in contemporary scholarly works and has its origin in the struggle for women's rights. Feminist theory emerges from Europe but has now become a political and ideological emotion across the world with the





main aim of fighting for the right of women (Humm 1992). In the perspective of Barrow and Milburn (1990), Feminist ideologies consider the position of women in society especially, in decision making that affects the quality of their own lives. To Cuddon (1991), feminism inculcates the exposure of women to social and political issues for which they consider themselves important to involve. These conceptualizations suggest that feminism is the belief of the social and economic equality of men and women such that the involvement of women in development process is as keen as that of men. It is a discourse that involves various movements, theories and philosophies which are concerned with the issue of gender difference, advocate equality for women, and campaign for women's rights and interest (Bryson, 1999).

Another group of people have different interpretation for feminist theories. They consider the long run effect of social activities on women; namely that "the freedom from oppression, involves not only equity but also the right of women to freedom of choice and the power to control their own lives within and outside the home (Ranganathan, 1998). The second goal of feminism is the removal of all forms of inequality and oppression through the creation of a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally. This means the involvement of women in national liberation struggles in plans for national development, and in local and global strategies for change. The feminists accepted the 'working definition' of Jaggar (1994) which identifies "feminism with the various social movements dedicated to ending the subordination of women". Many others also agree that feminist theories ultimately are the tools designed for the purpose of understanding women's subordination in order to end it (Jaggar & Rothenberg, 1993).



Social feminist theory adopts some of the tenets of Marxism, but instead of focusing on economic determinism as the primary source of oppression, the socialist feminist sees the oppression as having psychological and social roots (Kumari, 2006). They share a genuine concern for women that transcends politics. Their focus is on people, not profits. To the socialist feminist, the prostitute is a victim of the corruption of a society which accompanies class distinctions. The oppression of class in a materialistic society degrades people by categorizing them in a particular class and objectifying them so that they are merely parts of a mechanism that can be replaced by other parts of the same description. In both the socialist feminist and Marxist feminist perspectives prostitution is discouraged, but neither school of thought seeks a legal remedy for its elimination.

The expansion on the severity of the discrimination against women in the world at large became a pressing issue on the minds of people and therefore out of the will to defend the situation of women forged ahead to make awareness about the predicament of women in parts of the world and sought for avenues through which help can get to them. The marginalization of women from politics has been equated to racial inequality or marginalization. The women need to be properly empowered in every way so as to be able to fend for them and so be able to influence national policies effectively (UNDAW, 1991).

However, for the sole aim of this research work, emphasis would be laid on liberal feminist theory. The adoption of the liberal feminist theory as the theoretical underpinning for this study will enhance understanding of the low representation and participation of women in Ghanaian politics. According to the liberal feminist's theory which seeks no special privileges for women, it simply demands that everyone receive equal consideration without discrimination on the basis of sex. Emphasis was laid on this in Article 1 and 2 of the

Universal Declaration of Human Rights that states that “all human beings are born equal in dignity and rights without distinction of any kind such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion or status” (United Nations, 1995). It advocates that, women should no longer be treated or referred to as second class citizens.

Liberal feminists argue that the society holds the false belief that women are, by nature, less intellectually and physically capable than men, it tends to discriminate against women in the academy, the forum, and the marketplace. Liberal feminists believe that “female subordination is rooted in a set of customary and legal constraints that blocks women’s entrance to and success in the so-called public world” and they work hard to emphasize the equality of men and women through political and legal reform (Tony, 1989). To this effect, women institutions now exist in most parts of the world. This has been perpetrated by international bodies as they took up the cause of women just as supported by the liberal feminist theory. This led to the setting up of conferences on gender issues. These conferences which were set up by bodies like the UN were what led to the increasing spread of the women institutions worldwide. For instance, the Beijing conference of 1995 was one of the influential factors that brought about a more determined action plan towards the issue of women rights and participation in Ghana. It eventually led to the establishment of women institutions in Ghana, these women institutions and programmes were all aimed at improving the status and conditions of women in Ghana. The women institutions like the National Council on Women Development (NCWD) and Ministry of Women and Children’s Affairs (MOWAC) went ahead to create awareness on gender discrimination in order to curb it. The institutions also went ahead to inspire, encourage and support women to take up political offices as that is one of the main ways by which women can have a



greater influence in affecting the situation of women and also in influencing the policies that would be made for society.

The liberal feminist theory helps this study to ponder on the need to achieve gender balance in political life and the necessity to ensure that commitment to equality is reflected in laws and national policies. An example of such national laws is the Affirmative action which is a necessary tool to maintain at least 30 per cent of women at all levels of decision making (Kumari, 2006). Carefully, women must also think about their own strategies, goals, and tactics. Also, it is important to assist women already in parliament to be able to deliver on their promises and to equip them with the necessary skills and strategies on debate and discourse that takes place in parliament. In order to empower and enable women to participate in politics, it is necessary to extend the scope of women's movements at the grassroots level of women's movement and among local elected bodies. This also constitutes an important step towards confidence building and facilitates the sharing of experiences.



Researchers have found feminist theory to be a relevant tool for analysis in areas relating to women's roles and lives in different disciplines. The theory has been found applicable to feminist politics in anthropology and sociology, psychoanalysis, economics, women and gender studies, feminist literary criticism, and philosophy especially continental philosophy (Brabeck & Brown 1997, Griseida 2006, Zajiko & Leonard, 2006). Feminist theory has also been adopted for the purpose of this study because among its objectives which aimed to understand the nature of inequality and its focus on gender politics, power relations and sexuality. It also focuses on analyzing gender inequality and the promotion



of women's rights, interest and issues (Rosser, 2005). These aforementioned strengths, aims and objectives of feminist theory have informed its adoption for this study.

## **2.5 The Conceptual Framework**

The study is undertaken within the framework of Women's Empowerment first introduced by Longwe (1961) cited in Wallance & March (1991). This framework is central to an understanding of women's participation and mobilization, which brings with it the development of leadership for addressing and removing the many forms of gender discrimination and barriers, which leave women oppressed and marginalized. Longwe's framework is based on the concept of five different levels of equality as shown in Figure 1. The extent to which these five levels of equality are present in any area of social and economic life determines the level of empowerment. The levels of equality are hierarchical, in that programmes that focus on the higher levels are more likely to bring about women's empowerment than those focused on the lower levels. Empowerment and the creation of opportunities for women participation in local governance can significantly enhance the participation of women in local government as shown in Figure 2. An empowered woman will be able to find opportunities and if given the opportunities, women can be significantly empowered.

This framework is central to an understanding of women's participation and mobilization, which brings with it the development of leadership for addressing and removing the many forms of gender discrimination, which presently leave women oppressed and marginalized. Such empowerment is women's route to changing the practices and laws that discriminate against them, and achieving an equitable gender division of labour and allocation of resources.



Longwe's framework is based on the notion of five different levels of equality, shown in Figure 1 below. The extent to which these five levels of equality are present in any area of social or economic life determines the level of empowerment. The levels of equality are hierarchical, in that programmes that focus on the higher levels are more likely to bring about women's empowerment than those focused on the lower levels. In other words, equality of participation or control between men and women is more likely to bring about significant change than equality of welfare or access. Equal welfare or access is not empowering in itself. One needs conscientization and participation in the change process, and preferably control of the process if change is to be sustained.



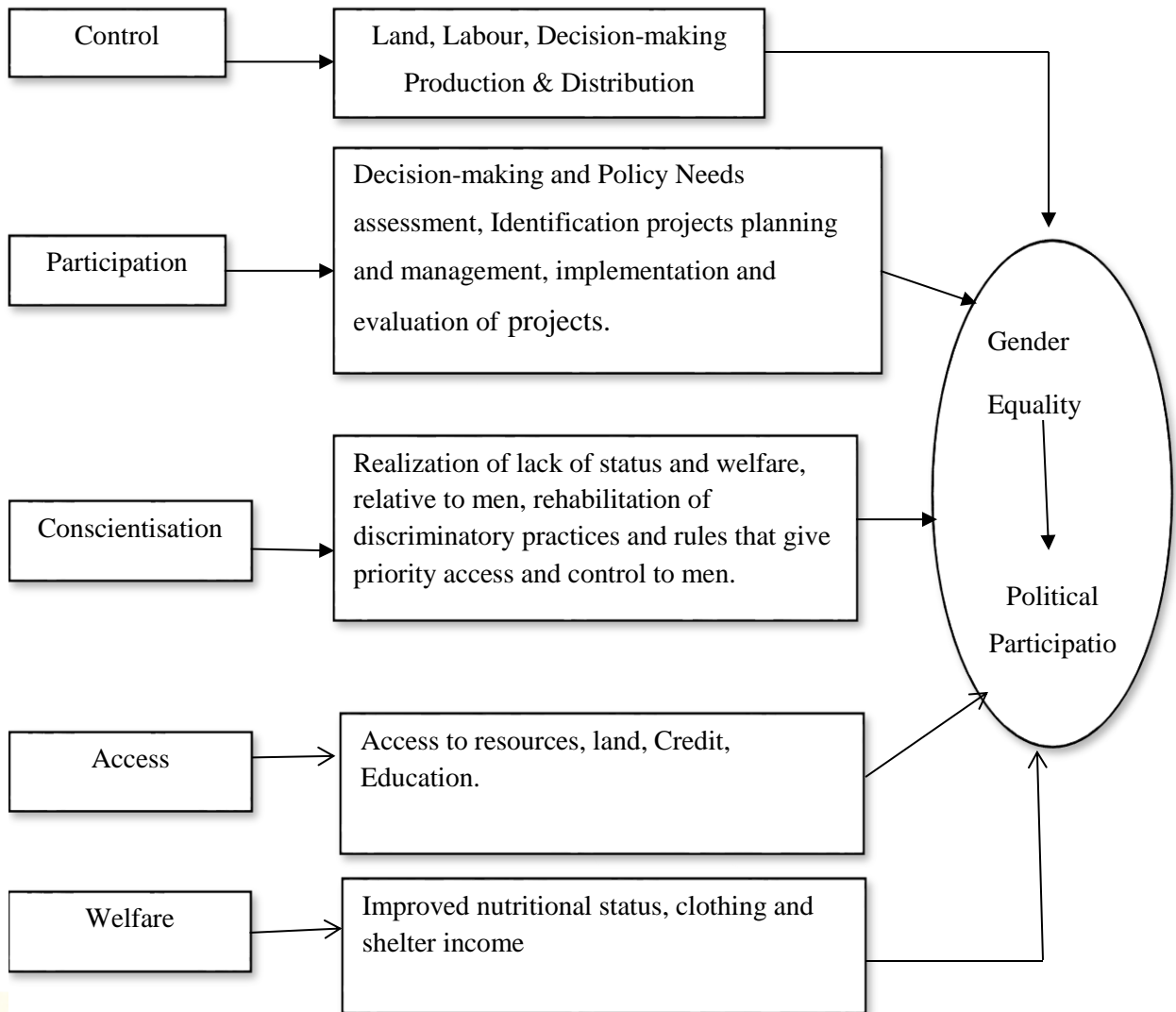


Figure 2. 2: Women's Empowerment Framework

Source: Adopted from Longwe (1961)

***Control***

Control is defined as equal power over decision-making, including the factors of production and the distribution of benefits. It means a balance of control between women and men, so that neither side dominates. This is related to the point about participation: participants in political administration need to have equal control of what they are entitled

to. For example, a female head of department should have the same level of control as a male head over departmental budgets and other resources, and over decision-making within the department.

### ***Participation***

Participation refers to equal involvement in decision-making, whether in policymaking, planning, or administration. Within a political context, this could mean involvement in needs assessment, project formulation, implementation, or evaluation. It requires 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.

### ***Conscientization***

Conscientization is the conscious understanding of the difference between sex and gender, and an awareness that gender roles, including the sexual division in politics, are culturally determined and can be changed. Political institutions in Ghana usually reinforce gendered practices by the allocation of duties to female and male staff on the basis of stereotypical views of what is appropriate.

### ***Access***

Access is defined as equal rights to use the factors of production: land, labour, credit, education and training, marketing, and all public services and benefits. This level relates to equal opportunities and the need to remove all forms of legal, cultural and administrative discrimination against women. Access to education, particularly at the higher levels, is



often very unequal with more girls than boys from poor homes denied any education or unable to go beyond the primary level.

**Welfare**

Welfare is the level of material wellbeing of females, relative to male in such areas as nutritional status, food supply and income. Here the gender gaps are described in terms of women as mere statistics rather than individuals capable of changing their lives. The “gender gap” can be identified through the disparity between male and female on indicators of nutritional status, mortality rate, and so on. Women empowerment cannot take place purely at this level; action to improve welfare will entail increased access to resources. It is more relevant to politics, but might be a factor when welfare is used as an encouragement to get women into Parliament.

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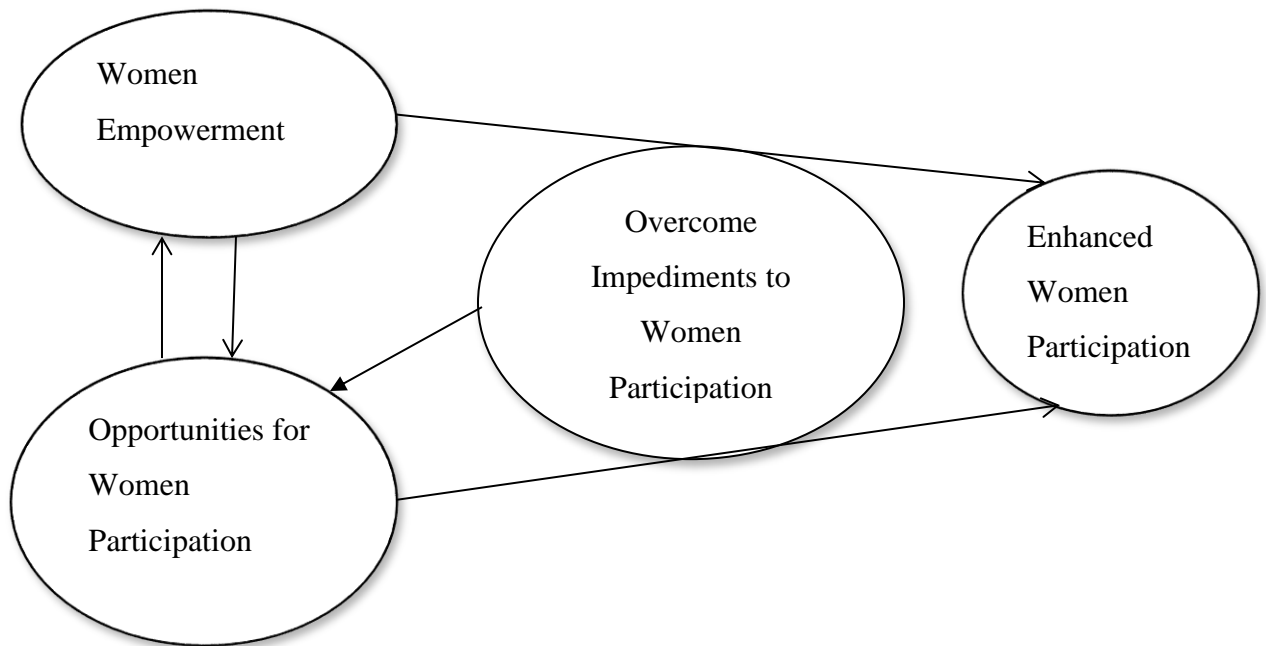


Figure 2. 3: The Concept of Women’s Empowerment

Author’s Construct (2017)

## 2.6 Factors Influencing Women's Participation and Representation in Politics

According to Alexander (2012), one of the key variables which accounts for women's participation and representation in politics is the availability of financial resources to female candidates for political campaigning during the electioneering period. However, in developing countries, women have limited access to financial resources because the division of labour is skewed against women owing to their sex, gender roles and class. Consequently, women become the preferred workforce whose labour is categorized in the lower employment groups. As explained by Alexander (2012), the limited access to financial resources constrains potential women candidates from running for political office, since they need sufficient financial resources to do this.

