

Examining the Effectiveness of the Women's Quota in Zimbabwe: Opportunities and Challenges

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Abstract: This paper makes an evaluation of the implementation of the women's quota system in Zimbabwe as provided for in the Constitution of Zimbabwe Section 124 (1b). This affirmative action measure is temporary and is valid for only two lives of Parliament, which means in 2023 it will not be applicable. In making the evaluation the methodology consisted of document analysis, face to face interviews, tele conferencing, focus group discussions and structured questionnaires with both open ended and close ended questions. Purposive sampling was used and random sampling was also administered. The evaluation also makes use of primary evidence obtained from the Parliament of Zimbabwe. The paper discusses the rationale of having a women's quota in light of the democratic global wave and calls for gender equality. The paper also gives best practices in terms of implementation of the women's quota from other countries in the region such as Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda and Rwanda, as well as countries from the international community like Sweden and Finland. The quota system is generally perceived to be a way of redressing the historical gender imbalances existing in the political field. It is an affirmative action method which gives those who have been excluded and discriminated against some avenues to get access to parliamentary representation. This paper argues that the quota system may be a game of numbers for women representation if proper monitoring and evaluation is not done on the achievements, challenges, strengths and weaknesses of the system. The paper therefore seeks to make an evaluation and analysis of strides and gains made from 2013 to date so that strategies are reinforced or changed and mitigation measures can be proposed for improvements in future terms. Through the use of interviews and focus group discussions with some members of the public and some female parliamentarians, the paper discovered that more needs to be done to achieve more gains through the women's quota in Zimbabwe. Terms of operation should be put in place and more should be done to encourage the women to be fully equipped for the tasks in parliament. Politics is a duty for those who really have the call to perform the duties not for those who are forced or just placed to satisfy the numbers. In Addition, representatives to the quota system should be chosen on merit so that there is effective leadership which can be emulated by future female aspirants into the political arena.

Key Words: Gender Equality, Equity, Women's Quota, Affirmative Action, Amendment Act.

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The women's quota or gender quotas is commonly used to refer to a way of making sure that women constitute the critical minority of 30-40% in all leadership posts. This was reached at by the international community due to the realisation that women have been historically marginalised for a very long time from the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial eras. Even the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

which crafted and adopted by states on 10 December 1948 and was meant to give all human beings equal status in all aspects of life did not manage to address the discrimination against women. Following guidelines from international conventions like the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW article 7 and 8), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG number 5 also MDG 3), the country prioritised the issues of women to the extent of clearly including a section in her constitution adopted in May 2013. Zimbabwe adopted the quota system, in 2013 which is a temporary provision for only two terms, 2013 and 2018. Special reference is made here to section 124 part 4 which states... 'an additional sixty women members, six from each of the provinces Zimbabwe is divided into, elected through a system of proportional representation based on the votes cast for candidates representing political parties in a general election for constituency members in the provinces' (Shawarira 2014). This section was a practical approach to gender inequality in the country as suggested by some parts of the constitution as well as other legal instruments at national and international level. For example, section 17:1(b) of the same constitution states: 'the state must take all measures, including legislative measures to ensure that (ii) women constitute at least half the membership of all commissions and other elective and appointed governmental bodies established by or under this constitution or any act of parliament.' In addition, a national gender policy was created to effectively deal with gender issues in the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development. This inquiry is making special reference to section 5:3 of The National Gender Policy 2013-2017 (Gender, Politics and Decision Making) whose main objective reads i) 'To create a supportive environment for gender parity in politics and decision-making positions (ii) Strategy- develop and strengthen policies, legal provisions and programmes, to ensure attainment of a 50/50 representation of men and women in politics and other key decision-making positions.'

