A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY ON THE ZAMBIAN WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE

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Abstract
The involvement of women in local government can be enhanced in all three important aspects: as electorates, policy-makers and as members of decision-making bodies such as local bodies. There is essential for strategies to improve the local governance structure of a particular nation. Empowering women through these local bodies will grantee the empowerment of local communities especially the women folk. To identify the requirements of the civic and to best promote social and economic development, local elected representatives need the input of their constituents to be able to best identify those areas that need addressing. Local elected representatives should inspire the participation of the women community in local governance. The representation and involvement of women in local governance is straight linked to the progression of women and is a basic prerequisite in the trip towards gender equality. The present paper discussed about the status of women's contribution in local governance system in Zambia as recommended by the Southern African Development Community (SADC)'s Protocol on Gender and Development.

Keywords: SADC, Political Participation, Zambia, Decision-making, Women, Local Governance and development

Overview of Zambia's Political Context

Zambia attained independence from Britain in 1964 and since then, there has been 3 republics, starting with multi-party government that guaranteed that opposition political parties existed until 1972 when the one-party structure was adopted.

Although Zambia terminated to be a multi-party democracy in 1972, the country still continued a one-party-participatory egalitarianism basically meaning that the people still involved in elections to choose their leaders. The competitiveness of the elections particularly at parliamentary and local government levels remained very high but that was not the case at presidential where efficiently no competition was there. In 1990, the country returned to diversity agreeing a multi-party democratic arrangement.

In the elections that conducted in succeeding year, the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) begun as part of the multi-partisan political organisation that followed the 27 year rule of Kenneth Kaunda and his United National Independence Party (UNIP). The country used the political changes to set pace to important democratic creeds for those who govern and how to guarantee that a high standard of democracy and responsibility exists. Since 1991, the country conducted a number of general elections, to hail as in lieu of a development in Zambia's democracy, comprising not so notable or 'perceived' fake elections in 1996 and 2001.

Women's Participation in the Political Process

Women's participation in political life has significantly declined particularly at parliamentary and local government stages as attested from the Sep. 2011 elections. This is against a background of many interventions to reduce this gender imbalance. A trend analysis by the Ministry of Gender & Child Development indicates that from 1991 women representation in politics was on the increase from 4.8% to 10.6% in 1996, and further increased to 15.19% in 2006. In contrast, there was a sharp decline in 2011 to 11.3%. Similarly the Zambia National Women's Lobby (ZNWL) Gender Analysis of the 2011 Zambian Tripartite Elections provides context to these statistics. In practical terms, the 2011 Elections saw the participation of only one female presidential

candidate, Edith Nawakwi who received 0.3% of the total presidential votes and came out 7th out of the 10 presidential candidates. Similarly, at parliamentary level, only 17 women were elected out of the 150 parliamentary candidates elected. This represents 11% out of the total number of elected to the legislative body. The report further goes to state that none of the female candidates who stood as independents managed to get a seat.

At local government level, only 85 women were elected out of the 1,382 councilors that emerged winners. This represents 6.1% of women representation and shows a decline from the 7% female councilors in 2006. The Women in Law and Development in Africa (WiLDAF) report also confirms that the 2011 elections failed to address the gender gap in terms of women's participation in elections (NFD 2011). Cabinet level representation is also very low with only four full cabinet members appointed by President Sata. Out of 10 provincial ministers only one is female.

From Representation to Participation
The efforts arranged in confirming the unbiased representation for women in decision-making forums indirectly assume that this would be an adequate instrument to guarantee their involvement in these institutions. Representation can be enhanced through legal and institutional means and such efforts have been mainly concerned with quotas and the design of electoral systems. The research argues that while participation is obviously contingent upon representation, it would be a mistake to see representation as an end in itself. It is tempting to assume that better representation will guarantee higher participation. However, the evidence clearly shows that even legally mandated quotas and mechanisms ostensibly designed to enhance the representation of women can be easily undermined by elements of the institutional design itself. The higher the numerical presence of women in representative bodies alone cannot ensure their more effective participation in these bodies.

