

The Factors that Motivate Women to Seek Political Leadership Positions in the Parliament of Ghana

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Abstract

The study assesses the state of women in political leadership in the 4th Republican Parliament of Ghana, the challenges confronting the women in political leadership and how the situation can be improved. The study employed qualitative research method. Ten women Parliamentarians were sampled for the study. The researcher used interview and observation for collection of data. Thematic process was used to analyze the data collected. This study found that the representation of women in the parliament of Ghana is discouraging. As a result, women were confronted with challenges such as socio cultural problems, intimidation, financial constraints and many other factors, as they try to involve themselves in political leadership. In the study, it was indicated that women political leaders were abused verbally and physically. In Ghana many cultural beliefs and practices serve as a hindrance to women because women must act in accordance to societal norm. Some women solicited for funds from friends, family and philanthropist to enable them partake in political leadership. However, it was found that women used planning, unity, tolerance, patience and other factors, to enable them overcome the barriers. Meanwhile, the society should be educated on the role of women parliamentarians and women parliamentarians should be appreciated, accepted and be encouraged. Therefore, there is the need for women to be competent, disabuse their minds on perceptions which are not the reality, involve themselves in planning, nurturing of oneself and the young ones for political leadership and educating the women on the need to partake in political leadership.

Keywords: Women in Politics, Parliament of Ghana, Political Leadership Position, Motivation

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Over the years, the United Nations and its agencies have handled the issues concerning women in different facets. Although international bodies with Ghana included, have pronounced and confirmed the equality and rights of men and women, existing literature shows that the percentage of women in politics and legislature is disproportionately low. Gender inequities persist particularly in political leadership, even though immense effort have been made globally with various global conferences such as the Fourth World conference on Women in 1995, the World Summit for Social Development in 1995 and the Cairo Conference on Population and Development in 1994 (Karam, 2000). Until in the 20th century, women were almost ruled out in exercising their franchise or engaging in politics as the men do. However, in 1920, women attained suffrage in some parts of the world like the catholic countries and other countries after the World War II (Ballington, 2008).

The participation of women in politics and the admittance of women in formal structures of political leadership differ from one country to the other. Women compose of over half of the population of the world and play significant roles for the development of societies. Women play some roles like home management, mothering, activists in politics, socio cultural activities and, others, although their involvement in politics is surrounded by historical issues of gender inequities and discrimination (Kivoi, 2004). Stereotypes, biases, attitudes, socio-cultural beliefs, among others, are some of the barriers that hinder women in participating in political leadership spheres. This situation involves the stress on the inferiority of women to superiority of men through socialization process and gender education from infancy (Adhiambo, 2003). The barriers that hinder the progress of women in political leadership in the society are functionally and structurally related. Such barriers are the structures of politics and institutions, socio-cultural constraints in political and social discourse (Bari, 2005). Also, the patriarchal system, finance, education, customs, violence against women and many other factors were identified as challenges to women in politics (Karl, 1995).

In addition, institutional framework guiding gender division of labor, vertical mobility and recruitment, are some of the barriers, since there is inadequate involvement of women in legislative process on issues that concern them, it has caused male values to reflect the outcome of the decision process (Olejede, 2000). Another challenge that serves as hindrance to women in political leadership is the domination of men in politics. Political parties, which are often controlled by men, have the viewpoint of men in terms of issues concerning the nation without considering the point of view of women. As a result of gender bias, women are not elected as leaders in parties and meetings of councils or parliamentary sessions are normally held at odd times which go contrary to the domestic responsibilities of women (Bari, 2005). During the call for enhancing women participation in national governance in Africa, the percentage of women in the parliament of Ghana was 10% in 1960. However, as a result of the changes in constitution and institutions that came with the democratic rule, women representation in Governance was given the least attention, therefore, the decrease in the participation of women in parliament for the past 50 years (Tsikata, 1997).

In Ghana, no political party is prepared to risk selecting a female presidential candidate at the primary election. This action is attributed to the fact that, candidates are selected based on ethnic, religious and regional background and gender is least considered, especially in the big parties like the NDC and NPP (Sossou, 2006; Tsikata, 2001). This is evident in the 2008 parliamentary elections where 103 women representing 10% contested out of the total number of one thousand and sixty (1,060) contesting parliamentary candidates. However, out of the eight presidential candidates who contested, no woman was involved (Allah-Mensah, 2004). Again in 2008, the number of women representative had reduced, with twenty Members of Parliament representing 8.7% and 20% reduction from parliament, which is less than average. According to the report of the United Nations Fund for Women in national assemblies, averagely, women have about 18.4% seats in 22 countries and their number surpass 30% (Ballington, 2008)