This paper will make reference to legal documents like the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women of 1979 (CEDAW), the National gender policy of Zimbabwe and the constitution of Zimbabwe. Guided by provisions in these legal instruments, the paper presents a case that the quota system in Zimbabwe remains a necessity until a time when there is a level playing field on the political arena so that the women can stand on their own to claim their 50% of the leadership posts in all critical sectors in the country as stated by legislation. However, before making conclusions on the need to expand the periods of the quota system which is

expiring in 2023, the paper presents an argument that it may not be necessary to continue with the quota system if there are no measurable results and indicators of development change and improvement due to the female representation available in parliament to date. The paper therefore seeks to analyse the effectiveness of the quota system in the two terms it has been used in the country. For the sake of meaningful development, effective representation in future, there is need to monitor and evaluate the achievements, counting the gains, the strides and impacts made by the women in parliament for the given opportunity during the specified period. This will enable the women community to realise the effects of representation on the same status with men as well as realising the need to claim their 50% share of posts based on the examples and paces set by the role models of women in parliament today. Giving periodic analysis monitoring and evaluations is also critical in finding mitigation measures so that strategies can be changed, alternatives set and options explored for sustainable means of forwarding performers, not just place holders in such critical positions for developmental results for all women and the nation at large.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

There is a general agreement internationally that women have always been discriminated against and there is urgent need reduce this gender inequality effectively. This inequality in terms of political leadership was summarised by (UN 2019 and McCullar.com/charts.-female leadership) as follows: only 22 women lead some countries worldwide and out of these only 3 are African, which are: Senegal, Liberia and Central African Republic. As of June 2019, UN Women reports that only 24.3 per cent of all national parliamentarians were women. Such statistics are the reason why gender quotas have been proposed internationally to accelerate the process towards economic gender equality and promote women's empowerment. Evidence indicates that quotas are playing an instrumental role in levelling the gender disparity in the political area (Brody 2016(Ferrari et al 2016). In concurrence are Pande and Deanna (2012), and Akbar (2018), who aver that quota indicate a changing attitude towards the role of women in politics by increasing female representation through guaranteed seats in parliament. Using legislative quotas do not discriminate against men but just make right the injustices and historical gender imbalances in many nations globally and there is no need to give women political seats without economic re-engagement and social inclusion in all facets of life. (Zungura and Nyemba 2013). However the quota system has always been controversial because sometimes the application of the system is not directly related to women empowerment (Bagues and Campa (2017). Sometimes it is only a game of numbers and the other women do not have any lessons or reasons to push for extension or increase in the number of women representatives. According to Krook and Zetterberg (2014) quotas are not simply about increasing the number of female representatives but looking at the implications of the quotas as well as the calibre of the women chosen to represent others. The whole concept is about monitoring effectiveness and delivering of

results to those women given the opportunity. Despite being elected into office through the quota system, the women may never rise into higher offices to show improvement or achievements, thus an indication that sometimes it is only an issue of appeasing the international community with ineffective numbers in terms of real women empowerment (Pande and Deanna 2012)

2.1 Defining the Quota System

Dahlerup and Freidenvall (2003) defined a quota system as a measure to increase the participation of the underrepresented groups in decision making positions for example in Parliaments, governments and local authorities. Quota system becomes a measure to boost the participation of women in decision making positions. Quota systems are meant to bridge the gap wherever there is unbalanced gender representation. Mostly, quota systems are known for women who are mostly underrepresented in most positions of decision making Dahlerup (2006:19) stated quotas are generally used to increase the participation of underrepresented groups in decision-making positions, for example, in parliaments, governments and local councils. According to Coleman (2012), quota systems are well known for bringing women's voices into political systems where they are otherwise excluded, shortcutting the process that can naturally take generations. This therefore shows that, quotas are temporary measures used to bridge the gap that existed for years and which is more likely to take more years without being filled.

2.2 The History of the Quota System

Countries discovered the slow speed in which women are taking to participate in politics and decision-making positions, there arose different methods that can be efficient to reach a gender balance in institutions. The Quota system became one of the mechanisms. According to International IDEA (2003), because of its relative efficiency, the hope for a dramatic increase in women's representation by using this system is strong. Placing gender equality at the centre of democracy, the international world mostly being led by the United Nations came up with different initiatives to strengthen the mechanism of quota system. These systems include the international laws and declarations such as the Universal Declaration for Human Rights, the Beijing Platform for Action and the SADC Protocol on gender equality among others.

