EXAMINING THE PROSPECT OF ELECTORAL GENDER QUOTA SYSTEM IN GHANAIAN POLITICAL PARTIES

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENTS OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PhD)

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OF THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA

2025

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certify that they have read and hereby recommend for acceptance by the Open University of Tanzania (OUT), a thesis titled: **"Examining the Prospect of Electoral Gender Quota System in Ghanaian Political Parties"** in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Doctor of Philosophy Degree of the Open University of Tanzania.

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Signature

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Date

DEDICATION

I gratefully dedicate my work to Divine Providence, which has guided me on this journey. My dear wife Vida, whose steadfast support has been my greatest blessing, has my sincere dedication. Additionally, I dedicate this to my beloved children, Lady Stephanie, and Duke-Matthew who never cease to inspire me.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am profoundly grateful to God for the gift of life and the ability to maintain a positive outlook every day. A special acknowledgment goes to Dr. Emmanuel Mallya and Dr. Felician Mutasa, my project supervisors. Their patience and unwavering support have been instrumental in helping me successfully complete my thesis.

I would especially want to thank Prof. Goski Alabi for her guidance and persistent encouragement. I extend my heartfelt thanks to my dearest wife, Vida; my children, Lady and Duke; Ms. Rebecca, my mother-in-law; Mr. and Mrs. Kubi, my parents; Ms. Betty, my siblings; and the Soputamits. I would like to thank Selorm Agozie and Patience Obeng Ahwireng. Also, to my pals Emmanuel, Rexford, Israel, and Akua for challenging me beyond my comfort zone. I also thank the staff at the NDC and NPP headquarters, as well as all the delegates from both parties, for their assistance in providing the data I required to complete my thesis.

I extend my "GOD BLESSINGS" to everyone who has supported me academically in any kind and has not been mentioned here. Your help has been extremely beneficial.

ABSTRACT

This study examines the prospect of implementing a gender quota system in elections within Ghanaian political parties from the perspective of grassroots actors. Despite a great deal of research and lobbying work, women in Ghana are still notably under-represented in politics, especially in the legislature. The study used a qualitative research approach to obtain insights into how grassroots political actors perceive the gender quota system and how are they willing to accept it. Purposive and snowball sampling were used to hold a focus group discussion with 28 participants and unstructured interviews with 30 grassroots individuals. Gioia analysis was used to examine the gathered qualitative data. The findings reveal that the majority of grassroot participants disagreed with the idea of a gender quota system. Their disapproval of the system was rooted in their misgivings about perceived injustice, strong convictions in merit-based political positions, and doubts about the system's dependability. The study offers a framework for a feasible electoral gender quota system designed specifically for Ghanaian political parties based on these findings. This framework places a strong emphasis on the necessity of open and honest procedures, community involvement, unambiguous communication, equity, cultural sensitivity, striking a balance between diversity and merit, and measures to prevent tokenization. The suggested framework seeks to advance gender equality and increase the representation of women in Ghanaian politics by attending to the concerns of grassroots actors and offering workable implementation techniques.

Keywords: *Political Parties, Electoral Gender Quota System, Grassroots (ordinary) Political Actors, and Quota System.*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAB	Affirmative Action Bill
AU	African Union
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GEC	Gender Equality Committee
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
ID	Identification
IDEA	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
LGBTQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer
MPs	Members of Parliament
NDC	National Democratic Party
NPP	New Patriotic Party
PHC	Population and Housing Census
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nation Development Program

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

Achieving gender parity in political representation is essential for fostering inclusive and democratic societies. The global discourse increasingly recognizes the crucial role of all genders in accelerating development goals (Odera & Mulusa, 2020). However, gender equality and inclusive governance in Ghana are significantly hindered by the underrepresentation of women in politics (Awusi, Addae, & Kwapong, 2023).

This study explores the prospect of electoral gender quota system in Ghanaian political parties' system. The study aims to shed light on the trajectory toward a more gender-inclusive political climate in Ghana by exploring the complexities of this important issue from the perspective of grassroots political actors. This section of the study therefore addresses the background of the study, problem statement, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope of the study, and organization of the study.

1.2 Background to the Study

Ghana has long been recognized as a model of successful democracy in Africa. Its thriving electoral democracy is regularly cited in evaluations of the nation's political landscape (Bauer & Darkwah, 2020). Key institutions such as the Electoral Commission, Parliament, Judiciary, and Executive play vital roles in maintaining law, peace, and order. Political parties also contribute significantly to sustaining democratic momentum (Nwokeke, 2019).

Despite these democratic advancements, female representation in Ghana's parliament remains dismally low. In the 2020 parliamentary elections, only 40 women (14.55%) won seats out of 275 contested. This figure reflects only marginal progress from previous years: 10.9% in 2012, 13.1% in 2016, and even lower percentages in earlier elections (Diabah & Agyepong, 2022). Ghana continues to lag behind over two dozen African countries where women hold at least 20% of parliamentary seats. Unlike in the judiciary and executive branches, where women can be appointed, their legislative representation is entirely dependent on the electoral process (Goel & Nelson, 2023).

To address this underrepresentation, many countries have adopted electoral gender quotas as an affirmative measure to ensure greater female participation in politics (Dahlerup, 2018; Okedele, 2021). African nations that have implemented quota systems, such as Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, and South Africa, have seen significant increases in female parliamentary representation. Rwanda, for example, holds the world record with 61% of its parliamentary seats occupied by women, leading to notable influence on political discourse and gender-sensitive policymaking (Agbortanyi, 2024; Chouchou Lyliane, 2022).

Studies further indicate that higher female representation in governance enhances accountability, reduces corruption, and promotes gender-sensitive policies (Soyaltin-Colella & Cin, 2022). Research from 18 European countries shows that corruption is higher in jurisdictions with fewer elected women (Goel & Nelson, 2023). Additionally, countries led by women during the COVID-19 pandemic such as

Germany, New Zealand, and Finland demonstrated effective crisis management, reinforcing arguments for increased female participation in governance (Wittenberg-Cox, 2020).

However, the success of quota systems largely depends on a country's electoral framework and enforcement mechanisms. Ghana has no constitutional quota for its parliament, and despite political parties including gender equality in their manifestos, the Affirmative Action Bill has yet to be passed into law (Bauer & Foli, 2024). The male-dominated legislature prioritizes economic concerns over gender equity, further delaying the bill's enactment (Bauer & Darkwah, 2021; Tenu, 2019).

While studies indicate a steady rise in Ghanaian female parliamentary candidates (Amegede, 2021; Umar, 2024). Systemic obstacles such as cultural norms, political inertia, ineffective advocacy, and competing priorities continue to hinder their success. Addressing these challenges requires coordinated efforts from advocacy groups, government agencies, and political parties, particularly their grassroots supporters.

Political parties hold the key to achieving gender equality in Ghana's parliament, as they control candidate nominations, vetting, and elections (Win, 2021; Ofosu, 2019). While voluntary quotas have proven ineffective, mandatory quotas could be a viable solution (Chiluwa, 2023; Yusif, 2018). However, the ultimate success of such a system hinge on grassroots acceptance. As "kingmakers," grassroots activists influence candidate selection and election outcomes, making their perspectives

crucial to understanding the feasibility of gender quotas (Knowles, 2021; Dreyer, 2022).

Grassroots supporters form the foundation of political parties, shaping their policies and electoral success (Driscoll, 2022; Driscoll, 2023; Brooks, 2019). Their endorsement of gender quotas would not only facilitate policy implementation but also reflect a broader societal shift toward valuing women's leadership. Political parties represent Ghana's most promising avenue for attaining gender equality, as they serve as the primary vehicle for political participation and representation. Effective political reform requires grassroots buy-in, as their participation embodies democratic principles of representation, participation, and accountability (Kolberg-Shah, 2021; Dinerstein, 2020). Empirical evidence from comparative studies indicates that countries with strong party-driven gender quotas have seen significant improvements in women's political representation, reinforcing the critical role of political parties in advancing gender equality.

This study examines the understanding of the Affirmative Action Bill among political party grassroots and explores the prospect of an electoral gender quota system in Ghana. Across Africa and beyond, gender quotas have significantly increased female representation in parliaments. It is therefore essential for Ghanaian scholars to engage in critical discussions on implementing a gender quota system within political parties' parliamentary primaries. These discussions can inform policy decisions and legal reforms to enhance gender parity in Ghana's political landscape.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The underrepresentation of women in political administration remains a critical concern for political scientists and sociologists worldwide. Decisions that shape societies, economies, and overall human welfare are primarily made within the political sphere, yet women continue to be excluded from these spaces (Fox & Pate, 2023). Ghana reflects this global trend, with only 40 women (14.55%) winning parliamentary seats in the 2020 general elections out of 275 contested seats (IPU, 2021). This persistent gender imbalance raises concerns about governance quality, policy inclusivity, and democratic legitimacy.

Efforts to address this issue in Ghana have largely been inadequate. Various stakeholders, including governments and political parties, have introduced initiatives to promote women's political participation, but systemic barriers remain. The Affirmative Action Bill, which has been widely discussed as a legislative intervention, has stalled in implementation. A key weakness of the current draft is its proposal to establish a Gender Equality Committee (GEC) rather than an independent commission with legal authority to enforce gender quotas (Profeta, Passador & Caló, 2021; Appiah, 2015). Without enforceability mechanisms, the bill may fall short of driving meaningful change. Additionally, Ghana's political culture, characterized by patriarchal norms, financial constraints, and intra-party biases, continues to hinder female political participation.

Comparisons with other African nations highlight Ghana's slow progress in achieving gender parity in political leadership. Countries such as Rwanda and

Senegal have significantly increased female parliamentary representation through legally enforced quotas. Rwanda, for instance, has over 60% female representation in its parliament, a development often linked to improved governance outcomes such as reduced corruption and more inclusive policymaking (Boahemaa, 2022; Tripp, 2016). However, Ghana's sociopolitical landscape differs in several ways. Unlike Rwanda, where a post-genocide political restructuring allowed for gender reforms to be institutionalized, Ghana operates within a highly competitive, resource-intensive electoral system where political financing remains a key barrier for women (George & Braimah, 2021). Furthermore, Ghana's decentralized party structure means that grassroots support is crucial for the success of any gender quota policy.

The consequences of women's low representation in Ghanaian politics are far-reaching. Research suggests that higher female representation in governance is associated with stronger social policies, greater investment in education and healthcare, and lower levels of corruption (Hessami & da Fonseca, 2020; Mechkova, Dahlum & Petrarca, 2024). However, in Ghana, the limited number of female MPs reduces their collective bargaining power, restricting their ability to push for such reforms (Amoah, 2024; Boahemaa, 2022). Additionally, the absence of gender-diverse perspectives in policymaking exacerbates existing biases, making governance less inclusive and representative of the broader population.

Despite political parties in Ghana publicly endorsing gender equality, these commitments have not translated into concrete electoral reforms. While existing research has extensively examined women's underrepresentation at the elite political

level, little is known about how grassroots political actors who play a crucial role in candidate selection and party decision-making—perceive gender quotas. The acceptance or rejection of an electoral gender quota system by grassroots party members could significantly impact its feasibility. Yet, there is a lack of empirical research exploring their views on gender quotas, their perceived challenges, and their potential role in promoting or resisting such policies.

This study seeks to fill this gap by investigating grassroots actors' understanding, acceptance, and participation in the implementation of an electoral gender quota system within Ghanaian political parties. By focusing on the grassroots level, this research aims to provide practical recommendations for enhancing women's representation in Ghanaian politics, while critically analysing the socio-political barriers that hinder gender-inclusive governance.

1.4 Objective of the Study

1.4.1 General Objective

Generally, this study examines the prospect of electoral gender quota system within the Ghanaian political party elections.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

Specifically, the study focused on:

i. Assessing the acceptance of electoral gender quotas among grassroots delegates within Ghanaian political parties.

ii. Examining the expectations of grassroots delegates regarding the conditions that would facilitate the implementation of electoral gender quotas within Ghanaian political parties.

iii. Developing a framework for a viable electoral gender quota system for Ghanaian political parties.

1.5 Research Questions

1.5.1 General Research Question

What are the prospects for implementing an electoral gender quota system within Ghanaian political party elections?

1.5.2 Specific Research Question

The research tried to answer the following specific questions:

i. How do grassroots political actors within Ghanaian political parties perceive the concept of electoral gender quotas?

ii. What specific factors do political actors at the grassroots level believe are necessary for electoral gender quotas to be implemented successfully within their parties?

iii. What elements should be included in a framework for a viable electoral gender quota system tailored for Ghanaian political parties?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study provides a unique contribution to the discourse on electoral gender quotas by integrating grassroots perspectives, thereby expanding the application of critical

mass theory, patriarchy, and feminism within the Ghanaian political landscape. Unlike previous studies that primarily focus on elite political actors, this research highlights the role of grassroots political actors in shaping the acceptance and effectiveness of gender quotas in political party elections.

In terms of theoretical contributions, the study extends critical mass theory by applying it beyond elite political structures to grassroots political participation. It provides empirical evidence on how grassroots perceptions influence the threshold at which women's political representation transitions from symbolic inclusion to meaningful participation. Additionally, it refines the theory by identifying socio-cultural and financial barriers that prevent women from reaching a critical mass in Ghanaian politics. This highlights that numerical thresholds alone are insufficient without structural and cultural adjustments to support women's participation.

Regarding patriarchy, the study offers a contextualized analysis of how patriarchal structures within Ghanaian political party's shape resistance to gender quotas. Unlike traditional applications of patriarchal theory that focus on broad societal norms, this study specifically examines intra-party power dynamics and the role of grassroots actors in either sustaining or challenging patriarchal systems. By analysing political party structures through the lens of patriarchy, the study highlights specific institutional and informal barriers that hinder the implementation of gender quotas. These findings offer practical insights for policy reforms aimed at dismantling patriarchal resistance to female political participation.

The study also makes a significant contribution to feminist theory by emphasizing the need for intersectionality in gender quota discussions. It moves beyond a binary male-versus-female approach to examine how factors such as economic status, education, and political affiliation impact women's participation in Ghanaian politics. Furthermore, the research challenges the notion that gender quotas automatically lead to empowerment by demonstrating that grassroots acceptance and systemic institutional support are equally critical for the success of quota systems.

Methodologically, the study employs the Gioia approach, which is rarely used in electoral quota research, to capture a more nuanced understanding of grassroots actors' perceptions. This methodological innovation bridges the gap between policy-level discussions and the lived experiences of those directly affected by electoral gender quotas. Unlike existing studies that primarily focus on policymakers and political elites, this research prioritizes the perspectives of grassroots delegates, making it one of the first studies in Ghana to examine gender quotas from this angle.

From a practical standpoint, the study provides a framework for a viable electoral gender quota system tailored to Ghana's political and socio-cultural context. Existing quota models tend to focus solely on numerical representation, but the proposed framework incorporates institutional adjustments, awareness creation, and grassroots ownership to enhance effectiveness. By addressing key factors influencing grassroots acceptance, the study offers policymakers a roadmap for designing gender quotas that are both feasible and culturally acceptable, ensuring higher rates of implementation and compliance.

The research also has significant social implications by identifying key resistance factors and conditions for the acceptance of gender quotas. The findings provide advocacy groups and policymakers with targeted strategies to increase women's participation in politics. Additionally, the study promotes bottom-up empowerment, ensuring that gender quota policies are not only elite-driven but also embraced by grassroots political actors. This contributes to a more inclusive and democratic political culture in Ghana.

In conclusion, this study moves beyond simply describing gender quotas by critically engaging with existing theories, proposing a context-specific framework, and offering practical recommendations that bridge the gap between theory and real-world application. It enhances theoretical discourse, introduces novel methodological approaches, and provides actionable insights for political stakeholders in Ghana and similar democratic settings.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The scope of the study was purposefully restricted to the political context in Ghana, specifically focusing on the two dominant political parties, the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC). This decision is based on their overwhelming influence on Ghana’s political landscape, collectively securing over 95% of parliamentary seats and presidential votes since 1992. Given their dominance, any policy changes regarding gender quotas within these parties are more likely to have a meaningful impact on national politics.

The researcher's background as a Ghanaian with an in-depth understanding of the country's political system further informed this choice. Additionally, the researcher's involvement in political activism and access to relevant information positioned them to explore this topic with competence. The study's sample consisted primarily of grassroots delegates from the NPP and NDC, as these parties' base supporters play a crucial role in shaping party policies, including gender quota adoption. By concentrating on these key stakeholders, the study aimed to provide insightful analysis on the feasibility and acceptance of electoral gender quotas within Ghanaian political parties.

1.8 Structure of the Study

This study is structured in Six (6) chapters. Chapter one comprises the introduction, background of the study, problem statement, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, and scope of the study. Chapter two comprises the literature review which presents discussion on theoretical and empirical review. Chapter three contains methods and techniques which was used in analysing the data. It also detailed how data was collected and analysed. Chapter four presents the study's findings while Chapter five presents the discussion of the findings. Chapter six has conclusion and recommendations based on the findings of the research.

1.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter provides a comprehensive introduction to the study, focusing on the prospect of implementing an electoral gender quota system within Ghanaian political

parties. It outlines the background of the study, presents the research problem, and articulates the research questions that guide the study. Additionally, the chapter discusses the study's significance, emphasizing its potential contributions to policy formulation and gender-inclusive political participation. The scope of the research is also defined, with a justified focus on Ghana's two dominant political parties, the NPP and NDC. Furthermore, this chapter establishes the foundation for the subsequent literature review in Chapter Two, which critically examines existing theoretical and empirical works, identifies research gaps, and situates the study within the broader discourse on gender representation in politics.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a comprehensive review of literature that bears on the subject matter in terms of concepts and empirical findings from similar studies. The study's objective and research questions were described in the previous chapter, which established the overall tone of the study. This session of the study examined literature related to women's participation and representation in parliamentary politics, across the world generally, and in Ghana particularly. The Chapter discussed the operational definitions of key terms, theoretical literature, empirical literature, research gap and conceptual framework of study.

2.2 Definition of Key Terms

This chapter presents a comprehensive review of literature that bears on the subject matter in terms of concepts and empirical findings from similar studies. The study's objective and research questions were described in the previous chapter, which established the overall tone of the study. This session of the study examined literature related to women's participation and representation in parliamentary politics, across the world generally, and in Ghana particularly. The Chapter discussed the operational definitions of key terms, theoretical literature, empirical literature, research gap and conceptual framework of study.

2.2.1 Parliamentarian

According to Jennings (2022), the definition of a parliamentarian aligns with the

foundational principles established by Henry M. Robert in Robert's Rules of Order, where a parliamentarian is described as "a person with expertise in parliamentary procedure and the rules of order, serving as an authoritative resource for organizations in matters related to conducting meetings, interpreting bylaws, and ensuring the orderly and fair functioning of deliberative assemblies. Studies like those by (Rangoni, Bedock & Talukder, 2023; Landwehr & Wood, 2020) demonstrate that MPs use evaluations as a way to ensure accountability in the political sphere. By scrutinizing government activities and policies, these evaluations contribute to keeping the government accountable to its citizens. The study by Martin and Whitaker (2019) shows that MP's also use evaluations as tools for determining the legislative course of action. By deliberately requesting evaluations through legislative requests, they accomplish this and have an impact on the subjects that are prioritized and given emphasis in the parliamentary discourse.

This study aligns itself with these various facets of the roles and definitions of a parliamentarian. The researcher used Robert and Loss (2021) definition of a parliamentarian for the purpose of the study. The term "Parliamentarian" in this sense refers to a person who is highly knowledgeable and skilled in parliamentary procedure and the rules of order. This definition is the basis for the researcher's inquiry into the role and significance of parliamentarians for this study.

2.2.2 Political Parties

According to Raniolo, Viviani and Damiani (2015), political parties are groups that compete in elections to gain political power. Various party forms, including mass parties, movement parties, personalist parties, and trade parties, are included in this broad description. It operates as a hierarchical political party that nominates candidates to elect them to the legislature as legislators. Some political parties are receptive to all types of interests regardless of class, gender, religion, profession, colour, or even ethnicity, whereas others may be exclusive, elitist, ideologically motivated, or influenced by religion (Ecevit and Kocapınar, 2018).

Political parties are vital to democracy and governance because they choose leaders and policies, discuss, draft, and review laws and regulations, and inform the public about other social and political possibilities. Party systems' competition is widely acknowledged as a fundamental condition for democracy to work, a platform for the development and presentation of different political viewpoints, and a state-civil society interaction (Moyo, 2024).

Political parties are viewed in the context of this study as organizations that are essential in influencing public opinion and interests, serving as an intermediary between the people and the government. In addition to identifying and offering political leadership, they actively engage in voicing public demands to the government. They also frequently work to inform their followers about policies that are thought to be advantageous for societal, economic, cultural, and political growth. As a result, this viewpoint is consistent with the study's main premise, which focuses

primarily on the importance of grassroots political party support in the setting of Ghana.

2.2.3 Affirmative Action

According to Joshi (2020), affirmative action refers to a set of legislation and practices that give preferential treatment, opportunities, or remedies to people or groups who have historically been marginalized or disadvantaged based on race, ethnicity, gender, or other protected characteristics to address historical and current discrimination and advance equality. To achieve equitable outcomes in education, employment, and other domains, these policies frequently include measures like quotas, outreach initiatives, and preferential hiring or admissions practices.

With a particular emphasis on partisan political contexts (political parties and politics), affirmative action is defined as giving members of historically under-represented groups extra structural support to increase their recruitment and inclusion into political parties, candidatures, and political office-holding. According to this definition, candidatures, political offices held, and party membership procedures are referred to as recruitment, while legal, institutional, and financial characteristics and practices of political systems, parties, and candidatures are referred to as structure (Schantz, 2019).

This research accepts the application of the aforementioned academic definition of affirmative action. This description succinctly captures the main ideas and objectives of affirmative action practices and policies, such as their emphasis on addressing

both past and current discrimination, advancing equality, and giving preferential treatment to historically marginalized groups.

2.2.4 Quota System

Quota systems, according to Oppenheimer (2019), are methods intended to guarantee that a defined proportion or number of posts within a given environment be inhabited by members of a specific group, usually those who have historically been marginalized or under-represented. These programs are put in place to foster diversity and inclusivity, correcting injustices, and granting equitable opportunity. Quotas are quantitative targets for a certain social group's involvement in a social, political, or economic organization.

They can be implemented in a variety of social organizations and take many different forms (Morgenroth & Ryan, 2018). Quotas are applicable in a number of settings, including the workplace, classroom, corporate boards, and political representation. A quota system can be applied to different groups, such as those based on gender, ethnicity, or socioeconomic level. It can also be administered in a variety of ways, such as by-laws or voluntary party rules. This study makes use of the above academic definition of a quota system.

2.2.5 Electoral Gender Quota System

An electoral gender quota system, according to Clayton (2021), is a purposeful and institutionalized method, frequently required by legislation or party rules, intended to increase the representation of underrepresented genders in elected political posts. To

achieve a more equitable and balanced gender composition within legislative bodies or other decision-making positions, it frequently involves measures such as reserved seats, candidate quotas, or legislative seat allocations. According to Krook and Norris (2023), electoral gender quotas are policies intended to guarantee that a specific proportion of candidates or elected officials are female inside political organizations.

This study makes use of the above academic definition of an electoral gender quota system. The main characteristics and goals of such systems, such as their institutionalization, legal or party-driven nature, and the objective of improving women's representation in elected positions, are best captured by this term. For this research purpose, it offers a clear and thorough comprehension of the topic that is consistent with the requirements of academia.

2.2.6 Grassroots Political Actors

In many cultural and sociopolitical situations, the word "grassroots actors" can signify different things to different people. The term has become widely used to describe members of a network, committee, or organization who are the lowest in terms of social, political, or economic standing (Ali & Suzana Ariffin, 2017). The term "grassroots actors" often refers to people who are actively involved in local or community-level operations campaigns, or organizations. These people are frequently common folks who are not a part of formal or institutionalized organizations but who nevertheless play a significant role in initiating and championing reform at the grassroots level. They may collaborate to address specific

challenges or promote particular causes within their communities because they tend to be motivated by local interests.

Although this definition does not have a formal academic citation, it represents a widely accepted idea in political science and political sociology. People from the grassroots are crucial to the success of political parties because they contribute to the party's grassroots campaigning and assist the party in growing its base of support. This study agrees with the definition stated above.

Delegates from the two main political parties, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP), who are positioned at the bottom of the party leadership ladder, represent grassroots (ordinary) political actors in this study. The branch/polling station units, which make up the base of the parties' organizational structures, include these delegates.

2.3 Theoretical Literature Review

According to Kar and Dwivedi (2020), all research must be theory-driven, with a theoretical foundation upon which the study is carried out. Theories have an essential purpose in supporting the intellectual fabric of every field of study. In every academic subject, the emergence of theories is an essential prerequisite. They function as the theoretical frameworks that clarify and characterize relationships, reveal the underlying dynamics that underlie these relationships, and predict important phenomena.

A theory is "a lens through which we observe and interpret the phenomena we aspire to comprehend and elucidate," as Tracey and Morrow (2024) perfectly expresses it.

This chapter's section examines the theories that support the study and which, along with the literature evaluation, help to shape the preliminary conceptual structure of the study.

This study uses three interrelated theories to examine the prospect of an electoral gender quota system in Ghanaian political party elections. The main theory, the critical mass theory, is backed by the theories of feminism and patriarchy. A thorough framework for comprehending how gender, power, and political representation interact is offered by these theoretical lenses. By using them, this study brings historical and current gender discrepancies in politics into context while also bringing to light long-standing structural obstacles that prevent women from participating fully in political processes.

This study's base is the critical mass theory, which provides insights into the circumstances in which larger representation of women affects political outcomes and decision-making. Although critical mass theory contends that reaching a particular level of female representation results in significant improvements, other viewpoints cast doubt on its generalisability in a variety of political and cultural contexts. Some research contends that merely increasing the number of women in a society does not inevitably result in their having more influence over decision-making, especially in cultures where patriarchal institutions are still firmly in place. Through the application of critical mass theory to the political setting of Ghana, this study examines whether gender quotas by themselves are adequate to change the power dynamics or if other institutional and structural mechanisms are required.

In order to examine how deeply ingrained sociocultural norms continue to influence political involvement, the second theoretical pillar the theory of patriarchy is employed. Though opposing viewpoints contend that patriarchal impacts differ greatly depending on the situation, this idea emphasises male supremacy in political structures. Male hegemony has been successfully challenged by affirmative action measures in certain political contexts, while in others, backlash effects serve to uphold established power structures. In order to further this discussion, this study looks at how much patriarchal resistance in Ghanaian political parties impedes the effectiveness and implementation of electoral gender quotas.

The third theoretical lens, feminist theory, clarifies the processes of favouring and opposing gender quotas. Though they have been crucial in advancing women's political engagement around the world, feminist movements' impact differs according to contextual elements like political will, societal views, and legal frameworks. Feminist activism has been successful in promoting the institutionalisation of gender quotas in some contexts, but it has encountered fierce resistance from conventional cultural norms and male-dominated governmental systems in others. Through the analysis of Ghana's experience, this study contributes to the feminist debate by investigating the grassroots perceptions and contestations of gender quotas, especially in a political environment where conventional gender roles continue to hold sway.

By critically examining these three ideas, this study not only applies them to Ghana's political environment but also highlights disagreements and gaps in the

academic literature. It specifically questions if critical mass theory's presumptions are still true in patriarchal cultures, looks at the complex ways patriarchy appears in election procedures, and investigates how successful feminist activism is in politically conservative settings. The study is situated within the continuing discussions on gender quotas in various political systems, and the comparative and critical analysis adds depth to the theoretical framework.

2.3.1 The Critical Mass Theory

According to the critical mass theory, women's interests must be systematically considered when they reach a minimum threshold in decision-making bodies (de Silva de Alwis, 2024). Supporters of gender quotas (Funk, Paul, & Philips, 2022; Schilling & Osborn, 2020; Arendt, 2018) often use this theory as a foundation, arguing that once a certain proportion of women attain decision-making roles, policies will reflect gendered perspectives. Early studies (Dahlerup, 1988; Kanter, 1977; Franceschet & Piscopo, 2008) suggest that when women constitute at least 30% of a legislative body, their interests receive greater consideration (Tenu, 2019).

Empirical evidence highlights the impact of critical mass on women's political representation, particularly in Nordic countries. Norway, Sweden, and Denmark have witnessed significant transformations due to gender quotas (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2022). Norway’s 2003 quota policy increased female leadership representation and enhanced gender-focused governance (Krook, 2014). Sweden's Social Democratic Party quotas enabled women to occupy 50% of parliamentary seats (Freidenvall, 2021). Denmark’s voluntary party quotas led to increased female representation in

the Folketing (Barberá Matías, 2021). Rwanda's quota system resulted in nearly 60% female parliamentary representation, driving gender equality legislation (Mukabera, 2019).

Research across political contexts supports critical mass theory, demonstrating that achieving a critical mass can influence policy outcomes (Li, 2024). The theory provides policymakers with a tangible target for advancing gender equality. Female parliamentarians contribute distinct perspectives, often championing policies on family welfare, healthcare, education, economic empowerment, and gender-based violence (Allen & Childs, 2019; Loitareng'an, 2023).

In the Ghanaian context, critical mass theory offers a useful lens for analysing the potential of electoral gender quotas to enhance women's political representation. Proponents argue that surpassing a threshold is essential for meaningful institutional and policy change (Krook, 2015). Effective representation requires more than token participation; women need substantial numbers to form coalitions and influence decision-making (Agarwal, 2023). Scholars advocate for gender quotas to accelerate the presence of women in political institutions (Barnes & Holman, 2020), with research supporting policies aimed at increasing female participation in Ghanaian governance (Madsen, 2019).

Despite minor improvements, women's representation in Ghanaian politics remains low. In the 2020 general elections, only 40 out of 275 MPs (14.5%) were women (Adofo, 2021), a modest increase from 13% in 2016. At the local government level,

female representation declined from 478 elected district assembly members in 2006 to 216 in 2019 (Odame, 2014). Barriers such as gender-based violence, intimidation, lack of campaign funding, traditional gender norms, and weak political commitment hinder women's participation (Opare, 2022).

Electoral gender quotas could help bridge this representation gap. Evidence from South Africa, Rwanda, and Uganda illustrates the effectiveness of quotas in expanding women's political roles (Chouchou Lyliane, 2022). Unlike these countries, Ghana has yet to implement a legally mandated gender quota, relying instead on minor interventions like reduced filing fees for female candidates (Wang, Muriaas, & Bauer, 2023). Researchers argue that stronger affirmative action measures are necessary to achieve gender parity (Ngele, 2020; Amoah, 2024). Without significant reforms, Ghana is unlikely to meet the UN's 30% minimum female representation target (Umar, 2024). Coordinated efforts from political parties, government, and civil society are required to accelerate progress.