This unfortunate situation in relation to women participation in political leadership is as a result of the attitude of the patriarchal societies and the insensitive nature of the electoral system (Goetz & Hashim, 2003). Many writers have indicated that the participation of women in political leadership or legislation is discouraging and added that, the report of the Secretary General of the Economic and Social Council captures that although women constitute the majority of electorates in the world, but their involvement in political leadership is low. However, the statistical power of women in parliament is so less that they are classified as not effective (Longwe & Clark, 1999). In several countries the abolition of prejudice of all forms against women in political leadership is clearly acceptable in several laws and constitution, as the significance of practicing gender parity has been identified in the entire world, including Ghana (Devine, 1989). Although, there has been improvement in Ghana in decreasing gender inequity over the past years, but women are continuously deprived in terms of basic human rights, access to resources and economic chances as well as voice in politics (Maiga-Toure, 2000). According to gender theory, the involvement of men in political leadership is more than women and therefore it indicates that the interest of half of the population will be partially represented (Andersen, 1975; Schlozman, 1994).

Kasomo (2012) indicated that gender equity is the practice of being unbiased to male and female. Also, Olga (2003) added that in order to ensure gender parity, women empowerment in politics, legislature, and public life, mechanisms should be put in place to ensure equal access of women in political leadership and in decision making positions. However, to ensure quality of democracy, there should be the realization of gender quotas, in order to ensure equal representation and involvement of both men and women. Thus, power disparity between men and women which affect women negatively in terms of political leadership, are as a result of gender parity. This has resulted in low representation of women in key economic and political decision making positions, as 19.6% was recorded as women representation in parliament in the world, as compared to men.

According to Enarson (2009) increasing the number of women in electoral process and parliament, is one of the main transformation in democracy in the 20th century in the world. However, to achieve the Millennium Development goal, the empowerment of women in political leadership is identified as key in the international political development agenda. The 1992 constitution of Ghana has obviously

made provisions in relation to the rights of women in the process of making decision with men and equal rights. Section 27 of the constitution again indicated that women should be assured of equal rights to training and promotion without any obstacle from any person and mechanism should be put in place to ensure that all people especially women, involve actively in political leadership in the country (Sossou, 2006). Moreover, even though women were accepted as electorates, they were still being exempted from most political leadership roles until recently, where they are currently particularly under-represented in parliament and cabinets. Also, that the issue of female participation in political leadership in Africa is appalling and it continued to be deserted even after the first United Nations conference on women in 1975 (Tuwor, 2008). Since human rights are one of the major principles of men and women, then women must take part equally and completely in political leadership and legislation just as their male counterparts (Inglehart & Norris, 2003; Wezel, 2002). However, society will be undemocratic if women, who form the majority of the population, are less represented in parliament and political leadership or have less political rights as men (Ballington, 2008).

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Many researchers have conducted research related to this topic of study. For instance; Allah-Mensah (2001) conducted a research on women in politics and public life in Ghana. The researcher employed both secondary and primary source of data to conduct the study. In the study, it was found that there was insufficient number of women in parliament even though women were active in political participation. This issue of insufficient number of women prevailing in the political sector is also prevalent in the public sector organizations. Women were specifically placed at the lower ranks of the organizational ladder which served as hindrance to their participation in decision making processes. From the study, it was identified that there was the absence of affirmative action. And women were also confronted with some obstacles like patriarchal system, cultural practices and traditions, domestic roles and other challenges which contributed to the woefully inadequate representation of women in decision making positions in both political sector and public organizations (Rai, 1994).

Also, Kasomo (2012) conducted a research on "factors affecting women participation in electoral politics in Africa." According to him, women consisted of not as much as 5% as presidents and 15% of Members of Parliament in the world, even though they had taken enormous steps to get elected in offices in politics and to secure a vote in various countries. In his research, he found that there was a customary view in Kenya which indicated that women were inferior to men and therefore had led to traditional acts which subjugated women. According to him, men persistently were domineering in the affairs of religion, economic, social and politics in Kenya, whilst the effort, success and tasks of women in political leadership were barely admitted or known, despite the fact that women form the majority of the population and play a significant responsibility in the society. This situation therefore calls for empowerment of women and their active involvement in decision making. The methodology used in the study were, interview, focus group discussion and questionnaire. The researcher also involved four field assistants to conduct or record interview.