These guidelines assisted Zimbabwe as a nation to consider women in the positions of decision making. The 2013 constitution was adopted and resulted in the increased number of women in Parliament. According to the Inter-Parliamentary Union (2018), the number of women in parliament by from 1980 were only 9 women in National Assembly and 3 Senators whereas men were 91 at National Assembly and 37 as Senators. The number grew with a slight change from 2005; there were 25 women and 125 men at National assembly and 21 women, 45 men at senate level. The change was not favourable for women probably due to some reasons that were later addressed by the quota system. When 60 seats were reserved for women in parliament in 2013, the number grew with 86 women at

National Assembly and 38 at Senate level (Inter Parliamentary Union: 2018). This history shows how the quota system was used as a mechanism to promote women's representation and participation in decision making processes.

2.3 Theoretical Frameworks

This study bases on the approaches to gender and development which are Women in Development, Women and Development and Gender and Development. These approaches to development give a shift from efforts being done by nations to include women in developmental areas.

2.3.1 Women in Development (WID), Women and Development (WAD), Gender and Development (GAD)

The concept of women in development came as a solution in resolving the exclusion of women in development processes. According to Collins (2013), the WID approach helped to ensure, the integration of women into the workforce and increase their level of productivity in order to improve their lives. World Bank Report of (1990) set up a policy of focusing on increasing women's economic productivity, investing in human capital and improving women's access to productive resources and labor market. The identified shortcomings led to the birth of Women and Development (WAD). The main focus of WAD is on the interaction between women and development processes rather than purely on strategies to integrate women into development. WAD argued that, women are already integrated into societies and that the work they are doing both inside and outside the household is central to the maintenance of societies, but this integration serves primarily to sustain existing international structures of inequality (Devon 2012) However, apart from all this, WAD was not an effective approach for it has been argued that, although at a theoretical level WAD recognizes and focuses strongly on class, in practical project design and implementation, it tends like WID to group women together irrespective of other considerations such as class divisions (Muyoyeta: 2012). Later on, Gender and Development emerged from a frustration with the lack of progress of WID and WAD approaches, in changing women's lives and in influencing the broader development agenda. As the development processes progressed with time, it was realised that, talking of men without including them in practices was not yielding effective results. According to Collins (2013), the diversity of the GAD approach has two main goals which were to prove that the unequal relationship between the sexes hinders development and female participation and it sort to change the structure of power into a long-term goal whereby all decision-making and benefits of development are distributed on equal basis of gender neutrality. This approach encouraged planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation to be undertaken through working in a participatory way with men and women for it takes them all to change gender relations, leading this paper to put much emphasis on it. In addition, according to the Gender Equity Team, Planning and Coordination Department (2007), GAD seeks to correct systems and mechanisms that produce gender inequality by focusing not only women but rather assessing social status of both men and women. GAD

encourages gender mainstreaming which emphasis development impacts on men and women through planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development policies on the premise that, all development polices impacts men and women differently.

2.4 Legal Frameworks

This section of the study reviews the legal laws and declarations that are being used as guidelines by Zimbabwe to implement the quota system. The frameworks trace from international, regional and national (constitution) in which Zimbabwe is a signatory to. These policies and legal structures help to identify the gap in which Zimbabwe as a nation is failing to meet the 50/50 equal representation of men and women in parliament and political parties.

