

**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL**

**WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION AND PARTICIPATION  
IN THE ERA OF DECENTRALISATION**

by

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## **DEDICATION**

This piece of work is dedicated to my maternal grandparents Gladys Nomvula (umaSeoka) and Obed Meyiwa who got educated in the early 1900s, paving the way for us and generations to come. This is also dedicated to my beloved late father Moses “Mashu” Majola for giving me ‘ifa langunaphakade’ which is education. My only brother Barry Ntokozo (now deceased), I miss you brother. My paternal grandparents especially my grandmother Nomi MaNzuza Majola, this one is for you. I know you are the proudest grandma wherever you are, for this is the fruit of your teachings while raising us as your grandsons.

## **ABSTRACT**

The issue of women has been very complex when it comes to representation and decentralisation of power by governments in democratically organised societies. Decentralisation has been associated with good governance, as it brings government closer to the people; about half of whom are women. Studies have shown that women participate in greater numbers in local government to fight against under-representation in decision-making processes. This study focused on South African local government and investigated women's representation and participation in the era of decentralisation. The main aim of the study was to investigate the extent to which women are represented and participating at local government level. The further objectives of the study were to establish the impact of women's representation and participation in decision-making processes at local government level, and to explore successful factors contributing to increased representation and participation of women at local government level.

A qualitative approach was adopted and more than one hundred councillors were interviewed from the targeted population. The researcher interviewed councillors from different political parties in different municipalities as well as independent ward councillors. The findings have shown that although women are the majority at local government level, the number of women ward councillors was low. The study noted that politics is still male dominated. This is exacerbated by the historical background of the two provinces, KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape. Very little has been done by the political parties and other stakeholders in terms of supporting women councillors. The findings showed that no training or strategies are in place to empower women and political parties are not grooming women for representation and participation at local government level. It was also noted that women councillors are treated the same and no gender issues were entertained separately by the council. Findings indicated that the public perception concerning the role of councillors has been a challenge together with high unemployment and poverty level.

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACDP	African Christian Democratic Party
AIC	African Independent Congress
ANC	African National Congress
AU	African Union
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women
CGE	Commission on Gender Equality
CODESA	Convention for a Democratic South Africa
COGTA	Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
COPE	Congress of the People
DA	Democratic Alliance
HDI	Human Development Index
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
IND	Independent
IULA	International Union of Local Authorities
LGNF	Local Government Negotiation Forum
LGTA	Local Government Transition Act 209 of 1993
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MEC	Member of the Executive Council
MF	Minority Front
MP	Member of Parliament
NFP	National Freedom Party
NGM	National Gender Machinery
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PR	Proportional Representation
PVO	Private Voluntary Organisation
SADC	South African Development Community
TLGF	Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act 41 of 2003
UCLG	United Cities and Local Government

UDF	United Democratic Party
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDHR	United Nations Declaration of Human Rights
UNDEF	United Nations Democratic Fund
USA	United States of America

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

The issue of women has been very complex when it comes to representation and decentralisation of power by governments in democratically organised societies. Decentralisation has been associated with good governance, as it brings government closer to the people; about half of whom are women. Studies have shown that women participate in greater numbers in local government to fight against under-representation in decision-making processes (Hassim, 2005). Women have been marginalised for decades and also feel that they should represent themselves, in order to influence decisions and channel the limited resources of local government to projects that would uplift their daily lives. The central government in democratic states creates structures that support the representation and participation of communities at the decentralised level including women. However, this is not the case in every country, due to political, religious, and cultural influences. Political parties have been dominated by men who are also leaders who are not interested in promoting women and their issues. As a result, very few women are interested in joining politics which affects their numbers in the council and leadership positions. The hesitancy of women to join politics and the unwillingness of political parties to motivate women to become leaders, has contributed to their low representation in politics (Macarie, Neamtu and Creta, 2008). With democratic countries promulgating prescripts to increase the number of women in politics, a number of women has increased which has affected how local government operates. This study focuses on South African local government and investigates women's representation and participation in decision-making processes in the era of decentralisation.

### **1.2 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY**

There are several reasons why this study is undertaken by the researcher. South Africa has been recognised worldwide for their advanced policy frameworks which have enhanced the condition and representation of women (Albetyn, 1995). Historically, women were excluded in politics based on gender, race and class. After 1994 elections and when local government

was reformed a year later, the national government overlooked women's representation at local government level (Robinson, 1995). This was felt when formal structures that attempted to address women and gender issues were located at centralised level of government. However, international studies argue that women participate in greater numbers in local level politics with the purpose to fight against under-representation in decision-making positions (Lovenduski, 1996; Rai, 1996; Phillips, 1996; Waylen, 1996; Bryson, 1999; Abdela, 2000; Hunt, 2004; Hassim, 2005). Although there were no women at local government in South Africa during the apartheid era, most women activists from women's movements moved from local to central level of government after 1994, leaving a vacuum probably without political parties grooming women for representation and participation at local level.

Secondly, demographics show that there are more women than men in South Africa, according to StatisticsSA (2013), yet the female population is on average poorer than the male population (Chagunda, 2004: 2). This means that even when it comes to voting, there might be more female voters than male voters. Therefore, there is a need for women to participate and represent themselves at all levels of government, and politics in general in order to influence decision-making processes.

Thirdly, the African National Congress (ANC) led government inherited apartheid legislation frameworks, policies and practices. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) as the supreme law of the country made provision for local government reform in South Africa. Three spheres of government that are 'distinctive, interdependent and interrelated' namely national, provincial and local, were created. The structure does not present a hierarchy as each sphere has its own role to play, without one being the boss of the other (Frug, 1996). The South African government wanted to create a platform for citizens to participate and therefore passed legislation to give them power to participate at local government level (McEwan 2005: 973). Therefore, women as important citizens should exercise their rights by utilizing the very same space for participation.

Another reason has been women statistics at local government level that seem to be fluctuating, as not all political parties believe in the quota system. In a study conducted by Sithole, it was found that in the first local government elections in 1995/96 only 19% of representatives were women, in contrast to 27,7% at national level. However, the number has

since increased to 28,2% in 2000 and 39,7% in 2006 (Nyalunga, 2006: 19). Chagunda (2004: 5) contends that the integration and involvement of women in high numbers will have an effect on the lives of the poor, once women get a chance of upliftment, the whole family and society benefits. However, with the local government elections in South Africa held on the 18<sup>th</sup> of May 2011; the number of women elected as councillors declined by almost 0,2 percent (see Table 1.1 below). The next local government elections will be held in 2016. Hence, it is crucial to investigate the representation and participation of women in order to identify factors that might have contributed to the decline in 2011 for the future. Also, the researcher hope that this study will add value on strategies to be adopted in addressing gender issues at local government level. It must be noted that this study is based on the researcher thesis of a similar title, done at master’s level. However, the focus was only on Msunduzi Local Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa. This study now focuses on two provinces, four district municipalities and several local municipalities under different districts.

**Table 1.1: Gender and Local Government in South Africa**

<b>Year</b>	<b>% women ward</b>	<b>% women PR</b>	<b>% women overall</b>
1995	11%	28%	19%
2000	17%	38%	29%
2006	37%	42%	40%
2011	33%	43%	38%

Source: Gender (Links 2011)

### **1.3 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

South African women of all colours and races have been at the forefront in their communities fighting for emancipation and their democratic rights (Imbokodo, 2006). In 1994, the newly elected South African Government of National Unity promulgated the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996, Bill of Rights Chapter 2(9) (1) to (9) (5) that refers to the

clause on equality, subsequent to the inheritance of apartheid discriminative legislation frameworks, policies and practices. The Constitution protects the rights of previously disadvantaged groups i.e. Blacks, Coloureds, Indian and people with disabilities as well as women. The Constitution of 1996 makes provision for both men and women to be treated equally and cements the rights of women (Todes, Sithole and Williamson, 2007: 1). Women were treated unfairly on the grounds of gender and black women seem to be the most marginalised. However, problems such as violence, unequal access to resources which leads to poverty were identified in the report that was released after 1994 (Myakayaka-Manzini, 2002: 2). In order to ensure fair and equitable treatment of women, the United Nations CEDAW was therefore, ratified in 1995.

South African government promulgated a Commission for Gender Equality Act 39 of 1996, which rendered Commission on Gender Equality (CGE) an independent organisation freely deal with issues which undermine democracy and marginalised people on grounds of gender (CGE, 2009). The CGE is part of the National Gender Machinery (NGM) together with civil society, government departments etc. and reports directly to Parliament in order to ensure conformity with international standards. It also allows for the establishment of Provincial Gender Machinery in order to work with other organisations on women issues. The women that moved from local to national level were through 30% quota system adopted by the ANC. The Department of Women, Children Youth and People with Disabilities was established in 2009 to deal with issues amongst others that would improve the status of women in all circles of life. However, though the newly created office have good intentions in terms of addressing women/gender issues, as women's 'voices' at local government level are not still not heard. In his 2004 book, former South African State President Thabo Mbeki pointed out that the State should involve women in all structures for all citizens to be liberated (Imbokodo, 2006). This statement is crucial for South Africa with its maturing democracy; therefore one may not shy away from scrutinizing democracy and gender issues at decentralised level of government.

Byrne and Schnyder (2005: 6) points out that most decentralisation processes take place in democratically organised societies. Hambleton (1992) contends that decentralisation is democratic as it enables people to participate in decisions affecting their lives and their communities. Therefore, it leads to the democratisation of local governance. Furthermore, Smoke (2003: 9) identified four advantages of decentralisation related to devolution as



enhanced competence, power, fairness, and growth and poverty decrease. According to Olowu (1997: 108) the relationship between democracy and decentralisation assist to teach people the art and discipline of accountable regime and democracy; employ and educate the new political headship; greater quantity of participation in political and democratic processes.

However, Kulipossi (2004: 777) argue that decentralisation can be practised in the nonexistence of democracy as it depends on the system of accountability and other mechanisms that were already in place before the introduction of decentralised reforms upon which the latter continued to build. Smoke (2003: 13), cautioned that democratic decentralisation differ in all states due to the way they conduct politics, formal state organisation, economic policies and cultural features and therefore must be ‘approached with care’. For Beall (2005: 253), when decentralisation is connected to democracy it is a benefit for women.