Another research conducted by Melander (2005) was on political gender equality and human rights abuse. He indicated that feminist theories disputed the fact that societies should not be afflicted by group brutality if they are not based on gender hierarchies. This research investigated if there was a correlation between human right abuse undertaken by representatives of state and gender equality (suffering, incarceration, disappearance and killings). The two indicators of gender inequality in politics employed in this study were the proportion of women in parliament and a copy which shows that the chief executive of a country is a female. The findings indicated that it was uncommon to find female political leaders and there was no correlation between their tenure of office and abuse level. However, the proportion of female representatives in parliament shows a link with human right abuse. Therefore, the result indicated that there was both direct impact on communication with democratic institutions and the involvement of women in parliament. But this result is valid or applicable when there is control of some vital issues known or guess to manipulate behavior.

Also, Kivoi (2004) researched on factors impeding political participation and representation of women in Kenya. The research revealed that in terms of the involvement of women in the structures of government and in decision making, women have been less represented and marginalized since the attainment of independence in Kenya. Women were deprived from involvement in politics as a result of cultural hindrance to economic liberation and customary beliefs, stereotypes, and perception that portrayed women as low-grade. From the data of the members of parliament elected, it indicated that gender equity was a hallucination in Kenya. In terms of the methodology, the research was a desk research, which examined traits which were psychologically, culturally and socially created and were connected to masculine and feminine. Secondary data was also used. From the research, the following were found: Firstly, there was failure on the part of Kenya to discover and apply measures to ensure the economic liberation of women, secondly, there was lack of enthusiasm on the part of political parties to apply the minimum of one third requirement of the constitution, for the female aspirants in the election and thirdly, there was the absence of political will in Kenya that will help reduce gender inequity. This therefore called for urgent need to attend to the issue of gender inequality in that country.

Considering the above research works, Allah-Mensah (2001) focused her research on women in politics and public life in Ghana. Kasomo (2012) conducted a research on factors affecting women participation in electoral politics in Africa, Melander (2005) was on political gender equality and human rights abuse and Kivoi (2004) researched on factors impeding political participation and representation of women in Kenya. However, in relation to the works of the scholars above, their works were centered on political issues concerning women representation, but this work is specifically on the state of women in political leadership in the 4th republican parliament of Ghana. Unlike the methodology used by the other scholars, phenomenological approach in qualitative research was employed in this study to capture the live experience of respondents. The above scholars had different findings to their research works, which may differ from the findings of this study. Some of the gaps identified are, the time those scholars conducted their research may differ from this recent time. Also, the geographical area where some of the researches were conducted may differ from Ghana and even if some were conducted in Ghana, the focus may differ.

2.1 Conceptual Framework.

The conceptual framework is made up of three interrelated components to be used in this study, which is significant in understanding the political leadership of women in the parliament of Ghana. It is categorized into gender, political participation and political leadership. This study is conducted based on the notion that gender which is related to the responsibility of men or women is crafted by culture and the society. Gender can be described as the chance, trait, connection related to a male or female and the social or cultural relationship that exist with it (Kasomo, 2012). The allocation of the responsibility of gender is emphasized during socialization which determines the status of an individual on the formation of the society. Gender which involves the responsibility assigned to a male or female during socialization, differ from sex which is the difference between male and female in the natural way (Kivoi, 2004). On the contrary, gender inequity or gender impartiality indicates the reduction in partiality as some group in the society are marginalized, as witnessed in the less representation of women in parliament and political leadership. The blindness of gender, is a situation where the society including women, due to social practice and cultural upbringing, blindly believe that only men can be in front and direct, where women become subordinates, which breeds gender inequality in societies Ballington, 2008)

Allah-Mensah (2001) described political participation as the act of representatives of government which is manipulated indirectly or directly by actions which are lawful. It is also indicated that representative democracy is key and should be recognized as it also entails execution of public plans and involvement in its creation (Richardson, 1983; Allah-Mensah, 2001). Also, participation in political leadership is the extent to which there is the participation of the members of the society in affairs such as cultural, economic and governance (Igwee, 2002). Therefore, democracy in its actual nature should encourage involvement as a means of transformation, since the representation and involvement of

women and men in legislative and political leadership procedure is very vital for the sustenance of the system of democracy. It is indicated that Ghanaian women have demonstrated zeal in the development of democracy in Ghana since 1992 and therefore making of strategies and debatable issues can advance if the number of women in parliament is large or considerable (Allah-Mensah, 2001).