Similarly, Beaman, Duflo, Pande & Topalova (2012) argue that, in many Third World countries, the electorate do not have trust in women and thus doubt the capabilities of potential women candidates because they see them as lacking the necessary experience and knowledge to perform well in political office although they are equally qualified and capable like their male counterparts. According to Topalova *et al.* (2012), this kind of bias against women in politics arises due to the social stereotypes associated with women; that they are good in performing the traditional gender roles. Consequently, when making decisions on candidates to vote for in an election, the electorate invoke myriad of issues on potential women candidates in terms of their suitability for the position they are vying for. Emphasizing the point further, Topalova *et al.* (2012) note that, although sometimes the influence of quota system serves as an advantage to women candidates contesting political positions in many parts of the world, nonetheless, in most cases, the traits and the level of respect giving to male politicians are considered more crucial for holding political office





than women. In addition to the above, Kanthak & Woon (2014) also argue that the gender role ideology is used as an ideological instrument by patriarchal societies to place burdens on women which are not usually faced by men. According to Kanthak & Woon (2014), in the developing countries, women often face a lot of burden when they contest for political office because women have a responsibility to their household chores and the family. As traditional caregivers, women have the added responsibility of taking care of the sick and the elderly. As a result, if women involve themselves in politics, they are more likely to take on another responsibility to increase their roles in society. Consequently, most women do not have positive attitudes and commitment to run for political office. This largely accounts for low level of participation and representation of women in politics in Africa.

Krook & Schwindt- Bayer (2013, pp.12) posit that the nature of politics in Third World countries is also responsible for the inclusion or exclusion of women in politics. According to the study, "politics is conceptualized as an articulation, or working out of relationships within an already given power structure". This conception of politics is in sharp contrast to the traditional view of politics as an activity, a conscious, deliberate participation and the process by which resources are allocated among citizens. As a result, politics restricts political activity only to the public arena; hence, the private sphere of family life is rendered as apolitical. Thus, this public-private dichotomy in the traditional definition of politics is used to exclude women from running for political office and even when they are brought into the forefront in politics, they are mainly entered as mothers and wives.

Kittilson & Schwindt-Bayer (2012) also contend that the growing preference for male domination against women in political parties has a great influence on women's political participation and representation in politics in Africa. They further indicated that, in Africa

in general, and West Africa in particular, male dominated political parties encourage a male perspective on issues of national significance, whereby women's perspectives are often relegated to the background, which often times do not reflect in the politics of their parties. In addition, in the male dominated political parties, women are mostly giving little attention in terms of the allocation of the executive positions in the party. This widespread gender stereotype restricts the promotion of women's political space and advancement within political parties.

In their investigation into women's low participation and representation in politics, Childs & Krook (2009) reveal that the subordinate status of women vis-à-vis men in politics is a universal phenomenon, even though, there are differences and degrees of subordination across countries in the world. As explained by Childs & Krook (2009), gender role ideology creates duality of femininity and masculinity, by placing them in hierarchical fashion whereby the female sex is by and large valued less than the male sex due to their socially ascribed roles as traditional caregivers. According to Childs & Krook (2009), these primary roles as mothers and wives with competing domestic responsibilities constrain them from engaging in other activities including politics.

In Krook & O'Brien's (2012) study entitled "*All the President's Men? The Appointment of Female Cabinet Ministers Worldwide*" the authors argue that some of the socio-cultural practices in Africa have great influence on women's participation and representation in public office. In explaining their point, Krook & O'Brien (2012) indicate that politics in general require interactions among individuals; either male or female to engage in discussions and deliberations on issues and policies which are vital for the interest and welfare of citizens in society. However, in many Third World countries, some of the socio-





cultural practices including sex segregation overtly oppose women's interactions with their men counterparts in society. This kind of socio-cultural practice presents a challenge to women when contesting for political office in a male dominated political environment. Research has shown that some factors influence women involvement in political activities. There is a strong resistant to women participation in political life (Ghaplanyan and Melikyan, 2015). The resistances have their origins from a combination of social and economic actors.

Cooper and Davidson (1982) sought to study the problems that women in leadership positions generally face. They found that women face stress from both the work, home and social environments. In addition, women have to acquire male leadership and managerial skills (for example, being aggressive, assertive, confident), as well as multiple demands in running a career and a family. Other sources of stress include difficult working relationships with male bosses and colleagues, sexual harassment, limited opportunities for promotion and career development. This research seeks to find out how far these challenges impact on women politicians in Ghana. The study further envisages coming up with strategies that would help women to cope up with turbulence that they face with regard to participation in electoral politics in Ghana.

Karl (2001) explores some of the factors she cites include: household status, work related rights (maternity leave, job security, provision of child-care); employment and remuneration: double burden of work; education and literacy; access to financial resources; legal rights; traditions, cultural attitudes and religion; socialization and self-reliance; violence against women; the mass media; health; ability to control fertility. It would be



interesting to investigate into how far these factors impact on women in the political realms in Ghana today.

### **2.6.1 Education and women's participation in local governance**

A lot of researchers have placed emphasis on education as a precursor to one's success in society. Whereas education may not be the only determinant of success, it empowers one with the capacity to fully engage or participate in any sector of society. Acknowledging that it is unlikely for the full range of gender issues to be addressed without women in prominent positions such as the legislatures, local government and major economic activities, McLendon and Eddings (2002) found enough evidence to confirm that women's education plays important role to enhancing their participation in politics and economic activities. A study conducted by Ahmed (2000) on the impact of Non Formal Education (NFE) among women in Srefultoli, Bangladesh found that the NFE program helped to empower women leading to their visibility in political and economic activities. Using a social mapping methodology to pattern these women's perspectives, the study concludes that education gives women a voice against social and political injustice because it enhances their empowerment both in the family and societal affairs. Education increases women's understanding and awareness of the situation in which they live, and their cognitive and psychological realm of empowerment (Ahmed, 2000). This supports Mulwa's (1999) argument that there will be increased women's political participation when there is gender equity and equality in education.

In another study by Bishaw (2014) on the impacts of education on women's political and economic activities, similar findings obtained. The study compared women's varied educational backgrounds using One Way ANOVA to determine impact of education on



participation in leadership, associations and governance as well as the benefits they secured as a result of their participation. Analysis of the study found that the mean score of the variables was considerably significant at  $P < .001$ . In other words, women with better educational backgrounds had the perception that they have contributed to ensure good governance in the society. Taking into consideration self-initiated projects and projects initiated by other organizations, it was realized that women with primary and secondary education participated in self-initiated projects like local textile, tea cafes, and horticulture. For projects initiated by non-government organizations such as Water Conservation, Soil Conservation and Other Natural Resource Conservations, there were women participants with primary and secondary education compared to illiterate women.

By these empirical observations, women are more likely to enhance their political participation with increased level of education. As already alluded to, education may be a precursor to women's political participation, but scholars like Godwin (2013) argue that despite the level of education, the dominance of male patriarchy will subordinate women's efforts towards political participation. In the Population Data analytical report by the Ghana Statistical Services (2005), male dominance has been clearly acknowledged. The GSS stated as follows:

Male-dominance is a key aspect of the Ghanaian social system and the woman's role and status are recognizably inferior to those of the man in almost all aspects of social, political and economic life. Custom, law and even religion have been used to rationalize and perpetuate these differential roles to the extent that women themselves seem to have accepted and internalized them.

### **2.6.2 Patriarchy and women's political participation**

In trying to understand the need for women's participation in local governance in Nigeria, Godwin (2013:65) analyzed studies on women's participation and came to the conclusion that "marginalization of women in local governance is nothing but an elongation of male dominance in virtually all political affairs". The study does not only see this as a historical fact but something that is deeply reinforced by attitudinal views which most often impede the visible quest of women to increase their political representation at the local government level in Nigeria.

In Sierra Leone, FRIDE (2009:3) observed similar outcomes. Despite the country's shift in social attitude and re-orientation on women's role and the observation that women now possess the right to participate in governance after 2002 civil war, it was found that women still experienced high levels of exclusion and unequal gender relations. According to FRIDE (2009), the bases for these unequal gender relations are endemic patriarchal, cultural and religious values especially in the north of Sierra Leone. The extreme nature of this patriarchal dominance is such that women are barred from participating in public life or speaking in public. It is important to note that while women themselves acknowledge the attitudinal and cultural shift, some respondents of the study still argued that this change is just mere rhetoric because women still "face resistance and harassment for taking on a more public role, particularly from customary authorities who argue that it is against tradition".

Arguably, women's visibility in politics in post-civil war Sierra Leone saw an improvement. In its first election held after the 2002 war, FRIDE (2009) documents that 18 women were elected members of parliament out of 124 but this subsequently dropped



to 16 women in 2007 being another setback to women's political inclusion. The reason for this decline as FRIDE observes was due to the use of proportional representation system as opposed to the traditional majoritarian system which was used in 2007 elections. Being self-centered and power hungry as they are, political parties fielded fewer women because of the concern that electorates will vote against them.

At the local government level, 56 women were elected as District Councilors out of 456. The number of women councilors increased to 86 in the 2008 elections. At the Ward Committee level, it is mandatory that women constitute 50 percent. While this 50 percent may show that at the ward committee level, there is gender equality, it is argued that these committees are relatively smaller with very little power. Consequently, the adoption of a 50 percent mandatory representation at the ward committee level smacks of tokenism since at that level, there is very little influence committee members can have on critical decision making.

### **2.6.3 Political parties influence on women participation in local governance**

Allah-Mensah's (2005) argument that political party affiliations can enhance women's chances of being elected is not gainsaid. In a study conducted by FRIDE (2009) in Sierra Leone, two major obstacles to women's political participation were identified. Women raised the issue of gaining social space and acceptance to play a role in the public sphere, as well as getting selected and supported to run for office. The latter is more of a reserved power for political parties because candidates wishing to offer themselves for politically elected post need to first gain approval from their political parties if they are not independent candidates. As demonstrated in the 2007 elections in Sierra Leone, the number of elected women reduced to 16 from a total of 18 elected women because political parties



fielded fewer women due to fears of being rejected during elections. On the contrary, as FRIDE (2009) found in Sierra Leone, the strong regional support bases enjoyed by political parties was more than likely to increase a woman's chances of being elected when selected by the political party because gender discrimination was unlikely to override the strong political regionalism. While the parties supported the 50 percent quota for women at the ward committee level, respondents in the study revealed that they faced a lot of challenges securing party nominations to contest as Councilors. Below is what FRIDE (2009:5) observed:

At Ward Committee level women reported no problems in getting party nominations, as would be expected given that women's equal participation is mandatory and therefore women Ward Committee members are not seen as "taking men's place". However, women attempting to enter both national parliament and district councils faced significant hostility and obstruction. Women councilors appeared to have faced the most difficulties in getting a party nomination, and were the group that most frequently reported experiencing hostility from local men while campaigning.

#### **2.6.4 Economic factors influencing women participation in politics**

The findings of Nwabunkeonye (2014) reveal that economic empowerment of women will enable their participation in local governance. He therefore, explained that economic empowerment will demystify the belief that women can only serve the home than political activities that involve the masses. Besides, the policy brief of the Lesotho Council of NGOs (2015) agrees with the argument of economic empowerment of women and stress that economic empowerment should not be considered as personal empowerment. The reason



is that personal empowerment does not translate into political empowerment for women because society is not ready to accept women as leaders.

In the conclusion of Quansah and Essien (2014), economic empowerment will overcome the financial barriers that confront women in politics. This implies that many women are not able to involve themselves in political activities because they lack the needed financial resources to enable them carry out political activities. This however, invariably is not different from the limited economic empowerment that is associated with many women. Mahamadu (2010) also reports that females often suffer more financial constraints than the males who owned property. This therefore, grant men more opportunity in electoral processes than women.

The evidence on economic factors influencing women participation in politics suggests that financial resource mobilization is a major factor that determines the success of women in politics. This means that men in many instances have been found to be controlling productive factors and hence can finance political activities at the local level.

### **2.6.5 Socio-cultural factors influencing women participation in politics**

The role of women in economic, social and political activities is very important. The situation of women involvement in the decision-making process in Africa and Ghana is abysmal. Even though a lot of effort has been made for equal participation in decision-making and political leadership as can be seen in UN forward looking strategy, AUs adoption and declaration to promote gender equality in Africa by heads of state reaffirmed their commitment. Socio-cultural factors still pose serious threats to achievement of the 30% threshold for women in political participation. Adhiumo-Oduol (2003) identifies



socio-cultural beliefs, attitudes, biases and stereotypes as major barriers to women electoral success. He argue that cultural biases such as superiority of men and inferiority of women, institutional framework guiding gender division of labour and also recruitment and vertical mobility of labour are permanent in the discourse of the impediments to women political participation.

Olajede (1990) adds that since men dominate in public decision-making processes; it is the male values that are reflected in the decision-making bodies. many institutions and practices in our society reproduce and legitimize gender inequalities, what many people refers to as tradition and culture are no more than the institution, practices and ideologies which frame an ever ongoing and long term social relations(Tsikata, 2000). Deji (2007) adds that community norms serve as the bedrock for its socio-cultural features and dictates the kind of values embedded by the majority of the people in that community. This invariable influences the level of commitment of the people to participate. Adding to these are deep seated socio-cultural perceptions of women as inferior to women participation at various levels of government.

In patriarchal culture of which the people of Upper West and for that matter Waala is a part, women are seen as an extension of men and cannot politically stand on their own. This political development is from sexist perspective. Alhassan (2007) concludes that many forms of representation of women is sexist; discrimination against women by valuing maleness and deprecating femaleness, as sub-humans. He therefore emphasizes the need for inclusion of sexist speech, its implications for the gender and social equity programs to create awareness vis-a-vis disabuse the minds of people against the use of language to demean a portion of humanity. The subordinate status of women vis-à-vis men is a







universal phenomenon, though with a difference in the nature and extent of subordination across countries. Gender role ideology does not only create duality of femininity and masculinity, it also places them in hierarchal fashion in which female sex is generally valued less than male sex because of their socially ascribed roles in reproductive sphere. The gender status quo is maintained through low resource allocation to women's human development by the state, society and the family. This is reflected in the social indicators which reflect varying degrees of gender disparities in education, health, employment, ownership of productive resources and politics in all countries. Additionally gender is mediated through class, caste and ethnicity that structure access to resources and opportunities. The socio-cultural dependence of women is one of the key detrimental factors to their political participation in public political domain.

Women also find it hard to participate in politics due to limited time available to them because of their dual roles in the productive and reproductive spheres. With their primary roles as mothers and wives and competing domestic responsibilities and care work, they are left with little time to participate in politics. In some countries, particularly in South Asia, women also face cultural constraints on their mobility. The mechanisms of sex segregation and *purdah* are used to restrict their mobility. Politics requires women's exposure to interact with male and female constituents and address public meeting.

## **2.7 Social capital and women's political participation**

Women often lack social capital because they are often not head of communities, tribes or kinship groups, resulting in the absence of constituency base for them and means of political participation such as political skills, economic resources, education, training and access to information. In all societies, men and women are expected to perform different

roles and responsibilities that are mostly defined by the social structure. These roles as they are related to work are defined in terms of ‘exchange value’ which virtually neglects the ‘use-value’ that women perform in the society that is invisible and unpaid for (Brohman, 1996).

According to Friez *et al.* (1978) status is a ‘hierarchy of inferiority and superiority on some dimension or set of dimension’, because ‘male in itself means higher status. Unger (1979) states that ‘male-female relationships are essentially similar to relationships between high and low status individuals. Contrary, this research came to accept that women are superior to men in the dimensions of child bearing and care, performing domestic responsibilities, socialization among others. Yet, society perceives them as low status human beings. This perception has an influence on the chances of women involvement in political activities.