Subsequent to promulgation of the White Paper on Local Government in 1998 to support and oversee municipalities, a number of legislation such as Local Government Municipal Demarcation Act 27 of 1998; Local Government Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998; Local Government Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000; Local Government Municipal Financial Management Act 56 of 2003; Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act 41 of 2003 were assented. Although local government was the last sphere of government to be transformed, the above-mentioned prescripts ensured that the needs for different interests groups such as women were catered for. Basically, the role of local government is to encourage community participation including civil society in local government issues in order to ensure that there is accountability at local government level. The White Paper with Development Local Government seek to be dedicated to working with people and community organisations to address socio-economic issues and therefore improve their standard of living (COGTA, 2009: 16). This was done in order to ensure that democratic decentralisation is realised because communities have the right to participate in decision-making affecting their development by electing representatives at local level.

The new democratic municipalities became fully functional after the year 2000. Ward councillors were elected by local communities including women to represent their respective wards. However, once elected, ward councillors have to be accountable to the community that elected them. Davids (2006: 4) argues that ward councillor’s role is to serve as a link by

communicating the needs of community members to the council. The Local Government Municipal Structures Act (117 of 1998) makes provision for ward councillors to serve as chairpersons of ward committees representing different interest groups in the ward.

The ANC government inherited legacy of non-elected traditional leadership from previously rural 'homeland' areas, into local government structures. However, government has been in the process of nation building and traditional authorities are therefore part of. Nonetheless, this has negatively affected women access to information, participation and representation for many reasons including culture. Beall (2005: 764) argues that women are particularly defenceless under the traditional arrangement as their rights are limited due to their marital statuses and lack of access to certain resources. One would argue whether or not the position of traditional authority constitutes democratic decentralisation as enshrined in the Constitution of 1996 and how women are represented and participating in decision-making processes.

Phillips (1998: 7) argues that it is a challenge to talk about inclusion in politics without ensuring that members of a particular group are included politically. He continues to question that males cannot lawfully represent women when the issues is about women representing themselves. Women are human beings just like any other man, and therefore deserve some recognition. Women are the first people to be affected by the failure of local government in terms of providing good services. When the municipality cannot provide any service because services have not been paid for, the person who would suffer most is a woman of the house (Beall, 2004: 16). Women are the ones who are taking care of the children and the household issues in most cases. In this regard, it is crucial to investigate how women are represented and participating in the era of decentralisation in South Africa.

#### **1.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study is exploratory in nature and therefore a qualitative research method was employed in order to address a specific social state. The target population were both male and female ward councillors from different local municipalities in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal Provinces. This was done in order to cover both rural and urban municipalities. In KwaZulu-Natal, eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality and three other local municipalities under uMgungundlovu District Municipalities were chosen, namely, uMkhambathini Local

Municipality, uMngeni Local Municipality and Msunduzi Local Municipality. In the Eastern Cape, uMzimvubu Local Municipality under the Alfred Nzo District Municipality was chosen using the convenience sampling method and also ensuring that both males and females are represented.

In-depth semi structured interviews for face-to-face and telephone interviews using an interview guide. The interview guide had seventeen questions which were mainly open ended. Secondary information was used in the study. Content analysis was utilised and themes were induced from the interview data.

## **1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The main aim of the study was to investigate the extent to which women are represented and participating at local government level.

The specific objectives of the study were:

- To establish the impact of women's representation and participation in decision-making processes at local government level.
- To investigate the extent to which women representatives are gaining support from other stakeholders (civil society, political parties, communities, other women etc.) in addressing gender issues at local government level.
- To analyse the personal strategies that women councillors adopt in order to maximise their contribution to decision making processes in local government contexts.
- To identify barriers and challenges related to the representation and participation of women at local government level.
- To explore successful factors contributing to increased representation and participation of women at local government level.

## **1.6 KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The research study responded to the following key questions:

Q1: What is the impact of women's representation and participation in decision-making processes at local government level?

- Q2: To what extent is women representative gaining support from other stakeholders in addressing gender issues at local government level?
- Q3: What strategies are adopted by women councillors to maximise their contribution to decision making processes in local government contexts?
- Q4: What are the barriers and challenges related to their representation and participation?
- Q5: What are the success factors contributing to increased representation and participation of women at local government level?

## **1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The study is limited to ward councillors, in only about two provinces out of nine provinces of South Africa. It focuses on the representation and participation of women councillors in decision-making processes within their local councils, therefore, it would be difficult to generalise the study. The fact that telephonic in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted on such as sensitive issues served as a limitation in this study.

## **1.8 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS**

This study is divided into seven chapters where the introductory chapter introduces the topic, outline and the aims of the study. A brief overview of the each chapter follows.

**Chapter One** provides an introduction and an overview of the study. Aspects discussed are the rationale of the study, background of the study, objectives of the study, key research questions, limitations of the study, and an overview of the chapters.

**Chapter Two** presents a literature review that outline the framework related to women's representation and participation at local government level. This chapter is be divided into sections, namely democracy and the role of the United Nations (UN), decentralisation, representation, participation, gender and feminist theories, women and their participation in politics, the role of the State and civil society with regard to women's interest, and a brief history of civil society in other continents Firstly, the chapter focuses on the role played by the UN in promoting democracy. It also deals with the relationship between the UN and other

stakeholders such as the non-governmental organisations (NGO's) and the civil society and the position of other structures within the UN regarding women's issues.

Secondly, the chapter deals with the meaning and kinds of decentralisation. A theoretical framework is reviewed to provide background as to the reasons considered by governments to decentralise, and, the relationship between decentralisation and democracy. A definition model of decentralisation is introduced to show how central government can transfer power to democratically elected institutions at local government level for the benefit of the whole population. It also deals with why government decides to decentralise.

Thirdly, the chapter proceeds to pay attention to representation and different types of representation to show how women could be represented and/or represent themselves. The politics of presence is briefly discussed as there are opportunities for women to represent themselves. The objective is to examine and explain the nature of which women may be selected and elected into position, what interest they are serving and to whom they are accountable to at local government level.

Another section focuses on why citizens including women should participate in politics, different types of spaces for participation, and theoretical models of participation. After this background, the chapter then shifts to deal with gender and the role that is played by feminists in addressing women's participation in politics issues. Different types of feminism are discussed such as liberal Marxist, cultural, socialist and radical feminism.

Since the study is about gender the researcher then deals with women and their participation in politics. Their voting rights, interests, and the relationship they have with other women, men, political parties, families, and civil society are looked at as part of social structures which can support or hinder women's participation and representation in politics. Finally, this chapter focuses on a brief history of civil society and progress made in different parts of the world on women's representation and participation in politics.

**Chapter Three** deals with local government and women in South Africa. It also shows the importance of women in local governance and local government reform in South Africa. It looks at the brief history of local government under the apartheid government in South Africa. The second part focuses on local government reform, the commencement of negotiation and prescripts introduced after 1994 to redress the imbalances created by apartheid policies. What is more important is women's participation and representation in decision-making at local government level. The reasons for and challenges of women's representation in decision-making processes are explored. This chapter also shows how local

government can contribute positively to gender equality, as women are considered closer to local government than men. The literature reveals the role of government and political party position towards women's representation and participation at local government in terms of the quota system. Finally, it explores the role of ward councillors, status and statistics in relation to women's representation and participation at local government level in South Africa.

**Chapter Four** presents methodology adopted to achieve the specific aims of the study. Included in this chapter is the rationale for preferring local and metropolitan municipalities and a brief background concerning the said municipalities prior to and after the first democratic local government election during 1995/1996. The purpose of the background is to explain the importance of ward councillors recently introduced in certain areas during local government reform in South Africa. This demonstrates the commitment of government to decentralisation and lead to a better understanding of how and where respondents would be drawn from. The chapter also describes the research design, the difference between qualitative and quantitative research designs and population and sampling. It demonstrates why and how the sample was chosen in order to obtain balanced information when gender issues are addressed in terms of women's representation and participation within the local and the metropolitan municipalities in South Africa. The chapter covers the type of data instrument to be used namely, telephonic in-depth semi-structured interviews and the reasons this method is adopted. It outlines why content analysis is employed to analyse data and how the researcher identify themes in relation to information gathered from interviewed respondents. Included in this chapter is ethical consideration and limitation discussion.

**Chapter Five** provides a detailed presentation of the findings of this study. These findings are presented in relation to each of the specific aims of the study. The results are presented through the use of charts, tables, diagrams, graphs and other relevant methods.

**Chapter Six** focuses on the analysis of results. The presentation of data is systematically linked to the research objectives or specific aims of the study. Also, an overview of the study, limitation, summary and discussion of finding is presented.

**Chapter Seven** presents conclusions, recommendations that could be drawn based on the findings relating to women's representation and participation at local government level. Also, it identifies and makes suggestions for future research.

## **1.9 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has discussed an introduction and an overview of the study. Aspects discussed are the rationale of the study, background of the study, objectives of the study, key research questions, limitations of the study, and an overview of the chapters. The next chapter discusses the literature review.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter dealt with the rationale for the study, the main aim and specific objectives of the study, the background as well as the outline of the study. This chapter focuses on different topics which concern women and their political representation and participation. For better understanding, first the literature deals with democracy, the role of the UN in promoting democracy and stakeholders involved in addressing gender issues. Secondly, the chapter focuses on the association of democracy and decentralization, definition and different kinds of decentralization as well as why governments decide to decentralize. Thirdly, the issue of representation is explored including the politics of presence as there are calls for women's interests not to be ignored anymore. In addition to women being represented, their participation in decision-making processes is important. The chapter then deals with different forms and theoretical models of participation that could be utilized by interested parties in order to influence decisions. Against this background, the chapter moves on to deal with gender issues looking at the role of feminism in relation to women's politics, different structures such as women's wings of political parties and groups that hinder or promote women's representation and participation in politics. Lastly, the chapter focuses on the progress that has been made and how women from different countries have fought for equality and their role at the local level of government.