Studies examining the relationship between women's representation and policy impact through the lens of Critical Mass Theory have sought to identify key policy domains influenced by increased female participation (Kroeber, 2023). Some researchers challenge the assumption that merely increasing women's numbers in politics automatically results in gender-sensitive policies (Reher, 2018; Dingler et al., 2019; Tusalem, 2022). Childs (2008) notes that early interpretations of Kanter and Dahlerup's analyses led some scholars to erroneously assume that female legislators would always unify in support of women-focused policies.

Critics argue that critical mass theory oversimplifies the link between representation and policy outcomes (Tilbury, 2023; Fitzpatrick & Richards, 2019). Tilbury (2023) contends that the theory assumes increased female representation will automatically lead to favorable policy changes, overlooking the influence of institutional and cultural factors. Dolan, Deckman & Swers (2021) emphasizes that focusing solely on numerical thresholds risks ignoring the broader dynamics that shape women's political influence.

This study builds on existing discussions by applying critical mass theory to the potential introduction of electoral gender quotas in Ghanaian political party elections. Given its strong association with the push for greater female representation, it is necessary to contextualize the theory within Ghana's political landscape. The study investigates grassroots political actors' perspectives on an electoral gender quota system and the extent to which such a system would be accepted.

Achieving meaningful female representation is essential for substantive change. Research links higher female leadership to improved governance, accountability, and productivity (Sears, 2021; Maida & Weber, 2022; Wanta & Augustine, 2021). The study incorporates arguments from both early and contemporary scholars (e.g., Kanter, 1977; Krook, 2010; Sundström & Wängnerud, 2016; Esarey & Schwindt-Bayer, 2018) who have consistently demonstrated the importance of numerical representation in shaping policy priorities and gender advocacy.

Consequently, this research employs Critical Mass Theory as a foundational framework, underscoring the necessity of reaching a critical mass of women in

political leadership. The theory provides a compelling justification for electoral gender quotas as a strategic mechanism for addressing gender disparities in Ghanaian politics. By examining the historical development of the theory and its applicability to Ghana, this study seeks to offer a robust analysis of how quotas can facilitate gender-inclusive governance.

2.3.2 The Theory of Patriarchy

The term patriarchy, derived from the Greek word meaning "rule of the father," refers to a societal structure in which men hold advantages over women in terms of status, moral authority, and property (Benstead, 2021). The origins of the patriarchal concept are multifaceted, encompassing historical, philosophical, and sociological perspectives. Over time, feminist researchers and theorists have examined and developed this concept. Historically, early human societies were often structured around patriarchal systems, with men dominating political, economic, and social spheres. Feminist scholars have analysed these historical gender roles and hierarchies to understand their origins and significance Grant (2020). In her seminal work "The Second Sex" (1949), Simone de Beauvoir explored how men have historically defined societal norms while relegating women to the status of "the other," thereby contributing to their subjugation (as cited in Marcus, 2020).

Sociologists apply the theory of patriarchy to explore its impact on family dynamics, education, and labour markets, as well as the institutionalization and perpetuation of gender inequality (Kalev & Deutsch, 2018). Historians examine how patriarchal structures have influenced historical events and societal developments (Greene &

Kahn, 2020; Folbre, 2021). Economists study gender disparities in wages, workplace discrimination, and the economic consequences of these inequalities (Goldin, 1990, as cited in Blau & Kahn, 2017). Additionally, scholars in international relations and global studies analyse how patriarchy intersects with race, class, and national identity to shape global power structures (Peterson, 2021).

In Ghana, patriarchal norms are deeply ingrained in cultural traditions and beliefs that reinforce gender stereotypes, positioning women in subservient roles and limiting their access to political power and decision-making (Bazaanah & Ngcobo, 2024). These norms create a societal structure that minimizes women's contributions and often dismisses their political ambitions. Economic and social factors rooted in patriarchy further hinder women's participation in politics (Gyan & Mfoafo-M'Carthy, 2022). Women face barriers such as limited access to education, financial resources, and political networks, leading to economic dependence on male relatives, which in turn restricts their political engagement.

Despite constituting more than half of Ghana's population, women remain significantly underrepresented in the political sphere (Umar, 2024). For instance, women held only 14.5% of parliamentary seats following the 2020 elections, highlighting persistent gender disparities in political representation (Gadri, 2024). This underrepresentation reflects the broader patriarchal culture that restricts women's participation in governance and decision-making processes.

One approach to addressing patriarchal constraints in Ghanaian politics is the implementation of electoral gender quotas. These quotas aim to increase women's

numerical representation in political bodies and challenge prevailing patriarchal norms by ensuring that a specified percentage of candidates are women (Mukabera, 2019). Political parties can foster a more inclusive environment by implementing quotas and providing female candidates with mentorship, training, and financial resources (Israrud Din, 2024). Such measures can help women navigate the political landscape and overcome structural barriers.

A significant presence of women in elected office can drive cultural transformation within political parties and institutions (Mlambo & Kapingura, 2019). Increased female representation enables women to influence policy, advocate for gender-sensitive legislation, and shift political priorities towards issues such as healthcare, education, and social welfare. The visibility of female leaders can also inspire future generations of women to pursue political careers (Keohane, 2020). When young women see female politicians in leadership roles, it challenges the perception that governance is a male-dominated domain.

Addressing the interplay between electoral gender quotas and patriarchy is essential for achieving gender equality in political representation. Gender quotas serve as a direct challenge to patriarchal norms by ensuring women’s presence in political decision-making, enabling them to form coalitions, shape policy, and influence legislative agendas (ElMorally, 2024). Empirical evidence demonstrates that gender quotas have significantly increased women's representation in politics. In Rwanda, for example, women hold over 60% of parliamentary seats, resulting in legislative reforms that prioritize social issues, health, and education (Agbortanyi, 2024).

Similarly, gender quotas have enhanced female political participation across Africa, leading to increased empowerment and leadership opportunities (Nare, 2022). These reforms contribute to broader societal changes, including greater visibility and influence for women in politics (Goss, 2020).

However, the concept of patriarchy remains a subject of academic debate. While some scholars endorse it as a framework for understanding gender disparities, others critique its applicability (Maricourt & Burrell, 2022). Proponents argue that patriarchy systematically disadvantages women by limiting their access to opportunities and resources (Applin, Simpson, & Curtis, 2023; Yin & Sun, 2021). These scholars also acknowledge that gender discrimination intersects with other forms of social inequality, including race and class, making it even more challenging for women to thrive in patriarchal settings (Liani, Nyamongo, & Tolhurst, 2020; Saunders, Lim, & Harris, 2023).

Conversely, critics contend that the patriarchal theory oversimplifies gender dynamics by failing to account for the diverse social, cultural, and personal factors that shape gender relations. Some argue that gender identities are not solely determined by patriarchal structures but are influenced by individual agency and broader socio-cultural contexts. For instance, Nancy Chodorow’s work, "The Reproduction of Mothering" (as cited in Chodorow, 2023), presents an alternative perspective on gender role formation, emphasizing the interplay of individual, societal, and cultural factors.

Emerging gender theories, such as post-structuralist feminism and queer theory, challenge and expand traditional notions of gender and power (Norton, 2021). Queer theory critiques the notion of fixed gender identities and highlights the fluidity of gender and sexual orientation (Link, 2023). Post-structuralist feminism similarly challenges binary gender classifications, emphasizing the socially constructed nature of gender roles. Judith Butler's work (as cited in Anderson & McCormack, 2018) underscores the performative aspect of gender, arguing that traditional gender norms are maintained through repeated social behaviors. These perspectives deconstruct essentialist views of gender and advocate for a more intersectional understanding of power dynamics (Okpokwasili, 2023).

In the context of the present study, understanding the principles of patriarchy is crucial for analysing gender inequality and assessing the feasibility of an electoral gender quota system in Ghana. The theory provides a framework for examining the cultural, social, and historical factors that have contributed to gender disparities. Additionally, it aids in identifying potential challenges and objections to gender quotas. By considering how quotas could disrupt entrenched power hierarchies and promote women's political participation, this framework informs policy recommendations that either challenge or adapt to traditional patriarchal values.

Furthermore, a comparative analysis of gender quotas in other nations offers valuable insights into their potential impact in Ghana. The patriarchal framework aligns with feminist strategies aimed at dismantling traditional power structures and advancing gender equality. By understanding the interplay between patriarchy and gender

quotas, policymakers can develop more effective interventions to enhance women's political representation and challenge systemic gender biases.

2.3.3 The Feminist Theory

Feminism is a multifaceted concept with diverse definitions and interpretations shaped by social, political, religious, and cultural perspectives (Mohajan, 2022). Rather than being a singular ideology, feminism encompasses a range of theories and approaches aimed at addressing historical and contemporary gender-based oppression and discrimination to promote social justice and gender equality (Allen, Goldberg & Jaramillo-Sierra, 2022).

Feminist theory remains a powerful force in shaping discussions and policies on gender, influencing academia, politics, and social movements (Grosser & McCarthy, 2019). According to Burrell and Flood (2019)., feminism advocates for social equality between men and women by challenging sexism and patriarchy. Allen (2023) traces the intellectual and historical roots of feminist theory to a broad range of sources, though its establishment as a distinct academic field aligns with the feminist movements of the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Tickner & True, 2018). During this period, feminist concepts gained prominence in scholarly discourse, socio-political activism, and institutional advocacy, solidifying feminist theory as an academic discipline (Trencsényi et al., 2016).

Feminist theory provides a robust framework for analysing and addressing gender disparities in political representation. It encompasses multiple perspectives, including intersectional feminism, socialist feminism, radical feminism, and liberal feminism.

Each strand offers a unique approach to achieving gender equality and understanding the underlying causes of gender oppression. Understanding patriarchal structures is essential for dismantling barriers that limit women's political participation in Ghana, where entrenched cultural norms reinforce gender biases and restrict women's access to decision-making processes (Gadri, 2024).

Beyond identifying systemic barriers, feminist theory underscores the importance of women's empowerment and agency in political participation. This involves creating environments that support women's engagement in governance by providing resources, training, and institutional backing (Kelly, 2019). Political empowerment extends beyond numerical representation to ensuring that women in leadership roles can effectively influence policy and governance.

Feminist theory also offers practical applications for implementing electoral gender quotas to address disparities in political representation. Liberal feminism advocates for legislative reforms and equal opportunity policies to remove barriers to women's political engagement (Omwami, 2021), viewing quotas as essential interventions. Radical feminism, in contrast, sees quotas as a step toward dismantling patriarchal power structures and ensuring women's active participation in politics (Giovannoni, 2023). Intersectional feminism emphasizes quotas that account for diversity among women, ensuring representation across different ethnicities, socio-economic backgrounds, and abilities (Kovacevic, 2022).

Empirical evidence supports the effectiveness of gender quotas in enhancing

women's political representation. For instance, Rwanda has one of the highest percentages of female lawmakers globally due to its quota system (Mukabera, 2019). Similarly, South Africa's quotas have significantly influenced gender equality legislation and increased women's political participation (Clayton, 2021). These cases illustrate the transformative impact of feminist advocacy for gender quotas.

While feminist theory provides a comprehensive framework for addressing gender inequality, critiques exist. Radical feminism, for instance, is sometimes viewed as utopian and difficult to implement in practice (Grant, 2020). Additionally, the complexity of intersectional feminism presents challenges in policy implementation, as it requires nuanced understandings of multiple intersecting oppressions.

In the Ghanaian context, feminist theory can inform the implementation of electoral gender quotas by highlighting structural barriers and advocating for inclusive policy reforms. It provides a theoretical foundation for designing gender-sensitive policies that consider the diverse experiences of Ghanaian women. However, feminist critiques also suggest the need for a nuanced approach to quota implementation, ensuring that women increased political representation translates into meaningful participation and influence in decision-making processes.

By integrating feminist principles with pragmatic policy considerations, Ghana can foster a political landscape where women are not only present but actively shape the nation's governance. The intersection of feminist theory and electoral gender quotas offers valuable insights into both the opportunities and challenges of advancing gender equality in Ghanaian political parties.

2.4 Empirical Literature Review

The underrepresentation of women in political administration remains a critical concern for political scientists and sociologists worldwide. Decisions that shape societies, economies, and overall human welfare are primarily made within the political sphere, yet women continue to be excluded from these spaces (Fox & Pate, 2023). Ghana reflects this global trend, with only 40 women (14.55%) winning parliamentary seats in the 2020 general elections out of 275 contested seats (IPU, 2021). This persistent gender imbalance raises concerns about governance quality, policy inclusivity, and democratic legitimacy. Despite various efforts to address this challenge, systemic barriers continue to hinder women's political participation, with entrenched patriarchal norms, financial constraints, and intra-party biases shaping the political landscape (George & Braimah, 2021).

This empirical literature review aligns with the study's specific objectives by examining global, African, and Ghanaian perspectives on electoral gender quotas and their implications for women's political representation.

Electoral gender quotas have been widely adopted in various countries to improve women's representation in political leadership. Studies show that their effectiveness largely depends on political will, institutional frameworks, and societal attitudes toward gender equality (Tripp, 2016; Dahlerup, 2006). In many African nations, quotas have significantly increased women's participation in governance. Rwanda, for instance, has over 60% female representation in its parliament due to legally enforced quotas, which have been linked to improved governance outcomes such as reduced corruption and more inclusive policymaking (Boahemaa, 2022; Tripp,

2016). Senegal, too, has seen a rise in female political participation following the introduction of a gender quota law in 2010.

However, in Ghana, the acceptance of electoral gender quotas remains limited, particularly among grassroots political actors. While some political parties have publicly endorsed gender equality, their commitments have not translated into concrete electoral reforms (Boahemaa, 2022). Studies suggest that skepticism toward quotas is rooted in socio-cultural beliefs, economic challenges, and concerns about fairness in political competition (George & Braimah, 2021). Many grassroots actors view quotas as an imposed measure that undermines meritocracy, reinforcing resistance to their implementation (Profeta, Passador & Caló, 2021). Additionally, financial barriers disproportionately affect female political aspirants, as Ghana's political system is highly resource-intensive, making it difficult for women to compete effectively (Amoah, 2024).

The literature highlights several conditions necessary for the successful implementation of electoral gender quotas. Key among these are political commitment, financial support, mentorship, and public education campaigns (Hessami & da Fonseca, 2020). Countries with successful quota systems, such as Rwanda and Senegal, have demonstrated the importance of enforceable legal frameworks and institutional commitment in sustaining gender-inclusive political reforms. In contrast, Ghana's stalled Affirmative Action Bill has been criticized for lacking strong enforcement mechanisms, which could undermine its potential impact (Profeta, Passador & Caló, 2021; Appiah, 2015). The bill's proposal to establish a

Gender Equality Committee (GEC) rather than an independent commission with legal authority has raised concerns about its effectiveness in ensuring compliance with gender quotas.

Additionally, the role of grassroots delegates is crucial in shaping the implementation of electoral gender quotas. Research suggests that grassroots actors expect clear policies, adequate funding, and sustained political will to support women candidates (Mechkova, Dahlum & Petrarca, 2024). Public education and awareness campaigns have also been identified as vital in addressing misconceptions about quotas and promoting their acceptance within political parties (Fox & Pate, 2023). Given Ghana's decentralized party structure, grassroots engagement is essential for any gender quota system to be effective. However, existing research indicates that little empirical work has been done to explore grassroots actors' perceptions and their potential role in either facilitating or resisting quota policies (Amoah, 2024).

The development of a viable electoral gender quota system requires a context-specific approach that takes into account Ghana's socio-political and cultural realities. Existing research highlights several critical components necessary for an effective quota system, including legal enforcement mechanisms, financial incentives, mentorship programs, and grassroots ownership (Boahemaa, 2022; Amoah, 2024). Comparative analyses suggest that countries with successful quota policies have established strong institutional frameworks to monitor and enforce compliance (Tripp, 2016).

In Ghana, however, the absence of enforceability mechanisms remains a significant challenge. While political parties have made commitments to gender equality, their lack of concrete actions suggests that voluntary measures alone may not be sufficient to drive meaningful change (Appiah, 2015). The literature further suggests that skepticism toward quotas is often linked to broader issues of political financing, as female candidates frequently struggle to mobilize the resources needed to compete effectively (George & Braimah, 2021). Addressing these financial constraints through targeted funding programs could improve women's electoral prospects and enhance the effectiveness of quota policies.

Furthermore, mentorship and leadership development programs have been identified as essential for increasing women's participation in politics. Studies indicate that female politicians in countries with successful quota systems often benefit from structured mentorship programs that provide strategic guidance and support (Hessami & da Fonseca, 2020). In Ghana, however, such programs remain limited, contributing to the challenges faced by women aspiring for political leadership positions.

Finally, grassroots ownership of quota policies is critical for their successful implementation. Research suggests that policies perceived as externally imposed often face resistance, whereas those developed through inclusive, participatory processes are more likely to be accepted and sustained (Fox & Pate, 2023). In Ghana, efforts to develop an effective gender quota system must therefore prioritize

engagement with grassroots political actors to ensure their buy-in and active participation in the implementation process.

The empirical literature review demonstrates that while electoral gender quotas have been successful in increasing women's representation in several African countries, their acceptance and implementation in Ghana remain limited due to socio-cultural barriers, financial constraints, and weak institutional support. The literature also highlights key conditions for effective quota implementation, including political commitment, financial support, mentorship, and public education campaigns. However, Ghana's current political landscape presents unique challenges that require a tailored approach to developing a viable quota system. This study seeks to address these gaps by investigating grassroots actors' perceptions of electoral gender quotas, their expectations for implementation, and the conditions necessary for an effective gender quota framework in Ghanaian political parties. By focusing on the grassroots level, this research aims to provide practical recommendations for enhancing women's political representation and advancing gender-inclusive governance in Ghana.

2.5 Research Gap

Existing empirical literature on electoral gender quotas (Krok, 2009; Dahlerup, 2006; Bauer, 2012; Tsikata, 2009; O'Brien, 2012) predominantly adopts a top-down approach, focusing on elite perspectives, legislative processes, and high-level institutional frameworks. While these studies provide valuable insights into policy formulation and implementation, they do not adequately examine the perceptions and

acceptance of gender quotas among grassroots political actors those who play a crucial role in shaping candidate selection, influencing party decisions, and mobilizing electoral support. This gap is significant, as the successful implementation of electoral gender quotas depends not only on policy endorsement at the elite level but also on acceptance and support from grassroots actors.

In the Ghanaian context, several studies (Adams et al., 2016; Hjlund Madsen, 2019; Agomor, 2016; Osei-Hwedie et al., 2018; Awuah, 2017; Sanny & Dome, 2020) have explored women's political underrepresentation and recommended the passage of the Affirmative Action Bill. However, these studies primarily analyze gender disparities through the lens of parliamentary representation and elite policy advocacy, often overlooking the socio-cultural and economic barriers faced by grassroots women who aspire to political office. Moreover, while the Affirmative Action Bill is widely regarded as a necessary legislative tool, its current provisions lack enforceability mechanisms and fail to incorporate grassroots perspectives, which are essential for its successful implementation.

This study addresses these critical gaps by shifting the focus from elite-driven policy recommendations to grassroots-level analysis. It investigates how grassroots political actors perceive electoral gender quotas, the challenges they identify, and the conditions under which they would support such reforms. Unlike previous studies that assume a uniform resistance to quotas, this research critically examines variations in acceptance based on party affiliations, socio-economic status, and regional differences.

Additionally, this study contributes to the broader discourse on gender-inclusive governance by providing empirical insights into how grassroots engagement can improve the effectiveness of gender quotas in Ghana. The findings will inform policymakers on how to design quota systems that are both legally enforceable and socially acceptable, ensuring that they do not remain symbolic measures but become transformative tools for increasing women's political participation.

By addressing the frequently overlooked perspectives of grassroots actors and offering a framework that aligns policy implementation with grassroots realities, this study provides a more holistic understanding of the barriers and opportunities for gender-inclusive political representation in Ghana.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework diagrammatically presents key information that encapsulates the specific objectives of the study. It provides a structured representation of the independent and dependent variables, clarifying their relationships within the research context.

The framework emphasizes the role of grassroots actors' expectations in shaping the adoption and effectiveness of electoral gender quotas in Ghanaian political parties. While qualitative in nature, it offers a comprehensive analysis of how these variables interact to influence policy formulation and implementation. The diagram visually represents these dynamics, ensuring clarity and coherence in understanding the study’s core constructs.

In line with Sekaran (2003), operational definitions have been applied to eliminate ambiguities, ensuring that key terms and variables are well-defined and measurable. This approach enhances the framework's explanatory power and aligns it with the study's objectives.

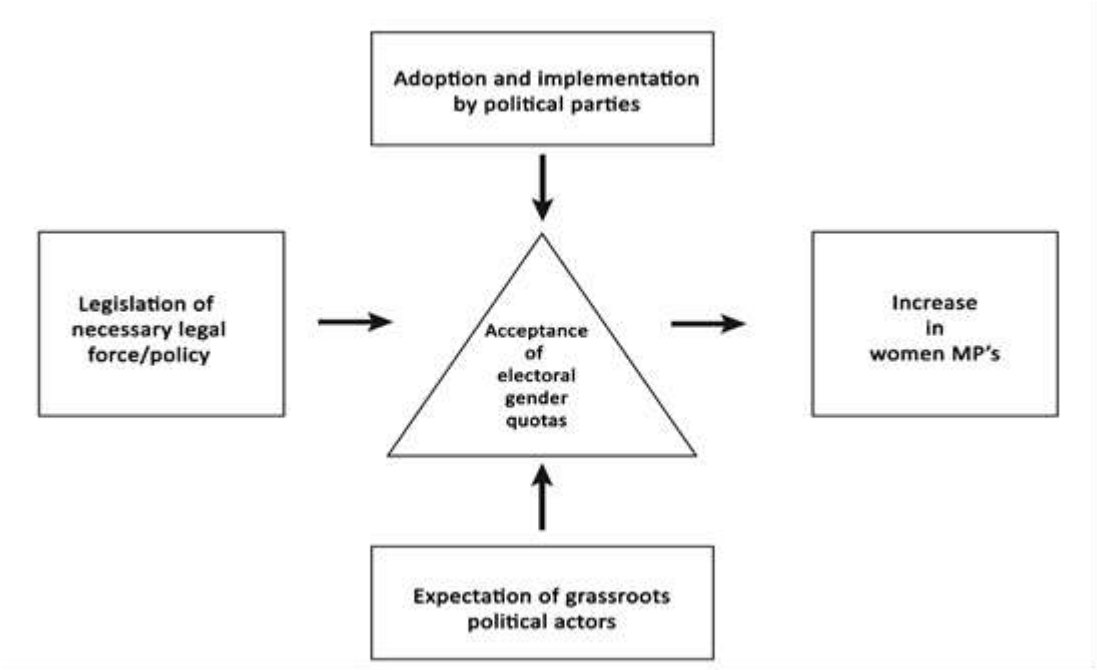


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Developed by researcher

Globally, gender quotas have shown to be a crucial tool for raising the proportion of women in national legislatures. There isn't currently a national gender policy in Ghana that requires gender quotas. A few prerequisites must be met in order for an electoral gender quota to be approved and implemented:

i. Legislation of Necessary Legal Force/Policy: Establishing a robust legal framework that mandates and supports gender quotas.

ii. Adoption and Implementation by Political Parties: Political parties must adopt and rigorously implement these quotas within their candidate selection processes.

iii. Expectations of Grassroots Political Actors: The success of gender quotas heavily relies on the acceptance and support of grassroots political actors, whose expectations and perspectives are crucial.

When these prerequisites are satisfied, they all work together to increase the proportion of female MPs in Ghana. This framework emphasizes how crucial it is to coordinate grassroots, institutional, and legislative actions to significantly increase the presence of women in politics.

2.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter critically examined relevant theoretical and empirical literature on the prospect of an electoral gender quota system in Ghanaian political parties. The review was structured around key themes, including theories underpinning gender quotas, historical and global perspectives, and the contextual challenges of implementing such policies in Ghana.

The chapter explored Critical Mass Theory as the primary theoretical framework, supported by Patriarchy and Feminist Theories. Critical Mass Theory emphasizes the importance of achieving a sufficient number of women in political spaces to drive meaningful policy change, while Patriarchy Theory highlights systemic gender-based power imbalances that hinder women's political participation. Feminist Theory

further contextualizes the need for gender quotas as a corrective measure to promote inclusivity and equal representation.

Empirically, the review identified significant studies on elite and policymaker perspectives but highlighted the gap in research focusing on grassroots actors. While existing literature addresses quota effectiveness, financial constraints, and socio-cultural barriers, no study has explicitly examined grassroots acceptance of gender quotas. This gap justifies the need for the present research, which aims to provide a bottom-up perspective to inform policy frameworks.

Furthermore, a conceptual framework was developed to visualize the relationships between independent and dependent variables. The framework ensures clarity by explicitly depicting how grassroots actors' expectations influence the adoption and success of gender quotas in Ghanaian political parties.

Overall, this chapter provided the necessary scholarly foundation for the study, identifying gaps and justifying the need for an empirical inquiry into grassroots perspectives on electoral gender quotas in Ghana.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The methodological procedures and techniques that served as the study's foundation are described in this chapter. The goal of the study was to examine the prospect of a system of electoral gender quotas in Ghanaian political party elections. The chapter explains the research approach of the study, including sample techniques, types of data and sources, data-gathering approaches, and instruments for data analysis and processing. The chapter also discusses concerns with validity and reliability as well as ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Paradigm

A "research paradigm" is a model, a method, or a pattern for conducting research (Kankam, 2019). An interpretivist research paradigm is used in this study. Interpretivism is an epistemological position that emphasizes interpreting human events from the perspective of individuals experiencing them. It holds that reality is socially created and subjective (Hiller, 2016). This paradigm is especially well-suited for investigating intricate social phenomena where social settings and individual perspectives are crucial, like the prospect of implementing an election gender quota system within Ghanaian political parties.

The primary objective of this study is to comprehend the perspectives, convictions, and experiences of political party grassroots supporters about the prospect of electoral gender quotas. Interpretivism captures the subtleties of participants' viewpoints and permits an in-depth examination of these subjective experiences

(Duffy, Fernandez & Sène-Harper, 2022). Social, cultural, and political settings all impact gender quotas in political parties. The study of these situations and the interpretations people make of them is made easier by interpretivism. Soss (2015), offers more detailed perspectives on the elements influencing their opinions on gender quotas. The research employs a qualitative methodology, collecting comprehensive and context-specific data through techniques like in-depth interviews. Since interpretivism emphasizes comprehending phenomena through the comprehensive perspectives of persons involved, it is consistent with qualitative approaches (Tracy, 2024).

Studies that have looked into related phenomena have used interpretivist frameworks with success. To capture the subjective experiences of women in politics, for instance, interpretive approaches are frequently used for studies on gender representation in political situations such as (Grahn, 2024; Forman-Rabinovici & Nir, 2021; Wilde, 2017). This exposes up the perspectives to barriers and facilitators that quantitative methods might overlook. (Maerland, 2023) employed interpretivism to examine the actual experiences of female politicians and uncover how cultural and social settings shaped their political trajectories. The study focused on gender quotas in Scandinavian nations. Furthermore, revealing people's and political actors' perspectives on electoral reforms in Latin America, an interpretivist study showed how interpretivism can reveal ingrained attitudes and ideas about policy changes in (de Tuya, 2023).

This study, which is based on the individual experiences and social realities of the participants, attempts to provide a comprehensive understanding of the prospects for an electoral gender quota system in Ghanaian political parties by using an interpretivist paradigm.

3.3 Research Approach

The research methodology of qualitative research is particularly appropriate for the topic "Examining the Prospect of Electoral Gender Quota System in Ghanaian Political Parties" due to various factors. Exploring intricate social phenomena and comprehending the meanings, experiences, and perspectives of participants are the two principal areas in which qualitative research thrives (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). With an emphasis on grassroots political actors' acceptance of electoral gender quotas, a qualitative method enables an in-depth assessment of their attitudes, convictions, and experiences all of which are essential for comprehending the cultural and social dynamics at play.

To gather rich, detailed data for this study, techniques including focus groups, participant observations, and interviews were made possible by the qualitative approach. These approaches gave intricate insights into how grassroots political actors perceive gender quotas and what they hope to see. The study was able to capture the nuances and complexity of these actors' perspectives that quantitative methods might fail to capture by interacting with them in person. Furthermore, the flexibility and adaptability of qualitative research empowered the researcher to delve further into developing themes and concerns while gathering data (Creswell, 2013).

Although quantitative or mixed methods have advantages, they were not selected for this study because the goal is to examine and comprehend subjective sensations and perceptions, which are better captured by qualitative methods. The depth of knowledge required for this topic may not be provided by quantitative approaches, which concentrate on numerical data and statistical analysis. Additionally, while mixed approaches, which combine quantitative and qualitative data, may provide a wider perspective, they may also lessen the in-depth comprehension that comes from qualitative methods. This study's focus, which is more in line with qualitative research, is on the rich, contextual, and in-depth examination of the perspectives of grassroots actors.

Qualitative methods have been effectively used in comparable studies that look at political engagement and gender quotas. To examine the effects of gender quotas in diverse political circumstances (Tsikata, 2009; Oduro; Krook, 2014; Dahlerup, 2006) employed qualitative methods. These studies show how qualitative research may be an effective tool for exploring the complex relationships between politics and gender. In general, the qualitative method was used due to its capacity to offer a comprehensive, contextual, and subtle comprehension of grassroots actors' acquiescence with electoral gender quotas in Ghanaian political parties. This approach is in line with the goals of the study and expands upon prior research in related fields that have proven fruitful.

3.4 Research Design

Heidegger's interpretive phenomenology was chosen as the research design for the

current study. Examining the intricate topic of electoral gender quotas in the unique setting of Ghanaian political parties is made possible by this design. In-depth, nuanced comprehension of the perspectives and lived experiences of grassroots political actors is made feasible by interpretive phenomenology, which also sheds light on how they comprehend and interpret the phenomenon of gender quotas (Greaves, 2018; Wrathall, 2013).

The interpretive phenomenology of Heidegger makes it easier to delve deeply into the interpretations of gender quotas that are given by grassroots political actors. According to Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2021), it enables the researcher to extract the substance of their experiences and how they influence their acceptance or resistance to such policies. Once again, this design makes it possible to analyse the phenomena in the context of real-world events, which is essential for comprehending how regional cultural, social, and political circumstances affect grassroots actors' perceptions. It offers a comprehensive, contextual knowledge of their actual experiences (Dewi & Primayana, 2019). Furthermore, because interpretive phenomenology is cantered on the subjective experiences of individuals, it is capable of capturing the complex and varied reality of grassroots political actors. This method is crucial for comprehending their expectations and determining whether gender quotas are feasible in their particular setting (Wroblewski, 2021).