It should not be automatic that, in so far as women play supportive role in society, they should be accorded with low or inferior status. Rather, it should be a matter of who does what, gets what, when and how. However, all the definitions in culture are dominated by ‘masculist screen’. This gives men a dominant position and has made women to accept men’s definition of them as ‘inferior’ and ‘others’ (Rosewater *et al.*, 1985). The participation of women in politics remained largely invisible in Africa and therefore need collaborative effort of local universities, research institution, academia, media and women’s movements in undertaking in-depth research on gender issues.

Several studies have been conducted to determine the level of women participation in politics. As a matter of fact, it is revealed that male has dominated over their female counterparts in the politics and local government system (Godwin 2013, Kurebwa 2014,



Quansah and Essien 2014). This is because issues of which women get into politics, what they are able to do once they are there, how political institutions can be made accountable to women and how women participate and exercise influence within non-formal political domains appeared to be somewhat overlooked (Castillejo, 2009). Kurebwa (2014) then suggests that the dominant ideology in organizations should not be male biased.

However, women participation in governance appeared to be increasing and cultural norms are changing among certain segments of the population to become more accepting of women in public leadership role (Minoletti, 2014). In addition to that, Godwin (2013) also concludes that there is more women participation in the government at the Federal and State government. Along similar lines, Kurebwa (2014) argues that there is increased participation of women in Rural District Councils (RDCs). Although this may be true, but Isshaku (2012) reveals that MMDAs, sub-district structure or politics is dominated by men and that women are relegated to the background as a result of socio-cultural belief systems in the Upper West Region. This suggests the need to assess the extent to which social capital contributes to women electoral victory in Wa Municipality.

One notable reason for women's visibility in the African political realm has been the move from one party system state, military takeover to multiparty democracy (Ocran, 2014). In addition, Huq (2016) points out that constitutional provision of Bangladesh can be seen as milestone towards ensuring women equal access and increased participation in the political structure. In contrast, Isshaku (2012) argues that there has not been democratic participation in local government as far as gender is concerned in the Upper West Region of Ghana. Implying that, women in the region have to strive to empower themselves in participation in political activities. In the same way, Huq (2016) indicates that patriarchal



society enforces rules and laws in women which affect the self-confidence of women, limit their access on resources and information and thus keep their status lower than men. Again, he stated that, lower educational achievements and the prevalence of social norms that severely restrict the freedom of movement in public places handicapped women in Bangladesh. Meanwhile, Isshaku (2012) indicates that the means through which principles of good governance can be promoted is through education. With regards to literacy, women are likely to be more represented in countries where they have greater access to education (Thinley *et al.*, 2014). Minoletti (2014) therefore, proposes that, training generally for women's confidence building and gender awareness are beneficial for raising women's ability and confidence to participate. By the same token, Boateng and Kosi (2015) recommends that, women should strive to empower themselves by acquiring knowledge, skills, resources, and motivation in order to raise their political power. In agreement with these positions, Ocran, (2014) reveals that women political participation in the world and Africa has been possible through access to education. This means that different forms of social capital facilitate women participation in politics.



Empirical studies have however shown that, effort has been made by government and NGOs to provide social capital support for women in politics. For instance, Minolett (2014) maintains that Tatmadaw, a non-governmental armed groups and many political parties currently offer limited opportunities for women and thus government preference include gender based violence, inheritance and divorce. However, despite all these measures undertaken by local government and other NGOs aimed at increasing women political participation, these measures are not even known to women (Ghaplanyan and Melikyan 2015).



Similarly, Gender Center for Empowering Development (GenCED) [2014] reveals in their study that less than 20% of the women had information about the Assembly budget; this implies that low access to information and awareness of the activities of the assemblies is general among women. GenCED (2014), indicates that as most of the women cannot read and write, it will be appropriate to use local drama to showcase issues of local government to enable them better understand the critical issues around local government and women participation. Ndlovu and Mutale (2013) reveal that quotas have been the most effective short-term strategy for getting women into office. ADB (2016) maintains that seats and quotas have led to increase in women representation in local government but argue that they are not sufficient on their own to help elected women carry out their mandate.

In Bangladesh, direct election to reserve seat is undoubtedly for women that limit the scope to influence decisions (Haq, 2016). In a study carried out in Ghana and Tanzania it was evident that access to educational opportunities being made available to girls and women have had an influence in women's visibility in the political realm globally and regionally (Ocran, 2014). The study further argues that another notable ingredient for the visibility of women's political participation has been the international women's movements.

### **2.7.1 People perception on women participation in politics**

Throughout the World, there exists no country where women have political rights, access, opportunities or influence as men (Nelson *et al*, 1994). This revelation stems from factors such as social structure, political economy and the inherent political regimes that exist. The small part played by women in politics, according to Sumana and Pandey (1990), reflects the secondary place assigned by customs and attitudes within the society, which their education and training tend to make them accept as natural order of things". Rosewater et

al. (1985) states that, ‘as women they feel quality, evil and unnatural if they dare question their assigned roles’. It is pertinent to note that, women as a group need to be given equal representation in decision-making (Young, 1990; Voet, 1998).

However, Stacey and Price (1981) argue that ‘where power is women are not.’ moreover, if at all they are present, they are likely to be found in less influential position’. What Stacey and Price did not notice is that, many women are in high political positions and are able to influence policies, programmes and projects sometimes better than men. According to Karl (1995) ‘ since the turn of the century, women have a long way as regard their political participation...their increase visibility, acquisition of full citizenship and greater education makes it impossible to conceive building a long term future without their participation’. Karl located women’s political participation within the discourse of sustainable development, which is central to this study. It can be asserted that women’s political participation is necessary especially at the local level. However, it is significant to understand the gendered nature of social relationships in public life activities and the barriers therein. This will help us appreciate the need for improved ways to enhance women’s participation in local governance in the Wa Municipality.



## **2.8 Challenges of Women’s Participation in Politics**

Despite the fact that African women have made significant treads in political participation worldwide, a colossal gap is still in existence. Women have gargantuan task before they can be acknowledged as full equal and partners to their male counterparts. In a study by Nwabunkeonye (2014), Nigeria women face political challenges such as discriminatory socio-cultural and religious practices, wrong perception of women in politics, lack of family and media support. Equally, Kurebwa (2014) argues that barriers to women

participation in politics include political violence, gender stereotypes and outright discrimination, personal obstacles such as lack of confidence, cultural prescribed domestic roles, lack of education, lack of finance and socio-economic capital, winner takes it all electoral systems and political institution that are not conducive to balancing family and public life. Again, rural women faced a number of constraints such as: cultural beliefs, violence against women, lack of resources, lack of mutual support among women in getting access to and participation in politics (Kurebwa 2014; Nwabunkeonye 2014).

Furthermore, Ahebwa (2006) reveals that, women lack support from their fellow spouse. Similarly, Minoletti (2016) maintains that the low level of female participation, together with the widespread lack of awareness of the relevance of gender issues act as barriers to more effective and equitable policymaking, budgeting and public service delivery. Additionally, Thinley *et al* (2014) indicates that there are widely-held stereotypes that influence the interest of potential women leaders to participate in leadership contest and their ability to recognize their innate leadership talents. Significant barrier to women's participation are traditional household rules and responsibilities. Lack of cooperation by men in local government in Bangladesh is a significant drawback to women's participation (Huq, 2016).

Empirical studies globally, have shown women still encounter challenges, despite the effort put in place by government and other non-governmental organization. For instance, Ndlovu and Mutale (2013) indicate in their study that, women have been limited to lower house in parliament and much work is yet to be done in the upper house of most African countries. The increase in the quantity of women in political participation in the lower house has not



effectively resulted in much transformation in the African political institutions to become responsive to the needs of women (Ndlovu and Mutale, 2013).

Particularly in Zimbabwe, barriers to women participation in politics include political violence, gender stereotypes and outright discrimination, personal obstacles such as lack of confidence, cultural prescribed domestic roles, lack of education, lack of education, lack of finance and socio-economic capital, winner takes it all electoral systems and political institution that are not conducive to balancing family and public life (Kurebwa, 2014). Likewise in India, gender attitude of both male and female Gram Panchayat are a cause of concern, with attitudes towards women holding public office tending to be biased against women. Identically, Quansah and Essien (2014) identifies women's gender roles as a challenge and argued that cultural factors are the major factors hindering women participation in decision making at the local level. Coupled with that, they revealed that from 2002-2010, the number of men who are either elected or appointed by the government always outnumber the women.



The misery of women's political participation particularly in Africa is both a fact of history and a reality of the present. Since 1960, women's representation in Ghana's Parliament has been under 20 percent while their representation in district level elections hover around 35 percent (Tsikata, 2009). Even with this, Tsikata (2009) believed this numerical representation does not constitute substantive or strategic representation despite being a good step. By strategic representation, Tsikata refers to political decision making where gender inequality is most pervasive and intractable. According to the study, the reasons given for women's poor showing in political governance are systemic and structural. These



reasons include disadvantages in the control of resources, gender ideologies which reinforce inequalities, problems of the political system and failure of public policy.

### **2.8.1 Control of Resources**

In all spheres of life, women have been seen to possess weaker voice as compared to their male counterparts (Tsikata, 2009). At the household level, Tsikata argues that society has ascribed the responsibility of handling visible, formal and predictable expenditures such as rent, school fees and electricity to men while women control only invisible and unpredictable expenditures. This customary demarcation of expenditure according to Tsikata defines the level of control a woman has over resources. Apart from this, the Ghana Living Standards Survey cited in Tsikata (2009) points out that women undertake the bulk of domestic work aside income generating activities. This increases their workload and limits their available time for their participation in public life as well as engaging in activities in the productive sector to raise resources. This disadvantaged position restricts their effectiveness in political contestations since a lot of resources are needed to facilitate their political campaigns.



### **2.8.2 Emergence of Gendered Occupations**

According to Afisi (2010), gendered occupations never existed in pre-colonial period until the emergence of colonialism because both men and women in traditional Africa performed complementary roles and each role was regarded important. Tsikata (2009) argues that though women were involved in community affairs just as men, the extent of their involvement in Ghana was limited to community work that dealt with reproduction of the household. At the same time, their male counterparts dominated in roles such as chieftaincy and unit committees which opened opportunities for experience in the skill of public

speaking, and the craft of politics. This permeates through to the national level and explains why women's representation continues to be low in the executive, legislature and the judiciary.

### **2.8.3 Problems of the political system**

According to Allah-Mensah (2009), political parties should receive some blame for women's low representation in political and local governance. The study identified factors such as financial conditionalities, male dominated structures in political parties which tend to favour men as well as consideration of ethnic, religious, and regional factors over gender. While recognizing that women are involved in the political party structure through the creation of women wings, the study argues that such action is a tokenistic and clandestine approach aimed at persuading women to vote for them. As noted by Tsikata (2009), because women are unable to mobilize financial resources due to their domestic work and lack of time, the imposition of hefty financial conditions as a precursor to contest in an election further worsens their attempt at reversing the trend of male dominance within the political sphere.

Tsikata (2009) pinpoints some ills of the political system in Ghana that help to perpetuate women's marginalization. First, he argues that the use of stereotypes, insults and aggression during political contests create insecurity which builds resistance to women's participation. The use of insults and threatening campaign styles explain why close family members will discourage women who show interest in politics. The study uncovered an instance where a husband assaults the wife for picking nomination forms to contest in the 2006 local government elections. While this may be an individual obsession, reports of



widespread intimidation and misinformation against women during the same election were obtained in the study.

#### **2.8.4 Influence of socialization on women participation in politics**

Apart from structural reasons, the Ghanaian socialization of men and women has been shown to have some link to the low participation of women in politics. From birth, both men and women are socialized to believe that men are natural leaders and women as followers (Tsikata, 2009). Even where women want to traverse their socialized role as followers, they end up discouraging other women from contesting for political post when they fail to win elections. This leads to a cycle of disadvantages.

#### **2.9 Support Systems for Women Participation in Politics**

There are various support structures that exist for women who are in politics and those willing to participate in politics. For example, Ahebwa (2016) indicates that legal and institutional framework and empowerment of women organization are some of the opportunities available for women. Also, some women leaders are found to be promoting the interest of women and striving for social justices through the village court (Rahman, 2015). This removes the barriers to women participation and boosting their confidence to take the lead in political affairs.

Similarly, women past experiences with their ability to organize and form network, whether formal or informal has help in gaining recognition in politics (Ocran, 2014). With this mind women leaders have ensured transparency, accountability and integrity in governance as a result of the support they had (Rahman, 2015). This implies that, it is necessary to create an environment that will facilitate the election, appointment or



promotion of sufficient number of women in decision making process (Kurebwa, 2014). In like manner, the presence of women in political offices will enable them to stand up for their needs and interest in decision making that affect their lives (Minoletti, 2014; Huq, 2016).

The introduction of Affirmative action plan has been very vital to women gaining representation in politics. This also contradicts the augment of Ghaplanyan and Melikyan (2015) that gender strategic Action Plan adopted by the government of the Republic of Armenia have no visible implementation mechanisms that can be monitored and followed. Castillejo (2009) therefore, suggests in his study that donor support should amid at building the capacity of women who are already in political office as well as of young women, implying that the role of donors in promoting political activities only target men instead of women.

### **2.10 Strategies to Improve Women Participation in Local Governance**

The most important ingredient to the question of improvement in women's ability to participate in local governance is empowerment. Empowerment refers to the equitable representation of women in decision-making structures, both formal and informal, and their voice in the formulation of policies affecting their societies. If women are to be empowered, the most critical things are to minimize socio-cultural impediments. Unfavorable culture orientation of the female, poor economic situation of women and intimidation by male political opponents and some strategies aimed at the orientation of the female at scratch are necessary.



Women have proven to be competent in contributing to law making in many countries. For example, in South Africa the women coalition helped in passing the women charter. Also in Ghana FIDA and WIDAF sought to educate people about the 1985 intestate succession and property laws require all custom marriages and family property to be registered to facilitate a widow's acquisition of property should her spouse die. Widows and their children are entitled to three quarters of the immediate family's property (Dei 1994; West et al., 1994).

Zimmerman (1994) states that electoral reform is a way to increase women's legislative representation. The electoral system explains almost 30% of the varying proportion of women in democracies national legislation. Under this system parties see an advantage in having some female candidates to attract more female voters and gain more seats. This type of system, called the party list or proportional representation system is used in all of the countries with the highest percentage of female legislators.

Contrary to this issue of non-party list or on proportional representation such as those in the United States, United Kingdom and France, where it is required that winning candidates must obtain an absolute majority of vote or plurality of any constituency. In such cases, parties will usually choose and support only those candidates believed to be capable of winning the required number of votes. In that case running a male candidate is a safer bet. It is noted however, that women generally do so well in multimember elections and electoral areas in which people can choose more than one candidate and where they can elect a female candidate in addition to a male one.



Making electoral system more women friendly is a clear strategy for improving women's participation in partisan politics and local governance as new democracies can conceivably choose party list or proportional representation systems with twenty or more representation per constituency. It is noted that, with the increase in educational opportunities for women and girls there emerged a large pool of women capable of vying for political power.

Barri (2005) notes that all arms of government and political parties in countries with low women representatives in politics should take action to promote the transformation of the political culture to make it more transparent, accountable and sensitive to the needs of those concerned. One type of quota that would increase both the number of women and other traditionally underrepresented groups in electoral system would be the allocation of quotas (Zimmerman, 2004). Abantu (1994) states that all political parties should promote affirmative action to progressively increase the number of women candidates for parliamentary and local government elections in order that, there is at least 30% representation of women by the year 2008 and 50% by the year 2012.

Finally, Allah-Mensah (2004) states that advocacy strategy which has not worked over the years because of the seemingly 'attacking' nature should be considered to give way to more accommodating strategies which have the potency of winning even the most recalcitrant gender opposed person, Male or female. She also noted that political parties should endeavor to be more pragmatic, committed forthcoming on women's role in political offices. This is an important aspect of Ghana's evolving democracy, which fortunately is built on the principles of equality and respect for fundamental human rights. Since, the number of women in politics and their positions on the public bureaucracy hierarchy are not encouraging. It is recommended that political parties and all stakeholders who are



interested in the consolidation of democracy in Ghana should be at the forefront of this drive for increased participation by women in politics and policy making.