#### **2.2 WHAT IS DEMOCRACY?**

When dealing with women's issues or gender issues, decentralization, participation and representation, it would not be possible to address or realize it fully in a non-democratic country. In fact, the definition of democracy has been a challenge for decades as countries are failing to fully understand its meaning and application. Most countries have to deal with how to democratize the country first. The countries would start by transforming the political system towards accountable and representative government. The term 'democracy' originated in ancient Greek linguistic and political practices and means 'rule by the people' (Bayes,



Hawkesworth, 2006: 15). Democracy addresses not only political issues such as elections, a number of political parties contesting the election etc. but include the inequality matters when decisions are made (Nzimakwe, 2005). Shija (2012: 238) pointed out that democracy is a political and social process which professes equity, equality before the law as well as gender and racial equality. When decisions that affects people's lives are taken, it is important that citizens must contribute and those taking decisions must follow the right procedure and must be accountable to the people (UN Democracy, 2013).

The UN is an international organization which has been assisting countries to introduce uniform policies when addressing equity and equal opportunity issues. Newman and Rich (2000) remarked that to be a member of the UN it is not a pre-requisite to be a democratic State but there are responsibilities in the charter that must be carried out. The 2004 UN resolution addresses two different aspects of democracy, namely 'vertical accountability' and 'horizontal accountability'. Vertical accountability is all about in what manner a State relates with members of the society in that country. Horizontal accountability is about how State organisations interrelate and how they are created and controlled. The UN Charter does not have a word democracy in it. However, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNDHR) outlines democracy as a model where 'the will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government'. Whereas 'the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966, lays the legal basis for the principle of democracy under international law particularly, freedom of expression (Article 19); freedom of association (Article 22) and; the right to peaceful assembly (Article 21)'. As a result, it has been the responsibility of the member States to increase the representation and participation of women in decision-making government structures.

This encourages states to create a platform where all its citizens irrespective of race, ethnic group, minorities, including women can influence decisions that affect them. It actually means that all individuals must respect the principle of equality through democracy by accepting that when something gets decided based on a majority vote it must be respected (Shija, 2012: 239). This can be beneficial for women in terms of influencing the decisions, especially when they are a majority. However, Botes, Brynard, Fourie and Roux, (1996: 11-25) argue that there is no consensus about what is understood by the basic principles of democracy. It is important to look at the role of the UN in promoting democracy.

## **2.3 THE ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN PROMOTING DEMOCRACY**

The UN as an organization has been instrumental in providing assistance in relation to the development of legislation, strengthening judiciary systems and national human rights machinery and provided electoral guidance in a number of countries. The UN General Assembly has reiterated that people must participate freely in all aspects of their lives be it politically, socially, economically and even culturally in any democratic system (UN Global Issues, 2013). Democracy is a world-wide and inseparable central significance and principle of the UN (UN Democracy, 2013). Some of the activities of the UN have been to assist governments to decentralise and to promote women's participation in politics (UN Democracy, 2013). These activities are supported by special programmes and projects such as UN Democratic Fund (UNDEF) and the UN Development Programme (UNDP).

The UN has for decades been working together with regional, intergovernmental and NGOs such as the African Union (AU), South African Development Community (SADC) and the Electoral Institute for the Sustainability of Democracy in Africa. This has allowed different stakeholders such as political parties, community organisations including civil society, government departments and other organs of the State to participate in all democratic processes.

### **2.3.1 Democracy as a Human Right**

In order to support democratic countries in promoting human rights, development, peace and security, the UN introduced a program called UNDP. With this programme the UN ensures that political rights are included in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. That is where women's participation in political and public life has been actually promoted. The UN Human Rights Commission affirmed freedom of association and expression, accountability and transparency during elections as significant characteristics which are essential to democracy (Democracy Reporting International, 2011). Therefore it is important for women to know these institution and lead if not, at least influence the decisions made as one of their rights. Women would have a chance of dealing with their own issues.

## 2.4 THE ROLE OF UNITED NATIONS ON WOMEN'S ISSUES

For the past five decades the UN has been instrumental in the enhancement and advancement of women's political representation and participation especially in democratic countries. According to Burrell, (2004: 89) women fought for their rights and concluded their very first agreement in 1848 when 350 people met in the Wesleyan Chapel in America. There were other conventions concerning marriage, age and family which were later adopted.

In order to directly address gender equality issues, the UN established the Commission on the Status of Women which paved the way for global policy-maker to be gender unbiased. At the first International Women's Year in 1975, the years 1976 to 1985 was declared as the UN Decade for Women. This led to the promulgation of the CEDAW which was regarded as the International Bill of Rights for Women. The CEDAW calls on States to deal with the elimination of discrimination against women in all spheres of life (Democracy Reporting International, 2011). Furthermore, the CEDAW is the foundation of participation of both males and females, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1978 and now ratified by 179 countries (Bennet, 2010: 28).

Grugel (2002: 5) argues that women are everywhere economically disadvantaged compared with their male counterparts and consequently participate less in politics and have less influence over policy-making. The 2011 General Assembly resolution on Women's Political Participation (A/RES/66/130), confirms:

*“that the active participation of women, on equal terms with men, at all levels of decision-making is essential to the achievement of equality, sustainable development, peace and democracy”.*

Since then, member States have to report on the position of women every 4<sup>th</sup> year where factors and difficulties in implementation may be indicated. The CEDAW would then suggest solutions and make recommendations to enhance implementation of the Convention. This stirred Member States to obliterate all discriminatory laws and incorporate gender equality in their national prescripts, establish tribunals and other public organizations for active protection as well as ensure that women have equal opportunities and access to political and unrestricted life. The right for women to vote and stand for election provided for in the document as well other right such as employment, education and health.

Women continue to struggle for survival on the margins of their mainstream societies and are victims of social exclusion and economic marginalization (Ramosepele, 2011). Mandela (1998), former President of the Republic of South Africa pointed out that:

*‘Women constitute the majority of the population and although we now have a democratic society, we conceded that freedom will not be attained fully unless women have been truly emancipated and empowered in all spheres of life’.*

## **2.5 THE BEIJING CONFERENCE IN 1995**

According to Talbot (2011) the Beijing Conference has provided the blueprint for the development of women. A Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies to the Year 2000 was adopted which led to women’s rights to be regarded as human’s rights in the 4<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. The Nairobi Conference is noted for the emergence of strong southern networks and voices, among them the launch of Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era, a southern feminist network dedicated to analysis and advocacy for gender and economic justice (Sen and Grown, 1987). Cesa (2011) stated that the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action would always be remembered as the most all-inclusive global policy framework for the full realization of gender equality, women’s rights and the empowerment of women’s rights. Furthermore, Cesa (2011) argues that despite the encouraging evolution, the progress has been uneven among areas and regions as there are still severe problems affecting women, such as poverty, violence and discrimination.

Women’s participation in government decision-making must be promoted and their presence in public office, including at the highest level of government, must be expanded (Rio Group, 2011). At the Sixty-Sixth Session of the UN General Assembly, Talbot (2011) pointed out that incremental progress has been the result of regional efforts thus far evidenced by gains in areas such as education, where females outnumber their male counterparts at secondary and tertiary levels. However, cultural and structural factors contribute to impede women’s access to and control over resources and services, their access to economic opportunities and this ability to exercise power and political influence. In spite of the attainment of high levels of education by women, men continue to dominate positions of power and decision-making (Talbot, 2011). Women are still underrepresented in positions where there are elections and it

had been a mammoth task for most countries to reach the 30 percent recommended in Beijing in 1995 (UN CEDAW, 2013). The next section looks at the role of civil society in democratic countries.

## **2.6 THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN DEMOCRATIC COUNTRIES**

In 2004 UN General Assembly resolution invites NGOs to participate in local and national structures in order to promote democracy (Democracy Reporting International, 2011). Community organisations serve to organize and facilitate political, economic, social and other interests including governments (Democracy Reporting International, 2011). The term civil society refers to a range of free associations which are located between the State and family and are based on notions of social and political autonomy and voluntary membership (Greenstein, 2004). Landsberg, Mackay and Ngwens (2005) argues that ‘civil society is the realm in which citizens associate with one another in order to ensure that government and State institutions respond to their needs and are accountable to them’. However, Houtzager points out that there is no civil society as such, but diverse array of actors with different capabilities and interests.

### **2.6.1 Social Movement**

Social movements are a section of civil society that pursues social and political agenda in relation to the State and its policies but independently of and frequently in opposition to it (Greenstein, 2004). According to Chatterjee (2001), social movements have four distinctive features:

- Many of its activities and mobilizations are illegal, including squatting, using public property, refusal to pay taxes, unauthorised service connections etc.
- People use the language of rights to demand welfare provision;
- The rights so demanded are seen not as individual rights, but as vested in a collective or a community which may be very recent in origin;
- State agencies and NGOs treat people not as bodies of citizens belonging to a lawfully constituted civil society, but as population groups deserving welfare.

## **2.7 THE ROLE OF NGOs IN THE UNITED NATIONS IN RELATION TO WOMEN**

The non-governmental organisations (NGO) participation had been recognized and encouraged by the UN Division for the Advancement of Women to provide oral information. Although NGOs had not been invited individually, they could write a report to the Committee and send representatives to address the committee. When stakeholders including the NGO gathered in 1985 in Nairobi, they realized that the UN Decade for Women goals had not been effectively met. Before Beijing there was a 1985 World Conference on Women in Nairobi as explained above. In 2009, the UN recognised the importance of NGOs in proceeding the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (UN CSW, 2009). Furthermore, NGOs has been ensuring that international and national leaders are accountable for the promise made (UN NGOs, 2013).