Leadership is considered as a means of organizing people in order to do things which are extraordinary in an effective way. Research has indicated that leaders are those who can challenge the process, are realistic, motivate, led by example and allow other people to operate (Eagly, 2007). Also, leadership is the process of influencing people intentionally in order to direct and aid their rapport and actions in an organization or group (Evans, 2010). According to Elcock (2001) many disciplines, including history, psychology, management studies and political theory have contributed to the study of leadership. The study indicated that political leadership is an idea which is fundamental in understanding the processes and results in politics, however, it is indefinable. Also, Ayalew (2010) described political leadership as a form of leadership which results in basic change in politics, social and economic institutions of a polity. Political leaders inspire followers by stressing on achievement of specific developmental goals with a promising future.

Even though the study of women in political leadership has generally helped in different angles, it also holds the view that the leadership of women may or may not be similar to that of men based on the framework in which they lead. The development of this framework is based on the realization that the study of the leadership of African women should be incorporated with the explanation of oppression of the African women, in terms of prejudice, patriarchal customs, discrimination, neocolonialism, colonialism and the employment of different means to produce and authenticate knowledge (Briston, 2006). Researchers have established that women in political leadership, especially those involved in the issues of social justice, have the propensity to take action as agents of change in the area which is not friendly to women or racial minorities (Alston, 2000; Jones, 2003, Meyers, 2002).

The research of Eagly and Karau (2002) indicated that male leaders are mostly assessed positively unlike female leaders. This is due to the fact that women and men are not with similar characteristics, as men are assumed to have more leadership skills than women and women leaders are graded in a negative way when performing a male related role. This therefore make some women to encounter difficulties in becoming political leaders as a result of some uncertainties and also make it difficult for some women to emerge victorious in elections since some voters perceive women as inefficient in office. Tremblay (1998) and other scholars held that there was a correlation between matters concerning women and the high representation of women in parliament (Tremblay, 1998; Delvin & Elgie, 2008). According to Carrol (1994) the populace would be more affected in terms of plans about women as compared to men, such as, matters on education, female genital mutilation, family planning, Etc., Tremblay (1998) added that the representation of women members of parliament signify the concern and desire of women in the society.

This therefore indicates that, gender, political participation and political leadership is related since, gender will determine the level of participation of either male or female in politics, which will lead to the kind of political leadership position to occupy. However, the leadership of the participants will be determined at the floor of parliament, committee level, and national level and at the constituency level.

2.2 Definition of Terms

The terms in this study are defined according to the usage in the study.

Gender: Gender refers to standards, attitudes, relationships, behavior and roles that are attributed to women and men by the society (Waylen, 1996).

Political Participation: Political participation implies, involvement in debates, meetings of politics and legislation, campaigns related to politics and exercising of franchise when its election time (Kivoi, 2000).

Political Leadership: Political leadership means comradeship and group assignment which is to be attained in a specific Institutional cultural setting and situation, through creative modification (Bari, 2005).

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the in depth account of the methodology of this study and it entails the location where the study was conducted or organized, the sample size and its features, the technique used in sampling, the design of the research as well as the resources used in the study. The process of collection of data in connection with ethical guidelines, real challenges, data management and analysis will also be dealt with in this chapter.

3.1 Research Design

The research method used in this study was qualitative method and phenomenological approach. Qualitative research entails the use of individual knowledge, introspective, interview based on existing account, observation, interaction based on history, interview, tests which give description and meaning of the usual problems in the life of the individual. Therefore, qualitative researchers embark on studies in the natural setting, to understand and interpret the observable fact to suit the sense of the people (Cassell & Symon, 1994). Therefore, it is impossible to give the causal explanation of human behavior without understanding the subjective state of the individuals involved (Dodd, 2002).

The major method of data collection was interview. Qualitative design permits an in-depth study of the respondent's personal view or experience (Cassell & Symon, 1994). Therefore, the use of qualitative design for this study was convenient since it aided to achieving the aim of the study as well as its understanding, through the provision of detailed explanation of their experiences which was significant to the topic under study, "The state of women in political leadership in the from 4th the republican parliament of Ghana." Qualitative research method also emphasizes more on the context of the study, specifically, where cultural diversity plays a significant function, where by hidden tones and details are well captured if not properly done in other studies. Therefore, since the context of this study considers Ghana as the center of attention, the research design was suitable to unveil any diversity in culture that was not captured in other studies (Evans, 2010).

3.2 Instrumentation

The researcher mainly used interviews in data collection by using Samsung galaxy S4 mobile phone with the model number GT - 19500 to record respondents' interviews for transcription and analysis to be carried on later. For the interview guide, a semi structured plan was pursued, with a degree of reliability and flexibility; the respondents were permitted to bring significant update which could show the way to new areas. The questions which were later posed on respondents were on demographic features like, status in marriage, academic qualification, length of period in politics, and other questions.