Effective participation cannot be legislated. It involves the creation of a political, social and cultural environment in which women acquire the awareness, information base and confidence to articulate their concerns, and an institutional environment that is receptive and responsive to such articulations. This arguably requires more committed and sustained initiatives by political parties and civil society. Such interventions need to be innovative but also sensitive to the particularity of social context, because despite the many shared attributes of patriarchy, what works in South Africa may not work in Ghana or India. As such, while laws and institutions can create the conditions for representation, political parties and civil society – especially women's organisations and the women's movement – have an important role to play in creating the conditions for effective participation.

Participation
Defining and measuring political participation is by no means straightforward. Yet, how one defines political participation has significant consequences for the conclusions drawn about the extent and nature of women's participation. Early studies tended to adopt narrow definitions. There is need to define genuine participation because it would be useful in distinguishing between mere mobilisation of people to implement what the government has predetermined will take place and the actual participation and decision-making by the people themselves. The idea of involvement is becoming less concerned with participation in plans and programmes and commencing to emphasis extra on participation in policy processes.

Participation of women in the local government bodies would include women as:
   a) Voters;
   b) Members of political parties;
   c) Candidates;
   d) Elected members of local government bodies taking part in decision-making, planning, implementation and evaluation; and
   e) Followers of women's forums and their association with NGOs.

Women in Cabinet
The number of women in the Zambian Cabinet has been erratic over the past decade, although it is still slightly up on the year 2000 percentage of 8.3 %. Zambia had five women in a 21-member Cabinet after the 2006 election, a proportion of 28.8 %, before dropping again to 13.6 % in 2008. There was only one woman in the first Cabinet following the election in 2011, although there were three women deputies. Two more women were appointed in 2012 increasing representation to three of the total 20, including the new minister of tourism and arts. This is a proportion of 15 %. The proportion of deputy ministers is 12 % as there are five women of the total 41. The top three positions of President, Vice President and Deputy Vice President are occupied by men.

Women in Local Governance
Women in Zambia encompass less than 10 % of elected local government officials. Following local government elections in 2011, there are 387 women among 4,095 rural councilors (9.5 %) and 83 women of 1,382 urban councillors (6 %), down from 7.2 percent in the previous local election. In 2009, 57 men were district commissioners and 11 women (16 %); and in 2010, there were no women mayors among the 18 men (0 %). Neither the Constitution nor the Local Government Elections Act mention or provide for gender parity, and there are no quotas or mechanisms defined for this purpose. However, the constitutional review is almost complete, with a new Constitution expected in 2013. The 2016 elections only went up to 9 % female representation at the local government level and 17% in Parliament. A lot requirements to be complete for Zambia to meet the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, which calls for State parties to guarantee 50% of women and men in all decision-making positions.

A lot needs to be done for Zambia to meet the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, which calls for State parties to ensure 50% of women and men in all decision-making positions. Neither the Constitution nor electoral legislation has affirmative action provisions like quotas to further the representation of women in public elected bodies or for appointed positions. There is a need for a wide policy change that would help Zambia dismantle the cultural biases that difficulty women in the method of selection of candidates at presidential, parliamentary and local government levels. There is essential for gender sensitive legislation to be developed. Proportional representation as an electoral system would also improve women's representation in elective bodies like Parliament and Councils as opposed to the first-past-the-post system, which is currently being used.

Moreover, political parties have failed to address significant inequalities among men and women in their ranks. The absence of voluntary quotas in political party manifestos and constitutions to guarantee the inclusion of women exposes a lack of political and affirmative action. Studies directed on political parties in Zambia display that none of the political parties offer any quotas for women or youth candidates for parliamentary or local government elections.

Structure of Local Government
Local government within the state
The government accepted a national decentralisation policy in November 2002, following two earlier attempts failed in 1968 and 1980. The policy has covered features such as permitting native people through setting up sub-district structures, and obviously defined strong establishments for local authorities, the provinces and national government. Moreover, it states that the ultimate aim of the government is decentralisation being developed in the local authorities. The objective of the policy is to enhance governance, by giving citizens more authority and power in decision-making at the local level.