## **2.8 UN AND GENDER MAINSTREAMING**

In order to expedite gender equality issue, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Goal 3 specifically promotes gender equality and women empowerment. In order to integrate women's issues, the UN created a single body called UN Women in 2010. The UN Women which was established in 2010 has been welcomed by all member States including the Caribbean Community and has been regarded as an institution that will be instrumental in bringing coherence to and leading efforts in the promotion of gender within the UN system (Talbot, 2011). The first UN Women Strategic Plan 2011-2013 sets out the entity's vision, mission and priorities support of the member States and other entities of the UN s system in the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment, in accordance with the general principles established in the General Assembly Resolution 64/289 (UN General Assembly, 2011). During the strategic plan stakeholders such as civil society, academia, governments and other development organisation were consulted. The UN Women also capacitate women for political participation and educate them on gender equality.

## **2.9 AFRICAN UNION ON GENDER ISSUES**

The African Union has launched the African Women's Decade, 2010-2020 in October 2010 in order to accelerate the realisation of regional and global commitments to the empowerment of women through a top-down and bottom-up approach which is inclusive of grassroots

participation (Kamau, 2011). The Assembly of the Head of State and Government of the African Union adopted the African Union Gender Policy which together with the comprehensive Action Plan is a guide for the implementation of decision and Declaration of the African Union on gender and women's empowerment (Kamau, 2011). The lack of economic resources in electoral processes is a bigger challenge for women than men. However, women's presence in the political arena is on the rise in some countries in Africa. According to Kamau (2011), there is a need to increase women's political participation throughout the continent. The general lack of quota laws on the representation of women added to the fact that elections could alter the gender distribution in this important decision-making forum undermines greater progress in this area (Talbot, 2011).

### **2.9.1 The African Women's Protocol**

In 2003 there was a Maputo Summit where the Heads of African States adopted The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Right of Women in Africa to encourage the participation of women in politics (Gawaya and Mukasa, 2005: 42-45). Gawaya and Mukasa, (2005: 45) pointed out that 'Article 9 of The African women's Protocol required States to increase the representation and participation of women at all levels of decision-making, and ensure that this representation and participation are effective'. The African Union's purpose of this protocol was to ensure that there was effective democracy and decentralisation in Africa and women are benefiting.

### **2.10 MEANING OF DECENTRALISATION**

Most of the developed and recently developing countries have become democratic as there are elections which are held every five years. Some of these countries have two three or four categories of government, namely national, regional, provincial and municipal or local spheres. The process is called decentralisation, when central government is trying to be visible and closer to the people, the majority of whom are women. The aim is to empower the people when government is brought closer to them and women are supposed to be the rightful beneficiaries. Central governments decentralise responsibilities to local levels and ensure that there is effective service delivery (Charbit, 2011). Decentralization is there to ensure that there is transfer of power, resources and responsibility to local government and other decentralised entities which are closer to the people (UNESCO, 2006: 8). Decentralization transforms the way government works and interacts with the public. According to Smoke

(2003: 13) decentralisation is a complex, multifaceted phenomenon that varies across countries with different, political, institutional, fiscal and cultural characteristics.

With decentralisation, decision-making powers move from centralised government local government officials and ensure that there is participation of all stakeholders (Govender, 2008). One can state that it leads to good governance and allow participation by the people at the lowest level of government. Decentralisation fosters good governance as lower level officials are able to deal with the needs and challenges and therefore respond positively to community issues (Loh, 2013). However, there are other authors such as Grindle (2007) who are of the view that the relationship between decentralisation and good governance is complicated. For example, Grindle (2007) argued that decentralisation improves public sector responsiveness, accountability and makes service delivery more efficient and effective. In this way, members of the public should be able to interact with local government official on daily basis. Public servants at decentralised level become accountable as they are closer to the people. They have a chance of directly dealing with the needs of the community people. That means there are more opportunities for participation, more accountability and responsiveness (Loh, 2013).

According to Loh (2013), decentralisation does not allow the central government to interfere with local issues. When limited resources are allocated such as budget, money should be used on projects which are mostly needed by the people. In fact, a number of scholars have argued that decentralization policies benefit local structures by giving them more autonomy and control in terms of managing their budgets and more resources (Tiebout 1956; Musgrave 1959; Oates 1977) by limiting the involvement of the central government in the economy (Brennan and Buchanan, 1980) and by making markets more competitive and efficient (Weigast, 1995; Treisman, 2007; Gonzalez, 2012). Decentralisation one can say is all about participation in the decision-making processes and increasing accountability at local government level. This means that decentralisation can be a tool which can be utilised by community members, including women, to participate and be represented in public institutions created by the government that they elected into power. Basically, decentralisation was predicted to improve or strengthen civil society; increase local capacity; and make government more accountable and responsive, able to use resources to satisfy citizen needs (Tulchin, 2012). There are different kinds of decentralisation which can be beneficial to all citizen including women.



## **2.11 KINDS OF DECENTRALISATION**

Decentralisation can be categorised into three types, namely, administrative, fiscal and democratic decentralisation, depending on the nature and type of power that is transferred.

### **2.11.1 Administrative Decentralisation**

According to the World Bank (2000), administrative decentralisation allows elected local officials to strategize and implement policies on anything under their jurisdiction according to the needs of the people. Administrative decentralization involves three positions of power that is, deconcentration, delegation and devolution. Deconcentration, is all about political, administrative and fiscal duties taken down to local level from the national departments (Crook and Manor, 1998). Cohen and Peterson (1999) pointed out that deconcentration can be a strategy to extend central control and closely supervise and monitor the implementation of national directives. Loh (2013) argues that with deconcentration, the national government may have taken decisions and local government officials would be responsible for the implementation of those decisions. Under deconcentration, it is possible for appointed local officials to be more accountable to central government than local population. This can negatively affect women especially when their interests have been overlooked by central government. Sometimes local people may find it a challenge to accept those decisions as they did not make any input. Women from different communities and class might have different needs at a particular time.

However, delegation is where there is no direct control by national government but responsibilities are transferred to organisations that are outside government structures (Blair, 2000; Crook and Manor, 1998). This can involve organisations such as the NGOs, local business people, private voluntary organisations (PVOs) etc. in this case, women may benefit when they are allowed to participate, are represented or members of these structures or outside organisations.

Lastly, devolution is where local government is solely responsible for outcome of the decisions they have taken. With devolution, local government is given more administrative, fiscal and political powers and support in terms of executing their tasks (Blair, 2000; Crook and Manor, 1998). Therefore, the role that is played by officials in each structure must be clearly defined so that resources may not be wasted unnecessarily. At this stage, government

can ensure that women are participating or represented in order to influence decisions which are taken especially on issues that affect them directly. The second kind of decentralisation is fiscal decentralisation.

### **2.11.2 Fiscal Decentralisation**

Fiscal decentralisation gives substantial income and expenditure power to local governments and other local entities (World Bank, 2000). With fiscal decentralisation, government believe that local officials are aware of the needs and preferences of the local people and are responsible to provide good service as they are closer to the people (Charbit, 2011). According to the World Bank (2015), fiscal decentralization is responsible for its own expenditure, can generate revenue and work with other local entities better than the national government. However, there are some arguments that local governments may not be able to deal their finances effectively or as expected (Charbit, 2011). Should this be the case, women would be the first group to suffer, as their daily activities such as cooking for the family rely on the services provided at local government level.

According to Bockenforde, Elbabour and Megerisi (2013), the fiscal question can affect other parts of decentralisation when it cannot generate revenue. Local governments are closer to the people, and they know where to best invest the money than national government. That is why government must ensure that women are part of the decision making process or represented at local government. Another kind of decentralisation is democratic decentralisation.

### **2.11.3 Democratic Decentralization**

Democratic decentralisation is sometime referred to as political decentralisation because it allows local government to be run by people who have been elected by citizens in a specific area of jurisdiction. The World Bank (2000) emphasizes that political decentralisation is about the power that is given to municipalities and councils as the people have trusted them by electing them to power. Therefore, it is important to represent those people and deal directly with local issues (Charbit, 2011). In a democracy, when diverse groups including women are represented, they may influence the outcome of whatever decisions that are made. In fact, 'decisions that are made with greater participation would be better informed and more relevant to diverse interests in society as compared to those made by national authorities' (PRIA International Academy, 2015). Bockenforde *et al.* (2013) argues that when political decentralisation is not supported by administrative and fiscal decentralisation, it would not

have any major impact. As a result, women would be the most affected as their interests would not be entertained. That is why it is important to understand why central government decide to decentralise power, responsibilities and resources.

## **2.12 WHY CENTRAL GOVERNMENT DECIDES TO DECENTRALISE**

Decentralisation has worked effectively in different countries where there had been wars or dictatorship (Bockenforde, *et al.*, 2013). Also, decentralisation is there to create a platform for different local interests groups to be heard (Rondinelli *et al.* 1989; Crook and Manor, 1998). According to Cameron (2001: 115), decentralisation may have two different motives. Firstly, it could intend to promote democracy and empower people at lower levels of government through representation and participation. Strong institutions at local government level are needed to ensure that there is democracy. However, institutions on their own might not guarantee that there is democracy without good leadership to ensure that people of diverse races, minorities or gender are represented. Therefore, women can be empowered by representing themselves, have the opportunity to participate and influence decisions affecting their day-to-day livelihood.