This was as a result of the busy schedules of the Members of Parliament. Some interview questions such as the following were asked, "Are you married?", "For how long have you been into politics?" "For how long have you served in the parliament of Ghana?" among others. Other questions asked in the interview include; "in your own view, what are the factors that motivate women to seek political leadership position in the parliament of Ghana?" "What are the barriers that affect women's participation in politics?" and others questions. Although, most of the participants complained that they disliked granting interviews where they would be recorded as a result of political reasons, but later admitted that their interviews be recorded. In addition to this, the researcher had in her possession a pen and note book in which to write all observations and other interesting ideas.

3.3 Population

The population of this study consisted of 30 people who had been or are actively engaged in electoral politics and are qualify to occupy or had occupied political leadership positions in Ghana. The target population was the women in the 4th Republican Parliament of Ghana. Purposive sampling

technique was used to select 10 women for the study. Purposive sampling technique is the choosing of elements such as institutions and individuals which depends on the precise rationale related to response of research work questions (Teddie & Yu, 2007). Strauss and Corbin (1998) indicated that there will always be the tendency for new ideas to emerge, as long as the researcher is familiar with, observe and analyze the data. Therefore, saturation should be considered at a point where new discoveries does not necessarily add any significance to the overall data and in line with this assertion, the sample size can be determined. Therefore, Mason (2010) indicated that sample size of 10 is acceptable in qualitative research.

Also, purposive sampling technique provides a vital basis for acquiring important information from specific people and therefore is suitable for precise events, locations or people. With this sampling technique, exact answers are demanded for the research questions and therefore suitable for the study. Also, this sampling technique was vital for this study because, significant information can be retrieved from some people but not others and therefore it is good for particular people, locations or incidents (Maxwell, 2008).

Considering the scanty number of women in politics and political leadership positions, purposive technique provided a critical benefit as compared to other techniques; hence information associated with women in political leadership was established. This is due to the fact that, the researcher had absolute concentration mainly on women in politics and political leadership, to recognize and deal with issues concerning them. The criterion used in the choice of respondents was based on women who have served as Members of parliament for three (3) years and above as of the time of conducting this research. The Members of Parliament excluded were those who had served in the house of parliament for less than three years. The reason for this selection is that Members who have served in the house of parliament for three (3) years and above might have more insight or knowledge on 'inside, out' of what goes on in the house of parliament and some might be occupying political leadership positions as compared to those who have served for less than three years. The researcher therefore had chosen the female Members of Parliament who have served for the period of three years and above in the house of parliament, either as current or past Members of Parliament. The respondents were chosen based on their experience as Members of Parliament and the number of years served in parliament house.

The respondents were selected from the ten regions of Ghana, namely: Greater Accra Region, Ashanti, Brong Ahafo Region, Northern Region, Upper West Region, Upper East Region, Western region, Central Region, Eastern Region and Volta Region. From the House of Parliament, ten female Members of Parliament were sampled for interview. Seven out of the ten female Members of Parliament from the republican parliament of Ghana were interviewed for the study. Out of this total number, one had been a Member of Parliament for nineteen years six months, two had been Members of Parliament for thirteen years six months, one had been in parliament for four years and three had been in parliament for three years six months, as of the time of collecting this data.

Generally, all the respondents interviewed had experience in leadership or political leadership with good educational background. Some of those interviewed pointed out that they possess Master's degree or qualified certificates from accredited institutions. However, three of the Members of Parliament were hoping to acquire a Master's degree whilst two had a Bachelor's degree and were also hoping to do their Master's degree. Also, with the number of women Members of Parliament interviewed, four were in their matrimonial homes, one was divorced and two were widows. All the seven women interviewed had children. Averagely, each of them had at least two children with the youngest child been ten years.

3.4 Data Collection

The researcher contacted some of the respondents on their mobile phones and was also led by some officers of the research department in Parliament House to meet some of the respondents in their offices, as well as at the tea shop in the Chamber block, in the House of Parliament. The researcher personally also made a follow up to the offices of some of the respondents. Individual or one-on-one interview was the major source of data collection. The researcher introduced herself and explained the general and specific objectives of the study at the beginning of the interview. This was done to build a

cordial relationship between the researcher and the respondents. The researcher officially got in touch with the department of research in parliament to enquire if there were women who served in the house of parliament for three years or more and if they satisfy the inclusion criterion, in order to begin the sample selection process. A letter of introduction from the Department of Management (UPSA), introducing the researcher was attained after confirmation was received from parliament house.