2.4.1 The Universal Declaration for Human Rights (1948)

The Universal Declaration for Human Rights (UDHR) of (1948) was the first international legal document that was signed and ratified by 150 countries and Zimbabwe being among the countries. It has 30 articles that call upon nations to uphold the human rights providing rights of men and women, boys and girls claiming that they stand on equality. This gave a platform for the rights of men and women, given equal opportunities to stand their grounds whenever participating in the political, economic and social platforms of the countries they belong to. Article 2a of the UDHR mentioned that, everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in the declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Article 21 (1) of the UDHR went on further stating that, "everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives." According to Shreck (2016), when the UDHR was adopted in 1948, 13 of the 56 countries voting did not give women the right to vote including 12 countries who voted for the UDHR and one country Saudi Arabia that voted against it, yet Article 21 speaks of universal and equal suffrage. However, Cameron (2018) argued that, over many of the Articles, international politics was at play in the debates over Article 21 and the delegates had adopted Article 2, which contains sweeping language on non-discrimination, including freedom of political or other opinion. Thus Article 21 underscored on the procedure of political life: periodic, equal, universal, direct and secret suffrage. This opened a door for women to take part in every decision process of their nations.

2.4.2 The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (1979)

The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) came as an idea by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979 to end all the discrimination being faced by girls and women. It says that, governments should do all they can so that girls and women are treated equally. According to Khanna and Kimmel (2004), although other international human rights instruments, such as

the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, CEDAW is important because it comprehensively addresses women's human rights and is focused on ending all forms of discrimination against women and girls, and guaranteeing their rights in all areas of life. Bond (2014) also argues that, as much as the CEDAW's influence can be felt in the text of the Protocol, the Protocol takes a more nuanced approach to culture and tradition, explicitly acknowledging the positive role that it can play in women's lives. As on political grounds, article 7 of CEDAW states that, women have the same right to vote and be elected to government positions, girls and women have the right to take part in every decision government makes. As nations ratified this convention, several mechanisms were put in place as a way to incorporate women in decision making and political positions. As proclaimed by the International Centre for Research on Women (2010), countries around the world have used CEDAW as a legal instrument and its recommendations to revise constitutions, change discriminatory laws and policies, support the creation of new legislation, and influence court decisions. The same ideas were emphasised by the international community at the Beijing Platform in 1995. According to the UN Women Report (2015), the BPA looked at the critical areas for women and development which are women and poverty, women and health, women and the economy, as well as women in power and decision making. The BPA laid emphasis on women in leadership.

2.4.3 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

According to the UN Economic and Social Council (2017), gender equality by 2030 requires urgent action to eliminate the many root causes of discrimination that still curtail women's rights in private and public spheres including the discriminatory laws to be changed and legislations to be adopted to proactively advance equality. The UN Women (2017) proclaimed that, women's full and effective participation in leadership and decision-making, in political, economic and public life is a strong enabler for other SDG targets, including those on water and sanitation resource management, reducing inequalities, and promoting peaceful and inclusive societies. The UNDP (2017) also suggested that, women's full participation in economic and political life can increase productivity, create decent work and enhance agricultural productivity in smallholder farms. Therefore, some schools of thought argue that, regardless of mechanisms that are being put in place, discrimination still exists and especially women who are included in the politics of a country. Inflammatory language is commonly used to women who are brave enough to participate in politics and especially in developing countries. This therefore means to say, the strategies being adopted need to be strengthened or to change and amend the legal constitutions of countries.

2.4.4 The Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment No 20 (2013)

The 2013 constitution of Zimbabwe won the majority vote by citizens claiming that it is very responsive to gender issues. Section 80 (1) of the constitution states that "Every woman has

full and equal dignity of the person with men and this includes equal opportunities in political, economic and social activities." The constitution went on opening a door for women to participate in parliament by introducing the quota system. Section 124 (1) (b) says "for the life of the first two Parliaments after the effective date, an additional sixty women members, six from each of the provinces into which Zimbabwe is divided, elected through a system of proportional representation based on the votes cast for candidates representing political parties in a general election for constituency members in the provinces." This was a great initiative by the government of Zimbabwe with the support of its citizens. According to Tshuma (2018), the current quota system which guarantees 60 reserved seats for women increased the percentage of women in parliament from 17% to 35% in 2013. Therefore, one can suggest that, an increase of women in the parliament led Zimbabwe to be recognized as one of the top countries with high representation of women in politics and decision-making positions. But however, as argued by Mlilo (2019), as an empowerment tool, the quota system has to be looked at and evaluated on various levels apart from just the numerical representativeness in parliament. Mlilo (2019) went on arguing that, the quota system benefited women who were already in politics and strategically positioned in parties, thus only cemented their hold on power through extending their stay in office. Therefore, there is need to find out in what ways are women are benefiting from the Quota System, understanding its effectiveness in promoting women's participation in all levels of decision making in Zimbabwe.