Due to non-availability of comparative data and time constraint this section is unable to assess comprehensively the successful strategies to promote women's political participation. The paper will focus only on two strategies: gender quotas and women's experience of networking.

### **2.11 Conclusion**

The literature uses the women empowerment framework as basis for understanding the under representation of women in political life and most decision making processes in Ghana. This study investigates why there exists low women participation in local governance yet they constitute an enormous political energy. The feminist theory is used as a guide to find measures to empower and improve women participation in local governance in the Wa Municipality. It brings to the fore that women participation in local governance in the Wa Municipality is influenced by religious, cultural and financial factors. The study therefore concluded that given the needed financial and institutional support, more women are likely to take active part in local governance in the Municipality.



## CHAPTER THREE

### STUDY AREA AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the general procedures for carrying out the study. First a description of the study area is presented; covering the location and governance with implications on women participation in local government. Other sections of the chapter present the research design, population, sampling procedures, data collection tools and techniques, and the methods of data analysis.

#### 3.2 Study Area

Wa Municipality is one of the eleven Districts/Municipalities that make up the Upper West Region (UWR) of Ghana. (However, at the 2010 Population and Housing Census, there were nine District/Municipalities in the region). Wa District was upgraded to Wa Municipality in 2004 with Legislative Instrument (LI) 1800 in pursuant of the policy of decentralization which started in 1988. Under section 10 of the Local Government Act 1993 (Act 426), the Assembly exercises deliberative, legislative and executive functions in the Municipality. The Wa Municipality shares administrative boundaries with Nadowli District to the north, Wa East District to the east and to the west and the south Wa West Districts. It lies within latitudes 1°40'N to 2°45'N and longitudes 9°32'W to 10°20'W.

Wa Municipality has its capital as Wa, which also serves as the Regional capital of the Upper West Region. It has a land area of approximately 579.86 square kilometres, which is about 6.4% of the Region. The Assembly is empowered as the highest political and administrative body charged with the responsibility of facilitating the implementation of





national policies. Figure 3.1 presents a map depicting the Wa Municipality boundaries and selected major towns.

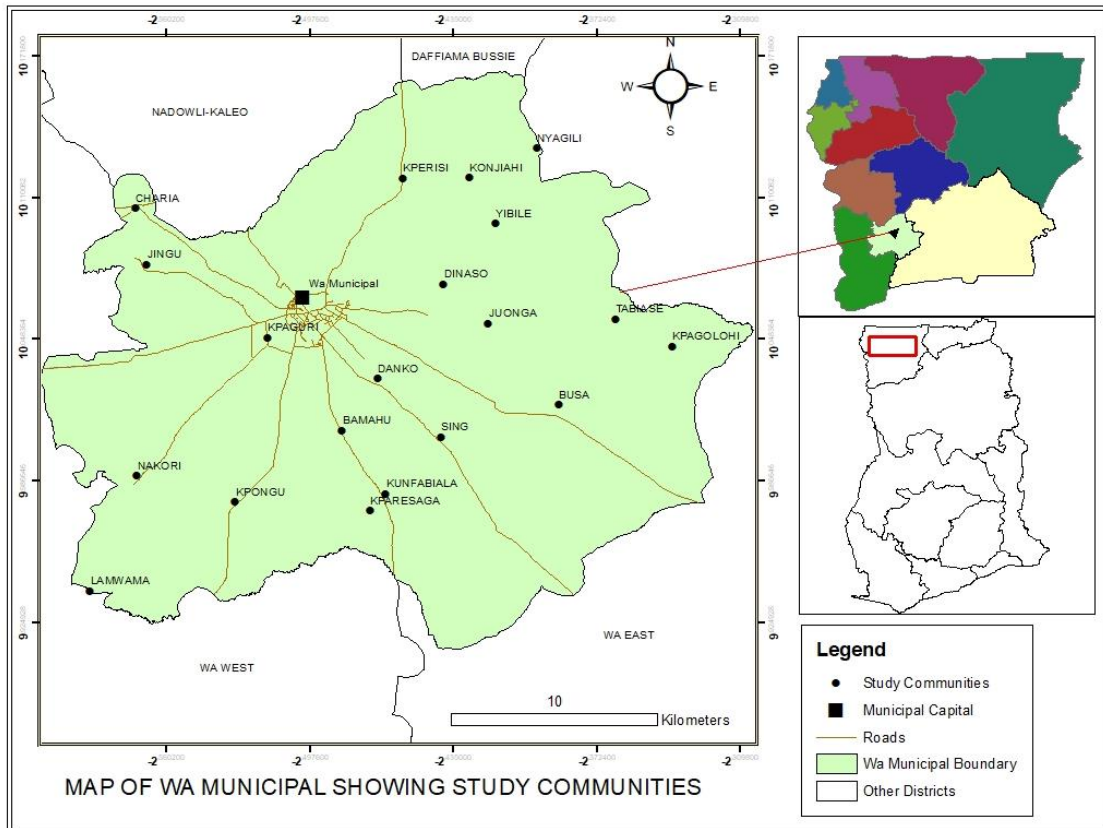


Figure 3. 1: Map of the Study Area (Wa Municipality)

Source: Author's Construct, 2017 based on GSS, 2014

In its quest to promote participatory planning and decision making at the local level, Wa Municipality has five Zonal Councils (Wa, Busa, Kperisi, Kpongou and Boli), and 155 Unit Committees. Each community in the Municipality has a unit committee that works through the Area/Urban Councils to the Assembly level. The Wa Municipality is currently composed of 44 Assembly members (38 males and 6 females): two-thirds are elected and the remaining one-third appointed by the president in consultation with opinion leaders of the Municipality. There are five mandatory sub-committees namely development planning

sub-committee, finance and administration sub-committee, social services sub-committee, works sub-committee and justice and security sub-committee (Ghana Statistical Service, 2017).

### **3.2.1 Population Distribution**

According to the 2010 Population and Housing Census (PHC), the Wa Municipality has a total population of 107,214 (male: 52,996/female: 54,218). This constitutes 15.3% of the total population of the Upper West Region (Ghana Statistical Service, 2010). The growth rate of the Municipality varies between 2.7% for rural and 4% for the urban. There is a growing population density and consequently pressure on land and educational infrastructure. The population structure of the Wa Municipality has a majority of the youth over the aged and females over males (Youth 49%, potential working population 47% and the aged 4%). This means a high dependency ratio since the economically active population is 47% compared to a dependent population of 53%. The population is also a female dominated one, that is, 51% females against 49% males. This brings to fore the need to take measures to improve female education for the growing population.

Over 80.4% of people in the Municipality belong mainly to one linguistic group – the Mole-Dagbani group. The Dagaabas are the most populous. Other ethnic groups found in the Municipality include the Akan, Ewe, Ga, Dagomba, Grunshi, Gonja, Sissala, Moshies who are engaged in government work and commercial activities (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). Children from all these categories of ethnic groups are found in schools. The heterogeneity in the population structure therefore, does not influence gender access gap in education.



### 3.2.2 Religion

There are three main religious denominations in the Municipality; Christianity, Islam and worshipers of the African Traditional Religion. These main groups co-exist well although differences exist among them. All the dominant religious denominations (Islam and Christianity) have their own educational units especially at the basic level so that they can achieve academic excellence under their religious context. Again, this diversity does not breed discrimination in access to education. For instance, Muslim parents are allowed to send their children to Christian schools even if they do not share their belief and the vice versa.

### 3.2.3 Cultural Activities

The Way of life of the people of Wa Municipality is unique. Some of the salient cultural features are:

- Festivals (Zumbenti, Dumba)
- Traditional Dances/Folk songs (Damba, Dugu, Jingo, Gangan, bawa)
- Traditional mud building
- Some aspects of chieftaincy
- Some aspects of religion (Traditional, Christianity and Islam)
- Traditional marriage processes
- Funeral organization

Following acculturation, literacy and globalisation, the negative effect of social and cultural activities on female education are minimizing. The role played by stakeholders in education such as gender activist has convinced society that women can equally play several roles that are played by men in development. Despite all forms of cultural activities



in the Wa Municipality, female enrolment in basic schools keep on improving over the years especially at the entry level. However, drop-out rate remains a challenge to girls' education which may not be independent from the cultural and social life of the people in the Wa Municipality.

### **3.2.4 The Economy of the Municipality**

The economy of the Wa Municipality has been dominated by agricultural activities. However, the situation began to change. In 2010 Population and Housing Census, it came out that the service sector employs about 51.3% of the working population, followed by agriculture 30.2% and industry 18.4% (GSS, 2010). Other key sectors of the economy are transport, tourism, communication and energy.

#### ***Agriculture***

Under the agricultural sector, most of the farmers engaged in peasant cultivation and the main staple crops grown include millet, sorghum, maize, rice, cowpea, and groundnut cultivated on subsistence basis. However, soya beans, groundnuts, bambara beans are produced as cash crops. Animal rearing is done together with other livelihood activities such as crop production (Ghana Statistical Service, 2017).

The state of agricultural production in the Wa Municipality is not different from that found in northern Ghana. In the whole area, about 86% of the population is engaged in agriculture as a source of livelihood dominated by crop production (Inkoom and Nanguo, 2011). Most of the farm enterprises are still dominated by semi-subsistence production of staple crops not suitable for profit maximization strategy (Al-Hassan and Poulton, 2007). As a result,



poverty still predominates as average household annual income remains at US\$65.00 and poverty headcount index was 83.9% in 2006 (Ghana Statistical Service, 2008).

The subsistence farming practiced by households has implications for educational development. The average annual income of households is often small, which is not sufficient in meeting the basic necessities of life (food, shelter and clothing). Poor households therefore, find it difficult in meeting the required educational expenditure. It is, therefore, anticipated that such poor households will rely heavily on government interventions in subsidizing the cost of education.

### **3.2.5 Support Organizations/Institutions**

The Municipal Assembly: The Wa Municipal Assembly has five Zonal Councils (Wa, Busa, Kperisi, Kpongu and Boli) and 73 Unit Committees. Each community in the Municipality has a Unit Committee that works through the Area /Urban Councils to the Assembly level. There are five mandatory sub-committees, namely, development planning, finance and administration, social services, works and justice and security (Ghana Statistical Service, 2017).

The Municipal Assembly coordinates all development activities. It works in collaboration with different organizations to address the felt needs of the people. In the area of education, the Assembly plays a significant role in the implementation of programmes and projects such as provision of educational infrastructure. The Municipal Assembly is a major stakeholder of the GSFP. Its functions include releasing resources and receiving reports during the programmes implementation. Besides, the Assembly design and implement



measures to enhance female enrolment, attendance and retention in school (Ghana Statistical Service, 2017).

**Traditional Authorities:** Traditional Authorities, as part of culture and local administrative set-up play a vital role in generating good governance, particularly in Ghana. The role of the chieftaincy institution relates to matters such as land administration, maintenance of peace and conflict resolution and community revenue mobilisation.

**Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs):** There are a number of NGOs, which operate in the Municipality. Some of these include the United Nations International Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF), World Food Programme (WFP), the Ghana Red Cross Society, Methodist Agricultural Project, The Diocesan Development Office of the Catholic Church, Baptist Agricultural Project, North West Development Agency, Plan International, Ghana Suntaa-Nuntaa etc. The activities of these organizations complement the development efforts of the Municipal Assembly. For example, they provide educational needs for students of poor homes and organize literacy programmes on the need for education. Vulnerable groups such as girls have been their focus and by extension the entirety of the female population in the Municipality.

The NGOs sometimes collaborate with state and local institutions for the achievement of common objectives. For example, they often engage in public education to create households awareness on the role of female education, their inclusion in decision making and the need to benefit from educational interventions such as the GSFP. The success of the GSFP, for instance, will depend on support organisations such as NGOs that are operating in the Wa Municipality (Ghana Statistical Service, 2017).



### 3.2.6 Educational Attainment and Literacy

The Various educational Institutions in the Wa Municipality are; Nurseries (78), Primary Schools (76), Junior High Schools (59), Special Schools (3), Senior High /Tech. (1), Technical /Vocational (4), SHS (6), Nursing Training College (1), Teacher Training College (1), Polytechnic (1), and University (1) (Ghana Statistical Service, 2017). The existence of educational institutions at all levels suggests that girls can have the opportunity of getting access to basic education in the Wa Municipality.

Of the population of up to 11 years and above, 65.2 percent are literates and 34.8 percent are non-literates. The proportion of literate males (74.1%) is higher than that of females (56.7%). It has been found out that six out of ten people (60.7%) indicate they can speak and write both English and Ghanaian Languages. Of the population up to 3 years and above (48,131) in the Municipality, 22.2% has ever attended primary school in the past and 37.0% are currently attending school (Ghana Statistical Service, 2017).

For the country, the proportion of the population that has ever attended school is 61.2 per cent in 2000, (66.9% of males and 59.5% females). This means that the proportions who have never attended school at the national level is 38.8 per cent (33.1% males and 44.5% females). Comparing these national figures with those for Upper West Region, one observes a very wide gap in the educational attainment between the country as a whole and the Region. In the Region, 69.8 per cent of the population, aged 6 years and older, has never attended school (65.1% males and 73.9% females). Data on current enrolment shows that the gap between boys and girls in school attendance is minimal. At the entry point of both primary (74.5% boys and 75.6% girls) and Junior High School (36.4% boys and 36.3% girls) the proportions of boys and girls admitted are about equal, but at every level,



the proportion of girls progressing to the next grade reduces from one grade to the next. This disparity in the region has a replication in the Wa Municipality (Ghana Statistical Service, 2017).

### **3.3 Research Design**

In an attempt to vividly examine the factors that influence women participation in local governance, reasons for women contesting local government elections as candidates or as appointees to represent their electoral areas in the Municipal Assembly and prescribing remedial solutions requires the use of appropriate research approach that facilitates the study.

A research design is the determination and statement of general research or strategy adopted for a particular project (Creswell, 2009; Kumar, 2011). It presents the method of enquiry (basic or applied), the objective (Exploratory, Explanatory, Descriptive, Experimental, Correlational) or approach (quantitative, qualitative or mixed method) [Kumar, 2011]. The design therefore, represents plans and procedures for research that span the decisions from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2014; Neuman, 2014).

This study used cross-sectional survey design to investigate the institutional, religious, socio-economic, psychological factors accounting for the low level of women participation in local governance in the Wa Municipality. The cross-sectional design is flexible, appropriate, efficient, and economical and provides an opportunity for considering many different aspects of a problem (Kothari, 2004; Bhattacharjee, 2012; Neuman, 2014). Again, it merely leads to insights or hypotheses and more flexible enough to permit the





consideration of many different aspects of a phenomenon. The cross-sectional design was therefore, appropriate in studying different issues such as the barriers to women participation in local government, the influence of women social capital on their participation and the kinds of support that influence women participation in local governance process.

This study however, specifically employed a mixed research approach in order to provide an extensive explanation of values, opinions and behaviors that characterized the population under study. Creswell (2014) explains that Qualitative researchers build their patterns, categories, and themes from the bottom up by organizing the data into increasingly more abstract units of information. According to Neuman (2014) the mixed method offers the researcher the opportunity to carry out deeper analysis in that where different approaches can be used to explain a phenomenon it ensures the credibility of the empirical results. The mixed method gives the researcher the opportunity to make good and valid conclusions about the research questions at hand (Creswell, 2014). The mixed method was deemed appropriate for this study because a combination of the qualitative and quantitative approaches in undertaking a single research enables each methodology to complement the other, thereby ensuring a formidable research design and strengthen the validity and reliability of the findings (Neuman, 2014). The mixed method also eliminates bias and neutralized the weaknesses associated with the qualitative or quantitative method (Creswell, 2014).



### 3.4 Sampling and Sampling Procedure

#### 3.4.1 Study population

The population in this study includes all electorates (eligible voters) in the electoral areas of the Wa Municipality. This includes people in political positions such as the Member of Parliament, Assembly members, Unit Committee members and persons who generally are not representatives of the local government structures.