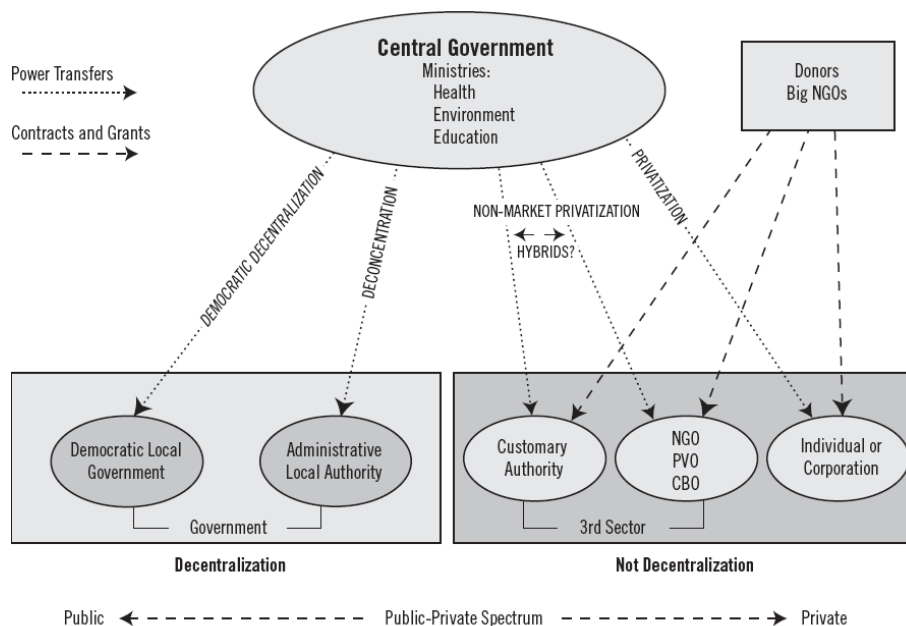
Secondly, government can decentralise for “a narrow political advantage, where the state may position itself within global economy that reflects a more integrated, centralized view of local government” (Cameron, 2001: 115). Furthermore, the central government may be interested in off-loading tasks which are inflated onto local government and appeared to be democratic though in fact employing deconcentration and controlling sub-national government properties (Manor, 1999: 39). Galvin (1999: 89) warns that several African countries have reacted to difficulties for decentralisation through deconcentration well than democratic decentralisation. The latter approach of decentralisation creates obstacles for women to represent themselves and participate in decision-making processes. Therefore, it is crucial at this point to fully understand the meaning of decentralisation as some public administration and governance authors have thoroughly defined it.

## 2.13 FORMAL DEFINITION OF DECENTRALISATION

Ribot (2004) in his formal definition model of decentralisation identified the kind of institutions that should be in place to constitute democratic decentralisation (see Figure 2.1 below). The model shows that central government departments should transfer power to democratically elected institutions at local government for the advantage of the whole local population. When power is transferred to democratically elected local government structures, it is considered democratic decentralisation.

Furthermore, as explained above, deconcentration occurs when power is transferred to administrative local authorities. The model considers both transfers namely, democratic decentralization and deconcentration as true “decentralization” because democratic local institutions and elected officials are accountable to the central government and the local population.

**Figure 2.1: Formal Definitions: Decentralisation, Not Decentralisation**



Source: Ribot (2004: 10)

Ribot (2004) remarked that democratic decentralization is a ‘stronger’ form of decentralisation than deconcentration, as it leads to greater efficiency and equity because of representation. Ntsebeza (2004: 75) argues that with deconcentration, local authorities are not forced to account to the people that elected them. Smoke (2003: 11) warns that local

authorities would focus on their needs and those of the elites when the accountability issue is ignored. There would not be any form of transparency when local authorities are failing to account (Charbit, 2011). Furthermore, Blair (2000: 27) emphasises that it is important for local officials to account to those who have been elected by the people in order for them to account to the members of their communities. As a result, if women are represented and participating in decision-making processes, socio-economic issues affecting them such as service delivery and, infrastructural development would be addressed much quicker.

Mosoetsa (2005) points out that women are more active at local government level where they deal directly with service delivery issues. However, central government transfer power, together with donors and “big” NGOs to empower various institutions such as customary authorities; PVOs; Community-Based Organisations (CBOs); and individuals or businesses (third sector) through contracts and grants, all in the name of decentralization. On the one hand, Evertzen (2001: 3) argues that women are organised at local level and work with local organisations and therefore can participate in decision-making processes at that level. On the other hand, Ribot (2004) contends that the involvement of third sector institutions is ‘not decentralization’ as they are not democratically elected and their interest may be in satisfying their members or in profit gains. It would be difficult to monitor the participation and representation of women in such structures. Furthermore, the majority of women who are poor would have to compete for limited resources which tend to favour the local elite with the advantage of making decisions. McEwan (2003: 478) points out that local elites tend to dominate when decisions are made which affect the views and needs of the majority of the people. Therefore, it is important to explore the issue of representation in relation to women and politics.

## **2.14 REPRESENTATION**

In politics, there is no guarantee that women would be represented which is the reason why political representation and politics of presence is discussed below. This section also deals with social representation and identifies four elements of representation.

### **2.14.1 Political Representation**

Political representation in a democracy does not necessary reflect the variety of people within a society. However, political representatives should typically carry out constituent demand, or

if they need to deviate from it, they must justify that deviation such that the constituents themselves may be persuaded to redefine their interests and wishes to accord with what their representative has done (Disch, 2012). Traditional forms of political representation are being re-examined where citizens play a greater role in decisions that affect them (Govender, 2008). Lovenduski (1993) identifies three strategies that can be employed to increase women's representation in political parties. Firstly, when the leadership of the political parties take women's participation in politics seriously and ensure that they are represented at all levels. Secondly, they groom women candidates for representation and participation as well as providing resources to support them. Lastly, they use the quota system to allow women to influence decisions that are taken in different structures (Franceschet, 2005: 93).

Scholars have conducted research with regard to low representation of women in politics (Ballington, 1998a) and have identified different characteristics such as gender prejudice, family and work responsibilities, unsuitable political atmosphere, financial support for women, non-adoption of affirmative action, lack of education especially political participation and work security (Biggar, 2012: 304-5). An increase in women's political representation matters not only because it enhances women's capabilities (Sen, 1985; Hill, 2003; Peter, 2003), and therefore their well-being, but also because it can add value to governance and to the policies that are developed (Bonomi, Brosio, and Tommaso, 2013). That means women like any other interest groups must be present in all political structures.

#### **2.14.2 Politics of Presence**

While focusing on parliament, Phillips (1995), argued that when it comes to representation in parliament, there must be a move from 'politics of ideas' to the direction of a 'politics of presence'. Young (1990) states that with 'politics of presence', people who have been historically disadvantaged or marginalised are then included. Phillip (1998) argues that the formation of the 'politics of presence' can work to renew equality by improving the rightfulness in settings of historically disadvantaged people. According to Childs and Cowley (2011), 'the politics of presence is a belief that it is not just that people should have someone who speaks for them, but that they have one of their own speaking for them, someone who broadly shares for their experiences'. Women can benefit a lot as they can identify themselves when there is a woman representative in the structures of government especially

at local government level. Maybe it is important to understand where people are coming from and how their presence can be felt in terms of representation and decision making.

### **2.14.3 Social Representation**

Individuals whether male, female or otherwise, are members of their families before there are members of a society. For these individuals to be part of the society, they need to have a system of mutual understanding to converse well with each other. Otherwise whatever one individual is saying might not have a meaning to a particular society or group. Same thing for women, they must understand who they are and what role are they playing in their families and society in order to communicate with other groups within the society. One cannot dispute the fact that not everybody in the group can have the same view at a particular point. That is why it is important for the group or society including women to have representatives. Moscovici, one of the respected writers, introduced social representation in his 1963 book (Wagner, 2012). His understanding was that each community has its own unique way of communication depending on their belief system (Wagner, 2012). Even women and minority groups as community members have a different way of communicating and of doing things that are of interest to them. When there is a platform for women to discuss issues of common interest, it takes their relationship to another level.

Knights (2005) identified three factors that exist in any relationship, namely, the representatives, the represented and the relationship that exists between those two parties (which is the representation that is exercised by the representer on behalf of representees. Burke (1949) argues that people should give their representatives the greatest possible freedom to act as those representatives think best. He warns that a representative who subjects his own best judgement to opinion of those who elected him 'betrays, instead of serving' them. However, Przeworski, Stokes and Manin (1999), pointed out that political leaderships have their own goals, interests and values and are aware of things that community members are not aware of. Pitkin (1967) is one of the highly respected writers on representation. Her influential work identifies four diverse, but interrelated elements of representation, namely formal, descriptive, substantive and symbolic representation.

#### **2.14.4 Formal Representation**

Formal representation is all about official rules and procedures which concerns the selection of representatives (Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler, 2005). Formal representation includes authorization and accountability where formal processes are followed and where people who want to be represented give someone the right to represent them and can have authority over that representative (Wauters, 2012). Basically, women in government have a chance to participate in decision-making processes on issues significant to them. As Wauters (2012) puts it, formal representation allows parties to express their concerns for particular social groups and leads to descriptive representation. These institutions with tier rules can give women a chance to participate and or be represented just like any other groups in a society. Those that are elected would be accountable to their constituents. That means the prescripts governing local government and the procedures must be clearly understood by all members of the society including women irrespective of whether they choose a woman or a man to represent them or serve their interest.

#### **2.14.5 Symbolic Representation**

Symbolic representation refers to represented party's perception of being fairly and effectively represented (Schwindt and Mishler, 2005: 407). For example, institutions may involve traditional authority, 'standing for' the people within their jurisdiction, including women. Irrespective of whether the representative is male or female, women could be glad that they have a representative who will address their issues.

#### **2.14.6 Substantive Representation**

The concept of acting to benefit women has been termed 'substantive representation' (Costa, Sawyer and Sharp, 2013). Substantive representation is when the representative 'acts for' the represented, for instance, a leader advancing the interests of workers (Tornquist, 2009: 6). In this case, anyone may 'act for' women, provided they share the same views, interests and ideas. There is an assumption that there is a set of issues or interests that may be considered women's issues or interests and that once in office women will seek to act upon these (Bauer and Britton, 2006: 4). Substantive representation refers to the expected results of women's full participation in elected bodies in politics: elected women should promote and enact policies that are in line with their interests, such as promotion of their status and opportunities through legal measures and or the provision of appropriate service (Bonomi, Brosio, and Tommaso, 2013). Dolan (2004: 15) argues that electing more women to office will increase



the likelihood that women's interests will be addressed by policymakers because women believe and behave differently from men.

With substantive representation, most writers have analyzed it by using critical actors (such as parliament, women's movements) and critical acts (NGOs, International agencies, public service). Critical actors influence the policy process and mobilize others around women's concerns, while critical acts are actions that lead to changes in the positions of minority groups (Dahlerup, 1988) including women as they are classified like that in other countries.