The study's objectives and the nature of the research questions are aligned with the interpretative phenomenological design. The study's focus on the real-world experiences of grassroots political actors allows it to capture the range of opinions

and reactions on gender quotas. This method aids in comprehending the underlying significance and implications they give to the concept. Once more, the interpretive phenomenological approach enables a thorough analysis of the factors that grassroots actors think will help achieve gender quotas. It offers the freedom to examine these expectations in more detail using qualitative techniques like in-depth interviews. Moreover, a customized framework for a workable electoral gender quota system can be developed using the knowledge gathered from the in-depth analysis of the real-world experiences of grassroots political actors. The framework's iterative refinement based on actual data collected from the field is supported by the architecture.

All things considered, Heidegger's interpretive phenomenology was selected because it offers a comprehensive, contextualised investigation of the viability and acceptability of electoral gender quotas at the grassroots level of Ghanaian political parties. This design not only supports the objectives of the study but also makes it easier to gather comprehensive, insightful data that can result in deeper comprehension and useful suggestions for policy and implementation.

3.4.1 Phenomenology

A phenomenological design for qualitative studies focuses primarily on the discovery and description of the experiences shared by numerous persons or participants regarding a certain phenomenon or subject under study. This design attempts to identify and articulate the common threads that run through the participants' encounters with the phenomenon rather than concentrating on the peculiarities of individual experiences. In essence, the phenomenological design has led to

substantial modifications in the social construction paradigm and the level of theorization in the field of organizational research. The transformative power of phenomenology in transforming how researchers approach the study and interpretation of organizational phenomena has been championed by academics notably Gill (2014) and Lincoln et al. (2011). This development emphasizes the significant contribution that phenomenological study has made to enhance the depth and scope of organizational endeavours.

According to Gill (2020), there are two distinct types of phenomenology: hermeneutic or interpretative phenomenology and transcendental or psychological phenomenology. The decision between these two strategies depends on a comprehensive evaluation of the study's philosophical underpinnings, overarching objective, and the distinguishing traits between the two.

The research approach of choice is interpretative phenomenology since it best fits the philosophical underpinnings of this study, its specific study objectives, and the fundamental characteristics shared by both types of phenomenology. This purposeful choice aligns well with the objective of the study and demonstrates a dedication to exploring the intricate and personalized interpretations of participants' experiences, which is essential to interpretative phenomenology. This decision was determined with the knowledge that the study's objective goes beyond simply expressing the emotions of the participants, establishing it distinct from the realm of transcendental phenomenology. Instead, to understand the underlying "reasons" for the situation under research, the study seeks to delve further into the field of interpretation.

Addressing this current study, phenomenology is particularly well suited for examining and understanding people's subjective perceptions and realities. Reference to the prospect for implementation of an electoral gender quota system, enables the researcher to delve extensively into the experiences, beliefs, attitudes, and perspectives of both male and female members of Ghanaian political parties. Phenomenology makes it possible to explore how people interpret and make sense of planned transformation to the political landscape.

3.5 Location of the Study

Beyond mere convenience or geographic accessibility, Ghana was chosen as the subject for this study, “Examining the Prospect of an Electoral Gender Quota System in Ghanaian Political Parties,” based on specific contextual and scientific considerations. Ghana presents a unique case for studying electoral gender quotas due to its democratic stability, political structure, and sociocultural dynamics that directly impact gender representation in politics.

Despite being a leading democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa, Ghana has persistently low female political representation. As of the most recent parliamentary elections, women occupy less than 15% of parliamentary seats, falling short of the African Union’s 30% benchmark. Unlike some neighbouring countries, Ghana lacks a legislated national gender quota policy for political representation, making it an ideal case to explore the feasibility and acceptance of such a system within political parties. The study, therefore, fills a critical gap by examining whether grassroots political actors—the key stakeholders in party primaries and internal elections—support or resist gender quotas.

Furthermore, Ghana's political party structure provides a compelling framework for this study. The two dominant parties, the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC), have historically struggled with integrating gender quotas into their candidate selection processes. While both parties have introduced some affirmative action measures, these have largely remained informal and inconsistently applied. This study examines how grassroots actors within these parties perceive electoral gender quotas, contributing to a deeper understanding of internal party dynamics in implementing gender-based electoral reforms.

Socioculturally, Ghana's strong patriarchal norms continue to shape political participation and representation. The intersection of gender, tradition, and politics often creates barriers for women, particularly in securing party nominations. Unlike elite-level analyses that focus on policymakers, this study critically engages with grassroots perspectives, where sociocultural resistance to gender quotas is most pronounced. Understanding how deeply ingrained beliefs influence attitudes toward gender quotas provides a more nuanced analysis of the political feasibility of such policies.

In addition, Ghana's legal and constitutional framework allows for voluntary party quotas but lacks a binding legislative mandate for gender representation in elected offices. This creates a distinct policy environment where political parties play a crucial role in shaping gender inclusion without a national law compelling them to do so. By focusing on Ghana, this study contributes to the global discourse on voluntary versus mandatory gender quotas, offering insights relevant to other democracies facing similar gender representation challenges.

Ghana was also selected over other Sub-Saharan African countries with similar gender representation challenges due to its combination of democratic resilience, the absence of a legislated gender quota, and the unique sociopolitical structures of its major political parties. While countries such as Rwanda and Senegal have successfully implemented quota systems, Ghana's reliance on voluntary party quotas presents an opportunity to examine the factors influencing the adoption or rejection of such measures. Additionally, Ghana's major political events, such as party congresses, provide a unique platform for collecting diverse grassroots perspectives from across all 16 regions, making it an ideal setting for studying gender quota feasibility within political parties.

To ensure diverse and representative grassroots perspectives, data collection was conducted during major political events: the NPP's congress at Koforidua Technical University and the NDC's congress at Accra Sports Stadium. These events gathered delegates from all 16 regions, ensuring broad geographic representation and capturing the varied regional nuances in gender quota perceptions.

In summary, Ghana's combination of political stability, persistent gender disparities in political representation, entrenched sociocultural norms, and an evolving policy framework makes it a particularly suitable case for this study. By focusing on grassroots political actors in this specific context, the research offers practical insights into the challenges and opportunities of implementing electoral gender quotas in Ghana and beyond.

Figure 3.1: Geographical Map of Ghana

Source: https://www.ghanamissionun.org/map-regions-in-ghana/

3.6 Target Population of the Study

According to Willie (2024), "the collection of all possible individuals, objects, or measurements of interest" is what is meant to be understood as the population under consideration in research. The target population for this study was grassroots (ordinary) political actors, defined as delegates from the two major political parties, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP).

According to Frempong and Amankwah (2024), the NDC and NPP have continuously maintained their dominance in Ghana's political scene, even though the country has over 30 registered political parties, 11 of which contested in the general elections of 2020 (ec.gov.gh). Not only have these parties proven themselves as credible opposition forces, but they are the only ones to form governments that last entire terms. Out of the 275 seats in parliament, the NPP and NDC presently possess 137 seats apiece, demonstrating their enormous influence over national governance and the process of legislation (Asekere, 2021).

As stated by IDEG (2023), in the run-up to the 2020 elections, the Electoral Commission of Ghana once again revoked the licenses of 15 political parties from the nation's Political Parties Register. To comply with Section 22(1) of the Political Parties Act, 2000 (Act 574), which requires all registered political parties to uphold a national character and satisfy specific criteria, such as having operating offices throughout Ghana. With the exception of sporadic news conferences, the majority of the roughly 11 political parties that contested in the 2020 elections did not have offices around the nation and were not very active in public affairs (Abdulai & Sackeyfio, 2022). Determining the membership of these parties was difficult due to

their lack of visibility and engagement. Numerous trips to these supposedly "regional offices" showed that a large number of them were perpetually shut, and the ones that were accessible frequently demanded appointments that kept getting rescheduled. This circumstance calls into question the political parties' operational capacity and legitimacy within Ghana's political environment, as well as their inclusion in the study. The importance of acknowledging these two major political parties within the framework of Ghana's political system is further highlighted by their consolidation.

Table 3.1: Numbers of Elected Members of Parliaments by Political Parties in Ghana in the Fourth Republic

Years	Number of NDC MPs	Number of NPP MPs	Other	Total
1992	189	0	11	200
1996	131	63	6	200
2000	92	100	8	200
2004	94	128	8	230
2008	116	107	7	230
2012	148	122	5	275
2016	106	169	0	275
2020	137	137	1	275

Source: ec.gov.gh.

Table 3.1 depicts number of elected Members of Parliament (MPs) for each of the political parties, together with the number of independent candidates that fall under the "Others" category in the fourth Republican constitutional democratic era of Ghana's parliament.

Party leaders at the bottom of the leadership ladder, known as grassroots (ordinary) political actors popularly known as delegates from the NDC and NPP, make up the study's population of interest. Nominating and electing prospective parliamentary

candidates in internal party primaries members is the primary responsibility of these delegates, numbering roughly 10,936 across the country (6,730 from the NPP and 4,206 from the NDC). This operational decision offers a strong basis for examining their perspectives, attitudes, and possible obstacles concerning the adoption and successful use of gender quota systems in Ghana's changing political landscape. This population guarantees that a wide range of perspectives from the lowest echelons of the party leadership hierarchy were included in the study, offering a strong basis for examining the prospects and possible obstacles to enacting gender quotas within the NDC and NPP structures.

3.7 Sample Techniques

According to Casteel and Bridier (2021), sampling is the process of drawing a sample from a larger population. Whether adopting a qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods research approach, the concept of sampling weighs large when conducting a comprehensive demographic survey is impractical, as cleverly noted by Saunders et al. (2012). According to Cooper & Schindler (2014) and Ahmed (2024), it is an essential component of research methodology that has the potential to significantly influence the reliability and credibility of a study.

Purposive sampling and snowball sampling are two qualitative sample strategies used in this study. Since the research was qualitative in nature, these methods were ideal for selecting participants who could provide deep and relevant perspectives into the thoughts and experiences of grassroots actors about electoral gender quotas. Participants with specific knowledge or experience related to the study's objectives were specifically chosen through the use of purposeful sampling. New Patriotic Party

(NPP) and National Democratic Congress (NDC) grassroots delegates were the main actors in the present situation. Because they are directly involved in the nomination and election processes of parliamentary candidates, these delegates were selected from among those who hold lower positions in the party leadership hierarchy.

Understanding the implementation of electoral gender quotas and the expectations surrounding their implementation requires knowledge of their perspectives. Purposive sampling focuses on people who can offer comprehensive perspectives on the subject of women's representation in Ghanaian politics and is one way that the study ensures the data acquired is incredibly relevant to the research objectives (Patton, 2005; Saunders et al., 2012). While the study focused on the two major political parties, NDC and NPP, this decision was intentional, as these parties dominate Ghanaian politics and set the tone for electoral policies and reforms. Including their grassroots actors provided rich insights into the feasibility and acceptability of gender quotas within the political landscape.

To find more participants through recommendations from the initially selected participants, snowball sampling was used in addition to purposive sampling (Parker, Scott, & Geddes, 2019). When researching populations that may be challenging to reach or identify, such as grassroots political actors, this method can be extremely useful in qualitative research (Dosek, 2021). However, snowball sampling presents the risk of sampling bias, as participants may refer individuals from similar networks, potentially limiting the diversity of perspectives. To mitigate this risk, the study ensured that initial participants were selected from different constituencies and regions to encourage a more diverse range of viewpoints. Additionally, efforts were

made to balance recruitment across varying demographic factors, including age and gender, to capture a broader representation of grassroots actors' experiences.

To reach a larger network of grassroots delegates with potentially different perspectives and experiences on electoral gender quotas, the snowball sampling technique was employed. The study was able to increase the number of participants and obtain a wide spectrum of viewpoints by beginning with a few key delegates and asking them to propose others. This approach allowed for the inclusion of voices that might have otherwise gone unnoticed, which was notably helpful for addressing the study's objective of examining grassroots acceptance of gender quotas.

Baltes and Ralph (2022) prior reference to quantitative sampling techniques raises concerns from the reviewer, which is addressed by the use of purposive and snowball sampling procedures, which are in line with the qualitative nature of the study. This section presents a clear and comprehensive description of how the sampling procedures support the goals of the study by outlining the participant groups and providing a rationale for each sampling method.

To sum up, the study's use of purposive and snowball sampling approaches made it easier to deliberately choose participants, ensuring that the data collected is thorough and pertinent. In the end, this method contributed to a deeper knowledge of the prospects for electoral gender quotas in Ghanaian political parties by enhancing the quality and relevance of the data.

3.8 Sample Size

For qualitative studies, choosing the right sample size has always been difficult for academics, mostly because of the uncertainty it creates (Patton, 2002). A debate on the appropriate sample size for qualitative research persisted in the academic literature, as Mason (2010) pointed out. Patton (2002) contended that there was no set formula for determining the right sample size; rather, the significance of this decision rested on a number of factors, such as the researcher's particular study goals, the research objectives, the value of the information sought, the reliability of the findings, and the effective use of available resources.

Purposive sampling in qualitative research frequently produces results that are on par with or even better than randomisation, which is usually used in quantitative studies, in terms of generalisability and reliability (Patton, 2002). The "point of saturation" strategy has also been supported by the literature on qualitative research (Guest, Namey & Chen, 2020; Sebele-Mpofu, 2020). The idea of saturation—the moment at which a sizable percentage of the participants started to voice essentially similar opinions—was the foundation of this strategy. To ensure that the data collection procedure included a significant array of perspectives and experiences and enhanced the research findings, researchers were encouraged to continue conducting interviews or discussions until this saturation point was reached (Cooper & Schindler, 2014).

For this study, data saturation was assessed by continuously reviewing and analyzing the responses collected during interviews and focus group discussions. Saturation was determined when no new themes, concepts, or variations in perspectives

emerged from additional interviews or discussions. This iterative process involved coding the data after each set of interviews and focus group discussions, identifying recurring patterns, and assessing whether further data collection would contribute new insights. Once responses became repetitive, with participants reiterating previously identified themes, it was concluded that saturation had been reached.

For the interviews, the researcher attempted to reach approximately 40 grassroots actors at the congress and conference grounds of their respective parties. The researcher eventually conducted 30 interviews. A combination of purposive sampling and snowball sampling was used to recruit participants. With a sample size of 30, the purposive sampling technique was employed to target grassroots delegates from the NDC and NPP. This range was sufficient to allow for a thorough assessment of perspectives while being manageable for an in-depth qualitative study.

To further enhance the data, four focus groups of seven participants each were conducted, including a total of 28 grassroots actors. This approach aligned with existing literature, which suggests that focus groups should normally have 6 to 12 individuals to effectively facilitate conversation and data collection (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Onwuegbuzie et al., 2010). Focus groups provided an interactive platform for participants to share and discuss their experiences collectively, often revealing insights that might not have emerged in one-on-one interviews. This method also allowed for cross-validation of themes identified during individual interviews, reinforcing the assessment of saturation.

In conclusion, even though the literature offered a variety of guidelines for choosing sample sizes, the particular context and goals of the present study ultimately determined the appropriate sample size. The combination of individual interviews, focus groups, purposive sampling, and snowball sampling ensured a diverse representation of grassroots actors' opinions. More importantly, data saturation was systematically assessed through iterative coding and thematic analysis, confirming that further data collection would not yield new insights. This approach enhanced the reliability and applicability of the findings, leading to a deeper understanding of the prospects for implementing electoral gender quotas in Ghanaian political parties.

3.9 Data Collection Methods and Tools

According to Creswell (2012), data collection is the process of locating and choosing study participants, getting their permission to take part, and acquiring information using a variety of techniques, including questioning and behaviour observation. Semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and document review were the three main methodologies used to gather data for the study that examined Ghanaian political parties' prospects of implementing an electoral gender quota system.

3.9.1 Interview

In qualitative research, interviews are an effective method for gathering data since they allow the interviewer and interviewee to interact. Getting accurate, dependable, and comprehensive information from interview subjects is the main objective of the process (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). Interviews are the foundation of initial data collection in qualitative research designs, giving researchers rich, contextual

information that encapsulates participants' life experiences, opinions, and attitudes (Monday, 2020).

Depending on the objectives of the study and the research design, interviews can be conducted in a variety of ways, including unstructured, semi-structured, and structured. Semi-structured interviews were utilized as the main means of data collection in the context of the study. This approach made it possible to establish a balance between rigidity and adaptability, guaranteeing that important subjects such as gender quotas, difficulties, and expectations were covered while giving participants a chance to express their viewpoints and experiences (Galletta & Cross, 2013).

Using a series of open-ended questions and prompts intended to elicit comprehensive, thorough answers from participants, the interview guide served as a tool to help streamline the interview process (Kallio et al., 2016). Through the use of a well-crafted interview guide and a semi-structured interview format, the research was able to collect extensive qualitative data that captured the subtleties of the attitudes and beliefs of grassroots political party actors (delegates) regarding the implementation of electoral gender quotas in Ghana.

The interview guide included questions intended to gauge participants' understanding of gender quotas and how they should be applied within their party. It also explored the advantages and disadvantages of enforcing gender quotas, including increased diversity and female representation, as well as potential tokenism and backlash. The

interviews also attempted to obtain information about the participants' individual experiences with gender-related matters within their party, such as instances of discrimination, involvement in quota-related talks, or lobbying for gender equality. The sample that was used as an interview guide is shown in Appendix 1.

These delegates were chosen on the basis of their potential influence on party decisions and their active participation in party activities. Flexibility in inquiry was made possible by this approach, which made it possible to explore complex subjects and collect rich, qualitative data. Interviews were conducted with 30 delegates in total (15 from each party). To guarantee a range of viewpoints, the sample comprised delegates who were both male and female.

Only accredited delegates wearing name tags were present at the congress or conference grounds, where initial contact was made. Days after the initial meeting, interviews were held in person at the grounds, in hotels or various lodging facilities, or in the participants' homes or offices, depending on their comfort level and availability. This flexibility made it possible for participants from different backgrounds and places of residence to take part in the study. Every interview was planned to run between 45 and 60 minutes, giving enough time to fully explore the subjects without stressing the participants.

A brief explanation of the study, a reminder of the participant's rights, and an assurance that they were at ease preceded the formal questioning in the interview. When necessary, the interviewer included follow-up questions to probe more into the

participant's primary themes of interest while enabling the subjects to expand on their answers following the semi-structured guidance. A digital audio recorder was employed to capture the interviews verbatim to guarantee accuracy in capturing the participants' responses. After the interviews were taped, they were transcribed, resulting in written transcripts that, where feasible, included all spoken responses, pauses, and significant non-verbal clues. Before every interview, participants had to sign a consent form. This essential ethical tool provided them with information on the goals of the study, their rights as participants (e.g., confidentiality, voluntary participation), and the intended use of their data. Participants agreed to participate in the study by signing consent forms.

Table 3.2: Interviewed Participants

Participants ID	Party Affiliation	Role/ Position	Location	Date of Interview
R1	NDC	Secretary	Accra	May 2023
R2	NDC	Women Organizer	Accra	May 2023
R3	NDC	Youth Organizer	Accra	May 2023
R4	NDC	Research Officer	Cape Coast	July 2023
R5	NDC	Secretary	Takoradi	July 2023
R6	NPP	Women Organizer	Kumasi	July 2023
R7	NPP	Treasurer	Sunyani	July 2023
R8	NDC	Chairman	Accra	May 2023
R9	NPP	Youth Organizer	Accra	May 2023
R10	NDC	Communication Officer	Koforidua	August 2023
R11	NDC	Chairman	Koforidua	August 2023
R12	NPP	Treasurer	Accra	June 2023
R13	NPP	Secretary	Accra	June 2023
R14	NDC	Youth Organizer	Accra	June 2023
R15	NPP	Chairman	Accra	June 2023
R16	NDC	Communication Officer	Cape Coast	July 2023
R17	NPP	Secretary	Cape Coast	July 2023
R18	NPP	Youth Organizer	Cape Coast	July 2023
R19	NDC	Women Organizer	Accra	June 2023
R20	NPP	Treasurer	Koforidua	August 2023
R21	NPP	Chairman	Koforidua	August 2023
R22	NDC	Research Officer	Sunyani	June 2023
R23	NDC	Chairman	Sunyani	July 2023
R24	NPP	Women Organizer	Takoradi	July 2023
R25	NPP	Research Officer	Takoradi	July 2023
R26	NPP	Secretary	Takoradi	July 2023
R27	NDC	Treasurer	Accra	June 2023
R28	NPP	Youth Organizer	Accra	June 2023
R29	NDC	Women Organizer	Accra	June 2023
R30	NPP	Women Organizer	Accra	July 2023

Source: Field Data (2023)

A breakdown of the 30 grassroots political actors is shown in Table 3.2, with 15 members from the NDC and 15 from the NPP. The participant's identification (ID), their position at the branch level, the location of the interview, and the date of the interview are all included in the demography. The table presents the participants in the order that they were contacted; hence, the individuals who were available first are listed with the earlier dates of the interviews. Logistical factors made this necessary, such as the researcher having to travel to various locations to interact with participants. When a participant needed to stay an additional day after their party's congress or conference wrapped up, the researcher occasionally had to cover the cost of their transportation and lodging.

A wide range of viewpoints were represented in both the NDC and NPP due to the variety of locations, which included both large cities and regional capitals. With the use of this approach, the study was better able to gather a variety of viewpoints on the subject of electoral gender quotas from Ghanaian grassroots political actors.

3.9.2 Focus Group Discussion

Focus group discussions (FGD) are a type of qualitative data collection where participants are allowed to interact and share their opinions. According to Sim and Waterfield (2019), this dynamic process offers important insights into how a group thinks about a given subject collectively. It also reveals the spectrum of perspectives and ideas as well as the inconsistencies and differences that exist within a community about beliefs, experiences, and practices.

Four focus group discussions were held to encourage interaction among grassroots political party actors (delegates) from the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP) for the study examining the prospects of implementing an electoral gender quota system in Ghanaian political parties. There were two groups of seven participants in each focus group, for each party. To guarantee the calibre and dependability of the data gathered, the focus group talks were held following best practices for research protocols and guidelines. The focus groups' objective, anticipated length, and significance of their participation were all explained in the official invitations that were subsequently sent out. Logistic details, including time, date, and site, were shared when registrants confirmed their attendance.

The initial phase in the preparation process was outlining the goal of the focus group talks, which was to acquire detailed information about the opinions, attitudes, and experiences of grassroots political party participants concerning electoral gender quotas. A detailed procedure was devised, encompassing the moderator's manual, questioning techniques, and ethical deliberations. The discussion's structure and the precise questions to be asked were specified in the moderator's guide. The sample that was used as the moderator’s guide is shown in Appendix 2. Informed consent was secured from each participant, and participants were purposefully chosen from the grassroots levels of the NDC and NPP based on their relevance to the study's objectives. A calm and comfortable setting was selected to foster a relaxed atmosphere that encouraged candid interaction.

The moderator opened the focus group discussions by introducing the research team and extending a warm welcome to all participants. To make participants feel more at ease, an icebreaker exercise was employed along with an explanation of the discussion's objective and format. After that came the main debate, which was facilitated by the moderator utilizing prepared questions as a jumping-off point. Probing questions were posed to elicit more in-depth responses and to stimulate elaboration on important issues, while participants were encouraged to freely express their opinions.

High-quality digital audio recorders were used to capture the conversations, and backup devices were set up to guard against data loss. With the help of a note-taker, the moderator made sure that everyone had a chance to speak, encouraging quieter individuals to air their opinions and controlling the louder voices. Every conversation lasted between sixty and ninety minutes, providing ample time for a thorough examination of the subject.

The moderator thanked everyone for attending and gave them a chance to voice any last queries or worries. Since the recordings were verbatim transcribed, all spoken words, pauses, and significant non-verbal cues were accurately recorded. The moderator and assistant moderator immediately followed each focus group discussion with a debriefing to exchange impressions, insights, and any more material not publicly shared during the session.

The four focus group discussions that were held as part of the study, including two groups each from the NDC and NPP, are summarized in Table 3.3. There were seven participants in each focus group, for a total of a total of 28 participants in each of the

discussions. In order to ensure that the conversations were informed by individuals who had direct and relevant expertise within their respective parties, the participants were chosen from branch executives.

Table 3.3: Focus Group Discussants

Participants ID	Party Affiliation	Role/ Position	Location	Date of Interview
R31	NDC	Secretary	Accra	June 2023
R32	NDC	Women Organizer	Accra	June 2023
R33	NDC	Treasurer	Accra	June 2023
R34	NDC	Chairman	Accra	June 2023
R35	NDC	Secretary	Accra	June 2023
R36	NDC	Chairman	Accra	June 2023
R37	NDC	Women Organizer	Accra	June 2023
R38	NDC	Chairman	Ho	June 2023
R39	NDC	Secretary	Ho	June 2023
R40	NDC	Treasurer	Ho	June 2023
R41	NDC	Youth Organizer	Ho	June 2023
R42	NDC	Research Officer	Ho	June 2023
R43	NDC	Youth Organizer	Ho	June 2023
R44	NDC	Communication Officer	Ho	June 2023
R45	NPP	Research Officer	Kumasi	August 2023
R46	NPP	Communication Officer	Kumasi	August 2023
R47	NPP	Women Organizer	Kumasi	August 2023
R48	NPP	Treasurer	Kumasi	August 2023
R49	NPP	Chairman	Kumasi	August 2023
R50	NPP	Youth Organizer	Kumasi	August 2023
R51	NPP	Women Organizer	Kumasi	August 2023
R52	NPP	Chairman	Koforidua	August 2023
R53	NPP	Treasurer	Koforidua	August 2023
R54	NPP	Secretary	Koforidua	August 2023
R55	NPP	Youth Organizer	Koforidua	August 2023
R56	NPP	Chairman	Koforidua	August 2023
R57	NPP	Chairman	Koforidua	August 2023
R58	NPP	Communication Officer	Koforidua	August 2023

Source: Field Data (2023).

The discussions were held in different locations to accommodate participants from various regions, with two focus groups conducted for the NDC in Accra and Ho and two for the NPP in Kumasi and Koforidua. The choice of locations was strategic, aiming to capture regional diversity within the political parties and to ensure that the voices of grassroots actors from different parts of the country were heard.

3.9.3 Document Review

A qualitative data-gathering technique called document review entails methodically examining and interpreting documents in order to develop a comprehensive picture of a certain occurrence (Bowen, 2009). Document review was used as a secondary data collection method in conjunction with focus groups and interviews with grassroots political party actors (delegates) to augment primary data collected for the study on the prospects for implementing an electoral gender quota system in Ghanaian political parties.

The meticulous selection of pertinent materials marked the start of the document evaluation procedure. These included party manifestos, constitutions, and policy statements from the NDC and NPP, which provided information about the parties' official positions on gender representation. The minutes of meetings where gender issues were discussed, reports from past elections, party communications, and public remarks made by party leaders about gender quotas were also examined. To place the findings within broader scholarly and public discourses, academic articles, research reports, and media publications on the implementation of gender quotas in Ghana and other countries were also included.

These documents were reviewed using a systematic procedure. Initially, to facilitate thematic analysis and cross-referencing, all of the chosen materials were arranged according to category and importance. For instance, official policies were analyzed by grouping party manifestos and constitutions, but popular and scholarly viewpoints were examined separately by grouping media reports and academic papers. After that, relevant information was meticulously extracted from each document by carefully analyzing its content. This required identifying the portions that discussed party policies, electoral procedures, and female representation. Important words, phrases, and policies of gender quotas were highlighted and color-coded. The content analysis sought to determine whether party rhetoric and actions were consistent, whether explicit references to gender quotas were present or absent, and what terminology was used to characterize gender-related policies.

The researcher carried out a comprehensive examination to evaluate the appropriateness, reliability, and adequacy of the documents examined before using secondary data. The documents' reliability was assessed by looking at several important factors, including (a) identifying the data collectors; (b) identifying the sources from which the data were obtained; (c) evaluating whether appropriate methods were used in data collection; (d) considering the period of data collection; (e) examining potential biases of the data compiler; and (f) evaluating the desired level of accuracy and whether it was achieved.

Apart from reliability, the researcher carefully examined the data's suitability by verifying that the details were relevant to the study under review. This required closely examining the definitions of important terms as well as the collecting units

that were employed in the initial data collection procedure. The data were considered inappropriate and removed from the study if differences were discovered between the definitions or units used in the initial data collection and the current study's objectives.

Another important consideration in the analysis was the adequacy of the data. The researcher evaluated whether the level of accuracy attained in the initial data was adequate for the current study. Only once it was established that the existing data were acceptable, appropriate, and suitable for answering the research questions were they included in the study. This meticulous procedure made sure that the secondary data utilized in the study supported the main objectives of the research and made a relevant contribution to the analysis.

The documents were not just information extracted; they were also analyzed in light of the intended objectives of the study. For example, while examining party manifestos, the emphasis was on the establishment of gender quotas—as an intention, a pledge, or an afterthought—and the implications this suggested for the party's sincere intent in promoting gender equality. Similar to this, internal records, such as meeting minutes, were examined to comprehend the internal dynamics and conversations surrounding gender issues, as well as any opposition or support from party members.

The primary data gathered from focus groups and interviews were combined with the understandings obtained from the document review. By contrasting official party

stances and documented activities with the views and experiences of grassroots political players, this thorough methodology allowed for a clearer understanding of the chances for implementing gender quotas in Ghanaian political parties. A basic grasp of the current policy, the background, and the public conversation regarding gender quotas within the NDC and NPP was given by the document review. It also exposed differences between party documentation and members' actual lives, which were examined further using additional data-gathering techniques. These results had a significant influence on the study's overall analysis and suggestions.

3.10 Data Collection Procedure

Based on the research questions and a thorough analysis of relevant literature, the interview guides, focus group discussion protocols, and document review checklists for this study were meticulously developed. Every question was written in English to take into account the participants' varying levels of knowledge. Even though the survey instruments were written in English during the data-collecting phase, researchers occasionally used local Ghanaian languages to provide participants with more explanations or to help them understand complicated issues. When participants' comprehension of the questions was compromised by language hurdles, an interpreter was brought in to help with successful communication.

The researcher was able to collect high-quality data, reduce misinterpretations, and guarantee that participant replies accurately reflected their experiences and viewpoints owing to this flexible approach. To make sure these tools would work for a larger group of participants, a small sample of participants participated in a trial

phase before they were fully implemented. Improved reliability and understandability of the questions was the goal of the pilot testing, which would have a big impact on the validity and dependability of the study's conclusions.

Participants in the pilot study were made aware that the researcher was less concerned with their precise answers and more interested in how they responded to the questions and response alternatives. Participants were invited to draw attention to any ambiguities or confusing passages in the questions or answer choices, as well as to point out any material that seemed to be missing or repeated. The pilot test conversations lasted for between 20 and 30 minutes. Following that, the input from the participants was carefully examined, and a quick analysis was done. Before they were distributed to the entire sample of participants, any problematic questions were identified and the required adjustments were made to the interview guide, focus group discussion protocols, and document review checklists.

The inability of certain respondents to comprehend specific questions was one of the main problems found throughout the pilot study, which made it difficult to gather pertinent data. To remedy this, the instruments were updated with clearer questions that were easier for participants to understand. To enable reliable data collection, the instruments were replicated and given to each participant after these adjustments.