Council types

Table No. 1: Province wise details of Councils of Local Government

Sl. No.	Name of the Province	No. of Municipalities	No. of Town / District Councils	No. of City Councils
1	Central	01	11	-
2	Copperbelt	05	03	02
3	Eastern	-	07	01
4	Laupula	01	10	-
5	Lusaka	01	04	01
6	Muchinga	-	07	-
7	North Western	01	10	-
8	Northern	02	08	-
9	Southern	02	10	01
10	Western	01	15	-
	Total	**14**	**85**	**05**

There is one tier of local government. Local governments are called councils and there are currently 104 councils – 5 city councils, 14 municipal councils and 85 district councils. Generally, city councils are situated in those urban districts with huge population and diversification in economic events, the municipal councils which covers the sub-urban regions. District councils are situated in those comparatively rural districts which have less population and depend deeply on agriculture, and hence have fewer local tax revenue resources. However, legally all councils have the same mandates and authority vis-à-vis their residents and national government.

Southern African Development Community (SADC)'s Protocol on Gender and Development – Governance
Article 12 - Representation
1. States parties shall endeavour that, by 2015, at least 50 % of decision-making sites in the public and private subdivisions are held by women containing the use of affirmative action measures as provided for in Article 5.
2. States parties shall ensure that all legislative and other measures are go together with by public awareness movements which prove the vital connection between the equivalent representation and involvement of women and men in decision building places, democracy, good governance and citizen involvement.

Article 13 Participation
1. States parties shall accept particular legislative measures and other approaches to permit women to have equal chances with men to involve in all electoral progressions as well as the administration of elections and voting.
2. States parties shall guarantee the equal involvement of women and men in decision-making by placing the policies, strategies and programmes for:
    (a) capacity building of women to take part commendably through leadership and gender sensitivity training and mentoring;
    (b) giving support systems for women in decision-making situations;
    (c) the creation and strengthening of arrangements to boost gender mainstreaming; and
    (d) Changing biased attitudes and norms of decision-making systems and measures.
3. States parties shall confirm the addition of men in all gender-oriented events, as well as gender training and community mobilisation.

SADC Rationale for Representation and Participation
There are many reasons why women and men should be equally represented in politics and decision-making positions, but among these four main reasons are cited.
- Women constitute the majority of the population in most SADC countries, and it is therefore good democratic practice that women are represented in proportion to numbers, or at least in equal proportion to

men. In other words, equal representation of women and men in decision-making should be seen as an integral part of democracy.

- The right to representation in decision making structures is recognised as a fundamental human right by the national, regional and global instruments to which most SADC member states are parties to. Equality of representation is therefore a matter of fundamental human rights and justice.
- The involvement of women in headship will make a qualitative change to the governance of countries and the women have superior skills and exceptional experiences they would bring into this processes.
- The participation of more women in decision-making can lead to a qualitative transformation of institutions, laws and policies

SADC member states have committed to various regional, continental and international treaties with regard to the upgrade of gender fairness and the enablement of women. The regional policies, protocols and agendas on women representation in political and decision-making positions are informed by international and continental tools.

SADC member states have made improvement towards guaranteeing equal representation by women and men in political and decision-making positions at innumerable stages of government and the 3 institutions of State, which are the Legislature (Parliament), the Executive (Cabinet) and the Judiciary (Courts), but there is much to be done to reach the 50:50 target by 2015. Performances carry on to be assorted across the region with some member states doing well in enabling gender parity in decision making sites. All member states display triumphs towards gender equality in some part of the spectrum of governance, however the goal of achievement 50% representation by women in political and decision-making bodies by 2015 remains a most important challenge in all SADC member states.

SADC Status of Zambia
Women representation in the Zambian Parliament following general elections in September 2011 cut down to short of the regional targets. The 2011 elections indicated a growing awareness by political parties of the need to nominate more women candidates, but the number increased only slightly.