2.5 Spatial Analysis of the Quota Systems

2.5.1 Quota Systems Worldwide

Gender quota systems have achieved international recognition as a viable source of affirmative action, and are now embedded in the international legal structures which specifically outlined an objective relating to women in decision making. According to Bannett (2014), this international mechanism for increasing women in higher positions of decision making has gained leverage from the statistical evidence accumulated over the course of the last decade, suggesting that such systems do demonstrably increase the number of females participating in parliamentary processes. Approximately half of the world's countries currently have some form of electoral gender quota system (Dahlerup: 2003). Given the statistics from the Parliamentary Union (2015), in 2012, electoral quotas were used in 22 countries holding elections and with legislated quotas, women took 24 per cent of seats and with voluntary quotas they gained 22 per cent. When no quotas were used, women took only 12 per cent of seat cent (Parliamentary Union: 2015). Adding on to what International IDEA (2014) stated, a significant is the fact that nine out of the top ten countries which witnessed the highest growth in the number of women MPs in their lower house of parliament had used quotas. This indicates positive responses from nations that adopted the quota system mechanism as to promote gender equality.

The UN Women (2019) stated that, globally there are 27 countries in which women account for less than 10 percent of parliamentarians in single or lower house as of February 2019 including three chambers with no women at all. This therefore shows that the quota systems have a bigger impact which led many countries globally to respond positively.

Finland is one European country which implemented the quota system. Section 4(a) subsection 1 of Finland's Act on Equality between Women and Men states that, "The proportion of both women and men in government committees, advisory boards and other corresponding bodies, and in municipal bodies and bodies established for the purpose of inter-municipal cooperation, but excluding municipal councils, must be at least 40 per cent, unless there are special reasons to the contrary." Finland is one of the best European countries with the most represented women in her national parliament. Niethammer (2019) stated that, in 2018, Finland occupied place 4 of 149 ranked countries with overall high and gender equality achievements in health and education that have contributed to women's high economic and political participation. Finland's cabinet features a significant number of women, twelve portfolios are represented by women and only seven by men. This can be regarded as the greatest achievement of the quota system.

Sweden is well known for its extraordinarily high representation of women in politics and she occupied the number one position before being recently overtaken by Rwanda (Moon, Chun and Kim: 2017). Pursuing the incremental track, the level of women's parliamentary representation in Sweden reached as high as 30 percent in the early 1980s, even before quotas were officially introduced by the parties and since the early 1990s when quotas were implemented women's representation has remained above 40 percent (Freidenvall: 2003). This therefore shows that, quota systems are essential in promoting and increasing women's participation in decision making positions.

2.5.2 African Experiences on the Quota system

African nations are taking possible measures to make sure women are represented in parliaments. According to the Quota Project (2009), Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia and Uganda have constitutional quotas and some of these countries calls for 30 percent women in Parliaments. The increase in the number of women in parliaments shows that, these countries are benefiting from the quota systems. However, several challenges are being met on the way as stated by Osei-Afful and Hubbard (2014) that, in some instances, quotas have served as barriers rather than gateways, preventing women from competing with their male counterparts for higher positions. In other cases, the quota for female political representation is set at a low 30 percent, creating a glass ceiling and inhibiting the ability of women to have a stronger voice in decision-making processes. According to Hubbard in Ghana, as women strive to break political glass ceilings, some are criticized for not delivering adequately to the needs of the women they represent. Mostly, women in the quota system are not being recognized

and their works, their fellow competencies are always negative on their performance.