The researcher meticulously planned the four groups of seven participants each—two groups for the NDC and NPP—to guarantee meaningful conversation during the focus group discussions. The most professional protocols for research were followed in conducting these talks, and care was taken to create a welcoming atmosphere where participants felt free to voice their opinions. Similar refinements were made to

the document evaluation checklist, which now emphasizes the documents' appropriateness, sufficiency, and reliability. This required making sure the documents supplied correct and pertinent data and were suitably linked with the objectives of the study.

To optimize the caliber of answers and the return rate, the researcher worked with participants to schedule convenient times for focus groups and interviews. To ensure the integrity and correctness of the data acquired for the study, all information was cross-checked for mistakes after data collection before moving on to data entry and analysis.

3.11 Data Analysis

According to Alem (2020), data analysis is the act of interpreting gathered data to produce accurate and trustworthy conclusions. The data analysis for the study that examined Ghanaian political parties' prospects of implementing an electoral gender quota system required an exhaustive review of the primary and secondary data that was gathered during the study. This analysis followed a concurrent procedure, informing the conclusions with data from qualitative methodologies.

Qualitative data analysis commenced as soon as data collection started and went on for the duration of the study. Through the use of an iterative process, the researcher was able to assess information saturation and develop appropriate interview questions, resulting in a thorough and reliable compilation of data. The Gioia technique (Gioia, 2021), which aims to bring rigour to qualitative research, was utilized in this work for data analysis. The purpose of this methodology is to

represent and record the experiences of participants as well as the interpretations they make of them (Gioia et al., 2013). The Gioia technique is appropriate for political studies even though it is frequently linked to disciplines like entrepreneurship and international business. This is due to the methodology's emphasis on comprehending intricate social phenomena and people's subjective experiences, both of which are essential for examining the dynamics of gender representation in politics.

The present study's utilization of the Gioia approach is consistent with its research objective, which is to examine the prospects for implementing an electoral gender quota within political parties in Ghana. The concept offers a framework for comprehending the unique characteristics of grassroots political party actors' attitudes toward gender quotas by concentrating on their lived experiences. Though the methodology is primarily associated with corporate contexts, its emphasis on collecting the richness and depth of qualitative data makes it suitable for political research, where it is crucial to comprehend participant intentions and perspectives.

There were multiple crucial steps in the analysis process. To make sure the material was accurately recorded for analysis, the researcher first transcribed the data gathered from focus groups and interviews. After that, the data was coded to find recurring themes and trends about the adoption and application of electoral gender quotas. Because the coding procedure was iterative, the researcher was able to go back and adjust categories whenever fresh information from the data became apparent.

The advantage of this methodology is that it provides a strong framework for comprehending intricate social phenomena by methodically classifying qualitative

data into first-order concepts, second-order themes, and aggregate dimensions. In light of the political context of this study, wherein the interpretations of gender quotas by participants are crucial to the analysis, the Gioia methodology offers a methodologically sound and cross-disciplinary approach that is highly appropriate for the research under consideration. Moreover, the researcher actively participated in the data throughout the analysis phase, considering the consequences and meanings of the results. Being actively involved allows the researcher to be attentive to the details and context of the participants' experiences, which is a distinguishing feature of qualitative research. The researcher was able to provide a cogent story that captured every aspect of the participants' perspectives on gender quotas by utilizing the Gioia technique. This helped to advance comprehension of the possibilities and challenges related to the implementation of gender quotas in Ghanaian political parties.

In addition to addressing the research questions, the thorough application of the Gioia technique to the analysis of the qualitative data in this study offered insightful information about the viewpoints and experiences of grassroots political party actors about electoral gender quotas. This method improved the research's overall validity and reliability by ensuring that the conclusions were based on the experiences of the participants.

3.11.1 Analysis Phase 1: First-order category Coding

Recording and editing the transcripts, which serve as the foundation for the qualitative study, was a necessary step before undertaking the analysis. A description

of the interviewing process, including how it was done, recorded, and transcribed, may be found in Sections 3.9 and 3.10. It is unconventional to split interviews and analyses because they usually go jointly, according to several scholars who have studied qualitative research (Langley, 1999; Locke & Golden-Biddle, 1997). Thus, what Strauss and Corbin (1998) called "open coding" occurred early in the research process when many participant terms, codes, and categories emerged during the data collection procedure. This led to a large number of subcategories at the beginning of the analysis because the researcher purposefully followed participants' phrases exactly during this coding phase and needed to make more of an attempt to narrow them down.

During the open coding phase of this study, the researcher purposefully used the phrases provided by the respondents without trying to narrow the groups down. After 30 in-person interviews and 4 focus group discussions, this approach produced roughly 370 categories. The researcher might have felt lost and adrift, unsure of how to make sense of the seemingly diverse data, because of the overwhelming number of initial codes and the overwhelming amount of data that at first seemed to make little sense. But it's best to go lost before figuring things out, as Gioia, Corley and Hamilton (2013) suggested. After that, every original code was copied into an Excel document. Using the open coding principle and continuously contrasting the original codes with the extracts, 75 first-order categories were identified. This was achieved by grouping codes and giving each one a label.

The enormous amount of data was sorted into manageable categories by the researcher through open coding and continuous comparison, setting the stage for

additional analysis employing the Gioia technique. The researcher made sure that the first-order category remained based on the experiences and perspectives of the participants by closely following the phrases used by participants and classifying comparable codes. This increased the reliability and credibility of the findings.

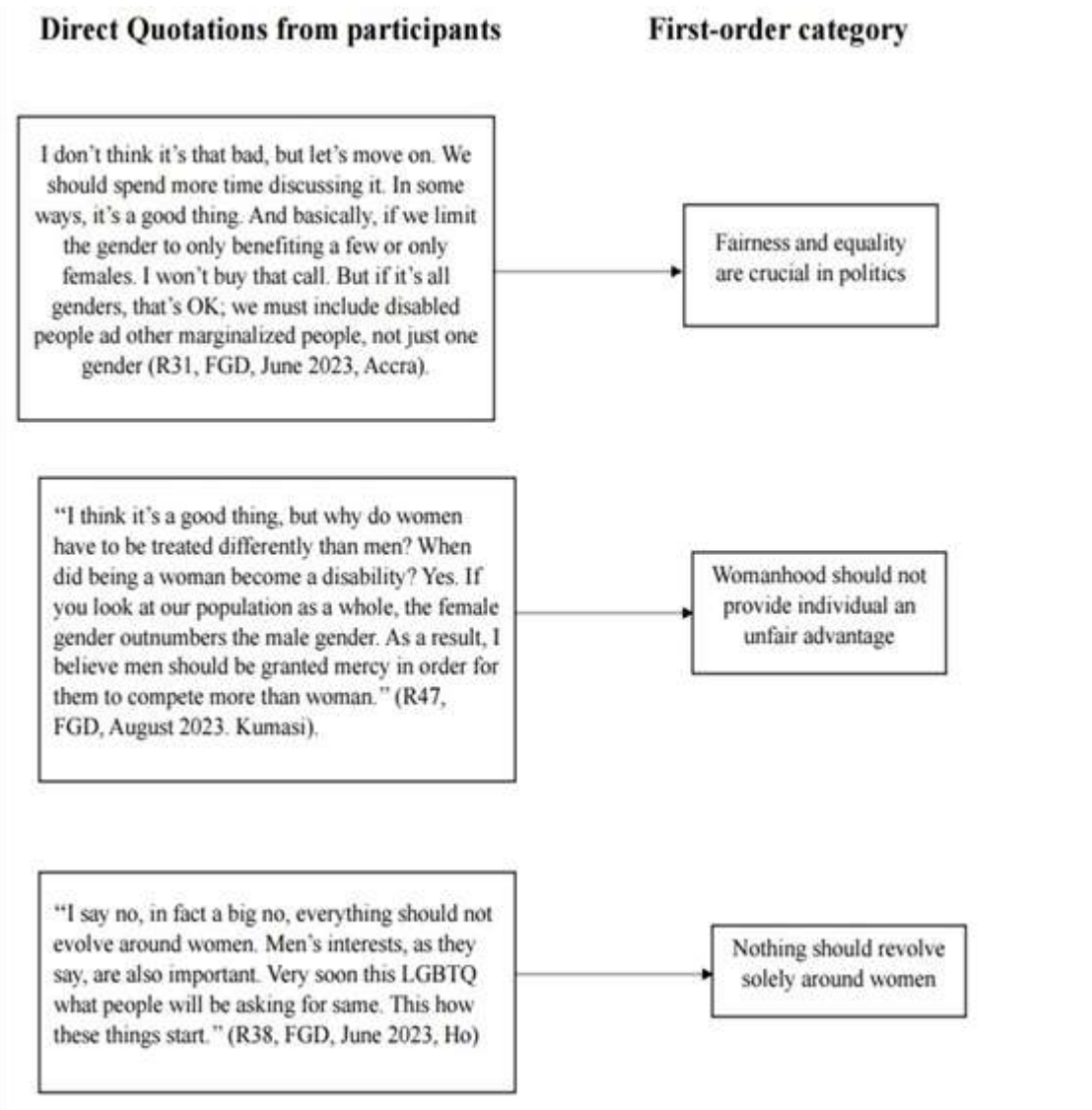


Figure 3.2: Example of First-order Category Development

Source: Field Data (2023).

3.11.2 Analysis Phase 2: Second-order theme Coding

The researcher concentrated on finding commonalities and contrasts between the many categories that surfaced during the first-order category coding phase of the analysis as it moved on to the second stage. This method is consistent with the axial coding stage put out by Strauss and Corbin (1990), in which linked concepts are grouped to create fewer categories that may be labelled or expressed in a few words, phrases, or sentences.

In order to make this process easier, the researcher showed the list of first-order categories with their corresponding codes using pivot tables in Excel. Second-order themes could be established and additional analysis made possible by this visual depiction. Axial coding was used in a manual analysis of the first-order category collection to examine the connections between the concepts. It was important for the researcher to consider the idea of oneself as a "knowledgeable agent" at this phase so that they might reflect on the question, "What's going on here?" Understanding the facts on several levels requires this self-inquiry (Gioia et al., 2013; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

The researcher used this procedure to extract 14 second-order themes from the data. These themes evolved through an iterative process of interaction with the ontological perspective, the theoretical framework, and the governing research phenomena. As the researcher attempted to make sense of the incidents, observations, and dispositions that characterize and explain the phenomena under examination, this step is firmly based on the theoretical framework of the research inquiry (Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2013).

The researcher was able to condense complex qualitative information into logical themes that represent the perspectives of grassroots political party actors regarding the implementation of electoral gender quotas in Ghanaian political parties by methodically analysing the data using first- and second-order coding. The findings were made more credible by this thorough analytical procedure, which also gave rise to a clearer comprehension of both possibilities and challenges related to gender representation in Ghanaian politics.

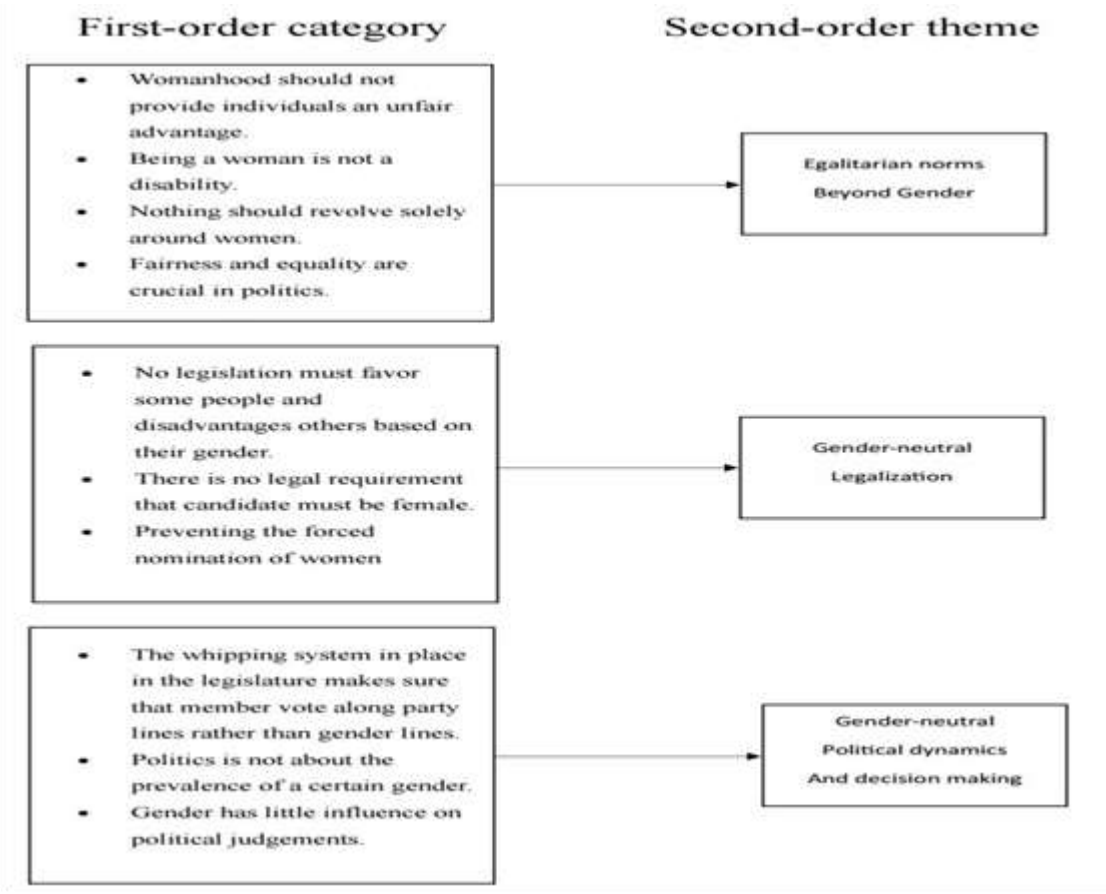


Figure 3.3: Example of Second-order theme Coding

Source: Field Data (2023).

3.11.3 Analysis Phase 3: Aggregated Dimensions

This study carefully adhered to the Gioia approach in the data analysis process, which examined the potential for introducing an electoral gender quota system in Ghanaian political parties. The researcher used open coding to discover the first-order categories and associated analysis to construct the second-order themes. These themes were then further refined and converged upon to create aggregated dimensions.

The aggregated dimensions offer a comprehensive perspective of the results and indicate that they will address the study topics. These dimensions, as proposed by Langley and Abdallah (2011), function as central categories that condense the components of the developing theoretical model. A higher-level abstraction of the data was provided by the researcher while preserving the richness of the qualitative data by distilling the second-order themes into more succinct aggregated dimensions. Presenting the data structure, which graphically depicts the aggregated dimensions, second-order themes, and first-order concepts, is the last phase in the Gioia approach. This approach provides an auditable record of decisions taken during the study, illuminating the method by which the researcher deduced meaning from the data. Since it shows the clear path from unprocessed data to theoretical conclusions, the data structure is a crucial requirement for proving the rigour of qualitative data analysis.

The data analysis processes that were meticulously followed based on the Gioia technique and the corresponding recommendations for its execution are summarized in Figure 3.4 of the study (Gioia et al., 2013). The researcher made sure that the

study remained grounded in the data while permitting the creation of theoretical conceptions by following this systematic methodology. The resulting data structure offers a clear and rigorous framework for presenting qualitative findings, which is a significant contribution of the Gioia methodology.

After the data analysis process, the aggregated dimensions provide a thorough picture of the potential for enacting gender quotas in elections among Ghanaian political parties. To answer the research questions and create a theoretical model based on the responses and perspectives of the participants, these dimensions effectively capture the major themes and patterns that surfaced from the focus groups, document reviews, and interviews.

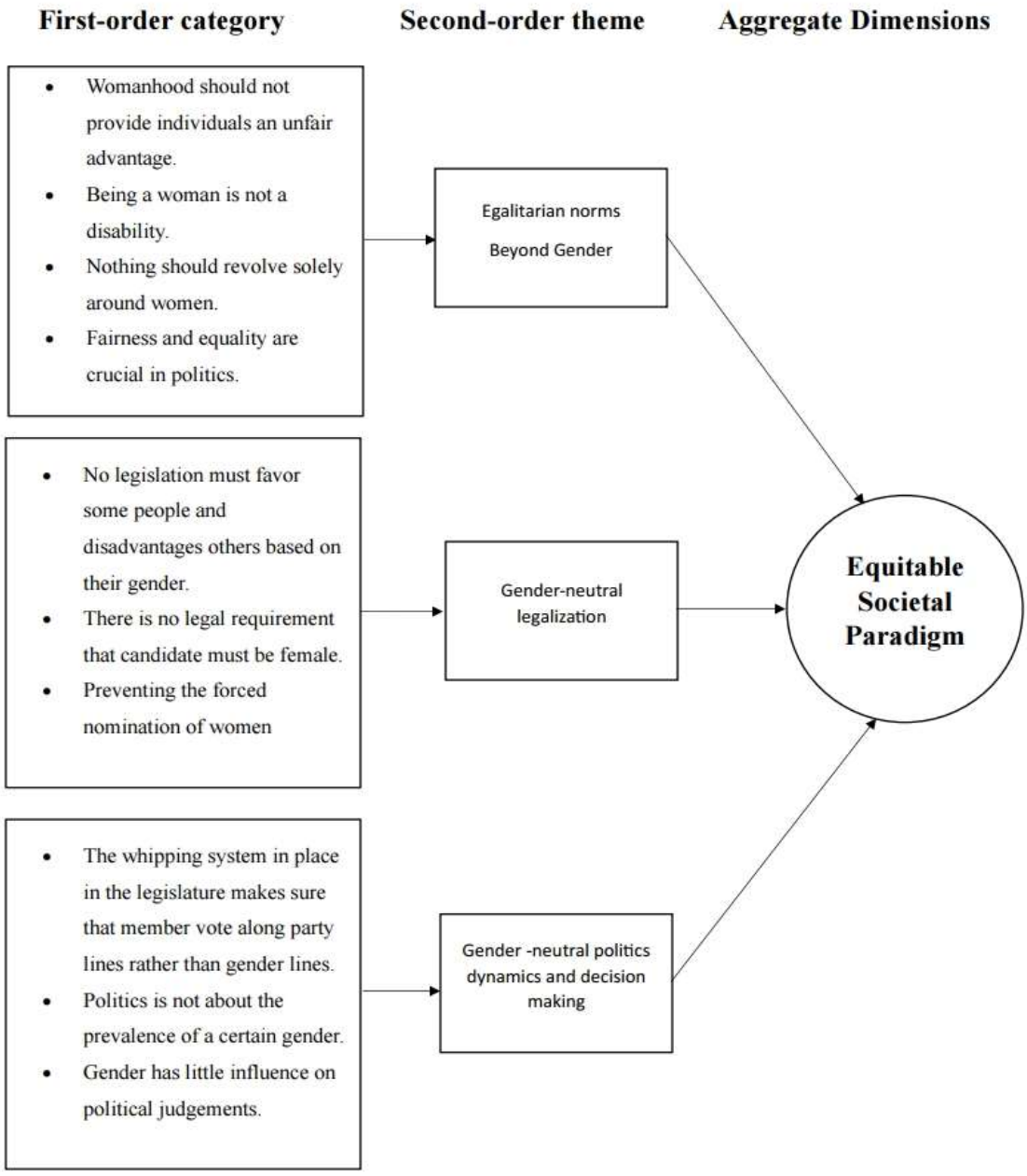


Figure 3.4: Example of Aggregate Dimension Coding

Source: Field Data (2023).

3.12 Validity and Reliability

Throughout the entire research procedure, ensuring the study's validity and reliability was the main priority. The researcher used several techniques to guarantee the reliability and accuracy of the data generated. First off, the validity of the results was increased by employing a triangulation technique that included semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and document reviews. The study's use of a variety of data collection techniques allowed it to cross-verify data from numerous sources, which decreased the possibility of bias and increased the reliability of the findings.

The researcher used audio recording devices to capture the participants' comments verbatim during the focus group discussions and interviews. By eliminating the possibility of misunderstandings or imprecise note-taking, this method made sure that the data appropriately represented the viewpoints of the participants. By using audio recordings, the researcher was also able to pay closer attention to the conversation's flow and interact with the participants on a more profound level without getting sidetracked by writing a lot of notes.

Another significant concern was avoiding subjectivity and bias. The researcher ensured that the questions were posed impartially, permitting participants to freely share their opinions without pressuring them to provide a specific response. To further minimize the possibility of the researcher's subjective impact, the data was meticulously arranged and interpreted during the analysis phase using the Gioia technique. By emphasizing the participants' own words and viewpoints, this approach improves the findings' objectiveness and credibility.

Additionally, measures for participant validation were introduced to enhance the study's reliability. Participants had the chance to examine and verify their recorded remarks following the interviews and focus group discussions. By using a procedure called "member checking," it was possible to make sure that the responses from them were accurately interpreted and represented their genuine intentions. The study guaranteed that the results accurately reflected the opinions of the participants and strengthened the data's reliability by incorporating the participants in the validation process.

By using a focus group discussion procedure and a standardized interview guide, the study's reliability was significantly increased. By ensuring uniformity between focus groups and interviews, these instruments made it possible to make insightful comparisons and spot trends and themes. Furthermore, the researcher upheld comprehensive documentation of the data gathering and processing procedures, generating an audit trail that bolstered the study's transparency and reproducibility.

In qualitative research, the Gioia approach is recognized for its transparency and rigour, which is why it was used for data analysis. Through the methodical procedures of open coding, axial coding, and the formulation of first-order concepts, second-order themes, and aggregated dimensions, the researcher ensured that the conclusions were firmly based on the data and appropriately reflected the perspectives of the participants. One of the main components of the Gioia technique is the visual depiction of the data structure, which offers an auditable trail of the choices the researcher made during the study. The research was able to uphold strict criteria for validity and precision by using triangulation, reliable recording

equipment, objective questioning, rigorous data analysis, and participant validation. All of these metrics worked together to make the research findings more reliable and gave the conclusions a strong basis.

3.13 Ethical Issues and Consideration

Throughout every phase of the research process, from the planning stages through the publication of findings, ethical issues are of utmost importance (Creswell, 2013). Cooper and Schindler (2014) contend that there is no single, universally applicable approach to research ethics. Nevertheless, it is expected of researchers to act ethically at all times while conducting their studies. The researcher deliberately attempted to strictly abide by accepted ethical standards for qualitative research in this study. The ethical considerations that structured the study are further discussed in this section.

Procedural ethics and ethics in practice, the two main ethical issues that pertain to qualitative researchers, were thoughtfully addressed by the researcher (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). Ethics in practice, also known as micro ethics, relates to the everyday ethical issues that arise during the course of the study and is an essential component in determining how acceptably a study is perceived in its entirety. Ethics in practice is a crucial component of research ethics as dilemmas regarding ethics frequently arise in the field, as reported by Guillemin and Gillam (2004).

According to Nii Laryeafio and Ogbewe (2023), the major ethical issues in conducting research are informed consent, beneficence, respect for anonymity and confidentiality as well as respect for privacy. Carefully attending to ethical issues,

the researcher commenced the procedure by obtaining a Research Clearance letter from The Open University of Tanzania (see Appendix 2). Following that, this official approval was given to the NDC and NPP headquarters, obtaining authorization to carry out field research within their congress and conference grounds. Before engaging with delegates of either party, the researcher meticulously obtained explicit consent to record all conversations.

The researcher made sure that participants understood the objective of the study and their part in it during the data collection phase. Participants were made aware that the study was entirely voluntary and that they might leave at any time without facing any repercussions. In addition, the researcher received approval to record the focus group discussions and interviews on audio, promising the participants that the recordings would be kept private and used only for study.

The researcher employed pseudonyms and deleted any identifying information from the research reports and transcripts in order to preserve the participants' privacy and anonymity. Only the researcher and the study team had access to the securely kept data. Additionally, the researcher made sure that the participants were not subjected to undue stress or injury as a result of the research questions and prompts.

To make sure that the participants' opinions were fairly represented, the researcher asked the participants for feedback after completing the data collection and analysis. Before including any direct quotes from participants in the research reports, the researcher additionally got their consent. After the study was over, the researcher

committed to making the research findings available to the participants and the general public.

Throughout the entirety of the research process, the researcher upheld the highest standards of honesty, ethics, and transparency. The researcher declared all funding sources and institutional affiliations, as well as any potential conflicts of interest. Additionally, the researcher complied with the codes of conduct and ethical standards set forth by The Open University of Tanzania. Prioritizing ethical issues prioritized the researcher in ensuring that the research process was performed in a manner that protected the participants' rights, dignity, and well-being before, during, and after the study. This dedication to moral research procedures enhanced the overall caliber and reliability of the study's conclusions.

3.14 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the research approach used in this study is explained in extensive detail. The research design, phenomenological design, is first described. The population of interest for the research is explored in depth in this chapter along with the method for gathering data, such as interviews. It also emphasizes the ethical issues that influenced the study process and discusses the data analysis techniques used to achieve the objectives of the study. Additionally, this chapter acts as a transition to Chapter Four by guiding how that chapter needs to be approached and executed.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the analyses of the qualitative field data gathered from grassroots political actors in Ghanaian political parties. The study's main findings are organized according to the three main research questions and further divided into themes that emerged from the analyses of field interviews and focus groups discussions (FGD) aiming to answer the following research questions: i) How do grassroots (ordinary) political actors within Ghanaian political parties perceive the concept of electoral gender quotas? ii) What specific factors do political actors at the grassroots level believe are necessary for electoral gender quotas to be implemented successfully within their parties? iii) What elements should be included in a framework for an acceptable electoral gender quota system tailored for Ghanaian political parties?

The study's data analysis, which employed the Gioia approach, revealed three key themes that emerged from the data, which represented the grassroots viewpoint on female representation in politics. These findings were presented about the findings from the primary data, the theoretical underpinnings, the empirical evidence from the literature review, as well as some demographic information of the participants that were deemed pertinent to the study, even though these demographics were not used in the inferences and conclusions of this study.

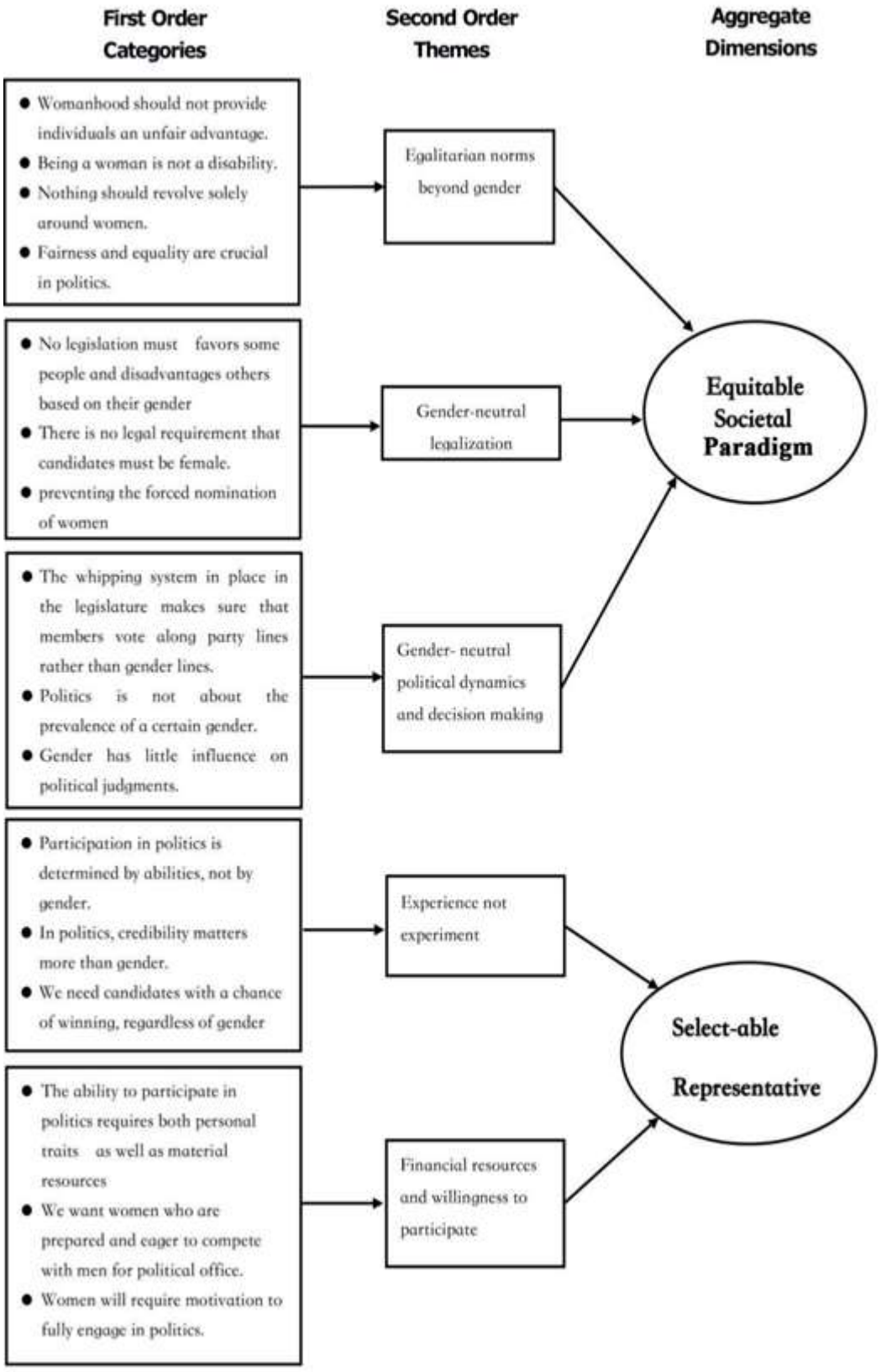
4.2 Grassroots Perceptions of Electoral Gender Quotas

The first objective of the study was to assess the perception of electoral gender quotas among grassroots (ordinary) political actors within Ghanaian political parties. In line with this objective, the following research question was asked:

How do grassroots (ordinary) political actors within Ghanaian political parties perceive the concept of electoral gender quotas?

This study conducted comprehensive interviews with 30 grassroots political party members, defined as delegates, from the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP), to capture their perspectives on the concept of electoral gender quotas within Ghanaian political parties. There were 15 participants from each party in the sample. Additionally, 4 focus group discussions (FGDs) were arranged with 2 groups from each party in addition to the interviews. Seven participants participated in each session, for a total of 28 discussants in all.

The objective of these discussions was to assist participants in gaining a better understanding of the dynamics and shared perspectives within the parties on the prospect of the electoral gender quotas with their political parties. A summary of the interview participants and FGD discussants is presented in Tables 3.2 and 3.3, respectively.