The researcher on several occasions called and visited the House of Parliament to aid the process whilst waiting for response which took about two to three weeks to go through the bureaucratic process of Parliament, to get in touch with the suitable people involved. The visit to the parliament house in most of the time was helpful, since an opportunity was created to meet some of the women parliamentarians in question, to communicate with them and many of them were pleased to be included in the research. I was also aided by the staff of the research department at the Parliament House on information related to the area of study and how to get in touch with the respondents. However, it was very difficult to meet the female Members of Parliament even after booking an appointment with them. On the first day of appointment, the researcher spent so many hours at the parliament house, without being able to speak to any of my respondents even after parliamentary sitting.

This therefore frustrated the researcher as she left the house of parliament to the office of another Member of Parliament who was a deputy Minister on the following day, but was turned down by the secretary after several visits to that office. On one of the visits to the office of the said Member of Parliament who was also a deputy Minister, I was told by the secretary that the Member of Parliament (Deputy Minister), had not been to office for one week, but on the contrary, the said Member of Parliament was in the office because, I saw her in her car, parked at the car park. Also, on my subsequent visits to the house of parliament, I was kept waiting for hours before I could speak to any of my respondents.

A pilot study was initially conducted on two female Members of Parliament to ascertain the validity of the questions before the main study. Some demographic questions were added to the original interview questions, such questions as "are you married?" "How many children do you have?" And other questions were modified or retained. The interview of Members of Parliament was in different segments. This is because; the busy schedules of the Members of Parliament had caused the interview to be held at any time or place convenient to the Members of Parliament. Whilst the second segment commenced in a week after the first interview which was used as a stage for verification, the former segment comprised of responses of respondents related to the semi-structured interview guide. During the second segment, the researcher returned to ascertain if there was a link between the first and the second interview conducted, especially in relation to the data and conclusion of respondents. The first segment of the interview began with the explanation of the state of women in political leadership in addition to the objectives and aims of the study, after the establishment of a cordial relationship with the respondents. The interviews were conducted in the offices of some of the respondents which were enclosed almost all the time.

However, some respondents were interviewed at the tea shop in the Chamber block, in the House of Parliament, where Members of Parliament take a rest before the commencement and after parliamentary session. In another office, the frequent mobile calls with the interference of the secretary and other people who kept walking in and out to deliver message to the respondent caused obstruction, which could not be avoided. Even though the interview which took about twenty minutes less each was for confirmation and validation was successful, but the noise from the environment and interruption of people sometimes caused responses to be unclear unless repeated.

3.5 Reliability and Validity

In qualitative research, the researcher serves as the instrument (Patton, 2002) and therefore the effort and the capability of the researcher determines the reliability of the research (Golafshani, 2003). To determine if data is consistent or valid in qualitative research, it will depend on the effort applied by the researcher (Golafshani, 2003). Also, in qualitative research, consistency involves documenting and reporting incidents properly but not the assertion of arriving at the same outcome (Opare, 2006). For this

current research to be reliable incidents were sufficiently documented, data was confirmed and examined which guaranteed that it was precise, consistent, replicated and verified.

The concept of validity has been developed and explained to mean honesty, firmness and quality by some qualitative researchers (Davies & Dodd, 2002; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Mishler, 2000; Seale, 1999; Stenbacka, 2001). Unlike Silverman (2013) who related validity to fact and it entails the correctness and clearness of events that come first before data is created, Davies and Dodd (2002) clarifies rigor as common communications in interviews, reflexivity and subjectivity. According to Patton (2002) dependability is the outcome of validity, together with the talent and capability of a researcher in a study. As a result of the concept termed validity, a semi-structured interview guide was used in this study in an explicit manner to gather data for consistency. It entails making questions uncomplicated as well as repeating the same questions to allow respondents sufficient time and for new ideas to emerge. For this reason, this research was valid and dependable since precision and clarity was established.

Interviews interpretation and transcription forms the main approaches to interviews data analysis, for the objectives stated to be held to. Through transcription, data in visual or audio form are converted or interpreted into a form of writing (Atkinson, 1998). It is a necessity that information required is captured on every transcript concurrently in honesty and validity during transcription process, even though it is a strenuous job but the rationale behind the research analysis should be considered (Edwards, 1993). Therefore, in connection with this study, there was a verbatim transcription of the audio recorded interview data, as the genuine account of the respondents' idea.

3.6 Data Analysis Technique: Content Analysis.

There are three phases involved in data analysis, namely, reduction of data, display of data, and the stage of verification or drawing conclusion. These phases are autonomous and simultaneous, since they are entwined. This approach indicates that content analysis was employed for the thorough examination of the data of interviews (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The phase of reduction of data entails classification, organization and editing of data gathered. This is undertaken by dividing, grouping, teasing out themes, summarizing, coding and memo writing which are integral of the data (Punch, 2013). The next phase, the display of data, involved the exhibition of data in the form of matrices, charts, graphs, tables, networks and relational models. The final phase is the stage of verification and drawing of conclusion. Conclusion is therefore allowed to be figured out from the data after it has been compacted or put in an organized assembly of information. The conclusion entails the analysis of what the researcher had gathered from the data in the study.