Of the 113 women parliamentary candidates who contested single-member constituencies, only 17 were elected, accounting for just 11 percent of the constituency seats in Parliament. Presidential appointments increased the number of women in Parliament to 18 and later to 23, increasing the proportion to just over 14 percent, similar to that of Swaziland. In representation of women in Parliament, Zambia is ranked 12th of the 15 SADC Member States, ahead of DRC and Botswana. Zambia's world ranking is 107.

There were 21 women elected to the previous Parliament in 2006, hence a representation of 14 % of elected seats, but 13 % of total seats. The highest proportion of women in Parliament in Zambia was 18.1 % in 1997. The Zambian Parliament is made up of 160 seats, together with the 150 constituency members elected plus 8 members nominated by the President. The other two members are the President and the speaker of the national assembly.

With the next general elections to be held in 2016, Zambia has missed the 2015 target of 50:50 women representation in politics and decision-making positions, but there remains scope to adopt positive measures for the 2016 election such as those that have brought results elsewhere. Most nations that have attained noteworthy rises in political involvement by women have done so through the use of quota arrangements or special seats. Zambia is in the final stages of drafting a new Constitution, as method that contains consideration of these aspects.

Zambia's First Past The Post (FPTP)
Women occupy 18 seats in Parliament (11.5 %), and Zambia ranks twelfth in the SADC region for the proportion of women in Parliament. The next parliamentary election is in 2016.

- Women representation in the Zambian Parliament following general elections in September 2011 fell short of the regional targets, despite a growing awareness by political parties of the need to nominate more women candidates.
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Quota System for Women Representation in Zambia
A new Constitution is being drafted to update and modernize the national legal framework, including revision of Article 23 (4) which permits discriminatory laws to exist in the area of personal law in contradiction with Article 11 that assurance the equivalent grade of women. The ministry has embarked on an advocacy and outreach programme to lobby for the adoption of a quota system for women representation in elected positions. There are plans to establish an inter-party platform for women politicians that would assist in lobbying for the adoption of a quota system. The gender division has been upgraded into a full ministry, the Ministry of Gender and Child Development, headed by a woman Minister, and a top priority for the new ministry is the domestication of international protocols on gender equality.

Factors that Hinders Women's Political Participation in Zambia
Social-Cultural factors: Women continue to face prejudices as leaders because there is a cultural assumption that leadership is a masculine trait. Women are considered subordinate to men both in the family and in the society especially in most rural areas. Many are reluctant to run for political office and if they seek office, they fail to appeal adequate party and electoral support to win. Political life is organised by male norms, values, life style and working patterns.

Religious factors: Religion is another arena where women's inferiority to men has long been used to exclude women from aspects of political life. The exclusion of women from spiritual institutions and leadership may have an undesirable influence on women's position in society and minimize their opportunities in politics and civic life. In most religion, power and authority is believed to divinely fit in to men henceforth conquering women.

Women are also seen to be their own opponents in their own political improvement and enablement, particularly when they adopt these long held old assumptions and perception that politics is a dirty game, thus a preserve game for men.
Economic factors: Lack of economic resources is one of the biggest obstacles that prevent women's participation in politics. Most women are financially dependent on their male partners or relatives to enter politics which poses hurdles for women to participate in politics in most developing nations like Zambia. Despite the increase in the number of women in paid employment, there additional work burden prevents them from having time to engage in politics.

Media factors: Gender biases in media coverage continue to hinder women's chances of ascending to political positions. They are often allocated less time and spaces in the media than their male counterparts and often women in politics are subjected to a higher negative bias in coverage. In most cases, women politicians are covered less by the mass media than their male counterparts and events and issues of importance to women are not covered as much as other issues. Mass media also reinforces gender cultural stereotypes about the role of women which prevent women from engaging in politics.