First Order Categories
Second Order Themes
Aggregate Dimensions
Womanhood should not provide individuals an unfair advantage.
Being a woman is not a disability.
Nothing should revolve solely around women.
Fairness and equality are crucial in politics.
Egalitarian norms beyond gender
No legislation must favors some people and disadvantages others based on their gender
There is no legal requirement that candidates must be female.
preventing the forced nomination of women
Gender-neutral legalization
Equitable Societal Paradigm
The whipping system in place in the legislature makes sure that members vote along party lines rather than gender lines.
Politics is not about the prevalence of a certain gender.
Gender has little influence on political judgments.
Gender- neutral political dynamics and decision making
Participation in politics is determined by abilities, not by gender.
In politics, credibility matters more than gender.
We need candidates with a chance of winning, regardless of gender
Experience not experiment
Select-able Representative
The ability to participate in politics requires both personal traits as well as material resources
We want women who are prepared and eager to compete with men for political office.
Women will require motivation to fully engage in politics.
Financial resources and willingness to participate

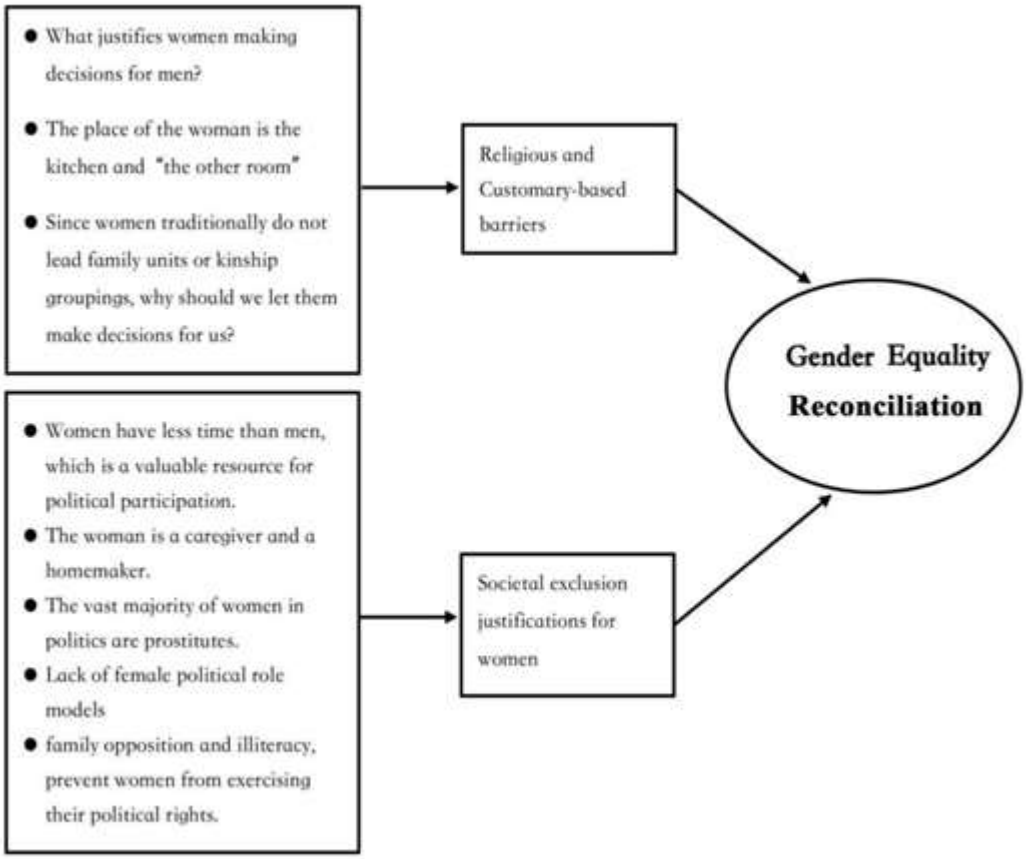


Figure 4.1: Data Structure on Grassroots Delegates Perception of Electoral Gender Quotas

Source: Field Data (2023).

Figure 4.1 depicts grassroots actors' responses to their perception of electoral gender quotas within Ghanaian political parties. As stated in the previous chapter, the first-order categories are the culmination of an open coding process in which the interviewees' responses were carefully analysed and summarized using short descriptions to represent the implications of different components of the participants' responses. First-order categories that were observed to conceptually overlap were subsequently grouped to create second-order themes. The seven second-order themes

that resulted from the interview and FGD data analysis are organized into three aggregate dimensions including Equitable societal paradigm, Select-able Representative and Gender equality reconciliation. These aggregate dimensions demonstrate the complexities of perceptions and ideological stands on the electoral gender quotas system by party grassroots.

4.2.1 Equitable Societal Paradigm

According to the research findings, electoral gender quotas are seen by grassroots political actors in Ghanaian political parties as an unfair way to advance gender equality and for that reason opposed it. Participants stressed that electorate gender quotas would be unconstitutional and result in the selection of unsuitable candidates.

According to the findings, participants also seem to think that enacting electoral gender quotas will not advance gender equality instead it will cause additional problems. The participants underscored that addressing the intricate problems of gender inequality requires a more nuanced strategy.

Overall, the findings imply that grassroots political actors in Ghanaian political parties oppose electoral gender quotas and perceive they are an oversimplified fix for a complex problem. The following themes emerged from the perceptive of participants on the issue of equitable societal paradigm; egalitarian norms beyond gender, gender-neutral legalization, and gender-neutral political dynamics and decision-making.

4.2.1.1 Egalitarian Norms beyond Gender

Egalitarian norms beyond gender are one of the second-order themes that arose from participant replies. This subject emphasizes the notion that egalitarian standards ought to cover all facets of social inequality in addition to gender. Participants stressed that electoral gender quotas would just exacerbate existing difficulties rather than address the larger challenges of socioeconomic inequality. One participant noted:

> *I believe the strategy is objective, but as I previously stated, execution remains the challenge. If we are to implement it, it must be done correctly. The foundation, the building blocks, and the approach to the final stage must all be solid; otherwise, the entire structure will eventually collapse. We must return to the fundamentals—mentoring, nurturing, educating, and enlightening individuals—so they develop a genuine appreciation for the electoral process. When they understand the 'what' and 'why' behind it, they will be motivated to compete, potentially making the quota system unnecessary. No, we are not there yet, and for that reason, I will not support its implementation in my party* (Interviewee R5, July 2023, Takoradi).

Other participants interviewed agreed and stated that they perceived electoral gender quota as an effective approach for increasing women's participation and election to the legislative house, but were opposed to its implementation within their political party at the moment, others during the FGD made the following statements:

> *I don't think the idea is entirely bad, but we need to have a more extensive discussion. In some ways, it has its benefits. However, if the system is designed to favour only one gender, particularly females, I would not support it. If it applies to all genders, including persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups, then it would be more acceptable* (R31, FGD, June 2023, Accra).

> *Why should being a woman grant someone an unfair advantage? There are already women in parliament, how did they get there?*

> *Didn't some of them defeat men? This discussion should not be about gender but rather about policies and competence. If we go down this path, what's next? Will we soon argue that women should pay less in stores just because they are women? Being a woman is not a disadvantage* (R51, August 2023, Kumasi).

> *I say no, in fact, a big no. Everything should not always revolve around women. Men's interests are just as important. If we continue down this path, what stops other groups, like the LGBTQ community, from making similar demands? This is how these things start. When did being a woman become a disability?* (R38, FGD, June 2023, Ho).

"Egalitarian norms beyond gender" is viewed by grassroots as an egalitarian perspective that goes beyond the emphasis on gender-specific remedies like quotas. They contend that the foundation of genuine equality ought to be found in the more general social standards that uphold justice and fairness for all persons, regardless of gender. This viewpoint highlights how crucial it is to have an inclusive atmosphere that gives everyone the same opportunity to engage in democratic processes, regardless of their heritage, identity, or circumstances.

4.2.1.2 Gender-Neutral Legalization

The term gender-neutral legalization pertains to the implementation of inclusive and objective laws, rules, and regulations that seek to eradicate discrimination based on gender identity or expression. Within the context of the study, opinions expressed by grassroots indicated a strong belief that electoral gender quotas had to be considered a question of democratic principles and justice rather than just something legal.

The findings indicate that grassroots actors, who have serious concerns about fairness in political representation, vehemently advocate inclusive and impartial laws and policies. Participants stressed that no gender should be disadvantaged or

benefited by the construction of legal systems. Rather, they contended that the law ought to be an instrument for advancing equality, guaranteeing that every person, irrespective of gender, has an equal chance to engage in the political arena. Many participants expressed a preference for legal systems that maintain fairness and impartiality and questioned the justification for implementing legal processes that would favour one gender over another, such as gender quotas.

Participants made the case that laws should promote equality rather than act as a means of upholding gender stereotypes. The political debate should centre on the qualifications and policies of candidates rather than their gender identity, as the sentiment "it should be about your policy, not about your gender" a participant in the FGD shouted. This participant's dissatisfaction with the political system, which included feeling that he had to "pay his way through for the position," also draws attention to the structural problems with party politics that can jeopardize the values of equality and justice. This incident serves as an example of the difficulties grassroots actors encounter when attempting to navigate a political environment that may not always be consistent with the principles of equity and gender neutrality. R50 believes the party had regulations that are impartial and offer everyone an equal opportunity to compete, and said the following:

> *Why should women be treated differently from men? No. Why? Why? In elections, both men and women are candidates, and women should not receive special treatment. There is no law, and there should not be one that excludes either men or women from political participation. Look, I had to wait twelve years to get to this position. The second time I contested, an undergraduate beat me by just three votes—but that was the law. Why wasn't there a law protecting older men from*

> *younger candidates? The rule of law is about fairness, and I don't see this quota system as fair at all (*R20, FGD, August 2023, Kumasi).

Another R51, stated that:

> *In my party, we have reduced filing fees for women and persons with disabilities. However, in my constituency, most if not all of the women who contested were wealthier than the men they ran against. Look, I am capable, I can do the MP's job and even exceed expectations, but where is the money? Meanwhile, our current MP, a woman from an affluent background with a wealthy husband, was asked to pay only half the fees I had to pay, simply because I am a man. Where is the justice in that? When a woman wins, she goes to parliament, does the same job as men, and receives the same salary. I do not support this electoral gender quota system, and I will not accept it. It is not a good policy and will create more problems for us* (R51, FGD, August 2023, Kumasi).

> *The legal system is gender-inclusive, ensuring that all individuals are treated equally, regardless of gender, with the same legal rights, obligations, and protections. How can such an argument even be advanced in a civilized political party like ours? I remember some people attempted to push this agenda in the past, but we stopped it. The law does not recognize gender, leadership is leadership, and the law must be applied equally. If anyone tries to introduce this in our party again, I will take legal action* (R51, FGD, August 2023, Koforidua).

The legalization of gender neutrality underscores the significance of instituting legal frameworks that advance equity and impartiality within the political sphere. Laws that truly reflect democratic values and do not reinforce gender inequalities are crucial, according to grassroots political actors. Participants participate in the conversation on how to create a more equitable society that promotes inclusivity and justice for all people by arguing for a political environment where merit and policy take precedence over gender identity.

4.2.1.3 Gender- Neutral Political Dynamics and Decision Making

The phrase gender-neutral political dynamics and decision-making pertains to the conduct of political procedures and the formulation of policy decisions in a way that does not exhibit partiality or prejudice towards any particular gender. It highlights how critical it is to create an atmosphere in which people of all genders receive equal treatment, have equal access to political discourse and government, and have their ideas heard and appreciated. In the end, this approach promotes greater participation and representation of all genders in politics by pushing for the implementation of policies that emphasize merit and competency above gender.

Participants emphasized that gender shouldn't be a deciding factor in political success and expressed a strong belief in the importance of expertise and qualifications in political participation. They envision an ideological setting in which people are assessed more based on their policies and abilities than their gender identity. The participants' emphasis on upholding established legislative procedures demonstrates how important they think accountability and transparency are when it comes to political decision-making. They contended that to maintain the integrity of political institutions, gender-neutral procedures are essential for making sure that choices are made on the basis of predetermined standards rather than arbitrary assessments affected by a person's gender. Some grassroots actors expressed their thoughts on this as follows:

> *I strongly oppose the gender quota system and will resist it at all costs. In parliament, members vote along party lines, not gender lines. Since the party's position takes precedence, why should one gender be given special significance?* (Interviewee R13, June 2023, Accra).

> *My friend, I believe in upholding democratic principles like fairness and non-discrimination. Introducing gender quotas could undermine these values by adding a discriminatory element. Focusing solely on gender oversimplifies human diversity factors like race, age, financial status, and disability also shape people's experiences. Personally, gender is not a major factor for me……Okay, it matters to some extent, but if we limit it to only women, I cannot support it. My past experiences with female politicians haven't convinced me otherwise. Besides, how much influence can a woman really have on a party's decisions? The constitution already guides our processes, so how does being a woman change anything?* (Interviewee R17, July 2023, Cape Coast).

Others who supported the above viewpoints underscored the importance of having diverse representation in the legislature. They contended however that, gender should only be seen as one aspect of diversity and should not be prioritized over other significant concerns, particularly the function of MPs in representing their political parties, constituency and promoting efficient and effective governance. Additionally, they argued that fostering a more equitable and accepting society requires embracing a comprehensive perspective on diversity that takes into account the convergence of multiple identities.

4.2.2 Select-able Representative

The expression "Select-able representative" usually describes an individual who is chosen or elected to represent a particular population, community, or institution following a selection or election process. The objective is to be able to choose or select a representative based on specific criteria, preferences, and even credentials. These representatives are regarded as qualified candidates, and the decision to choose one of them may be influenced by characteristics like expertise, loyalty to core principles, capacity for leadership, or other pertinent qualities. A select-able

representative is essentially someone who may be chosen or elected to carry out a specific position based on predetermined standards or preferences.

Most participants in the study indicated that they prefer individuals with strong experiences, appropriate qualifications, or specific expertise in a certain field. They believe these representatives have a greater ability to decide wisely and deal with difficult situations in the most effective way. Candidates with a track record of excellent leadership, community service, and parliamentary successes were preferred by these participants. The following are the themes that merged from the perceptive of participants on the issue Select-able representative; Experience not experiment, and Financial resources and willingness to participate.

4.2.2.1 Experience not Experiment

"Experience not experiment" highlights the idea that in certain situations in politics, it is preferable to rely on those with demonstrated expertise and practical understanding (experience) rather than trying unproven individuals. It emphasizes the importance of supporting individuals who have been tried and tested and are willing to learn from past successes and failures, strategies, and approaches, rather than trying fresh people with no prior experience in that sector.

The participants' emphasis on the value of choosing candidates with relevant experience over unproven or experimental candidates is emphasized by this theme. The notion held by grassroots actors is that more seasoned legislators are better suited to handle the intricacies of political decision-making and provide efficient governance. Participants voiced concerns about the potential risks of electing individuals without a track record, particularly women who could be brought in due

to gender quotas fulfilment. For these perceived quotas as not the best solution to solving the underrepresentation of women in the Ghanaian political space.

The findings of the study showed an alarming trend: almost 90% of the participants said that they did not take a candidate's gender into account when determining whether or not to nominate them. Rather, the majority of participants gave priority to the candidate's capacity to guarantee their party a seat. This finding implies that participants were more concerned with party loyalty and electoral success than they were with the gender of the candidate. Some participants made the following assertions:

> *Experience is not just an advantage in politics; it is essential. We need leaders who can effectively navigate the complexities of governance, not just individuals selected to meet a quota* (Interviewee R14, June 2023, Accra).

> *It can be risky to bring in individuals without a proven track record. During challenging times, we need leaders who have demonstrated their ability to take initiative and make sound decisions. It's not about giving women a chance simply because of their gender; it's about ensuring that those who represent us have the experience and skills to create real change in our communities* (R49, FGD, August 2023, Kumasi).

4.2.2.2 Financial Resources and Willingness to Participate

Acknowledging that a person has "financial resources and a sincere willingness to participate" suggests that the individual has both the financial means and a genuine eagerness to engage actively in a given project, which is frequently referred to in the context of politics, business, or community activities. This combination of characteristics can help a person contribute effectively and make a lasting contribution in their chosen field.

Financial capability and political motivation were shown to be two important criteria by the participants that affect which candidates they choose. A considerable majority of participants indicated that a candidate who has strong financial means and a sincere desire to engage in politics would have a higher chance of running a successful campaign, growing their support base, and developing deep connections with voters. Some participants said as follows:

> *The ability to participate in politics requires both personal qualities and financial resources. Elections in this country are very expensive, and rather than contributing financially, party supporters often expect money from the candidate. Therefore, as a party, we need someone who understands what it takes to run a successful election campaign* (R44, FGD, June 2023, Ho).

> *The only obstacle preventing me from becoming a member of parliament is money. Politics is a game of investment, spend today and gain tomorrow. Will the party fund these women you're referring to? If a woman has the financial means or knows how to fund her campaign, that's fine, but we prioritize financial capability over gender. We want women who are prepared and willing to compete with men, not just any women. Remember, this is a competition, and our opponents are watching too* (Interviewee R18, July 2023, Cape Coast).

4.2.3 Gender Equality Reconciliation

While a substantial portion of participants did not perceive electoral gender quotas as a negative concept, they did emphasize the necessity of a more sophisticated strategy to address the under-representation of women in Ghanaian politics. Citing the continued existence of patriarchal norms and practices that uphold gender-based disparities, a few participants voiced concerns about the ways in which women are marginalized and excluded from political processes. Affirmative action policies, including electoral gender quotas, are justified, according to these participants, since

structural and institutional impediments that have traditionally prevented women from entering the political sphere must be addressed. This viewpoint emphasizes the intricacy of the problem and the necessity of a multipronged strategy to advance gender equality in Ghanaian politics.

The process of creating a harmonious and balanced atmosphere favorable to gender equality in a community or particular context is known as gender equality reconciliation. It includes actions to address previous gender-based disparities, advance dialogue, and create an environment in which all genders are respected and afforded equal opportunities. A number of participants vehemently asserted that reducing disparities between genders and promoting gender equality in political representation requires the implementation of an electoral gender quota. They said that addressing historical and current gender disparities requires a holistic approach that promotes awareness and creates a parliament with practically equal representation for all genders. The themes that emerged from it included: Religious and customary-based barriers and Societal exclusion justifications for women.

4.2.3.1 Religious and Customary-Based Barriers

"Religious and customary-based barriers" encompass obstacles, limitations, or challenges resulting from established cultural norms and conventions as well as established religious beliefs and practices. These obstacles may restrict individual liberties, choices, and opportunities, particularly when dealing with societies where religious or cultural norms are strongly rooted. In essence, "religious and customary-based barriers" draw attention to the challenges encountered in navigating the

confluence of traditional cultural and religious beliefs with contemporary ideas of justice, equality, and human rights.

Religious and customary traditions were cited by many as major barriers preventing women from entering the political sphere. These obstacles frequently support established gender norms and restrict women's access to leadership positions. To establish an inclusive political environment that permits equitable representation, participants emphasized the necessity of challenging and transforming established conventions.

For some participants, gender inequality frequently intersects with religious and cultural barriers, which reinforce traditional gender roles and restrict female independence and participation in decision-making. It can also contribute to the stigmatization and exclusion of those who don't fit into a particular category, which can result in discrimination and social ostracism. As a result, some individuals were completely in favour of a gender quota and perceived it as “a saviour”, they had this to say:

> *For an array of noteworthy reasons, all of which are based on the values of equality, fairness, human rights, and social advancement, religious views should not be a barrier to women holding positions of leadership in society. Men and women have the fundamental right to gender equality. Denying women the same chances and privileges as men, and excluding women from leadership positions on the basis of religious beliefs perpetuates discrimination and injustice* (Interviewee R6, July 2023, Kumasi).

> *Everyone deserves respect and dignity, regardless of gender. Denying women leadership roles based on outdated customs and religious beliefs*

> *undermines their worth and potential. Leadership thrives on diverse perspectives, and excluding women risks biased and incomplete decisions. Interestingly, our own traditions acknowledge women's wisdom, when tough decisions arise, elders often say, 'Let's seek wisdom from the old lady' before excusing themselves. If we value that wisdom, why shouldn't women have a seat at the decision-making table?* (Interviewee R22, June 2023, Sunyani).

For some participants, establishing a balance between appreciating cultural history and making sure that customs don't interfere with people's rights and personal overall well-being is a common requirement for removing these barriers and others will not have it. They maintain that because we are products of our culture, anything that trivializes or interferes with it is foreign and should not be entertained. A participant had this to say:

> *Do you have a female family head where you're from? You don't attend church, right? You don't read the Bible, do you? Where were decisions made for men by women acceptable? In which culture, tell me, am also asking you? Our future is in danger because of these your book long stuffs* (Interviewee R23, June 2023, Sunyani).

Other participants also indicated:

> *My friend, I hope you understand that the kitchen and the other room are where women belong in the house. They ought to let us handle the politics. Men are our traditional decision-makers. An Akan adage holds that 'when a woman buys a gun, its place in a man's room.' Do I need to say anything else?* (R34, FGD, June 2023, Accra).

> *My religious and cultural traditions have not historically supported women in leadership roles, so I find it difficult to envision voting for a woman to lead me* (R49, FGD, August 2023, Kumasi).

4.2.3.2 Societal Exclusion Justifications for Women

The term "societal exclusion justifications for women" refers to arguments made within a society to support the marginalization or exclusion of women from

particular positions, opportunities, or domains of influence. These arguments support the persistence of gender-based inequality because they frequently result from deeply entrenched cultural conventions, prejudices, or discriminatory ideas. In certain countries, the exclusion of women from particular roles or activities is justified by cultural norms or historical practices. These defences could be founded on enduring traditions that have historically ascribed specific duties to men and others to women. These justifications were not lost on some participants and one made the following statement:

> *Time is a crucial resource in politics, and some argue that women have less of it due to household and childcare responsibilities. Many also believe that a lack of education and experience makes it difficult for women to take on leadership roles. In a fast-paced political environment, there is no time to babysit women* (Interviewee R25, July 2023, Takoradi).

Two participants who were dissatisfied with the absence of gender quota implementation in political parties in Ghana expressed their frustrations and argued that it is crucial to raise awareness of gender-related issues, confront stereotypes and biases, and promote a deeper appreciation of the value of equality and inclusivity. They had these to say;

> *I had to ask for my husbands' opinions before getting involved in politics just because I'm married woman, but he does whatever he wants without my permission. Since it is generally believed that women in politics must adopt a promiscuous lifestyle, every woman who speaks up is assumed to have ceded her body to men. I went to school like my husband and did well in virtually all of my examinations, but today I'm called a prostitute just because I'm involved in politics. The danger of violence combined with the weight of prejudice and stereotypes puts women in a difficult position and keeps them from actively participating in public and political decision-making. Women's participation in politics would*

> *surely increase with clear and decisive efforts taken to challenge these cultural norms, we need this quota thing* (R32, FGD, June 2023, Accra).

> *I feel that my husband and male colleagues envy me. I often hear comments suggesting that I am less capable or qualified than my male counterparts. Some even dismiss my contributions by focusing on my outfit rather than my insights. It pains me, my brother. These biases about women's qualifications and leadership abilities may be why women are underrepresented in politics. Traditional gender roles reinforce these prejudices, discouraging women from stepping into public life. This is something quotas can help address* (R53, FGD, August 2023, Kumasi).

4.3 Key Themes Emerging from Findings

The study's findings show that Ghanaian political parties' grassroots political actors perceive the concept of electoral gender quotas as a complicated and multidimensional problem. The data yielded three aggregate dimensions: Gender Equality Reconciliation, Select-able Representative, and Equitable Societal Paradigm. These dimensions offer a detailed insight into the participants' views toward electoral gender quotas.

The facet of the Equitable Societal Paradigm emphasizes how important meritocracy and justice are to the participants when choosing representatives. Nonetheless, the majority of participants thought that electoral gender quotas were unjust and against meritocracy. This indicates that Ghanaian grassroots political actors place a higher value on justice and equal opportunity than they do on affirmative action policies like gender quotas in elections.

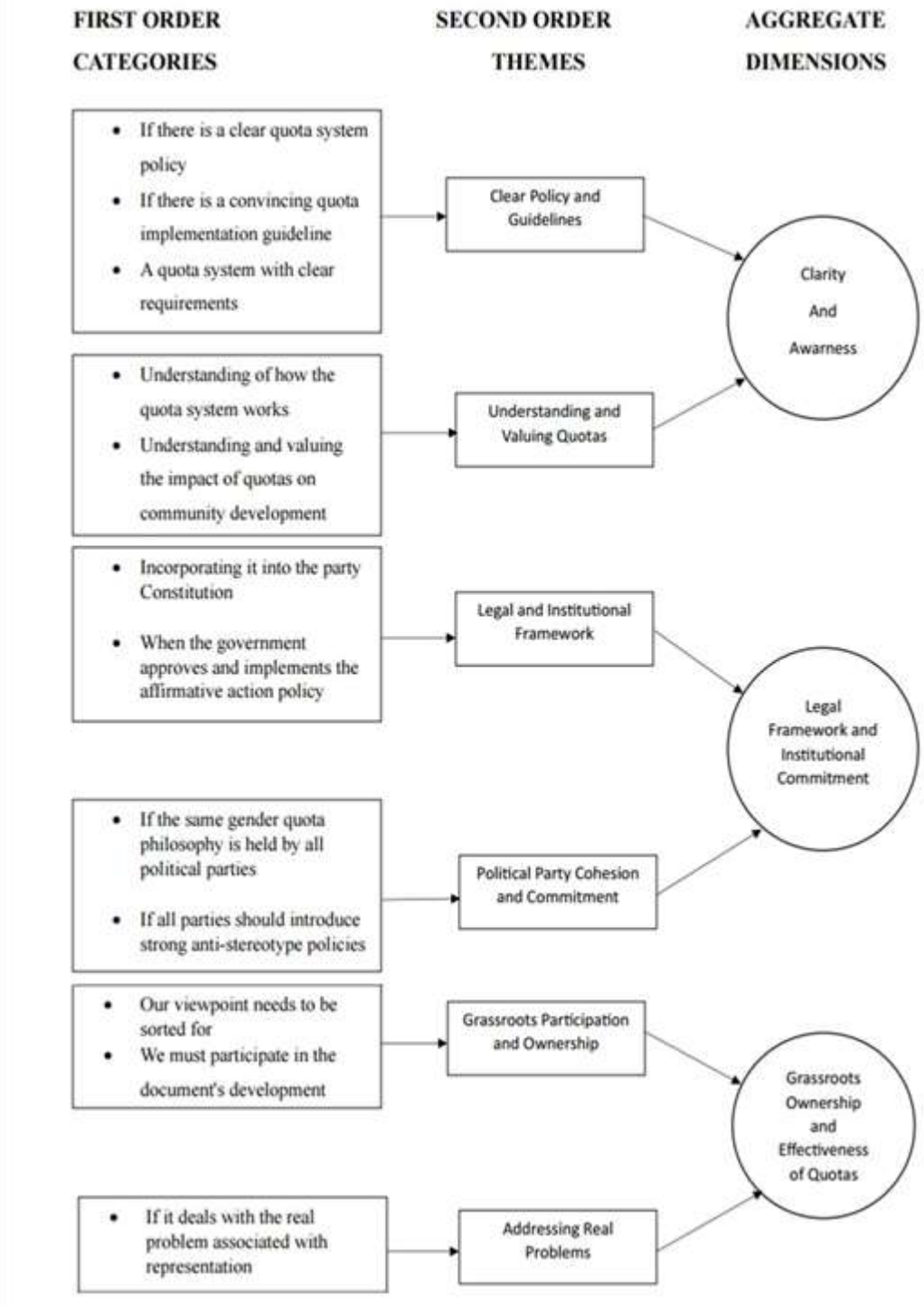
Participants value the choosing of representatives who are competent and able to carry out their duties, as shown by the Select-able Representative dimension.

Nevertheless, the majority of participants thought that electoral gender quotas would choose unsuitable candidates solely based on their gender. This indicates that qualifications and competence are given precedence by Ghanaian grassroots political actors above affirmative action policies like gender quotas in elections.

The Gender Equality Reconciliation factor underscores the participants' commitment to advancing gender equality and tackling the systematic and historical injustices that women have experienced. However, most participants thought that electoral gender quotas would not successfully address the underlying reasons for gender disparity, viewing them as an oversimplified answer to a complicated problem. This indicates that although grassroots political actors in Ghana are against affirmative action policies like election gender quotas, some nevertheless see the need to address gender inequality.

4.4 Grassroots Expectations for a Viable Electoral Gender Quotas in Ghana

The second objective of the study was to examine what grassroots political actors in Ghana considered as what might make electoral gender quotas feasible within political parties. Subsequent to the initial objective, which disclosed a widespread rejection of gender quotas among grassroots actors, the findings of this objective underscored some aggregate dimensions that would help quotas be accepted and implemented successfully. These dimensions include Clarity and Awareness, Legal Framework and Institutional Commitment, Grassroots Ownership and Effectiveness of Quotas and Skepticism and Challenges to Quotas. The findings with respect to the second study objective are organized according to the coding structure illustrated in Figure 4.2.


FIRST ORDER CATEGORIES
SECOND ORDER THEMES
AGGREGATE DIMENSIONS
If there is a clear quota system policy
If there is a convincing quota implementation guideline
A quota system with clear requirements
Clear Policy and Guidelines
Understanding of how the quota system works
Understanding and valuing the impact of quotas on community development
Understanding and Valuing Quotas
Clarity And Awarness
Incorporating it into the party Constitution
When the government approves and implements the affirmative action policy
Legal and Institutional Framework
If the same gender quota philosophy is held by all political parties
If all parties should introduce strong anti-stereotype policies
Political Party Cohesion and Commitment
Legal Framework and Institutional Commitment
Our viewpoint needs to be sorted for
We must participate in the document's development
Grassroots Participation and Ownership
If it deals with the real problem associated with representation
Addressing Real Problems
Grassroots Ownership and Effectiveness of Quotas

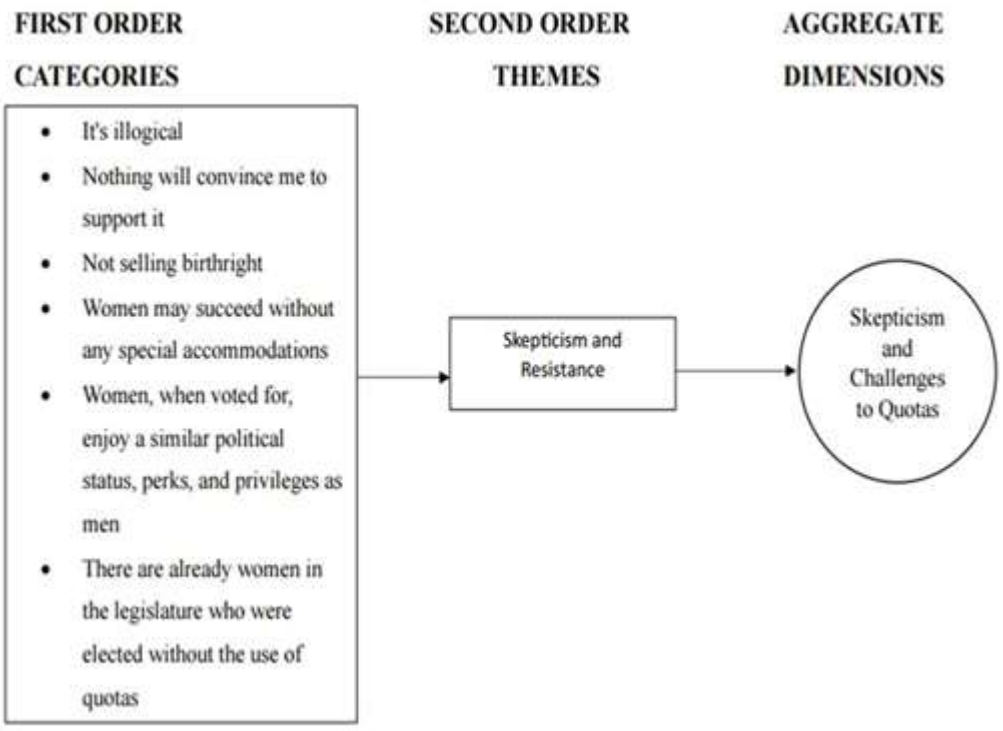


Figure 4.2: Coding Structure for a Viable Electoral Gender Quotas Among Grassroots Political Actors

Source: Field Data (2023)

4.4.1 Clarity and Awareness

The findings of the aggregate dimension of clarity and awareness underscore the vital significance of possessing unambiguous policies and rules, along with a profound comprehension and appreciation of the electoral gender quota system among Ghanaian grassroots political actors. Party members can better comprehend the objectives of the quota system when the conditions are clear, which can lessen resistance and ameliorate misunderstanding. Ensuring that the process is viewed as impartial and fair requires clear requirements, which offer a tangible framework that

directs the selection and support of candidates. Since it gives people confidence that the system is meant to be fair and merit-based rather than capricious or politically motivated, this degree of openness is essential for fostering trust among grassroots actors. This dimension includes the two second-order themes which are: clear policies and guidelines, and understanding and valuing quotas.