The researcher on several occasions re-examined the audio recording together with the transcriptions written, to ensure precision. This was done after the data was decreased and all audio interviews transcribed into writing in order to follow the process indicated above. As a result of this, the researcher was able to correct discrepancies to ensure that the script reflected the real audio recorded. This enabled the researcher to read the scripts of the interview repetitively and got familiarized with the data. Coding, which was the next phase entailed underlining some supporting data in connection with certain likely design in the data. There was a collation of each code with the data which supported it. The purpose of this was to prevent the loss of the original context of the data as it was offered and each script was involved. The search of themes which entailed grouping, comparing and categorizing of codes in terms of monitored design or resemblance was the next stage. The themes which resembled were grouped together and as a result, correlations were recognized and distinguished sub-themes from themes.

At the end, the analysis of data was done to determine if the data was associated with the factors identified to be the state of women in the parliament of Ghana. To guarantee unbiased involvement, each participant was represented by at least an interview extract, which had the purpose of indicating and validating the presence of sub-theme and theme. Then, the interpretation of the outcome was done with reference to literature and theory.

3.7 Ethical Consideration

In the midst of ethical considerations, the knowledgeable consent of the participants, which is very important, involves that participants in the research work are offered detailed updates to provide them with reasonable ideas on the aims and objectives of the study (Silverman, 2013). Sticking to moral requirement helps encourage the creation of actual knowledge instead of falsehood and wrong ideas in relation to the aim of the study (Quarshie, 2011). This means, the researcher ensured that explanations in relation to general over view of the state of women in political leadership, as well as the purpose and objectives of the study was offered at all times before the start of the interview. Also, participants were guaranteed that information gathered was to be utilized for educational purposes only, since the code of secrecy was firmly stuck to. In order for the researcher to restore confidence in the participants and maintain confidentiality, the complementary cards and names of the participants were collected not prior to the interview but afterwards. Aside that fake names were made use of in order to recognize the participants. The researcher employed this technique, in order to set the minds of the participants at rest or restore their confidence of anonymity throughout the process of the interview.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Description of Results

This study discovered the feminist theory, the liberal feminist theory and the social role theory, in relation to the state of women in political leadership in the 4th Republican Parliament of Ghana. The study particularly aimed to examine the political leadership positions women occupy in the parliament of Ghana, explore the factors that encourage women to seek political leadership positions in parliament and to identify the barriers that affect women's participation in political leadership. Various themes related to the objective of the study surfaced from the data. By the use of relational models, patterns which were related were put into sub - themes. These were coded under six sub themes, which are; women representation, representing theme 1: motivation, representing theme 2; barriers, representing theme 3; to overcome barriers, representing theme 4; lack of interest representing theme 5; and enhance participation representing theme 6.

2.2 How equal is the representation of women to men in political leadership in the parliament of Ghana?

2.2.1 Women representation

The representation of women in political leadership in the parliament of Ghana is an integral part of democracy in Ghana. Considering the population of women in Ghana which is more than that of men requires a large number of women in parliament to occupy political leadership positions. According to Rai (1994) the representation of women in political leadership is woefully inadequate, as well as in decision making even at the basic level like home. This is attributed to some obstacles like fewer resources, time and other factors which serve as a hindrance to women. Women in political leadership were sampled for this study and they gave different views on the representation of women in political leadership in the 4th republican parliament of Ghana. Most respondents indicated that the representation of women in the parliament of Ghana was discouraging.

A female Member of Parliament had this to say: Comparatively the representation of women against men in parliament is nothing to write home about, considering the fact that we have 275 seats in parliament and only 30 are occupied by women. The number of women in parliament is very small. We have 16 on the part of the majority and 14 on the part of the minority.

Another female Member of Parliament confirmed this and said; It is not equal at all. If you have 275 people in Parliament and you have 30 women, it is not equal, the ratio is not good at all. "A female Member of Parliament added this; It is very unequal. If you take the fact that women are 10.9 % of the total population in Parliament, there are only 30 women against the total of 275 in parliament. If you take the fact that women form about 51 % of our population and yet in parliament, where they are representing the people, it is only 10.9 %, it is very unequal.