First, the 31 electoral areas constituted the study area where respondents were drawn for the study. The units of analysis constituted assembly members, unit committees, women who have ever contested the position of assembly persons, women appointed members of the assembly and women electorates in the Wa Municipality.

#### 3.4.4 Sample size determination

The procedure for selecting the Assembly members and Unit Committee members followed a statistical procedure proposed by Miller and Brewer (2003) for sample size determination specified as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n = sample size; N= sample frame and e = error or significance level.

According to Ahuja (2001), an acceptable error level traditionally is up to  $\pm 0.05$  or  $\pm 0.10$  (i.e., 5 or 10 percentage point).

#### *Selection of Assembly members*

In this study, N = 44 and e = 10% = 0.1. Therefore,

$$n = \frac{44}{1 + 44(0.1)^2} = 30$$



*Selection of Unit Committee members*

In this study, N = 155 and e = 10% = 0.1. Therefore,

$$n = \frac{155}{1+155(0.1)^2} = 61$$

Table 3. 1: Sampling distribution of respondents

Target Population	Sampling Technique	Sample Size
Assembly members	Simple random	30
Unit Committee members	Simple random	61
Non-contested women	Convenience	89
<b>Total</b>		<b>180</b>
<b>Key Informants</b>		
The past and current members of parliament	Purposive	2
Municipal Chief Executive	Purposive	1
Gender Desk Officer	Purposive	1
Contested women	Purposive	2

Source: Author’s construction (2017)

The study is based on a sample size of 180 respondents. It includes 30 assembly members, 61 unit Committee members, 89 non-contested women from the selected electoral areas (5 from each), 2 women who contested and lost, 2 members of parliament (both past and present), the Municipal Chief Executive and Gender Desk Officer constituted the key informants for the survey.

**3.4.5 Sampling techniques**

Both probability and non-probability sampling procedures were used in the study. The types of probability sampling techniques included simple random sampling and stratified



sampling. On the other hand the non-probability sampling procedures were basically purposive and convenient sampling.

### ***Simple Random Sampling***

This method was used to randomly select 15 electoral areas out of 31 to constitute the sample for the study. The selection of 15 electoral areas represented almost 50.0% of the sample frame. According to Sarantakos (1979), this technique gives all elements of the target population equal chance of being selected. A random number table was used so that each electoral area in the Municipality had the same probability of being selected as sample for the study.

### ***Stratified Sampling***

A stratified sampling technique was employed in the selection of respondents from the various electoral areas based on the homogeneity of the communities. The researcher first classified the population into sub-population (strata) on the basis of supplementary information. After the stratification, the researcher draws a random sample from each stratum. In stratified sampling according to Neuman (2014), it's the duty of the researcher to control the size of each stratum, rather than letting random processes control it. This guarantees the representativeness of different strata within a sample. In this study, the selected electoral areas were stratified into Assembly members, and Unit Committee members. The availability of a comprehensive sampling frame for both the Assembly members and Unit Committee members permitted the use of simple random sampling procedure in selection.



### ***Non-Probability Sampling***

As a non-probability sampling technique, selection of respondents is not done by chance. The units of analysis are selected based on predetermined information or ease of accessibility (Kumar, 2011). The selection of respondents when using this technique does not necessarily require the use of statistical procedure. Two main non-probability sampling techniques were used in this study: purposive sampling and convenience sampling.

First, purposive sampling was used to select respondents who have adequate knowledge on issues of the study. Twumasi (1996) used purposive sampling to mean, selection of units based on their in-depth knowledge on the subject under investigation. This group comprises 5 respondents, among them include the Municipal Chief Executive, Presiding Member, Gender desk Officer and all the 14 women who contested but lost the elections. These respondents were selected to respond to the questions because they have knowledge on the issues and can answer the questions.

Secondly, 5 ordinary women who are literate were selected from each of the selected electoral areas. The purpose for adding this group of respondents is to gather evidence from potential women who could participate in local governance in the Wa Municipality. Past studies have revealed that women who were found to have engaged in politics in different places including Ghana are literate. Besides, the lack of a comprehensive sampling frame for this category of respondents precludes the use of random process in their selection.



### **3.5 Types and Sources of Data**

#### **3.5.1 Primary data**

Primary data were gathered directly for the survey from respondents. This consists of the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents, and the factors influencing women participation in local governance in the Wa Municipality.

#### **3.5.2 Secondary data**

Secondary data were obtained from the Wa Municipal Assembly, the Nation Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) and Action Aid International to support the primary data.

### **3.6 Data Collection Techniques and Instruments**

Data on the perception of women in politics, socio-economic and political constraints that prevent women from participating in local governance and the factors that influence their election or appointment in local governance were obtained through primary sources. The instruments used in the data collection included a questionnaire and an interview guide.

#### **3.6.1 Questionnaire**

Semi-structured questionnaire were designed and used in the collection of data. Open ended and close ended questions were used to gather information from respondents. The major theme of the questionnaire was focused on factors that account for women's participation in local governance and the challenges that confronts women's election or appointment into the Wa Municipal Assembly. According to Kumekpor (2002), a questionnaire is simply a document containing questions and other types of items such as statements designed to solicit information on specific issues, themes, problems or opinions to be investigated. This is a method of data collection where formal questions are framed



and written down for respondents to provide answers to. Questionnaires are relatively quick and easy to understand by using codes. Besides, the researcher was able to contact a large number of respondents quickly, easily and efficiently using a questionnaire, once the targeted group had been identified. This justifies the use of questionnaires in this study.

### **3.6.2 Interviews**

Semi-structured interviews were conducted for women who have never contested local government election in their electoral areas to solicit their views on their inability to contest, challenges and the way forward to increasing women participation and representation in local government. Additionally, the past and present members of parliament for the Wa central constituency, including two women who contested to become Assemble Women for their electoral areas but lost as well as one Assembly Woman who won the last District Assembly election and is currently representing her people (Konta Electoral Area), and the Gend Desk Officer of Wa Municipal constituted the key informant of the study. Face-to-Face interview is the most commonly used technique for conducting a systematic inquiry and most social researchers regard it as a window on the world (Holstein and Gubrium, 1999). It enables the research to ascertain the inner feelings of the respondents.

### **3.7 Data Processing and Analysis**

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to analyze the data. Data gathered with a questionnaire was coded and entered into the SPSS spread sheet where further transformation was done on issues identified. Descriptive statistics was used to describe and analyze data collected respectively. The outcome of the interviews was analysed,



classified into themes and discussed. Various conclusions were drawn from the findings of the study.

### **3.8 Ethical Considerations**

The study took into consideration all ethical issues considered in any objective social research. The study sought the consent of the respondents by allowing them to fill the consent form through which they agreed on the terms of the research and they were given the assurance that the research was purely for academic work. Also, nothing material was given to the respondents to induce their responses to the questionnaire thus allowing them to choose either to respond or not to respond to the questions. For the institutions concerned, letters were written to seek their permission to interview their staff and this exercise was only carried out after the clearance was given.





## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the analyses of the data collected from the field. It covers the demographic characteristics of respondents, women participation in local governance, resource mobilization efforts of the assembly persons. It also looks at the role of social capital in enhancing the success of women in winning or losing local elections.

#### 4.2 Demographic Information

This section reports the demographic characteristics of respondents who consist of the Assembly members, the Unit Committee members, non-contested women in the various electoral areas, and contested women in previous local level elections. The demographic characteristics examined were age, marital status, educational background and occupation of respondents. This demographic information was included to highlight the kind respondents who were involved in local governance and how these demographics influence women participation in local governance.

##### 4.2.1 Age of Respondents

Age of the respondents was included in the analysis of the demographic characteristics of respondents. The ages of respondents were categorized into intervals which include those within 18-24 years, 25-35 years, 36-44 years, 45-59 years, and those above 60 years. The age distribution of respondents is shown in Table 4.1.



Table 4. 1: Age Distribution of Respondents

Year	Frequency	Percent
18-24	18	10
25-35	29	16.1
36-44	74	41.1
45-59	46	25.6
60+	13	7.2
Total	180	100

Source: Field Survey, 2017

The results in Table 4.1 Show that majority (74) respondents (41.1%) were between 36 to 44 years. About 25% of the respondents were between 45 to 59 years while less than 10% were under 35 years. Although the youth has been described as the vibrant human resource, the youth were under represented in the sample. Different explanations can be given to this observation. For instance, one of the respondents between 36 to 44 years remarked that: ageism is among the several reasons marginalizing the participation of young women.

*“Culturally, young women are unexpected to hold positions of authority/leadership and therefore not encouraged to engage in activities that will catapult them into visibility”, a respondent said.*

Beyond being marginalized by sex, young women also face a daunting task of overcoming the cultural values frowning on their involvement in politics.



#### 4.2.2 Sex of respondents

Table 4.2 shows the sex composition of the respondents. It indicates that, 91 respondents were males representing 51% and 89 were females representing 49%. Males and Females were given equal chances of being selected to the questionnaire.

Table 4. 2: Sex Composition of Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percent (%)
Male	91	51.0
Female	89	49.0
Total	180	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2017

#### 4.2.3 Marital status of respondents

The survey results revealed that the respondents have different categories of marital status. Among them include those that have married, single, widowed, divorced and separated. The results revealed that majority of them are currently married and stayed with their spouses. The distribution on respondents' marital status is shown in Table 4.3.



Table 4. 3: Marital Status of Respondents

Age Range	Total	Frequency		Total (%)	Percentage (%)	
		Male	Female		Male	Female
Married	124	64	60	66.7	71.1	66.7
Single	44	21	23	24.4	23.3	25.6
Widow	6	1	5	3.3	1.1	5.6
Divorced	4	3	1	2.2	3.3	1.1
Separated	2	1	1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Total	180	90	90	180	100	100

Source: Field Survey, 2017

The study revealed that, 66.7% of the respondents were married. However, there were more married men (71.1%) than women (66.7%) in the municipality who constituted the sample population. Marriage is an important and revered social institution in Africa. It serves as a tool for ensuring social reproduction, rising of families, socializing children and caring for the sick and elderly. Because of these roles associated with marriage, it is sometimes argued that women's participation outside the domestic space is restricted since women carryout most of these responsibilities. Therefore, women who participate in politics are mostly likely to be unmarried, divorced or single mothers. Marriage has its associated ramifications as far as women and politics is concern. Married women are sometimes prevented by their husbands from fully participating in politics based of the negative perception African societies have about women in politics (Odame, 2010). Thus, married women in the Wa Municipality are like to face such limitation.



This implies that, despite the Municipality being a polygamous society, women being the majority have about 23.3% compared to just 25% of men being single as illustrated in Table 4.3.

#### 4.2.4 Main occupation of respondents

The main occupation of the respondents was included in the analysis of demographic characteristics. It was revealed that the respondents indulged in different occupations such as farming, trading, teaching, artisan, administration, accounting, politics, nursing and students. The distribution of respondents' occupations is shown in Figure 4.1.

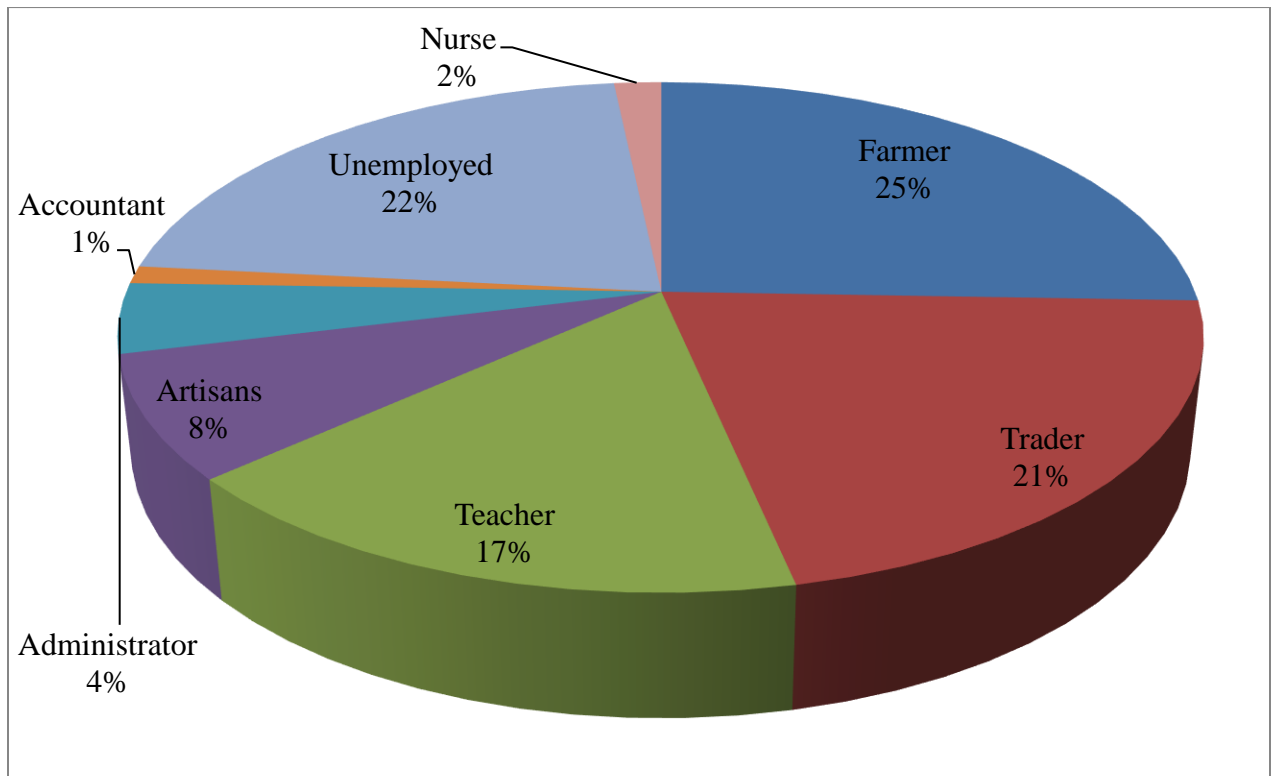


Figure 4. 1: Occupational Distributions of Respondents

Field Survey, 2017



Figure 4.1 presents the occupational distribution of respondents. It was deduced that men and women differed most in the choice of occupation. There were no women artisans and administrators compared to 11.7% and 3.3% of men in those occupations respectively. Also, there were more male teachers (30% against 18.3% females), farmers (15% against 11.7% females) accountants (5% against 1.7% females) and unemployed (6.7% against 3.3% females). However, women turn to dominate as petty traders (51.7% against 12.7% males) and nurses (6.7% against 3.3% males). The employment status of the respondents has several implications on their participation in local governance. It makes the financially sound and resourceful to campaign for more votes. However, the kind of job a woman does, particularly, if it is time consuming has the tendency of limiting her to fully take up key positions in politics.

#### **4.2.5 Level of Education**

The educational status of respondents is presented in Table 4.4. A total of 21 representing 11.7% of the sample population do not obtain any form of formal education. Also, 10% attained primary education, 22.2% attained JHS/MSCL (45%). The distribution of other educational level attained are as follows: O level/ A level/SHS (17.8%), Technical/Vocational Skills (6.7%) and Post Sec/ Nursing (30%).



Table 4. 4: Educational Level Attained

Level of Formal Education	Total Freq.	% Total	Male Freq.	Female Freq.	Male %	Female %	Total %
None	21	11.7	7	14	33.3	66.7	100%
Primary	18	10.0	14	4	77.8	22.2	100%
JHS/MSCL	40	22.2	30	10	75	25	100%
O'Level,A' Level/SHS	32	17.8	20	12	62.5	37.5	100%
Tech/Voc	12	6.7	8	4	66.7	33.3	100%
Post Sec/Nursing	54	30.0	44	10	81.5	18.5	100%
Other Prof. Level	3	1.7	2	1	66.7	33.3	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2017

The results reflect low level of educational attainment among women in the Wa Municipality. Education gives the individual to voice to community at all levels, thus women in the Wa Municipality lack the voice to actively and effectively communicate in the political sphere. This could lead to women marginalization in decision making at the local level. This is in line with McLendon and Edding (2002) argument that education enhances women's participation in politics and economic activities. Similar findings were gathered in Bangladesh by Ahmed (2000) in which the introduction of Non-Formal Education for women led to their visibility in the family and in social affairs.