According to Thomas (1994), when the number of women increases in different structures, women would be in a position to form alliances in order to promote their interests. As a result, men may support women in dealing with their issues (Bratton, 2005). Conversely, there might be some counter attacks from men who may try to derail women's policy initiatives and not elect them into any position of power (Hawkesworth, 2003). A lower number of women can effectively tackle women's issues without threatening men's dominance in politics (Crowley, 2004). In addition, the high number of women gives no guarantee that women's interests would be served as there are other different groups with their different issues as well (Carroll, 2001).

Women's issues are followed and deliberated at different levels of government, NGOs and political meetings. Women may work together to promote their interests (Lovenduski, 2005), substitute for (Weldon, 2002) or be in competition with each other (Haas, 2005); while dealing with their own goal of having one common policy (Krook, 2010). Therefore, substantive representation might have a different meaning for women at all these levels. This shows that 'women' are not a homogeneous group but a heterogeneous group, so their interests are not homogeneous (Celis and Childs, 2012). Even when representatives seek to act for women, 'mediating factors have proven to be multiple: the external political environment; extant institutional norms; the impact of party affiliation, ideology and cohesion; differences among women representatives; representatives' newness; institutional position, including front and back bench, and government or opposition membership; committee appointment and leadership; women's caucus presence; and wider vagaries of policy making' (Bratton and Ray, 2002; Carroll, 2001; Chaney, 2006; Childs and Withey, 2006; Dodson, 2001; Gotell and Brodie, 1991; Hawkesworth, 2003; Kathlene, 1995; Reingold, 2000, 2008; Swers, 2002; Thomas, 1994; Trimble and Arscott, 2003; Weldon,

2002). Scholars such as Weldon (2002) pointed out that to understand substantive representation, women's movements, women's state agencies and the interaction between them need to be brought into the picture.

#### **2.14.7 Descriptive Representation**

According to Tornquist (2009: 6), descriptive representation is when an actor 'stands for' the represented by being objectively similar, for instance, women representing women. Groups identify themselves with a representative with the same traits and attributes (Mansbridge, 1999). Dovi (2007) indicated that descriptive representatives are those who have the same features and have the interests and experiences as the represented, for example women compared to men. In that way, women can be in a better position to represent themselves and participate in decision-making processes at the local governance level. Mansbridge (1999) argues that descriptive representation is essential in politics for a number of reasons.

When members of the historically disadvantaged groups are holding certain leadership positions, it is proof that they can lead and that policies are implemented to redress the imbalances of the past (Dolan, 2004: 13). This can lead to better communication between different stakeholders including government and trust can be gained as effective policies are discussed and implemented. (Dolan, 2004: 13). According to Dahleup's 1988 study, women in leadership positions should train young women, and participate in the development of laws for the benefit of all women in order to change their mind set and attract them to join politics (Bauer and Britton, 2006: 5). However, there have been claims by leadership of political parties that few women are interested in politics which makes it difficult to select them (Dahlerup, 2001; Sanbonmastu, 2006; Krook, 2010).

It can be assumed that women's interests will be better represented simply by electing more of them (Bauer and Britton, 2006: 3). In a study conducted by Ellis and Wilson (2013) on committees that are chaired by Blacks and Latinos in America, they showed that issues of interest to minority groups were getting more attention. This put forward that descriptive representation has a significant role to play in influencing the official programme.

#### **2.14.8 Descriptive Representation and Symbolic Representation**

Some writers treat descriptive representation the same as symbolic representation. Symbolic representation refers to an elusive advantage or psychological good, which comprises the

political behaviour and approaches of people (Garcia and Sanchez, 2008). Writers like Wauters (2012) states that descriptive representation is symbolically important as subordinate community members are expected to be affected by the same regulations they allowed to pass. There is a view that the increase in the number of women is supported by both males and females (Shwindt-Bayer and Mishler, 2005), and the view that politics is the male domain as it is women who vote for men. On the contrary, when women are part of government structures, that government is seen as more democratic (Karp and Banducci, 2008; Shwindt-Bayer and Mishler, 2005). With descriptive representation, organs of the State are seen as more democratic when people see women in local structures (Childs and Cowley, 2011). Other studies found that women's presence have little or no impact on the political commitment of woman voters (Zetterberg, 2009). However, Dolan (2010) pointed out that most people who do not value women's contribution or increased women's representation but tend to invest their money and time by voting for male candidates. Descriptive representation is bound to reproduce some version of the characteristics of the represented, in symbolic representation the connection between symbol and referent is arbitrary (Pitkin, 1967).

#### **2.14.9 Descriptive Representation and Substantive Representation**

There is a link between descriptive representation and substantive representation. Rocha and Wrinkle (2011) argues that descriptive representation facilitates the substantive representation of the members of a group. Preuh (2006) remarked that political parties play a significant role in determining the move from descriptive to substantive representation. In a study conduct by Niven (1998) it was concluded that women's descriptive representation would always be negatively affected when men have a large percentage when it comes to political party leadership.

Furthermore, there have been some arguments by scholars concerning the relationship between substantive representation (being a woman representative) and descriptive representation (representing women's issues, interests, needs and wants). One group of scholars believe that descriptive representation leads to substantive representation so one cannot separate the two (Bratton and Haynie, 1999; Bullock, 1995; Canon, 1999; Haynie, 2001, 2002; Owens, 2005; Preuhs, 2007; Tate, 2003; Ueda, 2008; Whitby, 1997). Another group of scholars argues that they do not see any direct connection between descriptive representation and substantive representation (Cameron, Epstein, and O'Halloran, 1996; Guinier, 1991; Hero and Tolbert, 1995; Lublin, 1999; Swain, 1993). However, in a recent

study conducted by Jeong (2012) it was found that increased substantive representation led Latinos to take politics seriously and believing that there is value in political participation, which increased their enthusiasm to be involved in politics. Therefore, when there are women representatives serving women's interest, there might an increase in women involved in politics.

#### **2.14.10 PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION**

Proportional representation (PR) electoral system has been employed to increase the number of women in politics (Bauer and Britton, 2006: 7). According to (1998a) the PR system allows women to be equitably represented on the political party lists. Gender quotas do not always ensure that women are represented in elected bodies (Bonomi, Brosio, and Tommaso, 2013). This is because voters may prefer to continue to vote for men leading women to remain underrepresented, despite the increased number of women candidates (Bonomi, Brosio, and Tommaso, 2013). It can only occur in an open list system, where voters are free to choose a party as well as the candidate in the list proposed by the party. Even with a fifty percent quota increase, the probability of voting for a man is always higher than the probability of voting for a woman (Bonomi, Brosio, and Tommaso, 2013).

Another challenge with the PR system is when the party leadership can assign women candidates to the lowest part of the list, thus increasing jointly their visibility and their chances of being elected (Bonomi, Brosio, and Tommaso, 2013).

#### **2.15 PARTICIPATION**

It is important to learn why people should participate on community and political issues and to know where participation should take place.

##### **2.15.1 Why Citizens Should Participate?**

Individuals participation is about making decisions which contributes to good governance and the protection of individual interests (Pateman; 1970). Citizen participation is the participation of individuals in policy-making processes such as defining the point of services,

budget, community building programmes in order for government to provide services needed and supported by different communities (Fox and Meyer, 1996: 20). Studies have indicated that although there are more chances of citizen's participation than before, people are still not interested in politics (Key, 1966; Delli, Carpini and Keeter, 1996, Griffin, 2013). The challenge is that citizen might be aware of these opportunities but choose not to utilize them because of different reasons. Their concern would not be entertained or ignored by other people or leadership in those structures. Anyway, becoming involved in decision-making processes, women can deal with their issues irrespective of their numbers in leadership positions.

### **2.15.2 Where Should Participation Take place?**

Participation is an energetic process where people become creative and take action inspired by their thinking and discussion of things they have control over.

Mathur (quoted by Kroukamp, 2002: 50-51) suggests the following six guiding rules when participation takes place:

- Participation should start at community level. Individuals at grassroots level must be aware of the opportunities to participate and they must be aware of the benefits of participation.
- Participation must take place at all stages of a particular project. From the earliest pre-preparing exercises, to the development of plans, the design of mechanisms for implementation and the final stage of implementation, participants from the community must be taken on board.
- Participative is much more than casting a vote or an isolated activity. It requires from the concerned community members to 'get right into the middle of the fight', to care about matters of concern and not allow other to take all the decisions.
- Participative processes should address the issues of resource allocation including goods and services in order to succeed.
- Participation should focus on current commitments. It should not focus exclusively on the strengthening of leadership.
- Participants must be cautioned about the possibility of conflict in some form. In communities where citizens participate in activities of government, decisions may

favour one group at the cost of another. All participants involved, and not only the relevant government institution, must deal with what flows from a situation.

According to Meyer, Cupido and Theron (2002) there is a rationale behind such as follows:

- With participation local issues, needs and attitudes may be known;
- Prior to policy decisions being taken, community members opinions can be heard;
- Participation is more like a communication instrument to inform and educate community members;
- Participation improves the democratisation process;
- Participation stimulates fairness, objectivity and practicality in the distribution of resources to different communities; and
- Participation tries to strike a balance which causes pressure between democracy and government systems (Whitely, 2012: 34).

It is important for the rules to be clear including the reasons as highlighted above. Citizen must also understand and know the different types of spaces for participation.

## **2.16 DIFFERENT TYPES OF SPACES FOR PARTICIPATION**

Cornwall and Pratt (2003: 1) developed the concept of space that has been made for residence participation. These spaces may be temporary or enduring and may be regularized through government policy. There are different types of spaces namely ‘closed spaces’; ‘invited spaces’ and ‘claimed spaces’. Closed spaces are where civil society is not included in policy-making such as those taken by international organisations. ‘Invited spaces’ is started by government or other stakeholders and sometime forced by external factors or move in policy, whereas ‘claimed spaces’ is all about communities taking action against State policies or overseas interferences (VeneKlasen, Miller, Clark and Reilly; 2004). Local government in South Africa employs the invited spaces approach as citizen participate in local matters through a variety of mechanisms and processes. Citizen’s participation leads to healthier people, improved judgements and superior administration.