Rwanda's success in bringing women to the political table mirrors that of a small but growing number of countries in SSA countries and the international countries are drawing lessons from Rwanda who became successful in promoting equal representation as from 2003. In September 2003, Rwanda made history by electing more than 48 percent of women to its National Assembly, surpassing Sweden, which for many years had held the lead (International IDEA: 2004). More so, according to Clayton (2014), Rwanda, for instance, which reserves seats in both its upper and lower houses for women, has received international praise for superseding Sweden as the first in the world in women's parliamentary representation, with 64% of its total seats held by women against Sweden's 45%. Given the background of the status of women in Rwanda, women's ownership of land and property was prohibited and were discouraged from making their own opinions heard and were expected to defer to men (Jefremovas: 1991). However, the 2003 constitution of Rwanda assured the state to set thirty percent quota for women in parliament and government. According to Hansen (2017), in 2003 the parliamentary elections were held and in which political parties promoted female candidates and women gained as much as 49 percent of the seats in the parliament. More so, Corrigan (2015), women's representation in Rwanda has during the past decade extended far beyond the national government, all the way down to the grass root level. This shows how the quota system influenced women empowerment.

In Tanzania, the quota system was successfully implemented through both voluntary and mandatory quotas in her legal systems and party platforms (Fidel 2009). Tanzania amended her constitution to raise the number of special seats reserved for women in the National Assembly to 30 percent. According to the statistics provided by IPU, after 2005 elections, the National Assembly of Tanzania has 30.4 percent of women in parliaments and it was her highest percentage of women ever represented in a majoritarian electoral system (Women in National Parliaments: 2008). The change in laws, regulations and policies that in turn followed by practical actions increases the number of women in the decision-making bodies (Warioba & Fussi, 2012).

According to the statistics given by Swai, Masue and Anasel (2013), as of January 2012, there were 362 members in the National Assembly of whom 123 were women. Out of 123 women members, 21 were directly elected from constituencies and 102 were appointed under special seats for women. The same applied at the local levels, there were 4,449 councilors in the council of whom 1,302 were women. Out of 1,302 women council members, 190 were elected from the ward while 1,112 were appointed under special seats or quota system. Therefore, women held 34% of the seats in the National Assembly and 30% in the local government councils. Hence, given this information, one can strongly argue that, the quota system through reserving of special seats systems have successfully

increased the number of women in the decision-making bodies both at the national and local level.

III. METHODOLOGY

The paper made use of interviews and focus group discussions to get views and comments from the participants who included male and female parliamentarians, ordinary women and other legislators in the Zimbabwean Government. Purposive sampling was done in a bid to select only ideal respondents to this particular study, those with knowledge of the quota system in Zimbabwe.

IV. FINDINGS

4.1 Zimbabwe has made a good initiative by adopting reserved seats as a women's quota system to increase representation and participation as provided for in Section 124 (1b) of the constitution. Results indicate that more research need to be done because the representatives appear to be place holders only without any significant contribution in parliament to economic development.

4.2 MPs from the women's quota were elected provincially without clear delimitation of areas within their jurisdiction or mandate. Though they are MPs have the same roles in terms of representative, legislative and executive oversight as other MPs, the challenge comes as who do they represent. They cannot even hold meetings in provinces because the constituency MPs guard their territories jealously. Their sentiments are that some modus operandi is necessary.

4.3 Findings also revealed that the women's quota MPs feel inferior to their counterparts with constituencies because they are ineligible to the Constituency Development Fund (CDF). They would appreciate if some form of fund would be rolled out to them for them to gain respect and status by the public which they could use for development once a modus operandi was established. Of major concern was the stereotyping that comes with being a women's quota MPs nicknamed 'BACOSSI' meaning in short tokenism. Fellow MPs both male and female consider them inferior in a way because they did not sweat it out to Parliament but were handed power on a silver platter.

4.4 Furthermore, for most male respondents the women's quota is considered a waste of resources on the already cash strapped government. For them this initiative was good but what is wrong is the timing. Their argument is that with the economic challenges faced by the country a bloated Parliament is something that could be avoided by shelving the women's quota. However other findings also revealed that justice delayed is justice denied and that implementation mechanisms need to be revisited or rather legislated.