Implications for Local Governance

The exclusion of women from decision-making bodies has very negative consequences for development. Development practitioners understand the importance of target group involvement in the design of programmes and policies if they are to succeed. Representation and participation enable people to identify with and own policies and other decision-making instruments and practices, especially since participation is a learning process. These factors mean that for any government programme or policy that depends on the input of women to succeed, women's representation and participation in the appropriate public debates and the consequent decisions must be sought and assured. The representation and involvement of women in decision-making bodies is an assurance that their issues will be dealt with better by both women's sex and gender roles. Men often misunderstand or marginalise the gender-based needs of their communities.

Focus Areas to Increase Women's Involvement in Local Government

Sl. No.	Current Situation	Proposed Action
1	Amended constitution with gender equity and equality statement but with no quota system and proportional representation	Inclusion of minimum of 30% quota system and proportional representation in the constitution
2	Enacted Gender Equity and Equality but no Commission has been constituted	Immediate appointment of Commissioners and operational mechanisms for the Commission
3	Inadequate advocacy targeting local government women's participation	Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to identify and build capacities of potential female candidates for participation at local government
4	Unavailability of political party platforms and processes for building capacities for women in politics	1. CSOs to identify champions to provide mentorship opportunities and programmes for potential female candidates at local district level. 2. Political Parties to develop and adopt Gender Policies and Action Plans that should be disseminated to all party organs
5	Insufficient gender responsive civic and voter education to promote more women's participation at local government	1. Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) and CSOs to provide for civic and voter education awareness for the promotion of women's participation in politics. 2. CSOs and Political Parties to develop training materials and programs for academy of girls and young women to build broad based leadership skills
6	Low levels of utilization of ICT and community media to support women's participation in local government	CSOs to build capacity for serving / potential female candidates to be assertive and confident to utilize various ICTs
7	Low levels of media coverage for female serving and aspiring candidates in local government	1. CSOs to create opportunities for constructive engagement between the media and serving / potential female candidates. 2. CSOs and political parties to mobilize enough resources to channel towards gender programs and profiling of more women leaders in the media

Good Practices for Women's Participation in Local Government in the SADC Region

A proportional study of the countries within the SADC region indicates that Zambia is one of the least countries in terms of women's participation at local government level at 9% as of 2016. Zambia's situation is in contrast with Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, Mozambique and Tanzania with more that 30% female representation at local government which has since recorded some of the following benefits:

- There is more coordination of development programs and there is less pressure on the central government to perform area-specific development.
- There are increased opportunities for political participation by women.
- There is increased potential for inclusive economic growth and high performance in terms of service delivery at community level.
- There are more opportunities for extra involvement of women in the governance structure of their communities.
- There are opportunities for women becoming more visible and audible (critical mass) on the governance discourse.
- Countries with gender equality provisions at various sectors show inclination for improved access to productive opportunities, for example, since Rwanda adopted gender parity at all levels of decision making, it has revised its Land Policy resulting in 36% of women owning land out of which 52% have obtained loans / finances using land as collateral.
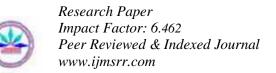
Conclusion

Challenges were identified as gender-blind legal and policy frameworks, systemic gender inequality, socio-economic development models that often feed stereotypical attitudes towards the role of women in society as well as perpetuate gender inequalities, structural rigidities within the various political parties, and generally patriarchal systems of decision-making. Women who are already involved at this level are taking a leading and active role. It can also be concluded that gender equality in decision-making must be legislated and entrenched in the systems of selection at all levels, including electoral systems. Voluntary quotas are better than no quotas, and have been important in some member states in reaching 30 percent representation quickly, but in general, voluntary quotas will not deliver 50:50 unless agreed and implemented by all contesting parties using an electoral system that facilitates this, such as incorporating the "zebra" system of interchanging the names of women and men, with a woman at the top of the list.

The establishment of local government in Zambia is seen as a way of inspiring maximum participation of all citizens in the matters of government in an open democratic state that guarantees civil and political freedoms vital for popular mobilisation and civic engagements. All policies and programmes should incorporate a gender perspective in order to contribute to the reduction of gender inequalities and promote the gradual change of attitudes of both men and women, awakening and creating sensitivities required in both regarding the situation of inequality in the treatment of social, economic, political and cultural realities.

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