#### 4.3 Level of Women's Participation in Local Governance in Wa Municipality

This section captures the participation of women in local governance in the Wa municipality. It covers women's participation at the municipal, zonal councils and unit committee's levels.



#### **4.3.1 Women's Participation in the Wa Municipal Assembly**

Popular participation in the decentralization drive is the main focus of local governance in Ghana. However, the level of women involvement in the Wa Municipal Assembly as both elected and appointed members has been persistently low. A total of 86.4% of the assembly persons in the Municipality are men with only six women constituting 13.6% of the whole assembly. This revelation suggests that the level of women's participation in the local governance structures in the Wa Municipality does not represent equal proportion of men and women. The finding therefore, suggests that women are not motivated to participate in politics or are associated with institutional barriers to take part in political activities.

#### **4.3.2 Women's Participation in the Zonal Councils and Unit Committee**

The level of women participation in the decentralized sub-structures of the Wa Municipality is represented in Table 4.5. The 15 sampled electoral areas have a unit committee membership of 5 each. The results revealed that a total of 93.3% of the total membership of the unit committees were men with women constituting only 6.7%.





Table 4. 5: Membership of Unit Committee in Wa Municipality

Electoral Area	Total	Frequency		Total (%)	Percentage (%)	
		Male	Female		Male	Female
Nayiri/Limanyiri	5	5	-	7	7.1	-
Zongo	5	4	1	7	5.7	1.3
Konta	5	4	1	7	5.7	1.3
Busa	5	5	-	7	7.1	-
Kambali	5	5	-	7	7.1	-
Degu	5	5	-	7	7.1	-
Dobile	5	4	1	7	5.7	1.3
Dokpong	5	5	-	7	7.1	-
Tagrayiri	5	4	1	7	5.7	1.3
Kpongu	5	4	1	7	5.7	1.3
Dandafuru	5	5	-	7	7.1	-
Nakore	5	5	-	7	7.1	-
Kpaguri	5	5	-	7	7.1	-
Dondoli	5	5	-	7	7.1	-
Nayiri Fifamuni	5	5	-	7	7.1	-
Total	75	70	5	100	93.33	6.67

Source: Field Survey, 2017



Table 4.5 shows that more men (63.3%) have the opportunity to participate in politics women (41.4%) Several factors including lack of interest among women, or women are faced by some challenges in participating in politics.

Further analysis was therefore, done to examine the relatively low participation in politics among the women. This was done by asking the 75 respondents consisting of women in the various electoral areas the factors influence their participation in politics. It was discovered that financial constraints (62%), high illiteracy rate among women (17%) lack of motivation and inferiority complex (30%), time constraints (12%) and society's perception (23%) are major constraints faced by women. The distribution is shown in Figure 4.3. These constraints constitute intervention areas if women's participation in local governance is to be improved

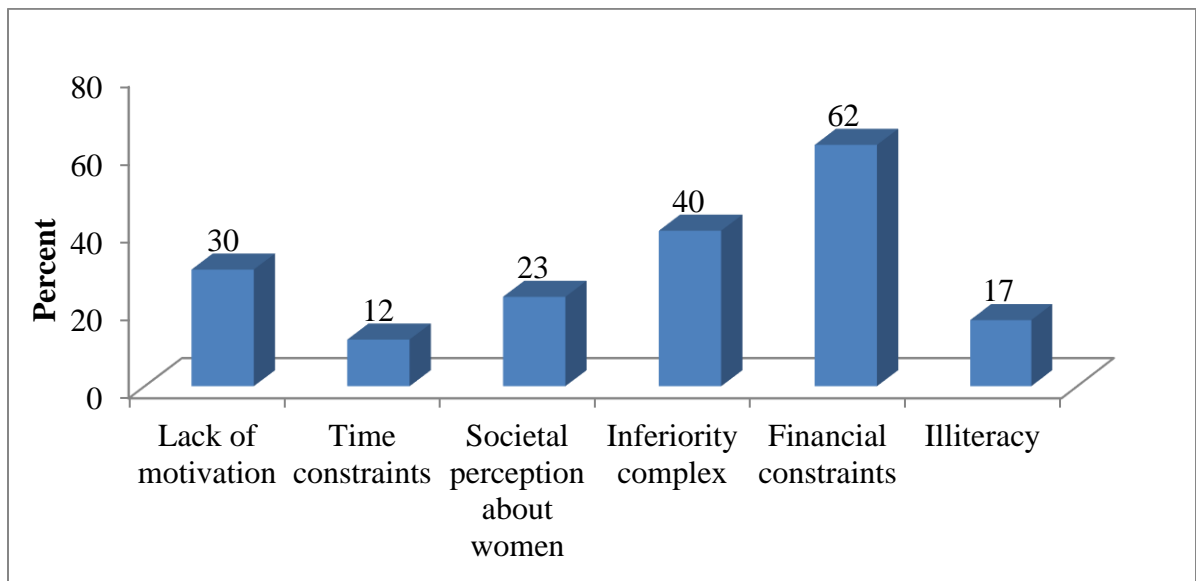


Figure 4. 2: Reasons why women do not stand for Assembly elections

Source: Field Survey, 2017

The results suggest that financial constraints dominate the reasons given for not participating in politics. This means political activities in the Wa Municipality are influenced by financial resources. Besides, the fact that inferiority complex, social perception and lack of motivation appeared as a major constraints for non-involvement in politics suggests that the people/culture of the Wa Municipality does not value women leadership in their society. Hence women participation can only be enhanced through attitudinal change.

#### **4.4 Challenges/Barriers to Women's Participation in Local Governance in Wa Municipality**

The focus of this section is on the challenges that women encounter in their bid to participate in local governance and the ways to promote women's participation in local governance in the Wa Municipality.

##### **4.4.1 Barriers to women participation in local governance**

The results in Table 4.6 show that religious/cultural factors (37.2%) is the major barrier to women participation in the Wa Municipality. Though other factors significantly serve as barriers to Women participation in the Wa Municipality, constitutional discrimination was found to be the least factor impeding women participation in local governance in the Wa Municipality. This finding is in tandem with the findings of Arthur et al. (2016) who found religions/cultural, social and financial factors as barriers to women participation in local level politics in the Wa Municipality. Furthermore, the findings of the study confirms the findings of Odame (2010) and Ohene-Konadu (2001)



Table 4. 6: Barriers to Women’s Participation

Barrier	Frequency	Percent
Religious/Cultural factors	67	37.2
Political violence	45	25
Lack of confidence	25	13.8
Limited political funding	20	11.1
Male Dominance over females	55	30.5
Labeling	21	11.6
Constitutional discrimination	7	3.8

Source: Field Survey (2017) *Multiple responses were considered*

Interviews with key informants on the barriers to women participation in local governance further supported these findings. A stand point that was generally held by the respondents was the pervasive perception in society that the female is incompetent. Some of the respondents recounted women being labeled as incompetent when they were appointed into local government or executive positions in government. They repeatedly faced the daunting challenge of proving to society that they were not incompetent. As a respondents indicated, “women were not accorded that positive platform like men and therefore felt marginalized”.

Respondents who had participated in politics and were appointed to key committees in the District Assembly indicated how the media over sexualized women in their discussions to the extent that the personalities of women were equated to their abilities to perform on the job. This prejudice against women undermines their capacity in terms of academic qualification, work experience, and ability to think logically and take independent



decisions. As Gidengil (2003) pointed out, the media is very significant in defining ethics and stereotypes of women political candidates. This is what a former Municipal Chief Executive had to say about the media:

*Instead of the media being progressive and supportive in terms of educating the public on the participation of women in politics, the media is a reflection of society and they also expound conservative ideas. You know un-liberated society means un-liberated media. The media end-up cultivating or perpetrating the stereotypes society has about women in politics (In-depth interview, September, 2017).*

#### **4.4.2 Male dominance over females**

A situation where men hold primary power, and dominate in political leadership came out visibly during the survey. At the party level, although respondents agreed that the creation of women wings within the structure of the political parties did not limit their horizon to such positions alone, they felt that indirectly, women were being told to concentrate on such reserved positions within the party structure. Their argument was against the backdrop that very few women or none at all are elected into executive positions within the party structure apart from the specific roles created for them. This is explained by the male dominance among the electorates of the various political parties. This also highlights an interesting twist to the motive behind some affirmative action policies.

Clearly, respondents indicated that even though the manifest intent of creating women wings is to help increase the number of women assembly persons in local governance, the latent objective is to restrict them to positions with little influence. A respondent views were captured as follows:



*“The gender stratification of positions within the local government and party structure is unfavorable for women across all the political parties in the Municipality. Positions like Municipal chief executive, presiding member, regional chairman, secretary among others are seen as positions for men; the best role women could get within the local government structure is to deputize a substantive male officer, a role with marginal influence within the structure”.*

Another important reason that came out of the discussions was ageism where young women compared to young men are seen to be unfit regardless of their qualifications. This view was expressed by a key informant. The open disapproval of young women in politics continues to reinforce the endemic prejudices against women.

It is obvious that the issue of discrimination against the female gender is not limited to the power blocs within the political circles but extends to important institutions like the media and the cultural orientation of majority of Ghanaians including women themselves. According to one respondent, the nature of socialization that is passed down to the younger ones is such that everyone is made to believe men should naturally be in leadership positions while females remain at the core of domestic work.

#### **4.4.3 Constitutional Discrimination**

Respondents who had participated in grassroots politics, contested parliamentary elections but failed to win their seats were very emphatic that the 1992 Ghanaian constitution discriminates in some respect against non-MPs. The respondents quoted article 78 clauses 1 and 3 of the 1992 constitution to buttress their point. Article 78(1) reads:



*“ministers of state shall be appointed by the President with the prior approval of parliament from among Members of Parliament or persons qualified to be elected as Members of Parliament, except that the majority of ministers of state shall be appointed from among members of parliament”*. In article 78 clause 3, it continues: *“a minister of state shall not hold any other office of profit or emolument whether private or public and whether directly or indirectly unless otherwise permitted by the Speaker acting on the recommendations of a committee of Parliament on the ground, 3(a) that holding that office will not prejudice the work of a minister”*.

These provisions in the views of the respondents impose some restrictions on getting more women in the executive arm of government. Their argument was that because there is already disproportionate representation of women in parliament, that constitutional provision tend to favour majority of men than women. While article 78 clause 1 which is the provision relating to the appointment of ministers of state is not in itself discriminatory against women, it limits the executive powers of the Presidents to reach out to the majority of women who are outside parliament. The respondents further stated that the fact the constitution says a minister of state shall not hold another public or private but tends to grant powers to the Speaker to allow MPs to be appointed as ministers is in itself discriminatory and women are the worse hit.

Notwithstanding, one respondent remarked that intra party power blocs impose some challenge on the President in honoring his commitment of increasing women appointees. She said: *“my appointment into government was not without dogmatic opposition by some cabal within the party. But the President stood his grounds”*.



On the other hand, respondents who doubled as MPs and Ministers at the same time also argued that, although being an MP should place them on equal footing with their male counterparts in terms of getting a ministerial appointment, certain ministries are seen as male controlled ministries. Names of ministries that were mentioned during the interviews are: Interior Ministry, Ministry of Defense, Energy Ministry and the Ministry of Communications.

As recounted by a respondent, *“when we were lobbying for ministerial appointments, certain ministries were earmarked as anti-women ministries and so, we did not even think of them. Moreover, because there are more men in parliament than women, even the female tagged ministries are intensely being lobbied by the men too”*. The mere perception created that women are not fit for certain ministries and whereby coincidentally, no woman has ever been appointed to these ministries means that patriarchy is still a structural problem even in our democracy.

#### **4.4.4 Political Funding**

At the electoral level, it was found that women are unable to compete on the same level with men due to limited financial resources, lack of interest among majority of women and the violent nature of multi-party democracy in Ghana. Because assembly members are not funded in Ghana, all respondents who participated in elective politics at the local level expressed deep concerns on the expensive nature of running a political campaign or raising money for nomination fees. They argued that where women do not have the financial muscle or incapable of identifying and/or mobilizing funding strings, they are unable to prosecute an effective campaign within the electoral areas to contest. A respondent had this to say about funding:





*Local governance elections demand campaigning and it is quite empirical that the bigger your pocket the more likely your chances of being elected. The people have more confidence in you because you are able to solve some of their immediate problems before you go for the elections and most women are relatively poor because they are not employed in both formal and informal sectors like men. And even where all candidates go looking for money, such places are usually controlled by men too and thus undue sexual demands are being made of you in order to access this funding. This is a challenge women face.*

Interestingly, even respondents in the category of non-elective political roles (those who have not contested elections) also cited political funding as a major concern that threatens the future involvement of women in local governance. In a remark, one of them said:

*Our politics and for that matter local governance elections has become so money inducing such that if you campaign only on ideas which should be the ideal case, you are not taken seriously. One of the reasons why this is happening is because we have a large illiterate population who do not appreciate issue-based campaign because they see the campaign season as the time to get paid for voting. This is how our assembly elections have become.*

Assembly members who were interviewed pointed out that the filing fees for seeking assembly election was not the real challenge for them. Instead they argued that because electorates within the communities/electoral areas, they tend to rely heavily on aspirants for financial support. This imposes a lot of financial burden on aspirants because you are expected to milk the mouths of so many electorates sometimes in order to win their support. One of the assemblymen had this to say: “*everywhere you visit; at the electoral area,*



*electorates look up to you for financial inducements and you have to give, otherwise you risk losing the election. Women who cannot give out money eventually lose out”.*

#### **4.4.5 Assertiveness**

It was also observed that lack of self confidence among some women affected their desire to participate in local governance. Generally, all respondents attributed the level of education among women as an inhibiting factor contributing to lack of assertiveness and their effective involvement in local governance.

#### **4.4.6 Political Violence**

The respondents also added that even those who are educated, a lot of them stay away from politics/local governance due to the violent nature of multi-party politics in Ghana. To them, the denigration, insults and name calling affect their self-esteem and only courage and determination motivate them to be in politics.

#### **4.4.7 Cultural Factors**

Apart from the funding, respondents argued that elections confer an element of authority on people when they win elections and because traditionally women are not encouraged or supported outside the domestic space, where there is power, authority and leadership even in our traditional environments, those areas are seen as male dominated field. A key informant posited that *“women who are now breaking the glass ceiling and venturing into politics are viewed as morally bankrupt because they hang around male politicians. This labeling coupled with the obsession men have towards marrying women politicians discourages so many women from showing interest in politics”*. Since marriage is a cultural expectation by society for one to be accepted and recognized, women who are desirous of getting married sacrifice their political interest in order to fulfill that cultural expectation.



#### **4.5 Perceptions on Women Involvement in Local Governance**

This section focuses on the perspectives of respondents on women's involvement in local governance level decision making. It covers the perception of the assembly persons on women's involvement in local governance, effectiveness of women assembly members in mobilizing resources, the contribution of women to development, the impact of assembly women to the development of the Municipality and the desire of people to contest future local level elections.

##### **4.5.1 Perception of Assembly Persons on Women Involvement in Local Governance.**

As to whether or not women should be involved in local governance, all respondents (100%) were in favor of women's involvement in local governance in the Municipality. This fairly reflects the perception of the Assembly persons with respect to women's participation in local governance level decision making. It is important to state that the 100% affirmation of the necessity of women's participation in local level decision making pertains to the assembly persons, who already knew the importance of women's participation in local government.