4.5 Over 90% of the respondents agreed the initiative was good but that there is need to go back to the drawing board to come up with implementation mechanisms that will enrich the provision because though representation has increased from 18.2% in the 7th Parliament to almost double in the current

Parliament at 35%, this has not translated to increased participation in Parliamentary processes.

4.6 On probing how women were appointed to these seats most evidence given revealed that it was based on loyalty to the party and it was not the obligation of the women's wings only but party leadership as a whole. The women's quota has brought in a mixed bag of women. One respondent said

"Some of the women are not educated enough to air any meaningful arguments or present any meaningful development plans, bringing a mockery to the quota system"

4.7 It was sad to note that low reference by women MPs to the National Gender Policy and other key instruments such as CEDAW and the SADC Protocol on gender and development, yet these are tools that would make contributions strong and effective. This was seen as an indication of lack of understanding and lack of knowledge in the women leaders. Any interventions to extend the quota provision which according to the Constitution is for two lives of Parliament will depend on value addition hence the need to maximise on the remaining life of Parliament 2018-2023. Already success of the quota system was noted in countries such as Tanzania and Kenya in the literature review but the same cannot be said of the Zimbabwe case.

4.8 As participant observers in parliaments, an observation was made that both MPs and leaders from Women's political wings agreed that there is need to go back to the drawing board to consider implementation as they foresee regression in terms of representation come 2023 elections when the provision is expired. Through a FGD they agreed to also push for an extension of the provision which would mean the need for a constitutional amendment and Electoral Act amendment as well. A report from Parliament on an "50/50 Advocacy Strategy for Women Politicians", held in Nyanga in December 2017 revealed that there was a critical challenge pertaining to the 50/50 which could be addressed through the women's quota to some extent.

4.9 Of importance to note was the fact that demographic information also influenced certain responses for example respondents below the ages of 40 both male and female emphasised the need to rope in professionals in the women's quota in order to have technocrats with expertise in different fields who had the qualifications to be appointed for cabinet posts. The need to have quotas within the quota came out strongly as the young felt they were being overshadowed by those who went to the trenches. This was not to say those who were in the trenches should not be considered but would also have their quota. The need to attach educational qualifications to the quota was also emphasised.

4.10 On the other hand those respondents between the ages 45 – 60 felt educational qualifications were not necessary for one to be an MP whilst other views were that the quota be reserved for professionals with a minimum qualification of a first degree and those without the relevant qualifications would battle it out at constituencies.

4.11 The way the women's quota was implemented in Zimbabwe has created a class structure among MPs where the constituency MPs is at a higher level and the women's quota seen more as a subordinate because if quota MPs want to do anything in the Constituency, they have to seek approval from the owner of the constituency or else violence will take precedence just to disrupt the meeting.

4.12. The other outcry from the respondents was that the women's quota seems to have been provided for the elite. Special note was given to spouses of male MPs in Parliament who are part of the quota. Quite a number of couples are now in Parliament through this system.

4.13 The quota system provides only 60 seats and these seats are being shared among 10 provinces. This explains that, the beneficiaries are only six per province and seats are further divided across the winning political parties. In most cases you would only get two or three women candidates applying for the first past the post and then you will get 50 applying for the Proportional Representatives. It is a problem on its own when we have 50 people applying for six posts and two applying for 26 posts

4.14. The Women Quota has been extended beyond 2023 through Constitutional Amendment Act No 2 of 2020, and passed in May 2021, but the modalities for implementation are still outstanding.

V. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings in this paper indicate that the women's quota in Zimbabwe did not bring any significant gains to participation in parliament or to economic development. The participants gave an outcry that the representatives chosen were just place holders because no merit was used to select them. The representatives chosen through the women's quota were seen to be only place holders rather than competitive participants to the work they were assigned to do. Younger respondents to the study opined those educational qualifications should be attached to those who are chosen through the quota system while older respondents felt that educational qualifications had nothing to do with politics and development since anyone can contribute significantly with or without education. However, this paper emphasises the need for considering education qualifications which will enable any incumbent to participate effectively with exposure through empirical studies from other countries worldwide. In the case of gender equality and sustainable development, it is critical for parliamentarians to understand all the theoretical frameworks outlined in this paper like CEDAW, Beijing Platform of Action and so on, for easy reference, effective and timeous implementation of plans during their term of office. On another note, the representatives chosen through the quota system expressed their displeasure over their lack of eligibility to the Constituency Development Fund, thus making them feel inferior to their counterparts. The quota system representatives therefore felt something should be done to enable them to access development funds so that they can also participate fully in the development process. Allowing quota system parliamentarians to float without portfolio is

exposing them to abuse and attack, which will dampen their enthusiasm in accepting such posts in future, thus it is very critical to draw implementation plans and budgets for the quota system parliamentarians. Awareness and sensitisation campaign should continue on gender equality and equity so that all women from a tender age are willing to participate in political leadership or to vote for another woman for fair representation in the leadership posts.

Although the government is increasing the number of women in parliament, there is still the need to domesticate the ratified policies, laws and declarations. The only way to domesticate laws is through constitutionalism. Just like the government of Rwanda, Zimbabwe too must encourage rule of law in all spheres be it in political parties or public institutions. Rwanda adopted the quota system from the local government which the government of Zimbabwe can also copy and experience the benefits of the participation of women leaders at local levels. More so, the Rwanda's Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion raised gender awareness and promoted gender sensitive policies throughout the government, coordinating with gender representatives in other ministries, monitoring programs and policies to recommend improvements and even conducting gender trainings at all levels of the government

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The parliament should be an environment conducive for all women regardless of background, religion, marital status and social class. Most women fail to participate because they are afraid of facing criticism. Divorced women also are afraid of being assaulted and being given names that describes their personal life. Inflammatory language should not be tolerated at all in parliament. From the above findings the paper makes the following recommendations:

- The Media Commission should make sure that all media organisations publish positive and benefits of women's participation in politics. As media has the capability of disseminating the information to people, it should also be used as driver to women's empowerment. There is need to engage media to improve coverage of women MPs and hence increase visibility to change the preconceived misconceptions on female leadership and enhance symbolic representation.
- Now that the Women's quota has been extended beyond 2023, through Constitutional Amendment Act (2020) and passed in May 2021, there is need to introduce inclusive favourable implementation modalities like: The need to introduce quotas within the women's quota to accommodate professionals, young women, those living with disability and war veterans and war collaborators. Young boys and girls should also be incorporated into parliament just like Zambia has incorporated mayors who are below 30 years of age. It is important for the adults to have their own representatives, while the youth and recent graduates should also be given a chance for continuity

and sustainability. There is also need to probably come up with not necessarily geographical constituencies but thematic constituencies for example MP representing the academia, informal sector, rural women etc.

- Political parties Constitutions must enforce laws which identify women of influence in their parties so that they can help to build up the abilities of these women to run the election campaign on their own. The process of women being influential begins from their parties. A political party should not be allowed to compete for the votes if their party is not gender balanced as required by their constitution.
- The government must arrange capacity building workshops for women in relation to the portfolios they represent. Women need more education and should be prioritized by being given a budget specifically for their capacity building
- The need to demand accountability from the government on the success of this provision by coming up with a modus operandi for the women's quota to carry out their mandate without stepping on each other's toes with constituency MPs. CEDAW and BPFA mandate that the government should take all possible measures to ensure participation of women. This will destigmatise being a women's quota MP and the stereotyping that comes with it. Section 17 of the Zimbabwe Constitution mandates the state to promote full gender balance in Zimbabwean and in particular, participation of women, enact legislative measures to achieve this as well as any other practical measures.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION INFORMATION

Tapiwa Musasa: Main author, abstract, discussion of findings, manuscript consolidation and review.

Farai Nhekede: Findings of the Study

Faustine Koke: Literature Review and Findings

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