4.4.1.1 Clear Policy and Guidelines

Participants underscored that clear policies and guidelines are essential for the effective implementation of electoral gender quotas. Throughout the focus groups and interviews, there was a constant emphasis on the necessity for the quota system to be made clear. Those who were willing to support electoral gender quotas expressed a desire for a clear quota system policy, a convincing implementation guideline, and transparent quota system requirements. The following remarks were expressed by some of those interviewed:

> *I'll support it as long as there is a clear policy in place and it is applied equally. Having a policy is one thing, but implementing it is another* (Interviewee R2, May 2023, Accra).

> *If there is a clear quota system policy, it would give us the confidence to support it* (Interviewee R7, May 2023, Sunyani).

> *If there is a convincing quota implementation guideline, it will help us understand how to effectively apply these quotas in our party* (R44, FGD, June 2023, Ho).

4.4.1.2 Understanding and Valuing Quotas

Participants stressed how crucial it is to fully comprehend the workings of the quota system and acknowledge its possible influence on social growth, in addition to

having established policies. They emphasized that understanding the quota system thoroughly will assist dispel any misunderstandings or anxieties about its execution in addition to elucidating its intended objectives and workings. Developing a greater understanding of the issue is essential to win over grassroots political players to the idea of gender quotas by showing them how these policies could benefit local populations' overall social and economic development. Participants thought it would be simpler to encourage a sense of ownership and commitment to the policy by connecting the quota system to concrete benefits like improved representation and more equitable decision-making. This for them would increase the policy's acceptance and successful implementation at the grassroots level. A participant said:

> *We need to have a solid understanding of how the quota system works to appreciate its benefits* (Interviewee R11, August 2023, Koforidua).

This emphasizes the need for educational programs that educate political actors on the principles behind gender quotas and their desired results. Participants also stressed how critical it is to understand the wider effects of gender quotas. Some participants had this to say:

> *It is crucial to comprehend and value the impact of quotas on community development. We are more inclined to support something when we can understand how it will benefit our community* (Interviewee R17, July 2023, Cape Coast).
> *I am aware of it, but I'm not sure how it will function. Even though it appears to be so straightforward, the matter is actually very complicated. I have a degree, but I'm having trouble picturing how it will work, so please bear with me. More education will help* (Interviewee R22, June 2023, Sunyani).

Overall, the findings of the clarity and awareness study show that grassroots political actors in Ghana believe that the electoral gender quota system's successful implementation depends on having clear regulations, procedures, and a thorough grasp of it.

4.4.2 Legal Framework and Institutional Commitment

The establishment of a strong legal framework and institutional commitment are prerequisites for the successful implementation of electoral gender quotas among Ghanaian political parties. The legal and institutional framework and the coherence and commitment of political parties are two important second-order themes that are combined in this aggregate dimension. When taken as a whole, these themes highlight the need for a strong legislative framework and a cohesive political will in order to advance gender equality in political representation.

The study participants stressed the need for effective enforcement mechanisms to successfully implement regulations establishing gender quota requirements, as well as the importance of having clear policies outlining these criteria. For most of them, establishing trust and confidence among party members can be facilitated by a transparent legislative framework. This dimension is informed by two themes including: Legal and institutional framework and Political party cohesion and commitment.

4.4.2.1 Legal and Institutional Framework

Findings about the institutional and legal framework as a second-order theme show that the grassroots actors believe electoral gender quotas within political parties can

only be implemented with the support of strong institutional commitment and legal foundations. Specifically, Participants expressed the importance of government support through affirmative action programs and the inclusion of gender quotas in party constitutions. This they believed was necessary for the effective execution of gender quotas in elections.

One of the main conclusions drawn from the participants' observations is that gender quotas need to be specifically stated in political party constitutions in order to be effective. Not only would this formalize the commitment to gender equality, but it would also provide implementation a clear mandate. As one person put it:

> *For gender quotas to be sustainable, the party's constitution has to stipulate them. By including them as a crucial element of our political system, we can guarantee that gender equality is given top priority within the party at all levels* (Interviewee R29, June 2023, Accra).

Another person answered:

> *I will support the gender quota if party leadership includes it in the constitution. A political party's success depends on its ability to represent the diversity of its people. Implementing a gender quota is a concrete step toward breaking barriers and fostering a more inclusive party structure. I fully support this move, as it will strengthen our party and contribute to a fairer political landscape* (R46, FGD, August 2023, Kumasi).

The notion that affirmative action regulations and government approval are necessary to reinforce gender quota implementation is another noteworthy inference. Participants suggested that these kinds of legislation would give political parties the legal support they need to enact and successfully enforce gender quotas. Some persons said that:

> *I'll support it if there is a clear policy in place and it is applied equally. Having a policy is one thing, but implementing it is another* (Interviewee R2, May 2023, Accra).
> *If there is a convincing quota implementation guideline, it will help us understand how to effectively apply these quotas in our party* (R44, FGD, June 2023, Ho).

The notion that affirmative action regulations and government approval are necessary to reinforce gender quota implementation is another noteworthy inference. A participant suggested that these kinds of legislation would give political parties the legal support they need to enact and successfully enforce gender quotas and stated that:

> *The government's adoption and enforcement of affirmative action will greatly support the implementation of gender quotas, providing parties with the necessary legal backing to enforce them effectively* (Interviewee R13, June 2023, Accra).

4.4.2.2 Political Party Cohesion and Commitment

In order for a political party to function well, pursue its objectives, and consistently carry out policies, its members and factions must be united and supportive of one another. This is known as political party cohesion. A political party is said to be cohesive when all of its members, from the top down to the lowest, have the same goals, support the same policies, and collaborate to achieve them.

The findings about the second-order theme of political party cohesion and commitment show that grassroots political actors in Ghana believe that the effective implementation of electoral gender quotas depends on political parties' unity and shared commitment. The necessity for a common gender quota ideology and the implementation of stringent anti-stereotype measures across all political parties.

A significant insight from the participants is that they all felt that political parties needed to embrace a similar gender representation stance for gender quotas to work. This mutual commitment is thought to be essential for fostering a stable political climate that can back the imposition of quotas. A participant noted:

> *If there were a level playing field where all political parties adhered to the same gender quota policy, it would be more effective. To make this work, all sides must be united. You know, we are in politics to win, and our rivals are watching just as much as we are. The goal is victory, so if we promote a woman to meet the gender quota while others don't, it could backfire. But if it becomes a collective effort and everyone agrees it's the best course of action, then I'll accept it. I mean, I'm a woman, and who knows? I might use that to my advantage* (R24, FGD, July 2023, Takoradi).

The significance of political parties cooperating to create a welcoming environment where gender quotas are not seen as a divisive issue but rather as a shared objective is highlighted by this statement. In order to overcome the systemic and historical obstacles that have prevented women from participating in politics in Ghana, a coordinated strategy is essential. Along with a shared perspective, participants emphasized how important it is that political parties implement robust anti-stereotype schemes. The social conventions and prejudices that support gender inequality in politics must be challenged, and this requires these policies. A participant made the following observation:

> *There should be strict anti-stereotype policies in all parties. We must actively challenge the myth that politics is a man's domain if we want more women in leadership. And this is where it hurts me. I once wanted to run for branch chairman, but someone told me to go for the women's organizer position instead. I was offended because, even in our party, we still assume women are incapable. We need to change this mindset so women have the opportunity to prove they can lead* (Interviewee R29, July 2023, Accra).

This perspective also acknowledges the possibility of strong opposition to the introduction of gender quotas in the absence of efforts to remove underlying stereotypes and cultural impediments. For a majority of them, effective anti-stereotype measures can contribute to the development of a more favourable atmosphere for female candidates, promoting their involvement and raising the potential of their electoral success.

4.4.3 Grassroots Ownership and Effectiveness of Quotas

The opinions of grassroots political players in Ghana about the feasibility and execution of electoral gender quotas within political parties are also highlighted by the combined dimension of grassroots ownership and the effectiveness of quotas. This dimension combines two second-order themes: grassroots participation and ownership, and addressing the real problems. The findings show that grassroots actors think that successful implementation of gender quotas depends on their active involvement and ownership of the quota system, in addition to resolving current gender inequities.

4.4.3.1 Grassroots Participation and Ownership

Grassroots participation and ownership, highlight the crucial part that Ghanaian grassroots political actors feel they have to play in the creation and execution of electoral gender quotas. Participants conveyed strong feelings about how important it was for them to be included in the process and stressed the significance of having their perspectives taken into consideration. The idea that their opinions need to be actively sought out and taken into consideration in the conversations regarding

gender quotas is one of the primary themes that emerged from the participants. As one of the persons puts it:

> *Things must be clear from our perspective. How can we expect quotas to reflect our needs and realities if we are not involved in these conversations? If we, the grassroots, have the opportunity to actively participate in drafting the policy, we can contribute our knowledge and ensure our views are accurately represented. This would help resolve any disagreements and make it easier for someone like me to fully embrace the idea* (R36, FGD, June 2023, Accra).

Another participant said that:

> *Look, my brother, they must listen to us if they want this to work. They can't sit in Accra and assume Accra is Ghana. If they truly want this to succeed, they must come to us, sit with us, explain things, let us ask questions, and if they can convince us, trust me, we are not stupid, we will gladly support it* (Interviewee R29, July 2023, Accra).

4.4.3.2 Addressing Real Problems

Participants acknowledged that gender quotas should be used as a tool to address the actual issues related to gender imbalance in political representation, in addition to grassroots ownership. Many participants expressed the opinion that quotas ought to address the root causes of the problems that prevent women from entering the political sphere, rather than just acting as a numerical target. This some said will also involve "Root cause analysis" which refers to a methodical process for locating and comprehending the root causes of a problem or issue.

Root cause analysis aims to go deeper and elucidate the fundamental causes that underpin a certain issue rather than merely addressing the symptoms at the most superficial level. Some participants stated that it is better to comprehend the

underlying causes of the gender gap issues in order to enable people to formulate better, more permanent solutions that go beyond simply treating the issue's symptoms by granting women quotas. A discussant remarked:

> *It's important to consider whether the proposed quota system will truly address the root causes of underrepresentation. The concern is that even if we implement this solution quickly, it may not fully resolve the underlying issues, and we could face new challenges later* (R50, FGD, August 2023, Kumasi).

In spite of the fact that enacting a quota system could offer an instant fix for under-representation, the participant expressed concern that it might not adequately address the fundamental problems with gender inequality in political involvement.

4.4.4 Skepticism and Challenges to Quotas

The combined element of scepticism and challenges to quotas represents the uncertainty and opposition to the introduction of electoral gender quotas in Ghana voiced by some grassroots political actors. Even though they acknowledged the possible advantages of gender quotas, these participants expressed reservations and doubts regarding their necessity and usefulness. The notion that quotas may not be the best way to achieve gender equality in the electoral process is needless and illogical as evident from their comments:

> *I firmly stand against the gender quota system, no matter the arguments made in its favour. While it aims to increase gender representation, I believe it fails to address the core issues of merit and individual capability. It simply doesn't make sense, and I won't compromise my principles for it* (Interviewee R9, June 2023, Accra).
> *It's ridiculous that someone would work for the amusement of another. I cannot be convinced to endorse it in any way. What made*

> *gender a political issue, and when did it start? Going to guard the ballot boxes is something women should do for now. Or that job is for us the foolish ones? For what purpose does the party require us to suffer for as long as others get to enjoy the fruits? After their turn, they now want their daughters and wives to take over. Allow them to bring it on, we are here* (R41, FGD, June 2023, Ho).

Participant R41, who was clearly upset, calls the proposition absurd and wonders why someone should labour for another person's enjoyment. These individual expresses dissatisfaction over the perceived suffering for the benefit of others and contests the idea that gender is becoming a political issue. The response raises concerns about the study's intentions and suggests that the political system is unjust.

The majority of the very educated female participants fiercely objected to the quota, with one of them characterizing them in really harsh terms. They considered it to be an embarrassment to women and their accomplishments. They inquire as to why they should be given a particular arrangement given that they have professions and have advanced in their different fields of employment without such an arrangement like quota system. Some had this to say:

> *Why should we, as women, receive different treatment simply because of our gender? Do you not see that as an insult to me as an educated woman? What exactly are you implying? Politics is for those who are ready to engage, and I have always maintained that stance. If I'm running against you for the same seat, why should I be treated differently? As a lawyer, fairness and justice guide my work, women who commit crimes are subject to the same laws as men. So why shouldn't the people have the freedom to choose their representatives when it comes to political leadership?* (Interviewee R16, July 2023, Cape Coast).

> *I believe this is one of the most defeatist policies we have ever attempted to promote, and it saddens me, especially because I see that educated women are the ones pushing for it the most. Whenever I hear discussions about it, I always ask, 'Who did you consult? Who asked you to do this*

> *for us?' Every time this issue comes up, I feel embarrassed because it is often educated people championing this agenda.*
> *Why must we be given a quota? Is it because we lack qualified women? Are the numbers not available? If women are not interested or capable, will reserving seats for them truly solve the problem? And then they say, 'This will encourage more women to enter politics.' I'm sorry, but that is not something I, as a woman, have ever believed in, and I see it as defeatist.*
>
> *I don't want my daughter growing up thinking that simply because she is a woman, she cannot achieve what she wants unless it is handed to her through a special arrangement. Do we really believe that tokenism is the only way to achieve equality? If so, then all we have fought for has been in vain. Yes, I support equality, but I do not see women as inferior to men.*
>
> *If I understand your question correctly, I do not subscribe to this idea. It isn't right. To me, it is provocative and a shame—especially for educated women* (R32, FGD, June 2023, Accra).

Another participant had this to say:

> *Surprisingly, women have secured seats in parliament without relying on quotas. In my opinion, attempting to usher women into parliament through tokenism or a backdoor approach is both disrespectful and offensive. In many places where such policies have been implemented, they seem to lack respect and credibility.*
>
> *I cannot imagine being called an 'honourable member' simply because of my gender. It feels like we are rushing to adopt a system we don't fully understand. We claim women are just as capable as men, yet we imply they need special treatment to compete. This contradiction is troubling and suggests a hasty, ill-thought-out policy. If this isn't madness, what is?* (R47, FGD, August 2023, Kumasi).

Some participants just like participants R16, R32 and R47 were adamantly against gender quotas in politics, favouring equality and meritocracy above tokenism policies. They challenge the idea that women can thrive without special accommodations, the defeatist nature of such policies, and the possibility that they

might offend educated women. They contest the usefulness and logic of gender quotas and advocate for equal chances based on ability and merit.

4.5 Key Themes Emerging from Findings

The study's second objective explored the key elements that could make electoral gender quotas in Ghanaian political parties feasible. Although it shows that these quotas are widely opposed, it also emphasizes the necessity of well-defined regulations, a strong legal system, and grassroots ownership. Activists at the grassroots level stress how crucial it is to comprehend quotas' operation and effects on political representation. There is a deficiency in focused teaching initiatives that particularly target grassroots actors' comprehension of gender quotas. To assist the implementation of gender quotas, the findings also emphasize the necessity of a strong legislative framework and institutional commitment.

The findings again, indicate that rules must be clear and laws must be robust to ensure that a sufficient number of women hold decision-making positions. The findings suggests that in order to ensure that electoral gender quotas are successfully implemented in Ghana and to promote gender equality, policies like gender quotas must be clear, there must be robust legal frameworks, grassroots ownership, and scepticism must be addressed.

4.6 A Framework for Implementing a Viable Electoral Gender Quotas in Ghanaian Political Parties

Designing a framework for a gender quota system that would be acceptable to Ghanaian political parties was the third objective of this study. The first two

objectives yielded useful insights into the expectations and perceptions of grassroots political actors concerning gender quotas, which served as the basis for this objective.

Among grassroots actors, gender quotas were widely rejected, and many expressed doubts about their necessity and effectiveness, according to the first objective. On the other hand, the second objective outlined some interconnected factors that would help gender quotas become more widely accepted and implemented. The legal framework and institutional commitment, the effectiveness of quotas and grassroots ownership, scepticism and challenges to quotas, and clarity and awareness are seen as these components.

Building on these findings, a framework for a feasible electoral gender quota system is presented in this section. It takes into account the concerns presented by political players at the grassroots level and suggests practical implementation approaches. The framework has been constructed in a manner that is consistent with the best practices that have been seen in other nations, including South Africa, Argentina, Rwanda, and South Africa (Krook, 2010; Schwindt-Bayer, 2009). The framework also has empirical support from studies that highlight the role that affirmative action policies play in increasing the representation of women in politics (Dahlerup, 2006; O'brien & Rickne, 2016) and that address the structural obstacles that have traditionally prevented women from participating in politics (Milazzo & Goldstein, 2019; Mlambo & Kapingura, 2019).

The suggested framework consists of a number of essential elements that work together to establish a favourable atmosphere for Ghana's gender quotas to be implemented successfully. These elements consist of:

i. Clarity and Awareness

ii. Legal Framework and Institutional Commitment

iii. Grassroots Ownership and Participation

iv. Addressing Skepticism and Challenges

Ghana may achieve gender parity in political representation by putting these measures into practice, which would ultimately help create a more welcoming and equitable political atmosphere. In order to increase women's representation in decision-making processes and encourage their political engagement, political parties, legislators, and civil society organizations can collaborate by using the framework that is provided in this section.

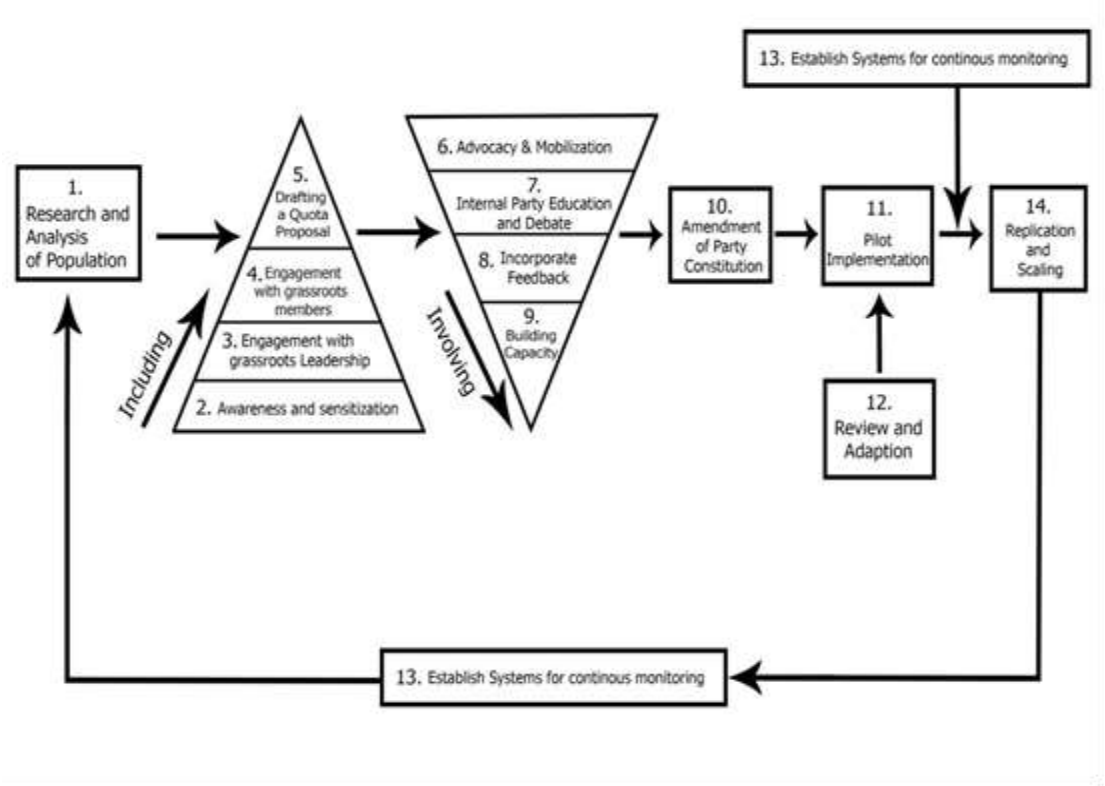


Figure 4.3: Framework for Implementing a Viable Electoral Gender Quotas in Ghanaian Political Parties

Source: Researcher, (2023)

4.7 Key Themes Emerging from Proposed Framework

With an emphasis on enhancing the representation of women in politics, this study attempts to create a framework for a gender quota system that Ghanaian political parties could embrace. According to the research's findings, Ghana's grassroots political actors largely disagree with gender quotas and question their needs and efficacy. On the other hand, the suggested framework is based on international best practices and encourages affirmative action measures meant to boost the number of women in elected office.

Clarity and awareness, institutional commitment and legal framework, grassroots ownership and engagement, and resolving difficulties and skepticism are the four fundamental components of the framework. These components are intended to function in concert to build a more welcoming political atmosphere that encourages women's involvement and representation in Ghanaian governance.

First of all, the framework highlights how crucial awareness and clarity are in encouraging the implementation of gender quotas. This entails dispelling prevalent myths and misconceptions regarding gender quotas and educating political actors and the broader public about the advantages and effectiveness of quotas.

The framework also emphasizes the necessity of an institutional commitment and a robust legislative structure to enable the implementation of gender quotas. This entails creating precise legislation and rules requiring political parties to implement gender quotas and guaranteeing that organizations like parliaments and election commissions are dedicated to upholding these legal requirements.

Thirdly, the framework emphasizes the significance of grassroots ownership and involvement in the establishment and execution of gender quotas. To increase support for gender quotas and guarantee that women are actively participating in the decision-making process, this entails interacting with communities and grassroots political actors.

Last but not least, the framework offers solutions to resolve the doubts and difficulties that frequently accompany the implementation of gender quotas. To prove that quotas are efficient in raising the representation of women in politics, it is

necessary to answer frequent objections to quotas, such as the notion that they are discriminatory or unnecessary.

The framework seeks to establish a more welcoming political climate that encourages women's involvement and representation in Ghanaian politics by prioritizing research, awareness, grassroots engagement, and continual advancement. This framework promotes affirmative action initiatives that seek to improve the representation of women in politics and is in line with international best practices.

4.8 Chapter Summary

A study demonstrating that grassroots actors in politics in Ghana broadly oppose gender quotas is presented in this chapter. The findings imply that overcoming skepticism, establishing robust legal frameworks, encouraging grassroots ownership, and having clear policies are essential for successful implementation. Clarity and awareness, institutional commitment and legal framework, grassroots ownership and engagement, and resolving difficulties and skepticism are the four main parts of the suggested framework. The proposed framework is consistent with empirical findings on the impact of affirmative action policies and structural obstacles on women's involvement in politics. Ghana could potentially create a more inclusive and fairer political environment and gender parity in political representation by political parties putting these measures into practice and adopting the proposed framework.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter offers an in-depth discussion of the study's findings, which were intended to examine the prospect of implementing an electoral gender quota system in Ghanaian political party elections. The background of the study was established in the previous chapters, which also reviewed the body of literature and the theories that underline and carried out the semi-structured interviewing approach of primary data collecting and analysis. The Gioia approach was then used to analyse the data. Consistent with the study's objectives, the study's scope was directed by three research questions: i) How do grassroots political actors within Ghanaian political parties perceive the concept of electoral gender quotas? ii) What specific factors do political actors at the grassroots level believe are necessary for electoral gender quotas to be implemented successfully within their parties? iii) What elements should be included in a framework for a viable electoral gender quota system tailored for Ghanaian political parties?

5.2 The Perceptions of Grassroots Actors Regarding Electoral Gender Quotas

The findings of this study shed light on Ghana's grassroots political actors' intricate and complex understanding of electoral gender quotas. Using the theoretical frameworks of patriarchy, feminism, and critical mass theory, it is possible to analyse how these actors perceive the concept of gender quotas through the three aggregate dimensions of the equitable societal paradigm, select-able representative, and gender equality reconciliation.

The concept of an equitable societal paradigm is a reflection of the desire for a political climate that prioritizes justice and inclusivity for all identities, not just gender. This viewpoint is consistent with the critical mass theory (Schilling & Osborn, 2020; Arendt, 2018), which holds that a significant change in governance and policy-making cannot occur until there are a sufficient number of women in political positions. However, the findings indicate that grassroots actors view this paradigm as critical to creating a political climate in which marginalized groups not just women can flourish.

The idea that equity initiatives should just concentrate on gender representation is called into question by the emphasis on egalitarian norms that transcend gender. According to Benstead (2021) and Hartmann (2002), this viewpoint represents a fundamental understanding of how patriarchal norms can impede good government and perpetuate inequality. A more thorough understanding of gender equality in Ghanaian politics is facilitated by grassroots actors' advocacy for a balanced strategy that takes into account the interests of all marginalized groups.

Specifically, egalitarian norms beyond gender were viewed by the majority of the grassroots as an egalitarian perspective that goes beyond the emphasis on gender-specific remedies like quotas. They contend that the foundation of genuine equality ought to be found in the more general social standards that uphold justice and fairness for all persons, regardless of gender. This viewpoint highlights how crucial it is to have an inclusive atmosphere that gives everyone the same opportunity to engage in democratic processes, regardless of their heritage, identity, or

circumstances. In contrast to implementing gender quotas, participants argue that advocating egalitarian ideas is a more effective and long-term strategy for combating inequality. According to them, gender quotas become less necessary in societies that genuinely value diversity and tolerance. This is consistent with the findings of (Krook, 2009), which examines the efficacy of gender quotas and emphasizes that, although they may be helpful in the short term in increasing the representation of women, long-term progress towards gender equality frequently necessitates larger cultural shifts towards egalitarian values and norms.

The significance of qualifications and merit in political representation is emphasized by the select-able representative component. The necessity for seasoned candidates with the means and desire to engage fully in the political process was underlined by the participants. This result is consistent with the research on gender representation, which argues that women have considerable obstacles when trying to get financial resources and make their way through the complicated political system (Funk, Paul, & Philips, 2022; Krook, 2006).

In essence, this remarkable combination of resources and an intense willingness to participate implies an active and attractive approach. It goes beyond just having the resources to support the effort financially; it also highlights the person's genuine commitment to contributing actively and meaningfully to furthering the political process objectives. This dual skill not only strengthens a candidate's position but also demonstrates their dedication to the party or constituency they hope to represent (Grumbach & Sahn, 2020). Additionally, it represents a commitment to tackling

problems, coming up with innovative remedies, and actively working for the benefit of the community or constituency. In the end, these candidates are in an excellent position to serve as the people's representatives and to be attentive to what their constituents need.

Additionally, remarks from the grassroots highlight a strong preference for legislators with expertise who can successfully negotiate the difficulties of political decision-making. Concerns concerning the possible dangers of electing people without a track record were raised by participants, especially in light of gender quotas that might put gender before their reputation. This viewpoint emphasizes a more general belief that competence and aptitude, not identification, should serve as the foundation for politics and aligns with (Kolberg-Shah, 2021). In political representation, the emphasis on "experience not experiment" is a reflection of a desire for consistency and strong leadership. The belief held by grassroots actors is that more experienced representatives are better suited to deal with the issues that their communities face and make defensible decisions for the general public. This is consistent with the notion that competent personnel who can handle challenging situations are essential for effective leadership.

Grassroots actors confront patriarchal frameworks that have historically excluded women's voices in political decision-making by placing a higher value on qualifications and competence. This viewpoint reflects a desire for a political culture that prioritizes leadership effectiveness and competency in governance, both of which are necessary for bringing about significant change (Dahlerup, 1988).

The gender equality reconciliation factor reveals a varied viewpoint, as some participants expressed discontent with how women are treated in politics, while others justified women's participation in politics by using religious, cultural, and exclusionary considerations. The intricate relationship between gender equality in political representation and cultural norms is highlighted by this particular issue. It is therefore critical to understand that cultural and religious differences in beliefs and customs can affect how individuals see leadership responsibilities (Koburtay, Syed & Haloub, 2020). While religious and cultural traditions have an impact on what individuals believe, it is also important to take into account how beliefs change over time and how different cultures and religious traditions perceive various concepts differently. In an effort to advance gender equality and inclusivity, many civilizations are rethinking and modifying their beliefs about gender roles and leadership.

The findings demonstrate that in an effort to establish an inclusive political environment that permits equal representation, it is imperative to tackle customary and religious barriers in addition to grounds for societal exclusion (Mohajan, 2022; Allen, Goldberg, & Jaramillo-Sierra, 2022). This viewpoint is consistent with feminist ideas that support the necessity to confront patriarchal systems that impede women's growth in politics and acknowledge the intersectionality of political engagement (Grosser & McCarthy, 2019; Tickner & True, 2018).

The results of this study offer important new perspectives on how Ghanaian grassroots political actors understand electoral gender quotas. Despite the overwhelming opposition to the proposal, the three aggregated dimensions show a

more nuanced picture that questions conventional gender stereotypes and supports a political culture that prioritizes diversity, merit, and capable leadership. Through the application of critical mass theory, patriarchy, and feminism to these data, it is evident that attaining gender parity in political representation necessitates a multiprocessing strategy that targets structural impediments, encourages a shift in culture towards inclusivity, and cultivates a climate in which all marginalized groups can prosper politically.