### **2.16.1 Political Participation**

For more than five decades, scholars have been concerned about why some people are likely to involve themselves in politics than others. Participation is the engine that drives representation (Cho and Rudolph, 2008). Political participation is a particular form of political behaviour used by citizens in order to exert influence in political life (Gabriel, Keil and Kerrouche, 2012: 2). Whiteley (2012: 34) argues that there can be no effective democracy when there is no political participation and community organisation. Political participation creates a platform for government and communities to discuss their needs, interests and preferences and ensure that they are addressed (Verba, Scholzman and Brady, 1995). Kaase defined political participation as a class of political activities encompassing all kinds of voluntary activities aimed at influencing political decisions made at various levels in the political system (Kaase, 1997: 160).

People may participate actively as community members concerned with certain issues and or as political party members. Gawaya and Mukasa (2005: 42) pointed out that women remain excluded in decision-making processes in their own communities as well as from formal political participation. Women could benefit from these forms of participation, understand and develop interest in the resolution of issues. Women's political participation has resulted in substantial gains for democracy, and enormous advantages in responding to citizens' demands, as well as improved co-operation between political parties and ethnic groups, thus leading to stability and sustainable peace (Biggar, 2012: 305). Whitely (2012: 59) argued that it is within party organisations that apprentice politicians learn the skill they will need to be effective. Through political parties, women's group can influence youth leaders and aspiring politicians to harness the energies of youth leaders to advocate for gender equality and other form of direct action to encourage the participation of young women to prepare for future national leadership roles. (Biggar, 2012: 306). However for women, having children may limit the time available for political participation (Lane, 1964: 210) or be a distraction from politics (Bauknecht, 2012: 83).

Phillips (1996) mentioned three challenges that hinder the political participation of women. Firstly, the fact that women have to bear children and expected to deal with paid and unpaid work as determined by societal needs. Secondly, an adjustment to politician's duties, which does not accommodate the involvement of people who are regarded as responsible parents.

Lastly, social networking which favours men and party leadership responsible for selecting candidates which does not benefit the representation and participation of women in politics.

### **2.16.2 Forms of Participation**

According to Bauknecht (2012: 34) forms of political participation involve protest action by community members; active participation within a political party; dealing directly with the local government office or just signing a petition. Also, studies have concentrated on conventional and unconventional forms of participation. Conventional forms include voting, contributing cash to certain organisations, being a member of a political party, being involved in community projects and issues. With this type of participation one does not need other people to participate in politics. Instead of active participation, an individual may choose to donate money to an interest group or organisation which share one's values and goals. That individual may feel psychologically engaged (Jordan and Maloney, 1997). However, Whiteley (2005) warns that an increase in political donations could weaken the membership and people might not be active as political party members. Members of a political party have to pay a subscription and have to agree to follow the ideologies and rules of the party (Whiteley and Seyd, 2002).

Participation has been influenced by social and technological changes with the rise in the use of social media such facebook, twitter, blogs. Internet participation is now a challenge in relation to old-fashioned methods of participation, as everything could be done via the internet (Whiteley, 2005). The use of technology, mass media such as radio and television, has made individuals to become 'critical citizens' (Norris, 1999). With access to technology individuals gain knowledge about politics, and can scrutinise policies and criticise those who are unable to deliver on their election promises (Whiteley, 2010).

Unconventional forms include marches by community members, remonstrating and participation in service delivery or political protest actions (Barnes, and Kaase, 1979; Perry, Moyser and Day, 1992). The latter form may be caused by a decline in trust in government institutions and strength of political parties (Dalton, 2004).

## **2.17 THEORETICAL MODELS OF PARTICIPATION**



There are three theoretical models of participation in this study that have been considered in relation to the participation of women in politics.

### **2.17.1 Cognitive Engagement Model**

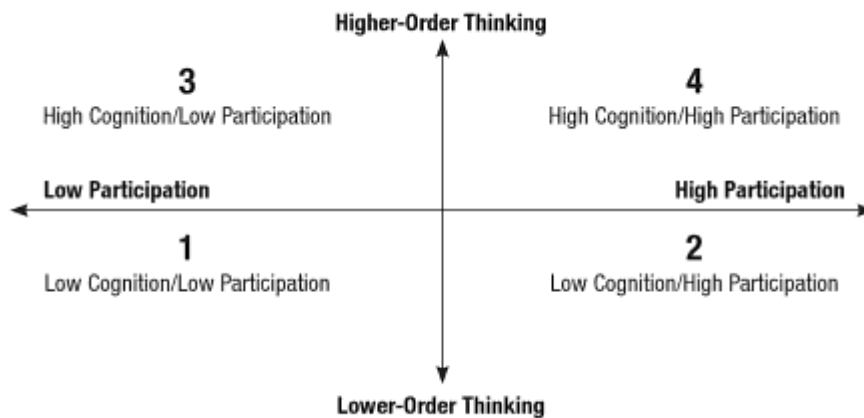
One important way to be politically involved is just by paying attention to politics. This is often referred to as ‘cognitive engagement’. Cognitive engagement is paying attention to politics and public affairs by participating in politics by being tuned into various sources of media such as newspapers, social media, email updates, phone or text alerts. In addition to this, when one talk to family members and friends as well as just interested in things that are taking place in her community that is part of cognitive engagement. Jaesung (2007) emphasises that even when one discusses politics with friends, donates money to political candidates or show some political interests using media that is also seen as suitable measures of cognitive engagement. According to Zukin (2006), paying attention to politics allows one to make informed decisions. Furthermore, thinking critically about current issues and topics in local, state, and national politics stirs people to further action and develops habits of political participation. For younger generation when they pay attention to politics and public matters, it may be a sign that they might participate in politics in future (Zukin, 2006).

In the cognitive engagement model, individual’s educational achievements, his or her knowledge of politics and knowledge of all procedures are factors which explain their participation (Norris, 2000; Clarke *et al*, 2004; Dalton, 2005; Whiteley, 2012: 45). Dalton (2002) stated that when citizens become aware and pay attention to politics, they make their choices and he described this as a process of cognitive mobilization. Cognitive mobilization means that more individuals are aware of the decision-making processes in a democratic society and understand the complexities of politics as they possess skills and resources related to politics (Whiteley, 2005).

This increase in cognitive engagement in all democratic countries is determined by the levels of education of the citizens (Dalton, 2004). That means that education is fundamental for this model, as it improves the understanding of the political information as well the ability to process it. Whiteley (2005) argues that people become cognitively engaged if they have higher education qualifications and use technology to process and make sense of political information. Figure 2.2 below deals with participation and the order of thinking. The diagram explains that those with low participation have a thinking order which is low. Those with low

participation might not be aware of what is happening in the political circles. There are individuals who participate in the politics but have a thinking order that is low. The third quadrant has people with high thinking order but who decides not to participate actively in politics. Whereas the last quadrant has those people who have a high thinking order as well as high participation.

**Figure 2.2: Total Participation Techniques**



Source: Himmele and Himmele (2011: 15)

Education assist individuals to develop their own interests in politics, understand the rules and procedures in democratic countries and therefore are able to participate and influence the decisions taken (Nie, Junn and Stehlik-Barry, 1996). However, Himmele and Himmele (2011) also argued that it has become cheaper to access information and that has led to the increase in individual’s ability to process political information. However, individuals may have less interest in voting but more engaged in different forms of protest actions (Whiteley, 2005).

### **2.17.2 Civic Voluntarism Model**

The civic voluntarism model is all about the resources the person has which motivates him or her to participate in politics. When a person is wealthier, has a higher status occupation and is more highly educated than the average citizen, they will participate more (Whitely, 2012: 48). The model is based on the study of participation in America conducted by Verba and Nie (1972: 269) which concluded the status of a person such as the occupation, level of education

and income can determine how that person participate in politics. The following quotation explains civic voluntarism model of participation clearer:

*“We focus on three factors to account for political activity. We suggested earlier that one helpful way to understand the three factors is to invert the usual question and ask instead why people do not become political activists. Three answers come to mind: because they can’t; because they want to; or because nobody asked. In other words people may be inactive because they lack resources, because they lack psychological engagement with politics, or because they are outside of the recruitment networks that bring people into politics”*

When an individual has the ability and is willing to process political information, that individual is likely to participate in politics (Clarke, Sanders, Stewart, Whiteley, 2004; Dalton, 2005; Norris, 2000).

With civic voluntarism model, education is a measure of resources. Citizens become more effective when it comes to community development issues compared to other uneducated citizens (Whiteley, 2005: 12). Those who are educated become more confident in themselves, become more efficient which improves their participation in politics (Whiteley, 2005: 12). Also, education encourages them to join any political party of their choice and sometimes participate in that political party’s activities. In addition, when individuals have spare time, maybe because they are working part time, they can become more active in politics (Whiteley, 2010). Family income, social status and leisure time have been other resources that facilitate individual involvement in politics. When there is a lack of these resources, it may become a challenge for an individual to participate in politics. The model also talks about participation in public affairs such as being a volunteer, going to church as some of the things which motivates individuals to participate in politics.

Individuals’ participation tendencies may be driven by mobilisation. People living in a close-knit community might be willing to participate when requested by other community members than individuals coming from communities with less social connections (Whiteley, 2005). This is more like an elite driven process. People who participate in politics are sometimes those who are contacted by partisan elites than those who have not been contacted at all (Rosenstone and Hansen, 1995).

### 2.17.3 Social Capital Model

According to Whiteley (2010), people who are likely to participate using the social capital model are people with strong networks and have relationships with people they can trust within their societies. There has been no agreement in terms of the meaning of social capital but most of the writers have agreed that trust is the main indicator (Fukuyama, 1995; Putman, 1993; Brehm and Rahn, 1997; Van Deth, Marraffi, Newton, Whiteley, 1999). According to Putman (2000: 19) social capital is all about means of exchange in different networks of people with mutual interests and who can rely on each other.

Coleman (1990) under social capital introduced 'credit slips' of responsibilities and means of exchange which involves people who trust each other to solve their problems. As trust is important with social capital, individuals work with people who are not their family or community members and sometimes had little interaction with each other before (Whiteley, 2005). Trust encourages individuals to participate as there is an expectation that that would bring benefits (Whiteley, 2005). It is essential for individual to involve themselves in any community activities as that can build some level of trust.