2.3 What factors motivate women to seek political leadership positions in the parliament of Ghana?

2.3.1 Motivation

When it comes to decision to seek political leadership, motivation is very essential. The women sampled for this study were women in political leadership and they mentioned different motives chosen to be in political leadership. This is in line with the assertion of Ross (2009) which states that some people, who were able to succeed in Ghanaian politics and are remembered of in politics in Ghana, were family members of some women who were encouraged to involve in political leadership.

Self-Motivated: Some respondents indicated that, their main interest in politics was to serve the people and they had succeeded because they personally had concern for the people and wished to serve and help their people. They also wanted to be part of the legislature. One of such persons was a Member of Parliament and she said; For us women, what motivates us is service. We want to serve our people. We want to serve the vulnerable people in the society, people who socially have been excluded, like children. That is what motivate us to come into politics, it is not about power and not about money, it is about serving our people.

Another Member of Parliament remarked: For me, I have the interest of helping people particularly women. Even when I became a member of parliament, I decided particularly to take girl child education seriously, so most of my common fund was spent on girl child education. So my going there was to try to help those girls there and especially the women too. Other respondents indicated that although their motive was to help people especially their fellow women and children, but they also want to break the gap between men and women and be recognized by the society as women who are capable of leading people.

A Member of Parliament mentioned this: You know for women, we want to serve our people, we want to be seen and we want to help our fellow women. We just don't want it to be one sex alone in parliament. We just want to come and bear with the men to let people know that women can do best if given the opportunity.

This is what another Member of Parliament had this to say: I think the major motivation or factor is the need for women to also play a part in the second arm of government which is the legislature. ...So most women, myself for instance, we are motivated by the fact that we need more voices to be heard in Parliament about women issues and children and the vulnerable in the society, to push for the rights of women and children, to ensure that we are taking part in budgetary allocation and approval, to ensure that we are also part of the checks and balances on the executive, also to have fair representation since we are the majority of the total population in the country. Others felt they were born into leadership and with the competence they had, it served as an advantage and encouragement for them to go into leadership.

A Member of Parliament commented on this: For some of us, it is because we were more or less like born into it. I for instance, I started as a cadre and I grew to see that leadership, decision making and all those things were part of my life. I as a woman, I grew amongst men and so the struggle was already there naturally for me to do things on my own ...as someone who has competence in me, I have also tried as much as I can in my life to lead smaller groups.

Motivated by Others: Some of the women were motivated by other people to go into politics. Some indicated that they were encouraged by people in their communities who spotted some leadership qualities in them. Some also said they were encouraged by the presence of some female politicians in politics. Ross (2009) added that in Asia, women who have ties with men in political leadership easily get high positions even in countries where the rights of women are limited. In relation to this, some of the female leaders made the following comments concerning the factors which encouraged them to be in politics.

One of the respondents commented;

... Also you will come to a point that people will be seeing some leadership skills in you and in my case that was what happened. Some people called me home and said, the way I have been coming to them,

talking to them, showing leadership in certain aspects of their lives means I can also lead the constituency. So I should think about being a leader, so I went into politics.

Another Member of Parliament said;

... Then I also look at other women leaders who have come up before me. For instance, let me mention Nana Konadu Agyeman Rawlings of the 31st December Women Movement. She is one of them and the things that we used to do gave me that courage that I can be part of the system, I can be part of decision making, I can be part of leadership and that I can lead people and also make contribution.

This is the comment of another respondent;

... It is just that you will watch others. Before I came to parliament, I was just watching women in parliament and saw how they were going about their work in parliament and that motivated me to become a parliamentarian. And I also took some of them as my role model, for instance, the late Hawa Yakubu was one of the women who motivated me to go into politics.

5.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, the study indicated that women do encounter challenges that hinder their progress in political leadership. These challenges unveiled have contributed to new understanding of the state of women in political leadership. These findings are of great importance in this political era, since most women intending to involve in politics or already involved in political leadership would nurture their ambitions and psyche themselves as they engage in politics or political leadership. Therefore, the society should create an environment that is politically friendly to women, in order to promote the participation of women in political leadership and legislation.

Tsikata (2001) observed that culture and tradition are seen by people just like the institutions, ideologies and practices which determine how social interactions, social relations and identities are established in the society. Women do not also get access to information and its utilization as well as opportunities, due to certain difficulties like limited literacy.

It is recommended that there should be the implementation of international conventions and treaties as well as existing policies like the quota system, to promote the involvement of women in political leadership. The government institutions like the National Commission for Civic Education should educate the general public on the role of Members of Parliament and the need for women to participate in political leadership. The government and non-governmental organizations should support women in political leadership with finance to enable them effectively participate in political leadership.

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