##### **4.5.2 Perception on whether Women Involvement Can Influence Effective mobilization of Resource for the Development of their Electoral Areas.**

The respondents expressed their views on rating the effectiveness of assembly women in mobilizing resources for the development of the electoral areas in the Wa Municipality. About, 25% of the respondents indicated that the assembly women can be very effective in resource mobilization drive. This suggests that majority of the respondents do not have confidence in women potentials in transforming the development activities of their respective electoral areas. However, the only assemblywoman whose effort in the resource



mobilization drive was duly acknowledged by all the assembly persons was the Konta Assemblywoman popularly called ‘Madam Talk true’. An assemblyman interviewed in connection with assemblywomen role in resource mobilization at the Wa Municipal Assembly had this to say: *“You know the nature of politics in our part of the country does not give enough room for women to excel especially when men are competing with them. Thus, the few women who had the opportunity to represent their people are not able to express themselves freely at the assembly meetings. It is only the Konta Assemblywoman whom we even called ‘Madam Talk True’ that is proactive. Hence, her contribution in all sectors of the assembly is significant.* This is an indication that, women assembly persons can make great impacts on the development discourse of their electoral areas, if given the opportunity.

#### **4.5.3 Ways to Promote Women’s Participation in Local Governance in Wa Municipality**

Respondents indicated strategies to be adopted by institutions towards promoting women’s participation in local level decision-making. It shows that 16.3% of the respondents insisted on women education. Out of which 17.3% were males and 15.3% females. Other strategies identified were economic empowerment (15.7%) representing 17.0% males and 15.3% females, encouragement/confidence building (15.7%) of which 16.4% were males and 15.1% females. Females turned to dominate in indicating credit/loans (15.3% against 12.3% males) and abolishing of bad cultural practices (13.6% against 9.4% males). This implies that, Narayan (2005) and Brohmans (1996) identification of credit/ soft loan conforms to the perspective of the respondents (14.0%), as well as Ofei-Aboagye *et al.* (2007), organizing workshops and seminars for women (12.7%) was also suggested.

## **4.6 Opportunities to Increase Participation of Women in Local Governance**

Increasing women participation in local governance is not an impossible task. Despite the several challenges women faced in participating in politics, respondents for this study believed that the trend can be reversed through change in attitude and the right policy framework.

### **4.6.1 Adopting Affirmative Action**

All respondents subscribed to the adoption of a national affirmation action policy in favour of women especially in critical positions. They proposed a quota system where a specific percentage of appointments will be reserved for qualified women. As observed by Jones (1996), quota system is used as an immediate strategy for correcting the imbalances in political representation. Writing on the intent of quota system, Aggio (2001) states that quota system was used to increase women participation in politics and the inherent assumption was that increased number of women will translate into having influence on policy and correcting the inequalities women face.

### **4.6.2 Funding Women Politicians**

The expensive nature of multiparty democracy is affecting the participation of poor political aspirants, majority of whom, are women. To financially empower women to compete on equal footing with their male counterparts, respondents proposed state funding for women politicians. Apart from the proposal for a national fund, they are also asking political parties to scrap nomination fees for women. They believe that when these measures are taken in consideration, more women who otherwise have been constrained by financial resources will avail themselves for political activities.



#### **4.6.3 Building Political Capacity of Women**

According to respondents, formal education is not enough to build the confidence of women to participate in national politics. To fully empower women, respondents think there is the need for state institutions like the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), the Electoral Commission (EC) and other civil society organizations like Institute for Economic Affairs (IEA) and Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG) to hold series of capacity building workshops for women aspirants. They also suggested that government should take advantage of the 30% quota at the district assembly level to appoint more women to the assemblies. According to them, this will help to prepare women for national politics as well as enrich their political experience to effectively influence policy through constructive contributions.

#### **4.6.4 Orientation of the Media**

As a tool for education, information and entertainment, respondents suggested a reorientation of the media because they feel the media does not discharge its traditional ascribed roles. The Members of Parliament for Wa central constituency (past and present) expressed strong views about the anti-women campaign being run by some journalists on the media and other platforms. In their views, media organizations should be the channels through which issues about women will be promoted. But most at times, the media tend to attack the personalities of women instead of highlighting the historical roles women have played and how they can contribute to the current development efforts and the democratization process. This is what a respondent had to say:

*The media shapes the opinion of a lot of people in society through its programming and content. For instance, because the FM radio has a large audience, whatever is*



*discussed can have some influence on people's perception towards women. Today there are a lot of community FM radios with programmes in the local language, so the audiences follow keenly what is being discussed. A cultural shift in terms of media posturing towards women need to change because that in itself has the tendency of discouraging women who are nursing ambitions to participate in national politics (In-depth interview, September, 2017).*

#### **4.7 Support for Women's Participation in Local Governance**

This section covers the structural support available for women to participate in local governance. Institutions (Government and Non-Governmental Organization) that support women participation in politics were assessed.

##### **4.7.1 The Role of NCCE in Promoting Women's Participation in Local Governance**

The facilitating role of National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) in promoting women's participation in local governance in the municipality was assessed. The commission's mandate according to the Gender Desk Officer of the Wa Municipal Assembly is to provide effective strategies and training in supporting women to actively participate and contest local level elections.

The NCCE employed various strategies to enhance the participation of women in local governance in Wa Municipality. The assembly women and those who contested and lost confirmed the following strategies as employed by NCCE in supporting women to contest local governance election. These strategies include:

- Organizing meetings with women groups to sensitize them on their rights and responsibilities as citizens including those relate to politics

- Organizing meetings with school girls to educate them on important issues that affect their lives
- Sensitization of men on the need for women empowerment be it political, economic and social
- Organizing of seminars and workshops with women groups and women contestants
- Focus group discussion.

In summary, the NCCE support mechanism for women appears to be ineffective due to the high rate of women illiteracy. This makes sensitization difficult; increased apathy resulting in absence of women from meetings and seminars organized to empower them. Inadequate logistics and personnel's to move closer and frequently to women and cultural biases of the people militate against the promotional drive of the commission.

#### **4.7.2 The role of Non-Governmental Organizations-Action Aid Ghana Upper West Local Rights Programme**

Action Aid Ghana is a subsidiary of Action Aid International, a Non-Governmental Organization working to improve the welfare of women and girls. Action aid began operating in Ghana in the early 1990s, and now works with more than one million people living in 279 communities in the Upper East, Upper West, Northern, Brong Ahafo, Volta and Greater Accra Regions. Action Aid Ghana supports the basic needs and rights of the poor. Action Aid Ghana uses a rights based approach (that is working within the human rights framework) to development. In its thematic area of women's rights, Action Aid focused on women in leadership, violence against girls and women economic empowerment.





The Upper West Local Rights Programme of Action Aid Ghana has created various support windows in support of women participation in local level elections. Since 2000, Action Aid has supported 80 women candidates participating in district assembly elections. Below are the support pathways for women who aspire to contest for district assembly elections in the Wa Municipality:

- Capacity building support for women who intend to contest district assembly election
- Printing of poster for aspiring assemblywomen
- Formed, trained and support the regional caucus of assemblywomen
- Annual meetings and reviews to support women strategies to contest district assembly election.

In addition, Action Aid also lobbied with the various district assemblies to appoint women into district assemblies as part of the 30% reserve positions for women. Despite this move, it was revealed that none of the 11 districts of the Upper West Region have met the required 30%

#### **4.8 Conclusion**

This chapter discussed and analysed the results of the study using secondary and primary data obtained for the field. Issues pertaining to women participation in local governance in the Wa Municipal Assembly were discussed. Tables and figures, and direct quotations were used to analyse the data.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter contains the summary major findings of the study and draws conclusions from therein. The findings are presented, conclusions drawn and general recommendations proposed on how to improve women participation in local governance. It's worth mentioning that both primary and secondary data have been used in the work leading to some of the findings obtained

#### 5.2 Major Findings and Conclusions

##### 5.2.1 Level of Women Participation in local Governance in the Wa Municipality

Out of 31 elected Assembly persons in the Municipality, only 1 of them is a woman. Also, out of the 13 appointed members of the Assembly, 5 are women, constituting 23% which falls short of the 30% reserve position for women. Also, 93.3% of the total memberships of the unit committees in the Municipality are men with women constituting only 6.8%.

This revealed the level of women participation in local governance in the Wa Municipality to be marginal.

##### 5.2.2 Challenges/Barriers to Women's Participation in Local Governance

A total of 23.8% of the respondents assigned financial constraints as major barrier to women participation in local governance. This confirms Damilola (2010) assertion that, lack of economic incentives (financial backing) is a major constraint to women participation in local governance. High illiteracy rate among women (19.8%) was also obtained, including lack of interest and faith in politics, 16.0% cultural barriers 13.3%



inferiority complex 12.1% and religious barriers 7.8%. All respondents agreed that women's representation across all facets of national life is still unsatisfactory considering their historical role in national development efforts.

Generally, the respondents held the notion that society is highly biased because they equate women to incompetence and mostly are hesitant in allowing women to occupy key roles. This notion in their opinion presents another challenge for women where they are expected to prove that they are not incompetent rather than demonstrating how competent they are. It became clear that this phenomenon appeared to deter women from availing themselves for national political life especially accepting executive appointments.

The media was cited as one of the powerful mediums through which women's personalities are being attacked in unprovoked manner with the aim of scandalizing their positive achievements and eventually confining them to the silent roles.

It was also found that lack of financial resources affected women in local politics because they are unable to compete with their male counterparts given the increasing expensive nature of multiparty democracy in Ghana and many other jurisdictions.

The 1992 constitution of Ghana which is expected to be non-discriminatory was identified as discriminating against women. Article 78 clauses 1 and 3 were referenced where they argued that the constitutional limitation imposed on the President of Ghana to appoint majority of ministers from parliament meant that women were disadvantaged given their low numerical presence in Parliament.



Aside this, some of the respondents believed that society's reverence for marriage scares young unmarried women from participating in national politics because they are perceived to be irresponsible.

Most respondents also attributed the low participation of women in national politics to lack of assertiveness among some of their colleagues. The factors likened to this were illiteracy and insufficient political capacity building for women.

The study also made a very important observation relating to the intent of affirmation action policies. Despite the fact that affirmation action is widely recommended as one of the effective ways of promoting women's participation, respondents from the political parties held a contrary view, indicating the creation of women wings within the political party structure as an example. To them, rather than see these women wings which are exclusively for females as an opportunity, they think such actions aim at maintaining the existing patriarchy where men will continue to occupy the influential positions. The position of women wings tends to shift the focus of women away from the key positions within the party structure. At best, women end up deputizing other male officers apart from the women wings.

Finally, ageism which is a systematic discrimination on the basis of age was also cited. Respondents argued that where young women are given executive appointments or participate in national elections, they are not supported but perceived to be trespassing on their traditional roles and venturing into male dominated spheres. The election of the 22 year old parliamentary aspirant during the 2015 NPP primaries was referenced as an example.



### **5.2.3 Perceptions of Assembly Persons on Women's Participation in Local Governance**

The assembly persons perceived women involvement in local governance as very necessary because they already know the important role women play in the assembly and the impact they make to the development discourse of their electoral areas if given the opportunity to that effect.

Women's participation in making decisions at the Assembly was assessed by the Assembly members as satisfactory and hence called for their involvement in local governance. All the respondents (100%) asserted that women contribution was very high.

### **5.2.4 Respondents Perspective of Local Level Decision-Making Promotional Strategies for Women**

Education of women (16.3%) was perceived as the cardinal strategy of promoting women in decision-making. This was followed by economic empowerment of women (15.7%). These were closely followed by provision of credit/loans for women (15.1%) and the abolishment of bad cultural practices (13.6%) as the less militating strategies for promoting women in decision-making. These revelations indicated that any attempt at enhancing women status in decision-making should incorporate the above strategies to enhance holistic development.

All respondents (100%) embraced the concept of affirmative action as an effective way of increasing women's participation in local governance. Although majority of the respondents held the view that it should not necessarily be a legal framework, they believed



that it could have significant bearing on women's representation if given the needed commitment.

Also, the respondents, especially in elective politics suggested the establishment of a special fund to support political activities of women including funding campaigns and political capacity building.

Furthermore, at the political party level, most respondents were of the view that party nomination fees should be scrapped for women in order to boost their moral in contesting Parliamentary membership position.

Lastly, respondents believed that the media could be a good partner in the drive towards dismantling the existing patriarchy in society by promoting their achievements and holding political parties to their commitment of affirmative action promises.

The study revealed two major support structures that assist women to participate in local level elections. These structures were Government and Non-Governmental Organisations.

Specifically, the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) and Action aid Ghana were studied. In its support drive to women, the commission adopts such strategies as workshops, public forums seminars meetings and focus group discussions with women groups, in-school girls and rural communities to discuss issues that affect women lives and the need for their involvement in the decision-making process.

In view of these strategies used, it was found that much focused was on public education and orientation virtually neglecting the economic empowerment of women to become self-reliant in order to assert their independent right to make choice, and to control resources



which will assist in challenging and eliminating their own subordination, which confirms Keller and Mbewe, (1991) writing.

The Upper West Local Rights Programme of Action Aid Ghana on the other hand, created various support windows in support of women participation in local level elections. The organization support mechanism include: capacity building for women who intended contesting the District Assembly elections, printing of posters for aspiring assembly women, strengthening of the regional caucus of Assembly women and annual meetings and reviews to support women strategies to contest District Assembly elections.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

From the aforementioned analysis of the study, the impact of both individual and institutional or systemic factors towards the enhancement of women's participation in local governance has been illustrated. The issues of individual financial resources, marital status, social capital, and education, membership of organizations or association, good neighborliness among others stressed the self-motivational and individual supply elements of the theory espoused under the study. On the other hand, structural or institutional factors like cultural and religious beliefs equally had some impact on the electoral fortunes of candidates. From the findings, there were more male recruits into the Wa Municipal Assembly than their female counterparts.

It is however worth mentioning that, local governance provides a window of hope for women to serve at the national level of governance. However, myriad of factors underpin women low participation at the local level elections. It is important to recognize that, the



negative stereotype and perception about women participation as well as social capital was the major contributory factor to their poor performance at the local level elections.

The study also revealed that, more women are now ready to come out to stand or contest elections which were not the case some ten (10) years ago. Majority (90%) of women respondents indicated their desire to contest the District level elections. This implies that, the public education work of the NCCE and the numerous sensitizations of various civil society organizations went down well with majority of the people in the Municipality. This corresponded with the view expressed by the respondents that women must be given room to participate in governance especially at the local level.

Women however need to be proactive and put in a lot of efforts such as participating in community development activities, undertake good neighborliness, be assertive among other attributes to be able to participate in local governance. Hard work, commitment, development stewardship and social capital in respect of good neighborliness are core values that contribute to women electoral success, especially the only female elected assembly woman of the Konta electoral area.

Also, the study revealed high illiteracy rate among women participation in decision-making. The struggle for increased women participation in local governance in the Wa Municipality is a long one considering the socio-cultural and economic constraints for women. There is however light at the tunnel, as the research findings indicated that, over 90% of the respondents perceived women as people who can make proactive decisions and need to be given a place in governance at the local level. With continues support of stakeholders, including government, NGOs and CSOs as well as the media, projecting





women leadership and supporting them to deliver. To ensure effective women participation in local governance in the Wa Municipal Assembly, concerted efforts and action is needed from multi-stakeholders in realizing an increased number of women in local government decision-making structures.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

The study points to the fact that, systematic and continuous training and empowerment of women through micro-credit finances, workshops, radio discussions, refinement of obnoxious cultural practices and change in perceptions and attitudes towards women, has a positive impact for enhancing their image in decision-making at the household, community and local governance levels. This therefore suggests that, all promotional institutions especially NCCE which aim at enhancing the status of the vulnerable and excluded, should give credence to efficient flexible people centered strategies and programs that will take them from their current social, political and economic subordination.

On the basis of findings from this study, the following recommendations were proposed:

Special funds should be established with the Electoral Commission (EC) as an independent arbiter to sponsor identified political activities including political campaigns for women candidates. This fund should be backed by law with statutory allocations to ensure the constant flow of resources. The National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) is not proposed because it is the EC that registers the political parties, takes custody of their audited accounts and has deeper information about their national representation in accordance with the Political Parties Act.