The study's findings again provide clarity regarding the complicated ways that grassroots political actors in Ghana perceive electoral gender quotas, building on the theoretical frameworks of feminism, patriarchy, and critical mass theory. An all-encompassing framework for comprehending these impressions is offered by the three aggregate dimensions. Linking these results to the body of empirical literature already in existence also reveals the research gap in understanding grassroots perspectives and permits a more thorough examination of the subtleties surrounding gender quotas.

The equitable societal paradigm intends to promote equity and inclusivity for all identities, not just gender. This is consistent with the empirical evidence, which highlights the significance of fostering an inclusive political culture that values equality and diversity. For example, Krook and Dahlerup (2006) contend that gender quotas are frequently viewed as a way to improve political institutions' representational quality and promote social equity. The results, however, suggest that grassroots actors in Ghana are skeptical of quotas because they see them as

potentially polarizing if they give preference to gender over other marginalized groups. This viewpoint is consistent with research that emphasizes the necessity of a comprehensive strategy for gender equality that takes intersectionality and the larger social context into account (Franceschet & Piscopo, 2008).

The selectable representative dimension underscores the emphasis on merit and qualifications in political representation. Participants expressed a preference for candidates with proven experience and capabilities, echoing findings in the literature that suggest electoral success is often linked to candidates' qualifications rather than their gender (Schilling & Osborn, 2020). This aligns with the work of Dahlerup (1988), who posits that the effectiveness of gender quotas can be undermined if they lead to the election of candidates perceived as unqualified. Grassroots actors' concerns about the potential risks of electing individuals without a track record reflect broader anxieties about maintaining effective governance and political accountability.

Women are under-represented in politics due to a complex interplay of societal attitudes, religious and customary restrictions, and exclusionary behaviours, which is highlighted by the gender equality reconciliation factor. To promote an inclusive political environment, participants expressed the necessity of addressing these obstacles. Empirical literature showing how cultural norms and societal views can have a major impact on women's political engagement lends credence to this perspective (Kenter, 1977; Allen, 2016). The findings align with the arguments provided by feminist scholars who support systemic changes to promote gender

equality, suggesting that grassroots actors perceive electoral gender quotas as a vehicle to redress historical and contemporary gender disparities (Tickner & True, 2018).

The conclusions drawn from the reviewed documents particularly the 1992 Ghanaian Constitution and the NDC and NPP manifestos, offer crucial background information for comprehending how grassroots political actors' approach electoral gender quotas. Although it does not specifically require electoral gender quotas, the 1992 Constitution preserves the values of equality and non-discrimination, allowing political parties to enact voluntary policies. Comparably, the NDC and NPP's manifestos place a strong emphasis on women's empowerment and gender inclusion but do not include specific plans for implementing quotas inside their respective party systems. This is in line with the study's findings, which showed that grassroots political actors were worried about meritocracy and justice and feared that gender quotas would put gender ahead of competence (Equitable Societal Paradigm and Select-able Representative). The reviewed documents also support the idea that, despite the fact that gender equality is widely accepted as a goal (Gender Equality Reconciliation), electoral quotas are not strongly supported by institutions or policies, which raises doubts about their ability to address systemic gender disparities in Ghanaian politics.

The empirical literature that has already been reviewed in chapter two on electoral gender quotas has frequently ignored the critical points of view held by grassroots political players in favor of elite perspectives and top-down methods (Krook, 2015).

To close this research gap, this study highlights the opinions of grassroots Ghanaian actors and offers insightful information about how they view electoral gender quotas. This research adds to a larger conversation on gender representation and the usefulness of gender quotas as a tool for policy by emphasizing the significance of recognizing grassroots perspectives.

In conclusion, the study's findings highlight the complexity surrounding grassroots political actors' opinions of electoral gender quotas in political parties in Ghana when analysed through the prism of empirical literature. Even though most participants were skeptical of quotas, the overall aspects show a complex perspective that supports merit, inclusivity, and efficient governance. This study reinforces the understanding of gender quotas in the Ghanaian context and highlights the need for more research that takes grassroots perspectives into account to inform policy and practice in promoting gender equality in political representation by connecting these findings to existing literature.

5.3 Grassroots Actors' Expectations for the Successful Implementation of Electoral Gender Quotas

This study's second objective was to explore the factors that Ghanaian grassroots political actors consider to be crucial to the feasibility of electoral gender quotas within political parties. After the first objective was identified, which showed that gender quotas were widely opposed, the results indicated some aggregate characteristics that might help them be accepted and put into practice. These aspects include awareness and clarity, the institutional commitment and legal framework, the

efficacy and grassroots ownership of quotas, as well as scepticism and challenges to them. In addition to identifying research gaps and bringing these findings into line with empirical literature, this discussion interprets the study through the critical mass theory, which is backed by feminism and patriarchy theories.

The findings demonstrate that political actors at the grassroots level place a strong emphasis on the need for precise legislation and guidelines about gender quotas. Participants suggested that to get support, it is essential to comprehend how quotas operate and how they could affect political representation. This is consistent with previous research that emphasizes how crucial it is for policy frameworks to be clear in order for them to be implemented effectively (Franceschet & Piscopo, 2008). This claim emphasizes how important it is for the government to take action in order to establish a legal framework that is favourable to gender quotas. The institutional support and legitimacy required for the implementation of quotas may be lacking in the absence of affirmative action policies.

Also, the legal and institutional framework findings show that grassroots political players in Ghana understand the importance of institutional commitment and a solid legal base for the successful implementation of electoral gender quotas. Participants reiterated that the first steps in fostering an atmosphere that supports gender equality in political representation include putting gender quotas in party constitutions and getting government authorization for affirmative action initiatives. These results highlight how crucial it is to eliminate the structural and historical obstacles that have prevented women from entering Ghanaian politics, both through legislative mandates

and political will. To improve women's representation and advance gender equality in politics, stakeholders should provide a strong legal framework and encourage institutional commitment.

However, the finding also shows that grassroots actors were not well-informed or aware of gender quotas. While some studies have looked into social norms and financial limitations as barriers to women's political participation (Ichino & Nathan, 2017), there isn't much research that focuses explicitly on the need for grassroots education regarding gender quotas in Ghana. Closing this disparity might improve political actors' comprehension and acceptance of quotas. An example is having a participant say:

> *I am aware of it, but I'm not sure how it will function. Even though it appears to be so straightforward, the matter is actually very complicated. I have a degree, but I'm having trouble picturing how it will work, so please bear with me. More education will help.*

The findings additionally, revealed that effective implementation of gender quotas requires both institutional commitment and a strong legislative framework. Participants emphasized the necessity for government policies to support gender quotas and for them to be included in party constitutions. Although both the NDC and the NPP have expressed support for gender equality, Ghana's lack of officially implemented gender quotas exposes a stark difference between political rhetoric and reality. Studies, like that of Ichino and Nathan (2017), highlights that political parties could not be motivated to give women's representation priority in the absence of official legal mandates, which would result in ongoing under-representation.

The findings emphasize how crucial it is to have a strong legal foundation and institutional support for the implementation of gender quotas. Participants underscored the necessity of affirmative action programs by the government and the inclusion of female quotas in party constitutions. This viewpoint is consistent with the research, which highlights the necessity of legislative requirements to guarantee political parties' compliance (O'Brien & Rickne, 2016).

The Ghana Gender and Inclusion Analysis (2020) notes that although there are policies in place to support gender equality, like the 1998 Affirmative Action Policy, their actual application is still lacking. According to Benstead (2021), the body of literature indicates that political leaders' and institutions' lack of commitment is impeding progress. This shows that there is a need for more research to examine the strategies that may be used to increase institutional commitment and successfully promote gender quotas.

The findings additionally demonstrate that grassroots actors in politics think that the quota system's effectiveness depends on their active involvement and ownership of it. Participants emphasized that their perspectives should guide the process and stressed the need of being included in the creation of quota policies. This is consistent with feminist views (Tickner & True, 2018) that support bringing women's experiences into political discourse.

The literature does, however, point to a knowledge vacuum on the best ways to promote grassroots ownership within political parties. While some study has looked at the obstacles that women face when trying to participate in politics, little is known

about the precise tactics that can increase grassroots engagement in quota implementation. Examining these tactics may yield insightful information about how to support gender quotas that work in Ghana.

Even with the positive aspects noted, the results also show that certain grassroots political actors have a great deal of mistrust and opposition to gender quotas. The need for quotas was strongly contested by the participants, who thought they were superfluous or nonsensical. This cynicism is a reflection of the deeply ingrained patriarchal standards that still shape how people view women's responsibilities in politics (Ford, 2018).

The study makes clear that overcoming skepticism is essential to implementing gender quotas successfully. According to studies, opinions about women's political engagement are greatly influenced by cultural attitudes and conventions (Mlambo & Kapingura, 2019). There is a research vacuum, nevertheless, when it comes to knowing how to properly confront and alleviate grassroots actors' skepticism about gender quotas. This is because; there is still a lot of mistrust among grassroots political activists about gender quotas, even in spite of their possible advantages. Participants voiced worries about how quotas may erode meritocracy and how women could thrive without special treatment. The empirical literature (Benstead, 2021) echoes this skepticism by pointing to strongly embedded patriarchal practices that inhibit women from participating in politics. It is imperative that the NDC and NPP take proactive measures to tackle these issues by launching public education

programs and holding open and honest conversations regarding the advantages and necessity of gender quotas.

Participants again, emphasized how crucial it is to have explicit rules and regulations around gender quotas. This is consistent with major political parties in Ghana, such the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC), whose manifestos and policy declarations have from time to time recognized the need for greater representation of women. For instance, the Women's Manifesto for Ghana has emphasized the need for transparency in the implementation of these quotas and has called for a minimum of 30% female presence in political posts. However, grassroots actors frequently get confused and skeptical about the parties' genuine intentions as a result of party manifestos' lack of specific commitments. For example, the NDC stated that it intended to hire 40% of women for positions in the government on its 2008 manifesto. Subsequent manifestos, however, have not said precisely what percentage of women they want to be appointed.

The findings can be examined through the prism of critical mass theory, which posits that a certain proportion of women in positions of decision-making can result in notable shifts in political dynamics (Dahlerup, 1988; Dahlerup, 2014). According to the findings this study identified, reaching such a critical mass necessitates resolving skepticism, establishing robust legal frameworks, fostering grassroots ownership, and having clear policies. Additionally, the theory of patriarchy draws attention to the systemic obstacles that women encounter in politics and emphasizes the necessity of legislative changes to remove these obstacles (Benstead, 2021). The continuance of

patriarchal norms that impede women's political engagement is reflected in the skepticism voiced by certain grassroots players.

In closing, feminist theory promotes the integration of female perspectives and experiences in political discourse (Tickner & True, 2018). Based on feminist ideas that prioritize representation and empowerment, the findings highlight the significance of grassroots ownership and engagement in the creation of gender quotas.

The study's findings, taken in tandem, show that Ghanaian grassroots political actors are aware of a number of crucial factors that may enable political parties to implement electoral gender quotas. These results are consistent with empirical literature, which emphasizes the significance of addressing skepticism, institutional commitment, grassroots ownership, clarity and awareness, and a robust legal framework. Nonetheless, there are still a lot of unanswered questions, especially when it comes to establishing institutional commitment, encouraging grassroots ownership, reducing skepticism, and comprehending the necessity of gender quota education. To ensure that electoral gender quotas are successfully implemented in Ghana and to promote gender equality in political representation, it is imperative that these inequalities be addressed. Stakeholders may improve women's representation and engagement in Ghanaian politics by concentrating on these areas and working to create a more inclusive political climate.

A review of Ghana's 1992 Constitution and the NDC and NPP manifestos shows a notable discrepancy between the terms of the policies and the populace's awareness.

Despite the Constitution's support for gender equality, it does not specifically call for electoral gender quotas, which leaves opportunity for interpretation and lax enforcement. Likewise, while both party manifestos mention women's participation in governance, they do not include specific implementation strategies. The majority of grassroots political actors are notably uninformed of the contents of these documents since no concerted effort has been made to inform them of their importance. These documents are only on paper and have little practical applications relevance for many long-time party members in their political interactions. They continue to priorities winning elections over carrying out the policy commitments made in these publications. Electoral gender quotas will not be able to take hold without intentional education and sensitisation campaigns because grassroots actors will not be aware of them or inclined to support their implementation.

5.4 Designing a Viable Electoral Gender Quota Framework for Ghanaian Political Parties

A suggested framework for an acceptable system of electoral gender quotas for Ghanaian political parties can be seen in Figure 4.3 above. It offers an in-depth review of the numerous factors, both dependent and independent, which support the various procedures required to carry out the objective. Following this step-by-step procedure systematically will enable Ghanaian political parties to establish the foundation for the acceptance as well as effective implementation of an electoral gender quota system, which is likely to garner the support of members at the grassroots level and the general public.

Addressing gender disparities within Ghanaian political parties is essential if we are to achieve a more inclusive and equitable political system. There is an increasing understanding of the significance of enhancing women's perspectives and contributions in the decision-making process as the country moves further to stronger democratic standards and participatory governance. To achieve this, the suggested framework attempts to create the foundation for a feasible electoral gender quotas system that is customized to the context of Ghanaian political parties.

This framework was developed with the understanding that achieving gender equality in political representation requires a thoughtful and systematic approach. It acknowledges that political parties play a crucial function as gatekeepers to political power and that the internal dynamics of these entities have a significant impact on the overall political landscape. This approach aims to maximize the leadership potential of women, overcome structural prejudices, and usher in a new era of more inclusive governance by proactively integrating gender quotas at the level of the grassroots. This framework suggests a collection of strategies, procedures, and guiding principles. It draws insights from both international best practices and the distinctive socio-cultural context of Ghana. It supports the objective of Ghanaian political parties to create a thriving political system that is representative of the entire country's people. This proposed framework outlines a course for rewriting the political narrative, boosting women's participation, and eventually furthering the democratic principles of representation and inclusivity through group effort and a commitment to gender equality.

Three thematic themes; acceptance, enhancement, and survival form the foundation of this framework. In my opinion, the long-term sustainability of a policy is contingent upon its broad acceptance, irrespective of its design or efficacy. Thus, to gain support and popularity and eventually gain acceptability among stakeholders and the general public, a substantial amount of effort needs to be focused on research, education, and advocacy. Even the most creative and well-meaning policies are unlikely to survive without its acceptance. For this, the framework suggests the following:

5.4.1 Research and Analysis

Research and analysis of particular constituencies must be done comprehensively as it starts. The party leadership will be better equipped to comprehend gender dynamics in the chosen areas due to this research. Leadership can determine the underlying causes for women's under-representation in partisanship and the challenges they encounter by concentrating on areas that are historically favorable to the parties (strongholds). Engaging with a variety of stakeholders, such as community members and grassroots leaders, can be made easier by the research process. Building support for gender quotas and ensuring that policies represent the needs and ambitions of the community depend on this kind of participation. Involving grassroots actors in decision-making processes improves the legitimacy and acceptance of policies, as documented in the literature (Chowdhury, Kourula & Siltaoja, 2021).

Applying gender quotas in areas where a party has little chance of winning could result in the nomination of female candidates with poor electoral prospects,

decreasing the policy's effectiveness (Peterson, 2023). This tailored approach is essential. Parties are better able to allocate resources, support, and campaign activities when they concentrate on stronghold constituencies. This tactic helps create successful campaigns, mobilize supporters, and create an atmosphere that supports the advancement and achievement of female candidates. Policymakers can also guarantee elected women's ability to actively engage in legislative processes and decision-making by focusing their efforts in these areas, which will increase the policy's overall impact and relevance.

5.4.2 Awareness and Sensitization

To inform party members about the significance of gender equality and diverse representation, the second phase of the initiative highlights the necessity of internal awareness efforts. To educate party members about the advantages of the electoral gender quota system for improving democracy and governance, workshops, seminars, and training sessions might be employed. Contextualizing these initiatives is crucial, and it requires awareness of the peculiarities of many grassroots communities (Willeck & Mendelberg, 2022).

The messaging used by the leadership must take these populations' cultural practices and values into account. In the realm of communication and social change, it is well-established that cultural practices and beliefs should be taken into account while crafting messages. Any attempt to bring about social change must include effective communication, and it is crucial to take the cultural context of the message into account, according to Servaes (2022). For this reason, when creating messaging

campaigns to support gender equality and women's empowerment, it is important to take these elements into account, especially in Ghana where cultural practices and beliefs have a considerable influence on individual and collective behaviours. Smith and Sinkford (2022), contend that cultural sensitivity is crucial for health communication, and that this idea may be applied to other social change initiatives such as women's empowerment and gender equality. Gender quotas can be shown to have potential benefits by highlighting instances where they have been successfully implemented in comparable settings.

Acquiring the support of prominent party figures who recognize the importance of gender parity is essential in this stage. The academic field has long recognized the significance of gaining the endorsement of well-known party figures in the pursuit of gender parity. Laursen and Austin (2020) asserts that, fostering change and attaining gender equity within an organization requires the backing of influential people. This is especially important when discussing political parties, since the endorsement of well-known party leaders can play a significant role in advancing women's empowerment and gender equality. Studies have again, indicated that the support of leaders can play a crucial role in encouraging alterations in behaviour and accomplishing societal transformations (Udoudom, Aondowase & Igiri, 2023). Support from well-known party members can contribute to a culture change within the party that fosters gender parity by encouraging an atmosphere that is more welcoming and equal for women. The pursuit of leadership endorsement becomes of the utmost importance during this phase, which is a turning point. The goal is to

garner support from important individuals in the party hierarchy who have an in-depth grasp of the importance of gender equality. In addition to their political clout, these leaders must be once notable for their unwavering dedication to improving inclusive representation within the party.

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The framework includes both a bottom-up (include) and top-down (involve) approach. The bottom - up (include) approach starts the gender quota policy drafting. A sizable percentage of participants interviewed expressed dissatisfaction with their lack of involvement and participation during the formulation of policies within their respective political parties. This they believe frequently resulted in misunderstandings and subsequent rejection of decisions and policies at the grassroots level. Within political parties, inclusivity and democratic decision-making procedures are crucial, as seen by the discontent that the participants voiced. For policies to be more successful and legitimate, research by Celis and Lovenduski (2018) highlights how important it is to involve an array of stakeholders, including grassroots actors.

Critical mass theory holds that legitimate and meaningful representation of marginalised groups is necessary to gain legitimacy and support (Kanter, 1977). This phenomenon of grassroots rejection of policies and decisions due to perceived lack of participation is consistent with the principles of this theory. This highlights the need for political parties to implement inclusive tactics that give grassroots actors the power and make sure their opinions are heard. Furthermore, the idea that the grassroots is the center of the political process emphasizes how crucial it is for common people to influence policies and bring about revolutionary change. The viewpoint expressed here is supported by the research conducted by Karam and Katz (2014), who highlight the importance of a bottom-up strategy for political engagement in which the priorities and viewpoints of the grassroots influence policy choices.

Encouraging grassroots engagement through inclusive strategies is essential to giving marginalized populations a sense of legitimacy and ownership. Political parties can improve the effectiveness and responsiveness of their policies by developing a more nuanced awareness of the interests and concerns of their constituents by recognizing and adopting the opinions of grassroots actors.

The focus on grassroots involvement also emphasizes how crucial it is to democratize the policy-making process to guarantee that the interests and viewpoints of a variety of stakeholders are taken into account. Political parties can promote a more inclusive and participatory democracy that is better suited to tackle the complex challenges of the twenty-first century by empowering grassroots actors and giving them a role in the decision-making process.

5.4.3 Engagement with Grassroots Leadership

Party Leadership's involvement at the local level is crucial at this stage. To discuss the potential benefits of enacting female quotas, national party officials ought to start talking to local party leadership. The positive consequences of this approach are for party dynamics, policy making, and public opinion must be emphasized.

In order to guarantee a favourable result, national leadership ought to take a facilitative stance, giving local leaders the opportunity to participate in comprehensive discussions and arguments, which could last for many days or weeks. The local stakeholders' sincere acceptance and buy-in will be fostered by this iterative process. The focus ought to be on developing partnerships with powerful grassroots advocates who sincerely believe in gender parity and quotas.

The policy will gain legitimacy if these officials support it, as their endorsement is expected to garner acceptance from a wide range of local political perspectives. National party officials may foster a sense of shared accountability and ownership among local leaders by involving them in a cooperative and inclusive process, which will ultimately increase the legitimacy and efficacy of the initiative.

Taking into consideration the distinct qualities and requirements of every constituency, this method also recognizes the significance of placing the policy in the local political environment. This will increase the policy's chances of success since national party officials can make sure it is customized to the unique needs of each local environment.

The ultimate objective of this involvement is to establish a movement at the grassroots level that advocates for the imposition of women's quotas, as opposed to enforcing a directive from above. National party officials can develop a long-lasting and successful policy that advances gender equality and increases the representation of women in politics by giving local leaders more authority and encouraging a sense of local ownership.

The 2003 research "Setting the Ghanaian Context of Rural Local Government: Traditional Authority Values" by Owusu-Sarpong (Owusu-Sarpong, 2003) examines the traditional and cultural aspects of Ghanaian administration, highlighting the great faith that Ghanaians have in their local leaders. This approach suggested emphasizes the deeply embedded cultural traditions of Ghanaian culture, which give rise to the widespread assumption among the people that local leaders correctly reflect their

needs, desires, and beliefs. Mutual support and community cohesion are fostered by this trust and are essential for efficient local government.

The findings of Owusu-Sarpong are consistent with the body of studies that highlight the role of traditional authority in rural government in Sub-Saharan Africa. For example, Kendie and Bukari (2014), highlights the important role traditional leaders have in local governance, frequently serving as a bridge between the community and the government. This function strengthens their legitimacy and cultivates community trust, in line with Owusu-Sarpong's conclusions about the dependence on local leaders.

Schilling and Osborn (2020) also address how formal political institutions can be supplemented by traditional governance arrangements, improving the efficacy of governance in rural areas. Because it encourages community people to interact with and support their leaders, this viewpoint supports Owusu-Sarpong's claim that the trust Ghanaians place in their local leaders is a crucial component of effective governance.

5.4.4 Engaging Grassroots (ordinary) Members

After key local party officials are successfully engaged, the focus turns to the crucial stage of engaging grassroots (ordinary) members. Participation and consultation are given top priority at this level, with grassroots leaders spearheading conversation facilitation and national party officials offering assistance. Enabling grassroots leaders to drive the conversation is essential because they have a better grasp of their constituents and can build relationships based on trust.

Ensuring that grassroots participants have a sense of ownership over the process and the authority to participate in decision-making is the primary objective of this phase. By doing this, national party leadership may foster among grassroots supporters a sense of shared accountability and common ownership, which will ultimately strengthen the policy's legitimacy and efficacy.

Moreover, this approach recognizes the significance of situating the policy within the local political environment, considering the distinct attributes and requirements of every stakeholder group. The possibility for policy success can be increased by ensuring that it is customized to the unique needs of each local setting through the involvement of general party members and the empowerment of grassroots leaders. Creating a coalition at the grassroots level that advocates for the enactment of women's quotas is the ultimate objective of this phase, as opposed to enforcing a top-down approach. A robust and effective policy that advances gender equality and increases the representation of women in politics can be developed by national party leadership by encouraging a sense of ownership and inclusivity among grassroots members.

A key component of democratic government is the inclusion of grassroots participants in the decision-making process, which guarantees that decisions and policies take into account the many viewpoints and requirements of common people (Lima, 2019). Political parties can increase their legitimacy and effectiveness by implementing a bottom-up strategy that fosters diversity, accountability, and transparency (Raj, 2024).

In addition, the leadership of the party should set up avenues for ongoing input, enabling members at the grassroots level to voice their issues and recommendations all the way through the process. By doing this, a culture of accountability and transparency is facilitated, enabling party members to make well-informed decisions. Party members must be made aware of the quota system's operation and any misunderstandings or worries must be addressed if the system is to be successful. By doing this, party leadership may encourage grassroots members to feel inclusive and like they own the system, which will ultimately increase the quota system's legitimacy and efficacy.

5.4.5 Drafting of a Quota Proposal

The next step is the careful draughting of a quota proposal once grassroots engagement has happened. A structured document detailing the details of the gender quota system, including the percentage of seats allotted to women and the time line for implementation, would be drafted by the party leadership in consultation with a few key stakeholders and members of the grassroots movement. A crucial first step in putting a gender quota system in place is the meticulous draughting of the proposal. Lima and Guedes (2024) asserts that a system's ability to advance gender equality depends critically on how it is designed. A well-thought-out quota system ought to consider the unique circumstances and requirements of the party and its constituents.

According to research, it is crucial to have open lines of communication and have grassroots discussions to make sure that the quota plan is practical and well-liked by

all parties involved (Shaw, Althaus & Panagopoulos, 2024). This is due to the fact that, rather than being a top-down mandate, the quota system need to be viewed as a group endeavour to advance gender equality. This stage highlights how crucial it is to have transparent communication and grassroots consultations to make sure that the plan takes into account the various viewpoints that party members have.

5.4.6 Advocacy and Mobilization

The draft quota proposal is given to important stakeholders and party members during the advocacy and mobilization phase, which is a crucial step in the policy-making process. This phase is marked, according to Zoorob (2019), by a planned campaign to win over party members and secure endorsements from influential people and organizations. According to research, a policy proposal's chances of success are based on how well its backers can assemble a powerful coalition (Hacker & Pierson, P2019). In relation to the quota plan, this entails securing the support of influential people and organizations that can give the idea legitimacy and credibility.

The advocacy and mobilization phase, according to Bitonti (2022), is defined by a process known as "venue shopping," in which supporters of the policy proposal look for influential people and decision-makers who can support their cause. Regarding the quota plan, this entails focusing on significant party figures, powerful people, and establishments that have the potential to bolster the proposal's backing. At this crucial point in the policy-making process, the draft quota proposal is presented, initiating the advocacy and mobilization phase. Party officials are going to launch a calculated campaign to win over party members in key constituencies. The

endeavour entails obtaining endorsements from powerful individuals and institutions, which can greatly augment the proposal's legitimacy and reach.

The party's internal discussion and debate are sparked by the introduction of the draft proposal, which gives members a forum to assess the advantages and disadvantages of enacting gender quotas. Party members are expected to participate in a deliberate process to enhance and refine the plan of action, which promotes a collaborative effort toward achieving gender parity in electoral representation. Party leaders can be certain the quota proposal is carefully considered and enhanced, which will increase its credibility and effectiveness, by promoting an inclusive and participatory discourse. A sense of ownership and investment in the quota system is also fostered by this strategy, which helps party members get a greater comprehension of the policy's ramifications.

In addition, party leaders have the chance to create a wide coalition of support during the advocacy and mobilization phase, which includes a variety of stakeholders and interest groups. Party leaders can boost the proposal's exposure and credibility and better ensure its successful implementation by building a strong network of proponents and sympathizers.

5.4.7 Internal Party Education and Debate

One important factor that will determine how the gender quota system develops in the future is the active involvement of regular party members. To guarantee the effective execution of this policy, party leadership needs to encourage internal conversations and debates to resolve any issues or concerns that might surface about

the suggested framework for implementation. Party leaders can cultivate a feeling of inclusivity and ownership among party members by promoting an environment of open discourse that values a range of viewpoints. This will eventually lead to the development of consensus and support for the quota system.

This approach is founded on the ideas of participatory democracy, which highlights the significance of citizen involvement and participation in the process of making decisions (Auriacombe & Sithomola, 2020). Party leaders can leverage the pooled knowledge and experience of their members to create more effective and long-lasting policies by allowing regular party members to participate in the discussion.

In addition, facilitating internal conversations and debates provides a means of resolving possible issues and concerns, enabling party leaders to enhance and optimize the quota system. To ensure that the policy is responsive to the interests and concerns of party members and eventually increases its legitimacy and effectiveness, an iterative refinement process is necessary (Murphy, 2020).

In the end, creating a more inclusive and representative party depends on the active participation of regular party members in the creation and execution of the gender quota scheme. Party leaders may eventually contribute to the long-term success of the quota system by encouraging an environment of open discourse and valuing different points of view. This will help party members feel a sense of shared accountability and ownership.

5.4.8 The Incorporation of Party Member Feedback

At this point, a crucial step in the policy-making process is taking party member

input into account. To influence the course of the gender quota system, leadership must recognize the value of varied viewpoints and make sure that members' opinions are actively included in the decision-making process. The party's dedication to democratic decision-making and participatory governance should be reflected in every critique and recommendation made during this process.

This strategy is based on deliberative democracy's tenets, which highlight the significance of inclusive and democratic decision-making procedures (Adobor,2020). Leadership may increase members' sense of inclusivity and ownership by incorporating their feedback, which will ultimately strengthen the quota system's validity and efficacy. In addition, the process of incorporating party member feedback helps to identify possible obstacles and opportunities for development, which enables leadership to improve and fortify the policy. In order to make sure that the quota system is responsive to party members' demands and concerns, an iterative refinement process is necessary, which will ultimately contribute to the system's long-term success (Donnolo, 2019).

In the end, democratic decision-making ultimately relies heavily on member input and reflects the party's dedication to openness, responsibility, and inclusivity. Leadership can establish a more sustainable and successful quota system by valuing member feedback and a range of opinions. This will ultimately help to improve gender equality and representation within the party.

5.4.9 Building Capacity

The party leadership's top priority is empowering women via all-encompassing

capacity-building initiatives. Beyond only acknowledgment, the leadership must invest in the growth and potential of prospective female leaders and give them the tools they need to be successful in politics. This requires a dedication to assisting women to overcome the particular obstacles they encounter in politics and providing them with the resources and information needed to succeed.

To accomplish this goal, the party leadership needs to put in place a number of focused interventions, including mentorship programs, capacity-building workshops, and specialised training courses. These programs are thoughtfully crafted to tackle critical challenges that facilitate successful leadership, including self-assurance and leadership competencies, communication proficiencies, policy formulation know-how, and strategic readiness.

The ultimate objective of these initiatives is to promote a level of empowerment for women that surpasses traditional boundaries and allows them to not only engage in politics but also flourish there. The party leadership can help women become more engaged and successful in politics by sharing knowledge and developing their abilities. This will ultimately lead to a more lively, inclusive, and productive political environment.

Moreover, the aforementioned approach is based on the tenets of transformative leadership, which underscore the significance of endowing marginalized communities with agency and fostering diversity and inclusivity (Ahmad & Islam, 2024). The party leadership may fortify the base of their organization, increase the

variety of leadership, and eventually contribute to a more just and representative political system by supporting the advancement of ambitious female leaders.

5.4.10 Amendment to the Party Constitution

The party constitution will now be amended, a crucial step towards putting the gender quota system into place. Now that the legal foundation has been established, party officials can work with the lawyers to prepare amendments to the party constitution that would formalize the implementation of the gender quota system. Party leaders and legal experts collaborate to create a revised constitution that aligns with the party's basic ideals, driven by a shared commitment to gender equality.

In order to make sure that the party's constitution appropriately represents its commitment to gender equality, every word, term, and detail must be carefully scrutinised. This stage of the process requires a thoughtful and meticulous approach. The proposed constitutional amendments should exhibit a dedication to diversity and progressive reform, reflecting the opinions of notable figures, party members, and community leaders who have endorsed this cause.

Amending the party constitution is not just a formality; rather, it is an important step in defining the party's mission and principles. It necessitates a dedication to building an organization that is more inclusive and egalitarian as well as a thorough understanding of the party's history, culture, and mission. Party leaders can guarantee that the constitution embodies the fundamental beliefs and ideals of the organization and offers a structure for advancing diversity and gender parity within the party by participating in this process.

Moreover, this procedure is based on organization development and change principles, which highlight the significance of forging a common vision and set of values among stakeholders (Burke, 2022). Party leaders have the ability to foster a sense of ownership and commitment among party members through collaborative and inclusive processes, which can ultimately lead to a more sustainable and successful implementation of the gender quota system.

5.411 Pilot Implementation

An important turning point in the party's path toward revolutionary change is the experimental adoption of the gender quota system. The party's steadfast dedication to enacting significant change is evident in this stage, which is marked by a distinct vision, an inventive mindset, and a readiness to lead by example.

The pilot program provides a yardstick for evaluating the gender quota system's impact, efficacy, and resonance within the party. For the implementation to be effective, every detail—from quota allocation to candidate selection—is meticulously thought out.

At this stage, the goals established at the beginning of the voyage come to pass, symbolizing the convergence of theory and application. The party's dedication to cultivating an inclusive culture, embracing diversity, and advancing equitable representation is evident in the pilot implementation, which is more than just an experiment.

The findings and insights gleaned from the trial implementation will have a significant impact, directing the party's future direction in addition to its present

route. At this point, the party can use information and willpower to harness feedback and foresight, which eventually informs its decision-making processes. This strategy is based on organizational development and change theories, which highlight the value of trial and error, learning, and adaptability (Hillmann, 2021). Through the implementation of a pilot program, the party can verify its presumptions, improve its tactics, and fortify its future growth and development base.

5.4.12 Review and Adaptation

Establishing a culture of continuous review and adaptation is essential to continuous improvement. Periodic assessments and adjustments will be necessary in light of the lessons discovered from the effects of the gender quota system on women's participation, grassroots dynamics, and party performance. Party leadership should continue to be adaptable and willing to learn from new experiences and obstacles. They should also take a larger view, taking into account the wider effects of the female quota system on the party's overall narrative and the changing political environment.

Lau, Lee and Chung (2019), emphasised the significance of ongoing assessment and adjustment as a foundational component of organizational learning and growth, which is the basis for this methodology. A culture of ongoing assessment is something the party can embrace to bolster its resolve to bring about sustainable change and build a more just and representative political system.

Using the knowledge gathered from its assessment to guide future actions, the party can hone, enhance, and expand upon its efforts through an iterative process of review

and adaptation. The evaluation's findings are more than just a collection of facts; they are a light that leads the way in the direction of a more bright and inclusive future. Additionally, this strategy aligns with the inclusive and participatory governance concepts, which highlight the significance of public involvement and participation in the decision-making process (Ahmad & Islam, 2024). The party may promote a more representative and inclusive political system and, in turn, help create a more just and equitable society by fostering a culture of ongoing assessment and adaptation.

5.4.13 Establish Systems for Continuous Monitoring

The political party leadership must set up mechanisms for ongoing monitoring and reporting to keep tabs on the gender quota system's implementation status, difficulties, and success stories. The foundation of this project is a dedication to transparency and accountability, both of which are critical for guaranteeing that the party stays on track with its goals. The party's leadership must take responsibility for the objectives it sets as it sets out on this transformational journey. The party may make sure that any deviations or difficulties are quickly discovered and resolved by using systematic monitoring mechanisms that match its goals with its progress.

In this instance, the leadership has a duty that goes beyond simple navigation and includes careful tracking of advancement on several fronts. The leadership can learn more about the implementation's progress through regular reporting, which can help them identify areas of success and potential roadblocks. The leadership can adapt its strategy, make well-informed decisions, and deal with issues as they arise thanks to this data-driven approach.

This strategy is founded on the ideas of results-based management, which highlights the significance of assessment and monitoring in reaching organizational objectives (Bhattarai, 2020). Through the implementation of an ongoing monitoring and reporting culture, the party may guarantee that its endeavour is targeted, efficient, and long-lasting, consequently aiding in the accomplishment of its goals. Moreover, this methodology aligns with the fundamental tenets of openness and accountability, both of which are crucial for fostering confidence and legitimacy in the governance domain (Mees & Driessen, 2019). Through a dedication to transparency and responsibility, the party can exhibit its dedication to responsible leadership and sound governance, thereby augmenting its legitimacy and efficacy.

5.4.14 Replication and Scaling Up

Owing to the successful handling of obstacles and the feedback resonance, the parties have now moved into a new phase of replicating and escalating their new policy. The groundwork for increasing the scope and influence of the gender quota system has been established, with every obstacle surmounted and every concern addressed with insightful solutions. To guarantee the gender quota system's widespread acceptance and success across all constituencies and party levels, the party leadership has set its eyes on an ambitious goal.

This will be a significant step towards the party's goal of establishing a more inclusive and representative system of government and will serve as evidence of its commitment to advancing a varied and equitable political environment. In addition to improving the party's reputation and legitimacy, the expansion of the gender quota system will make society more just and equal. For the gender quota system to remain

viable and effective, it is imperative that it go through this replication and scaling-up phase. The party can help level the playing field for women in politics by growing in influence and number, which will ultimately lead to a more inclusive and representative system of government.

The party's initiatives to broaden the gender quota system are based on organizational learning and development theories, which highlight the significance of ongoing development and adjustment (Verge, 2020). The party can build a more robust and efficient governing framework and eventually contribute to a fairer and more just society by duplicating and expanding its creative policy.

Moreover, this methodology aligns with the fundamental tenets of participatory and inclusive governance, which underscore the significance of citizen involvement and participation in the process of making decisions (Ahmad & Islam, 2024). The party can promote a more inclusive and representative governing structure and, in the process, contribute to a more just and equitable society by increasing the gender quota system.

5.5 Chapter Summary

The findings of a study on grassroots political players in Ghana are discussed in this chapter, with particular attention to how they perceive electoral gender quotas. Most participants disagree with these quotas, stressing the necessity for a selected representative, a gender equality reconciliation, and an equitable societal paradigm. The chapter also lists the elements that must be in place for implementation to be successful, including institutional commitment, legal framework, grassroots ownership and engagement, and overcoming scepticism.

The chapter also discusses a proposed framework for a feasible electoral gender quota system for political parties in Ghana. It covers constituency research and analysis, awareness and sensitivity, active participation from the grassroots, draughting of the quota proposal, advocacy and mobilization, internal education and discussion, feedback incorporation, building women's capacity, amending the party constitution, pilot implementation, review and adaptation, and ongoing monitoring and reporting.

The chapter finally, discusses the significance of an all-encompassing strategy in fostering a more equal and inclusive political climate that promotes women's engagement and representation in Ghanaian politics. Comprehensive research, awareness campaigns, grassroots involvement, ongoing monitoring, and reporting are just a few of the framework's essential components.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The findings on the main issues addressed by the study have been presented and discussed in Chapter 5. The study is concluded in this chapter, which also describes its contribution to the body of knowledge regarding the prospect of an electoral gender quotas system in Ghanaian political party elections. The chapter constitutes the conclusion and recommendations of the study.

6.2 Conclusion

This study examined the prospect of implementing electoral gender quota systems in Ghanaian political parties, focusing on how grassroots (ordinary) political actors perceived quotas, and what they thought would make them feasible, and to develop a framework for a workable quota system. The first objective was to examine how grassroots political players within Ghanaian political parties perceived electoral gender quotas. The findings revealed that most participants were generally skeptical and thought that gender quotas might be unjust and ineffective. This mistrust emphasizes the necessity for political parties to hold in-depth discussions with members at the grassroots level to allay their worries and dispel their myths. The study emphasizes that promoting a cultural shift towards gender equality and inclusivity within political discourse is necessary for the acceptance of gender quotas.

Nevertheless, the study also revealed that some grassroots (common) political actors are receptive to the notion of electoral gender quotas, given that they are executed in a manner that is equitable, clear, and comprehensive. Participants underscored the necessity of a framework that considers the specific needs and apprehensions of women and other underprivileged groups.

The study also found a number of elements that are essential for Ghanaian political parties to be able to implement electoral gender quotas. They include the necessity of open and honest communication, consulting the people at the grassroots level, forming coalitions and alliances, and having a transparent and well-defined execution schedule. This study developed a framework for a feasible electoral gender quota system for Ghanaian political parties based on these findings. In addition to highlighting the significance of forming coalitions and alliances to support the quota system's implementation, the framework underscores the necessity of executing electoral gender quotas in a fair, transparent, and inclusive manner.

6.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to accomplish the objectives of the study, which examined the prospect of an electoral gender quota system in Ghanaian political parties:

6.3.1 Recommendations for Political Parties

To enhance the acceptance of electoral gender quotas among grassroots political actors, it is recommended that political parties:

6.3.1.1 Increasing Electoral Gender Quota Acceptance

I. Start awareness campaigns: To inform members at the grassroots level about the advantages of gender quotas, political parties should launch extensive awareness campaigns. Campaigns aimed at improving representation and governance should be sensitive to cultural differences and should showcase effective instances of female quotas in comparable settings.

II. Engage grassroots leaders: Encourage advocacy for gender quotas by including reputable local leaders. By addressing scepticism and promoting acceptance, their support can give the initiative legitimacy and aid in establishing trust among grassroots actors.

III. Encourage open communication: Provide platforms for candid conversations where community members can share their thoughts and worries about gender quotas. By using a participatory approach, misconceptions will be cleared up and a sense of policy ownership will grow.

6.3.1.2 Address the Prerequisites for a Successful Implementation Quotas

I. Establish explicit criteria: When it comes to implementing gender quotas, political parties need to establish precise, comprehensive criteria. To ensure process transparency, this involves stating the percentage of seats set aside for women as well as the standards used to choose candidates.

II. Include feedback procedures: Throughout the phases of policy creation and implementation, put in place procedures for ongoing feedback from grassroots actors. This will guarantee that the quotas take into account the community's demands and worries.

III. Invest in capacity building: Aspiring female leaders should receive priority enrolment in political parties' capacity-building initiatives. To improve the capabilities of female candidates, training sessions should concentrate on leadership abilities, the creation of policies, and successful campaigning.

6.3.1.3 Adoption of the Suggested Gender Quotas Framework

I. Research and analysis: Political parties should first carry out in-depth investigations into the gender dynamics that exist within certain districts, especially in areas that have historically been strongholds. This study will assist in identifying the particular difficulties and chances associated with enacting gender quotas in various fields.

II. Involve members of the grassroots in the development of policy: Incorporate grassroots actors in the formulation of the gender quota proposal by employing a bottom-up methodology. In addition to ensuring that the policy represents the various viewpoints of party members, this participation will promote a sense of ownership.

III. Pilot implementation: To evaluate the gender quota system's efficacy and obtain feedback for enhancement, start a pilot program in a few chosen constituencies. Important information regarding the effect of quotas on women's representation and engagement in politics will be made available by this trial phase.

IV. Create monitoring and evaluation systems: Create organized methods for tracking and assessing how well the gender quota is being implemented. Frequent reporting on achievements and difficulties will encourage responsibility and enable prompt policy revisions when necessary.

V. Encourage replication and scaling: After the gender quota system is successfully implemented in pilot programs, encourage its replication and scaling among other constituencies. To encourage greater acceptability and successful implementation, exchange best practices and lessons discovered.

Political parties in Ghana could establish a fairer and more inclusive electoral system that encourages the participation of women and other under-represented groups by putting these suggestions into practice.

6.3.2 Recommendation for Further Studies

The study recommends the following further studies;

i. Examine how identities overlap with the gender quota system, taking into account elements including ethnicity, socioeconomic standing, and age. Examine how various aspects of identity affect acceptance, application, and results.

ii. To conduct a long-term study to evaluate how electoral gender quota systems have affected the makeup, programs, and governance of political parties. Whether gender quotas result in long-lasting changes to the political scene may be revealed by this.

iii. Investigate the institutional and structural impediments to the successful implementation of gender quotas. Examining obstacles to the system such as constitutional restrictions, political rivalries, and administrative barriers could be part of this.

iv. Examine the views and perspectives of married, single, and those with and without female children regarding the electoral gender quota system. Look

into the perspectives of these various groups of people and how they might affect political processes.

v. The contribution of women's organizations and civil society organizations to the advocacy of electoral gender quotas in Ghanaian political parties.

Future research in these areas can help create more equitable and efficient electoral systems by illuminating the nuances and difficulties associated with adopting electoral gender quotas in Ghanaian political parties.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Consent Form for Participant

Introduction

Hello, my name is Michael Kubi. I am a PhD student in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) at The Open University of Tanzania. I will be conducting a research study as part of fulfilling the requirement for the award of a doctoral degree.

Description of the Study

You are invited to participate in this study, which **examines the prospect of electoral gender quota system in Ghanaian political parties.** You will be required to use a pseudonym during the interview to protect your identity. I will ask you questions about your views on what extent would the grassroots (ordinary) political actors of political parties accept electoral gender quota system. What you think would make electoral gender quota system among grassroots (ordinary) political actors feasible and what you believe will be an acceptable framework that can be developed for electoral gender quota system for Ghanaian political parties?

Your interview responses will be documented through recording, only for transcription purposes only; and your anonymity is assured.

Payments

There will be no compensation for the participants in the study.

Duration of Involvement

Your participation in the interviews will take approximately one hour.

Participant's Rights

Please understand your participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty. You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions. Your privacy and confidentiality of the information you provide will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study. The results of this study will be published as a methodical document and may be cited by others in professional or scientific journals.

Contact Information

If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this research study, its procedures, risks and benefits, you can contact me at mocorn2013@gmail.com or 0261101010.

Independent Contact

If you have any concerns, complaints, or general questions about the research or your rights as a participant and wish to speak to someone independently, please contact the Associate Dean, Dr. Emmanuel Mhache at +255713770223; emmanuel.mhache@out.ac.tz, Dean FASS Dr. Felician Mutasa at +255713229204; felician.mutasa@out.ac.tz & dfass@out.ac.tz ; or the Director of Postgraduate studies at drps@out.ac.tz.

Signature

If you have had all your questions answered and would like to participate in this study, sign on the lines below. Remember, your participation is voluntary, and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this study. The extra copy of this signed sheet and dated consent form is for you to keep.

SIGNATURE_____DATE_____

Pseudonym name of participant _____

Part A: Demographic Background Information

1. What is your opinion on gender quotas in elections?
2. Do you think boosting women's presence in politics requires electoral gender quotas?
   - l If not, why?
   - l If yes, why?
3. Are there any other nations you know of that have established electoral gender quotas? What do you think about their experience?
4. In your political party, do you think gender quotas are necessary?
   - l If not, why?
   - l If yes, why?
5. What advantages do you see for your party and Ghana's political system if gender quotas are implemented?

Part B: To access the acceptance of electoral gender quotas among grassroots political actors in Ghana

6. What, in your opinion, are the key elements that would enable Ghanaian political parties to successfully adopt electoral gender quotas?
7. In your opinion, what measures can the party leadership take to guarantee the successful implementation of electoral gender quotas?
8. What part, in your opinion, can members of grassroots in parties like yourself play in promoting the adoption of electoral gender quotas?
9. Do you know your party's position on electoral gender quota and what exactly does it state?
10. Do you know if your political party have an electoral gender policy or strategy?

    l. *If yes, in which document (instrument) does your party have this strategy or policy and do you think it the best place to have it?*

    ll. *If not, do you think its about time your party develops one and why? And which party document (instrument) do you think should contain an electoral gender policy or strategy and why?*
11. Do you have an idea of the number of female parliamentarians in your party and are you comfortable with it?
12. Do you have a favorite female Member of Parliament or politician?
13. What makes you like or admire her?
14. Do you think those qualities which makes you admire her will be enough for you to vote for her should she contest in your constituency primaries with your current MP and why?
15. Will you still vote for her if she is contesting with a man and why?

16. Does the party rules or constitution make any specifications in respect of the representation of women in the process of selecting candidates for the national legislature? (E.g. requiring a minimum number of women among the overall candidates) and what your opinion about it?
17. Who are the formulators of policies and strategies within your party?
    i. l. *Do you have an idea of how policies are generally formulated within your party and if yes, can you run me through it?*
    ii. If no, why don't you know and will you wish to know?
18. What is the role of the grassroots in decision making in your party?
19. Do you think a person's gender can affect the decision the person will take and why
20. What do you think can be done to make electoral gender quota acceptance and implementation fluid?

Investigate expectation of grassroots political actors on what will make electoral gender quotas feasible

7. Do you know your party's position on electoral gender quota and what exactly does its state?
8. Do you know if your political party have an electoral gender policy or strategy?
    i. If yes, in which document (instrument) does your party have this strategy or policy and do you think it the best place to have it?
    ii. If not, do you think its about time your party develops one and why? And which party document (instrument) do you think should contain an electoral gender policy or strategy and why?
9. Do you have an idea of the number of female parliamentarians in your party and

are you comfortable with it?

10. Do you have a favorite female Member of Parliament or politician?
11. What makes you like or admire her?
12. Do you think those qualities which makes you admire her will be enough for you to vote for her should she contest in your constituency primaries with your current MP and why?
13. Will you still vote for her if she is contesting with a man and why?
14. Is it a subject matter you are interested in or you don't care and why?
15. Does the party rules or constitution make any specifications in respect of the representation of women in the process of selecting candidates for the national legislature? (E.g. requiring a minimum number of women among the overall candidates) and what your opinion about it?
16. Who are the formulators of policies and strategies within your party?
    i. *Do you have an idea of how policies are generally formulated within your party and if yes, can you run me through it?*
    ii. If no why don't you know and will you wish to know?
17. What is the role of the grassroots in decision making of the party?
18. Who is/are tasked with the implementation of policies and strategies within your party?
    i. *How is such strategy implemented within the party?*
    ii. *What have been some of these policies and what has been the extent of effectiveness of their implementation?*
19. What are the factors you think make some policies acceptance difficult?
20. Have you been involved in any policy or strategy formulation of your party before?

Part C: A Framework for an Acceptable Electoral Gender Quotas System for Ghanaian Political Parties

21. How do you think an electoral gender quota system can contribute to increasing women's representation in Ghanaian politics?
22. What are the specific areas of Ghanaian politics that should be covered by an electoral gender quota system (e.g. parliamentary elections, local government elections)?
23. Should an electoral gender quota system apply to all political parties in Ghana, or only to certain parties?
24. How do you think an electoral gender quota system can be implemented in a way that is fair and inclusive for all parties?
25. How do you think electoral gender quotas should be allocated and distributed among political parties in Ghana (e.g. by percentage, by number of seats)?
26. Should electoral gender quotas be applied to specific positions or offices (e.g. parliamentary seats?
27. How do you think electoral gender quotas can be implemented in a way that ensures fairness and equity among all parties?
28. What institutional mechanisms are necessary for implementing and enforcing an electoral gender quota system in Ghanaian politics (e.g. laws, policies, regulations)?
29. How do you think an electoral gender quota system can be implemented in a way that is transparent and accountable?
30. What role do you think civil society organizations and other stakeholders can play in promoting and enforcing an electoral gender quota system?

31 How do you think the effectiveness of an electoral gender quota system can be monitored and evaluated in Ghanaian politics?

32. What indicators or metrics can be used to measure the success of an electoral gender quota system (e.g. number of women elected, percentage of women in parliament)

33. How do you think an electoral gender quota system can be adjusted or modified based on lessons learned and best practices?

34. What kind of capacity building or training is necessary for political parties and other stakeholders to implement an electoral gender quota system effectively?

35. What resources (e.g. financial, human, technical) are necessary for implementing an electoral gender quota system in Ghanaian politics?

36. How do you think an electoral gender quota system can be sustained over time, and what kind of support is necessary for its long-term success?

Thank You

Appendix II: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDELINE

Introduction

i. Welcome participants and introduce the research team

ii. Explain the purpose of the focus group discussion and the research questions

iii. Ensure participants understand the concept of electoral gender quotas and the context of the research

Section 1: Perceptions of Electoral Gender Quotas

1. Could you share with us your initial views regarding the idea of gender quotas in elections?
2. What advantages do you see for Ghanaian politics in election gender quotas?
3. What concerns or doubts do you have regarding gender quotas in elections?
4. What effect, in your opinion, do electoral gender quotas have on the representation of women in Ghanaian politics?
5. Have you heard of any other countries implementing gender quotas in elections? Regarding their experiences, what are your thoughts?

Section 2: Factors Necessary for Successful Implementation

6. In your opinion, what elements are most crucial to the effective application of gender quotas in elections in Ghanaian political parties?
7. In your opinion, what measures can the party leadership take to guarantee the successful implementation of electoral gender quotas?
8. What part, in your opinion, can members of grassroots parties like yourself play in promoting the adoption of electoral gender quotas?
9. What changes to the party's statutes and constitution do you think would allow for the adoption of electoral gender quotas?

10. What kind of rules or regulations should the party create, in your opinion, to guarantee the equitable and efficient application of electoral gender quotas?

Section 3: Framework for an Acceptable Electoral Gender Quota System

11. What components, in your opinion, ought to be part of a framework for a workable gender quota system in Ghanaian political parties?
12. In your opinion, how should the structure be created to guarantee equity and fairness for all parties?
13. Which institutional processes, in your opinion, are required to put into place and uphold an electoral gender quota system?
14. How can the framework be improved, in your opinion, so that all stakeholders can participate and be included?
15. What kinds of tools for assessment and monitoring do you believe the framework should include in order to guarantee its efficacy?

Conclusion

i. Thank participants for their input and insights
ii. Summarize the key points discussed during the focus group discussion
iii. Ask participants if they have any final thoughts or comments

Thank You

Appendix III: Clearance Letters (THUS for NDC and NPP)

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THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA

Ref. No OUT/ PG201803116 **9th February, 2023**

The General Secretary,
National Democratic Congress (NDC),
National Head Office,
641/4 Ringway Close, Kokomlemle,
P.O.Box 5825,
ACCRA-NORTH, GHANA

Dear General Secretary,

RE: RESEARCH CLEARANCE FOR MR KUBI MICHAEL, REG NO: PG201803116

2. The Open University of Tanzania was established by an Act of Parliament No. 17 of 1992, which became operational on the 1st March 1993 by public notice No.55 in the official Gazette. The Act was however replaced by the Open University of Tanzania Charter of 2005, which became operational on 1st January 2007.In line with the Charter, the Open University of Tanzania mission is to generate and apply knowledge through research.

3. To facilitate and to simplify research process therefore, the act empowers the Vice Chancellor of the Open University of Tanzania to issue research clearance, on behalf of the Government of Tanzania and Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology, to both its staff and students who are doing research in Tanzania. With this brief background, the purpose of this letter is to introduce to you **Mr. Kubi Michael, Reg. No: PG201803116)** pursuing **(PhD).** We here by grant this clearance to conduct a research

THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA

Ref. No OUT/ PG201803116 **9th February, 2023**

The General Secretary,
New Patriotic Party (NPP),
National Head Office,
Asylum Down, Borsue Ln, Number 4:40.98,
GREATER ACCRA, GHANA.

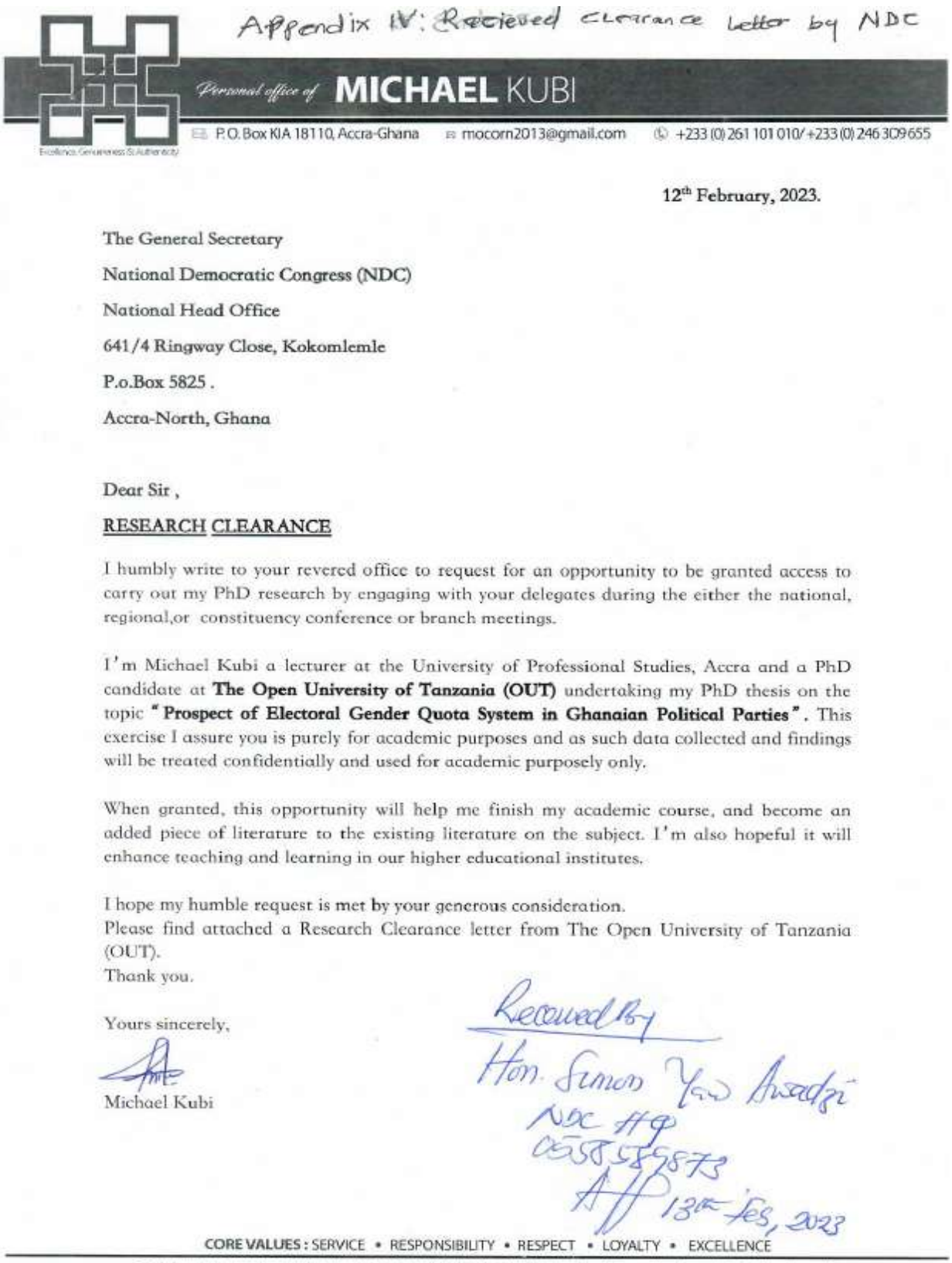
Dear General Secretary,

RE: RESEARCH CLEARANCE FOR MR KUBI MICHAEL, REG NO: PG201803116

2. The Open University of Tanzania was established by an Act of Parliament No. 17 of 1992, which became operational on the 1st March 1993 by public notice No.55 in the official Gazette. The Act was however replaced by the Open University of Tanzania Charter of 2005, which became operational on 1st January 2007.In line with the Charter, the Open University of Tanzania mission is to generate and apply knowledge through research.

3. To facilitate and to simplify research process therefore, the act empowers the Vice Chancellor of the Open University of Tanzania to issue research clearance, on behalf of the Government of Tanzania and Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology, to both its staff and students who are doing research in Tanzania. With this brief background, the purpose of this letter is to introduce to you **Mr. Kubi Michael, Reg. No: PG201803116)** pursuing **(PhD).** We here by grant this clearance to conduct a research titled **"Prospect of Electoral Gender Quota System in Ghanaian Political Parties".**

APPENDIX IV: Received clearance letter by the NDC



Appendix IV: Received clearance letter by NDC

Personal office of **MICHAEL KUBI**

P.O. Box KIA 18110, Accra-Ghana | mocorn2013@gmail.com | +233 (0) 261 101 010/ +233 (0) 246 309 655

Excellence, Genuineness & Authenticity

12th February, 2023.

The General Secretary

National Democratic Congress (NDC)

National Head Office

641/4 Ringway Close, Kokomlemle

P.o.Box 5825 .

Accra-North, Ghana

Dear Sir ,

RESEARCH CLEARANCE

I humbly write to your revered office to request for an opportunity to be granted access to carry out my PhD research by engaging with your delegates during the either the national, regional,or constituency conference or branch meetings.

I'm Michael Kubi a lecturer at the University of Professional Studies, Accra and a PhD candidate at **The Open University of Tanzania (OUT)** undertaking my PhD thesis on the topic **" Prospect of Electoral Gender Quota System in Ghanaian Political Parties"**. This exercise I assure you is purely for academic purposes and as such data collected and findings will be treated confidentially and used for academic purposely only.

When granted, this opportunity will help me finish my academic course, and become an added piece of literature to the existing literature on the subject. I'm also hopeful it will enhance teaching and learning in our higher educational institutes.

I hope my humble request is met by your generous consideration.
Please find attached a Research Clearance letter from The Open University of Tanzania (OUT).
Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Kubi

Received By
Hon. Simon Yaw Awadzi
NDC HQ
0558589873
13th Feb, 2023

CORE VALUES : SERVICE • RESPONSIBILITY • RESPECT • LOYALTY • EXCELLENCE

Appendix V: Received Clearance Letter by the NPP

12th February,2023.

The General Secretary
New Patriotic Party(NPP)
National Head Office
Asylum Down, Borsue Ln, Number 4:40.98
Greater Accra, Ghana

Dear Sir ,

RESEARCH CLEARANCE

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I'm Michael Kubi a lecturer at the University of Professional Studies, Accra and a PhD candidate at **The Open University of Tanzania (OUT)** undertaking my PhD thesis on the topic **"Prospect of Electoral Gender Quota System in Ghanaian Political Parties".** This exercise I assure you is purely for academic purposes and as such data collected and findings will be treated confidentially and used for academic purposely only.

When granted, this opportunity will help me finish my academic course, and become an added piece of literature to the existing literature on the subject. I'm also hopeful it will enhance teaching and learning in our higher educational institutes.

I hope my humble request is met by your generous consideration.

Please find attached a Research Clearance letter from **The Open University of Tanzania (OUT).**

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Kubi

Daniel Kwame Ansah
0244248755
13-02-2023

CORE VALUES : SERVICE • RESPONSIBILITY • RESPECT • LOYALTY • EXCELLENCE