National affirmative action policy should be adopted and signed off by all political parties to affirm their commitment to its implementation. Women groups should commit to using this policy as strong basis for national political elections.

Political parties should introduce a policy exempting women from paying for nomination fees at both the national and local levels.

As part of the constitutional review process, a consideration for amendment of article 78 (1) should be adopted to give an open door to the President of the Republic of Ghana to make more appointments of women into political offices.

The monitoring of hate speech by the West African Foundation for Media should include in it, “name and shame” programme during elections to openly criticize media organizations which attack the personalities of women without any basis.

Finally, women themselves should defy the odds at breaking the exiting patriarchy by resisting any form of insults, vilification and labeling and offer themselves for national political positions.

There are several opportunities in the current local governance system that when exploited can promote gender sensitivity and equity in local level development and the sharing of the benefits there from. Considering the conclusions, it is therefore recommended that;

1. The need for affirmative action is long overdue. The government of Ghana should as a matter of urgency pass the affirmative action bill into law to pave way for increase numbers of women in local governance structures.





2. Conscious effort should be made by government to enhance women participation in local governance by encouraging women to take advantage of the 30% reserve appointed membership of the municipal assembly.
3. Government should appoint a woman as a municipal chief executive as well as insisting on the Municipal Assembly to reserve a percentage of membership positions for women in its committees.
4. Implementation of more poverty alleviation programs that target women and women groups should be undertaken by government and NGOs to improve the economic situation of women.
5. Gender issues and women role in development should be incorporated into the curriculum of basic schools as a basis of ensuring equity in the future development. This could be taken up by the Curriculum Development Division.
6. Women capacities should be built and their confidence raise through efficient and effective education and sensitization by the National Commission for Civic education.
7. The NCCE should encourage Women to offer themselves for elections and appointments into the Municipal Assembly. This can be done through non-formal education, radio (FM) and television discussions, empowerment, public forum among others.
8. Religious and traditional leaders should preach the gospel against women subordination so as to enhance attitudinal change and perception towards women. This will lead to a change in our political culture such that politics will not be perceived as only the domain for men, but also for women.

9. Provision of micro-credit to enhance women economic status through collaboration with other development actors and government department such as NGOs, NBSSI among others.



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APPENDICES

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

FACULTY OF INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

Topic: Women’s Participation in Local Governance in WA Municipality

Appendix A: Elected Assembly and Unit Committee Members

The questionnaire is focused on obtaining information about your appointment to participate in governance process of the Wa Municipal Assembly. This is purely an academic exercise and I assure you that information given out would be kept confidential.

PART A. Personal Data of Respondents

- 1. Age .....
- 2. Gender a. male ( ) b. female ( )
- 3. Marital status: a.Married ( ) b.Single ( ) c.Widow ( ) d.Divorced ( ) c.Separated( )
- 4. Occupation: a. Farmer ( ) b. Trader ( ) c. Teacher ( ) d. Health personnel ( )  
f. Administrator ( ) g. Accountant ( ) h. Politician( ) i. If others specify.....
- 5. Educational status: a. basic ( ) b. secondary ( ) c. tertiary ( ) d. non-formal ( )  
e. uneducated ( ) f. others (specify).....
- 6. Electoral area: .....

PART B. Institutional factors that account for low women participation

- 7. What qualities do the electorate look out for in the election/appointment of members in local government? a. Income levels ( ) b. Educational attainment ( ) c. Marital status ( )  
d. Religious affiliation ( ) e. Loyalty to political party ( ) f. Confidence( )

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES



8. In your opinion, what qualities contributed to your victory?

.....  
.....

Which of the following factors may lead to women participation in politics at the local level? (Select all that apply). a. Income levels ( ) b. Educational attainment ( ) c. Marital status ( ) d. Religious affiliation ( ) e. Loyalty to political party ( ) f. Confidence ( )

9. To what extents does your society/culture value women participation in politics? a. very great ( ) b. great ( ) c. Not at all ( )

PART C. Contribution of social capital to women electoral success

10. Is it important for women to belong to social groups/local organization or club (eg, women group, CBO, craft/association, social club) before elected/appointed to participate in politics? a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. don't know ( )

11. In your locality, which organization(s) recommend/motivate women to participate in assembly/Unit committee elections? a. Social club/association ( ) b. NGO/CBO ( ) c. Political party ( ) d. Nobody ( ) e. If others, specify.....

12. Does women participation in local community developmental have a positive influence on their participation in politics in your locality? a.b Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. don't know ( )

13. Does women participation in social events (e.g funerals, naming ceremonies, etc) has a positive influence on their participation in local government? a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. don't know ( )



14. To what extent will the gender of a female influence your voting pattern?.....

.....  
.....

15. Have you ever voted for a female candidate in local elections before? a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. Don't know

If yes, is she biologically from the electoral area? a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. Don't know

16. If no, has she married and stayed with the husband in the electoral area? a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. Don't know

17. Do you think her defeat or win has a link to where she hails from? a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. Don't know

Explain.....

.....

If no, has that affected you in the elections?

.....

.....

PART D. Challenges that confront women electoral success or appointments

18. What challenges confront women in contesting district level elections in the Wa Municipality?

.....

.....

.....



19. Are there any reasons/factors that may disqualify other people from getting elected into the assembly? a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. don't know ( )

If yes, what are they?

.....  
.....  
.....

20. What major challenges do women in your area often face in standing for election at the local level? a. Financial constraints ( ) b. Inadequate knowledge on local governance ( ) c. Inferiority complex ( ) d. Lack of motivation to contest the election ( ) e. Household chores ( ) f. Religious constraints ( ) g. Cultural issues ( ) f. Marital status ( ) g. If others Specify.....

PART E. Structure of support for women participation in local governance

21. Is there any support package offered to women who contest the local level elections? a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. Don't know ( )

If yes, what support package is offered to women aspirants?

.....

23. Are there groups advocating for more women to be appointed or elected into the Wa Municipal Assembly? a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. Don't know ( )

If yes, which groups/institutions are they?

.....  
.....

What do you think about an introduction of specific quotas for women as members in the Assembly?



.....  
.....

Do you think women should be supported to contest local level elections? a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. Don't know ( )

22. If no, any explanations?

.....  
.....

Thank you for your co-operation





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Topic: Women’s Participation in Local Governance in WA Municipality

Appendix B: Women not in politics

The questionnaire is focused on obtaining information about your appointment to participate in governance process of the Wa Municipal Assembly. This is purely an academic exercise and I assure you that information given out would be kept confidential.

PART A. Personal Data of Respondents

1. Age .....
2. Gender a. male ( ) b. female ( )
3. Marital status: a. Married ( ) b. Single ( ) c. Widow ( ) d. Divorced ( ) c. Separated( )
4. Occupation: a. Farmer ( ) b. Trader ( ) c. Teacher ( ) d. Health personnel ( ) f. Administrator ( ) g. Accountant ( ) h. Politician( )  
i. If others specify.....
5. Educational status: a. basic ( ) b. secondary ( ) c. tertiary ( ) d. non-formal ( ) e. uneducated ( ) f. others (specify).....
6. Electoral area: .....

PART B. Institutional factors that account for low women participation

7. Have you ever participated in politics at the local level? a. Yes ( ) b. No ( )

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8. Are you willing to participate in local level politics in the future? a. Yes ( ) b. No ( )
9. What qualities do the electorates look out for in the election/appointment of members in local government? a. Income levels ( ) b. Educational attainment ( ) c. Marital status ( ) d. Religious affiliation ( ) e. Loyalty to political party ( ) f. Confidence ( )
10. Which of the following factors may lead to women participation in politics at the local level? (Select all that apply). a. Income levels ( ) b. Educational attainment ( ) c. Marital status ( ) d. Religious affiliation ( ) e. Loyalty to political party ( ) f. Confidence ( )
11. To what extent does your society/culture value women participation in politics? a. very great ( ) b. great ( ) c. Not at all ( )

PART C. Contribution of social capital to women electoral success

12. Is it important for women to belong to social groups/local organization or club (eg, women group, CBO, craft/association, social club) before elected/appointed to participate in politics? a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. don't know ( )
13. In your locality, which organization(s) recommend/motivate women to participate in assembly/Unit committee elections? a. social club/association ( ) b. NGO/CBO ( ) c. Political party ( ) d. Nobody ( ) e. If others, specify.....
14. Does women participation in local community developmental projects have a positive influence on their participation in politics in your locality? a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. don't know ( )

15. Does women participation in social events (e.g funerals, naming ceremonies, etc) has a positive influence on their participation in local government? a. Yes ( ) b.

No ( ) c. don't know ( )

16. To what extent will the gender of a female influence your voting pattern?

.....  
.....  
.....

17. Have you ever voted for a female candidate in local elections before? a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. Don't know

If yes, is she biologically from the electoral area? a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. Don't know

18. If no, has she married and stayed with the husband in the electoral area? a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. Don't know

19. Do you think her defeat or win has a link to where she hails from? a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. Don't know

Explain.....

.....  
.....

If no, has that affected you in the elections?

.....  
.....

PART D. Challenges that confront women electoral success or appointments



20. What challenges confront women in contesting district level elections in the Wa Municipality?

.....  
.....

Are there any reasons/factors that may disqualify other people from getting elected into the assembly? a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. don't know ( )

If yes, what are they?

.....  
.....

What major challenges do women in your area often face in standing for election at the local level? a. Financial constraints ( ) b. Inadequate knowledge on local governance ( ) c. Inferiority complex ( ) d. Lack of motivation to contest the election ( ) e. Household chores ( ) f. Religious constraints ( ) g. Cultural issues ( ) f. Marital status ( ) g. If others Specify.....

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**PART E. Structure of support for women participation in local governance**

21. Is there any support package offered to women who contest the local level elections? a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. Don't know ( )

If yes, what support package is offered to women aspirants?

.....

Are there groups advocating for more women to be appointed or elected into the Wa Municipal Assembly? a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. Don't know ( )

If yes, which groups/institutions are they?

.....

Do you have access to any support structure available for women in politics? a. Yes

( ) b. No ( )

22. What do you think about an introduction of specific quotas for women as members in the Assembly?

.....

Do you think women should be supported to contest local level elections?

a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. Don't know ( )

23. If no, any explanations?

.....

.....

Thank you for your co-operation



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Appendix C: Defeated Candidates

The questionnaire is focused on obtaining information about your appointment to participate in governance process of the Wa Municipal Assembly. This is purely an academic exercise and I assure you that information given out would be kept confidential.

PART A. Personal data of respondents

23. Age .....

24. Marital status: a. Married ( ) b. Single ( ) c. Widow ( ) d. Divorced ( ) c. Separated ( )

25. Occupation: a. Farmer ( ) b. Trader ( ) c. Teacher ( ) d. Health personnel ( ) f. Administrator ( ) g. Accountant ( ) h. Politician ( ) i. If others specify.....

26. Educational status: a. basic ( ) b. secondary ( ) c. tertiary ( ) d. non-formal ( ) e. uneducated ( ) f. others (specify).....

27. Electoral area: .....

PART B. Institutional factors that account for low women participation

28. What motivate you to contest in the local assembly elections?

a. To serve their people/communities ( )

b. For material benefits ( )



- c. To aspire for high political position in future ( )
- d. To satisfy their political party's interest ( )
- e. Just to represent women ( )
- f. If others specify.....

29. What qualities do the electorates look out for? a. Income levels ( ) b. Educational attainment ( ) c. Marital status ( ) c. Religious affiliation ( ) d. Loyalty to political party ( ) e. Confidence ( )

30. In your opinion, do you have the qualities the electorates look for? a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. Don't know ( )

31. If Yes, but why did that not offer you votes?

.....  
 .....

How do you feel about your loss?

.....  
 .....

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**PART C. Contribution of social capital to women electoral success**

32. Are you an active member of a local organization or club (eg. Women group, CBOs, craft/association, social club)? a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. Don't know ( )

33. Which organization recommended/motivated you to contest the Assembly election?

- a. Social club/association ( )
- b. NGO/CBO ( )
- c. Political Party ( )
- d. Nobody ( )

e. If others, specify.....

34. To what extent did your gender play a role in your defeat in the election?

.....  
.....

Have you ever taken part in local community developmental project before the elections?

- a. Yes      b. No      C. Don't know

35. Do you spend a lot of time visiting friends/neighbours before the elections?

- a. Yes      b. No      c. Don't know

If no, has that affected you in the elections?

.....  
.....  
.....

36. Are you biologically from the electoral area in whose ticket you contest the elections?

- a. Yes ( )    b. No ( )    c. Don't know ( )

If no, are you married in the community? a. Yes ( )    b. No ( )    c. Don't know ( )

37. Do you think your defeat has a link to where you come from?

.....  
.....  
.....

38. Have you participated in organizing any community activities before?

- a. Yes      b. No      c. don't know





39. Did your participation in community activities or otherwise contribute to your electoral defeat?

.....  
.....  
.....

PART D. Challenges that confront women electoral success or appointments

40. What challenges confront women in contesting district level elections?

.....

.....What major challenges did you face in standing for the election?

Financial constraints ( ) Inadequate knowledge on local governance ( )

Inferiority complex ( ) Lack of motivation to contest the election ( )

Household chores ( ) Religious constraints ( )

Cultural issues ( ) Marital status ( )

If others specify.....

41. How did these challenges contribute to your defeat?

.....

Has any woman ever contested district assembly elections in the electoral area?

a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. Don't know ( )

42. To what extent was your educational status influence the outcome of the elections?

.....

Did you have enough financial resources to support your election campaign?



a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. Don't know ( )

43. How will you describe your income level before the elections?

a. Low ( ) b. average ( ) c. high ( )

44. How did that impact on your effort in the election campaign?

.....  
.....

Would you feel free to express your views on all matters in the assembly if you were elected? a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. Don't know ( )

If yes why? .....

Have you participated in organizing community activities before?

a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. Don't know ( )

If yes, how did that impact on the election?

.....  
.....

Do you think there are any beliefs that may have made the people not to vote for you?

a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. Don't know ( )

If yes, please mention them?

.....  
.....

How do people perceive your participation in the assembly election?

.....



How does your response in 21 above affect your participation in assembly elections?

.....

PART E. Structure of support for women participation in local governance

45. What motivated you to take part in the election?

- a. To serve their people/communities ( )
- b. For material benefits ( )
- c. To aspire for high political position in future ( )
- d. To satisfy their political party's interest ( )
- e. Just to represent women ( )
- f. If others Specify.....

46. At the assembly elections were you supported by any institution?

- a. Yes ( )
- b. No ( )
- c. Don't know ( )

- (b) If yes, in what form(s)?
- a. Education/Training ( )
- b. Motivation ( )
- C. Finance ( )
- d. Others, specify.....

47. Mention the institutions or organizations that supported you in the election?

1. ....

2. ....

3. ....

48. Is the support institutions core mandate to provide support for women in local level election?

.....

How sustainable is the support to you?

.....



Do you think the support you receive is enough?

a. Yes ( ) b. No ( )

If no, what are the reasons for your answer?

.....

What factors account for your defeat?

.....

Thank you for your co-operation



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Topic: Women's Participation in Local Governance in Wa Municipality

Appendix D: Interview Schedule for Municipal Chief Executive, MPs, and Gender Desk

Officer

The interview is focused on obtaining information about your appointment to participate in governance process of the Wa Municipal Assembly. This is purely an academic exercise and I assure you that information given out would be kept confidential.

1. What is your opinion on women representation in local government in the Wa Municipality? (probe for numbers, trend and perceptions)
2. How does membership to local organization or club (e.g. Women group, CBOs, craft/association, social club) influence women participation in local government
3. To what extend is gender an issue in politics in the Wa Municipality?
4. What institutional factors influence women participation in politics in the Wa Municipality?
5. What challenges confront women in contesting district level elections?
6. What impact does women participation in politics made in the Wa Municipality?
7. What challenges confront women in participating in politics at the local level?
8. What support packages (if any) are offered to women aspirants in local elections?  
(Probe for forms/types of support, sources, purpose, and size).

Thank you for your co-operation