Putman (2000) and Whiteley (1999) argue that the interaction of individuals who are working voluntarily can produce personal trust and social capital. A number of studies have revealed that organisations lead to political participation as it provides a platform and encourages political discussions (Eliasoph, 1998), attentiveness to mutual interests (Fung, 2003), emotional commitment and understanding of politics (Verba *et al.*, 1995), and mobilisation on the matters of interest to citizens (Barber, 1984, Walker, 2008). A person who is a member of any organisation might be attracted to join other social groups outside his or her normal one (Liu *et al.*, 1998), and political parties recruit people from local organisations according to some studies (Brady, Scholzman and Verba, 1999; Verba *et al.*, 1995). A number of networks can be linked to more chances for support and resources (Prasad, Naidu, Ehrhardt, Winkel, Murthy, 2011).

Putman (2000) also introduced two forms of social capital which are 'bonding' and 'bridging'. Bonding social capital is all about relations of people of the identical group; with strong connections which prevents people from outside from joining and limit freedom to group members. He continues to say that this kind of social capital strengthens community differences between individuals which is not supported by close-knit societies (Putman,

2000). This form of social capital is regarded as exclusive as it allows those who are accepted to bond with each other. Nonetheless, McKenzie (2008) conducted a study which focused on undesirable things about bonding social capital which revealed that the intention is not about linking people to certain organisations.

Bridging social capital refers to diverse groups that incorporate variation which is likely to stimulate weak connections. Bridging social capital is where communities can benefit because of the heterogeneous groups that it connects, be it racial, class or ideology (McKenzie, 2008: 26). Bridging could be seen as inclusive as everybody who is interested in joining the network could be welcomed by the group. Putman came up with these two types of social capital only for comparison purposes and both can have positive social effects.

There is an increased investment in political capital when there is an arrangement of political interchange and a good relationship between political actors (Nee and Opper, 2010: 2107). When there is social exchange because of trust and responsibilities, politicians would do something for a citizen with the hope that that individual would return the favour in future (Nee and Opper, 2010: 2107). Some political writers have encourage that for good governance, civil society must be involved again (Putman *et al.*, 1993), provide local services by being accountable, and community unification (Fuchs, Shapiro, and Minnite, 2001).

In a study that was conducted by Orr (1999), on urban politics and school reform, he discusses issues of ethnic and racial social capital in the USA. This occurs where people of the same racial background trusted each other more rather than having ties or associations with white or black relations. He argues that when social capital is limited to people of one ethnic group, assistance would come from those members only not from outside (Orr, 1999).

Education is also seen as an important resource and, as an input and an outcome in this model. There are indications which suggest that highly educated individuals are trustworthy and therefore find it easy to trust (Pattie, Seyd, and Whiteley, 2004). Education seems to relate to trust, which may promote community connections and social collaboration within groups, which leads to participation (Whiteley, 2005). The contradiction is that in developed countries with more resources, there has been a fall in terms of electoral participation irrespective of their investment in education (Whiteley, 2005). This change is not limited to electoral participation, government departments and political parties have been affected by

the decline in trust (Dalton, 2004). Whiteley (2010) argues that individuals who become active participants in their political parties have trust in government and other individuals. In a study conducted by Whiteley (2010), it was concluded that there has been a decline when it comes to active political party participation and individuals becoming members in some democratic countries. Political parties are becoming more professional and sometimes ignore their volunteers who at the end of the day have to deal with more control from those political parties (Whiteley, 2010).

Putman (2000) remarks about how social life and social capital has been affected by television watching in recent years. In his book 'Bowling Alone' he claims that American citizens are bowling alone (Putman, 2000) which means that they have become individualistic in a sense that they do not value the need for interacting with each other anymore. In a recent study that was conducted on women entrepreneurs in India by Prasad, Naidu, Ehrhardt, Winkel, Murthy (2011), it was discovered that a family-run business system might result in limited network connects which may affect women's business skills to fully develop. However, family support is more of a 'coping resource' that can assist a women business's emotional security (Parasuraman, Purohit, Godshalk, 1996). The next part focuses on gender in order to understand why men and women behave differently when it comes to politics.

## **2.18 GENDER**

According to Scott (1986: 1070) gender is a suitable classification of analysis specifically because it 'provides a way to decode meaning' and to lighten how gender levels are formed, well-maintained, and transformed over the multifaceted communication of standards, signs, personal relationships, community practices, and spiritual, financial, and party-political institutions (Bayes, Hawkesworth, 2006: 7). Gender is all about biological differences between males and females and the understanding of those differences (Duerst-Lhti and Kelly, 1995: 13). However, gender is more difficult to understand as the community has created its own position and grouped it to 'feminine' and 'masculine'. While sex refers to the biological distinctions between a female and a male, gender is more difficult because of the society which focuses on the conduct, characters, actions and beliefs based on a person considered being feminine or masculine (Dolan, 2004: 7). Biological features are diverse and

constant, though common structures of gender are social and dichotomous (Hanson, 2001: 553).

According to Dandavati (2005: 26) ‘men are regarded as strong, independent and dominant; they are responsible for providing for the family, functioning in the public sphere and thus, participating actively in the political life of the country’. Furthermore, ‘Women are considered as weak, dependent, subordinate and responsible for raising children and fulfilling all household and religious duties’ (Dandavati, 2005: 26). Sales (1997: 62) added that women are responsible for passing on morals from one generation to another and therefore regarded as custodians of the family. According to Hanson (2001: 553), women can be cruel and men can be the opposite by being nurturing and not disturbing the belief about their differences. However, Klenke (1996: xi) argues that gender can be based on a specific culture and not on individual differences or democratic variable which has significant repercussions for persons and groups. Different sexual roles can only be known through culture (Duerst-Lhti and Kelly, 1995: 16).

### **2.18.1 Gender Inequality**

Gender inequality is rooted in unequal power relations at national and international levels (Rostami-Povey, 2012: 2). Inequality is caused by the society which gives status to people based on power in terms of wealth, education or income (Blau, 1977: 45). Gender-sensitive organisational changes should deal with the development and implementation of policies related to gender equality for women to participate in politics (Goetz and Hassim, 2003: 5).

Family and societal structures have negatively affected representation and participation of young women due to gender inequalities forced on them (Aryan, 2012: 36). All efforts that contribute to influencing public opinion to replace traditional gender roles and norms with a new gender consciousness are vital to achieving greater equality and equity between the sexes (Criquillion, 2004: 125).

In opposition to the male-dominated view that argued women were a ‘weak’ gender and unable to perform their professional duties, women demonstrated their capacity and ability as equal partners to their male colleagues (Koolae, 2012: 141) Women and men must be

convinced about gender equality; otherwise rivalry will not bring about sustainable changes in gender relations and in society as a whole (Aryan, 2012: 86).

## **2.19 THE ROLE OF FEMINISTS ON WOMEN'S ISSUES**

Feminism has taken many forms over time and place and according to social, political and cultural context (Allwood and Wadia, 2002: 213). Feminists would like to see men and women being treated equally at all levels and not discriminated against based on gender (Dandavati, 2005: 7). In some countries, feminising politics has been understood as an evidence of greater commitment towards European values (Forest, 2011: 81). As feminists increasingly moved into traditional political parties, especially those on the left, they entered a masculine world where they were inhibited from discussing their particular concerns, that is, those arising from their social positions as women (Franceschet, 2005: 47).

According to Allwood and Wadia (2002: 213), feminists disagree about their goals, orientation, strategy, and their relation with women as a group and about whether women constitute a group. Furthermore, it has been stated in different forums that not all women have feminist interests however some women do promote gender equality in policy making (Goetz and Hassim, 2003: 14). However, feminists are fighting a State that is protecting the interests of men only and not fighting for women's interests against men's interests (Pringle and Watson, 1992).

### **2.19.1 Feminist Theory**

Feminism started in the 1800 when Mary Wollstonecraft and John Stuart Mill fought for the liberation of women who were oppressed. They had a belief that women were treated unfairly, yet women have resources for the development of individuals and community relationships. Mainly, feminist wanted to see equality and fair treatment of both men and women politically, economically and socially. It can be stated that there is no one definition of feminism as there are different believes. The only two things that is common which defines feminism is sexuality and equality. Equality is all about the question of being treated equally by the society in terms of having access to resources and other things which are valued by the society (Hanson, 2001: 548). While sexuality comprises of who the individuals



is attracted to, what the person is doing sexually, reproduction and child care (Hanson, 2001: 550).

## **2.20 DIFFERENT TYPES OF FEMINISM**

There are many diverse forms of feminism; however, some women activists' discussions of a form of feminism which presents men as the enemy and rival has created fear in society both for women and for men and has resulted in a backlash (Aryan, 2012: 86). Women are criticised and called anti-men and labelled 'feminists' in a derogatory way by their colleagues (Koolae, 2012: 141). Women are criticised by a number of women's right activists within the women's movements for being slow (Koolae, 2012: 141). Feminists raised questions about the nature of the female condition, about women's attitude to themselves and the social images imposed upon them, about men's fear and hatred of women, and about the causes of women's powerlessness and oppression (Carter, 1988: 174).

Lawrence (1970, cited in Jonasdottir, 1988, 1988: 170) quotation is at present crucial about men's perspective about women in his words that:

*'Man is willing to accept woman as an equal, as a man in skirts, as an angel, a devil, a baby-face, a machine, an instrument, a bosom, a womb, a pair of legs, a servant, an encyclopedia, an ideal or an obscenity; the only thing he won't accept her as is a human being, a real human being of the female sex.'*

### **2.20.1 Liberal Feminism**

Liberalism is the kind of feminism which believes that only the change of laws and social transformation could assist women to be treated equally. There is a belief that women are discriminated against based on their gender by modern societies (Jaggar, 1983). Nationality, individual independence, and self-realisation are important aspects of liberal feminism. These type of feminists try to address gender equality issues and focus on the characteristics that both sexes possess more than anything. Liberal feminists do not support women only but are gender neutral and they want to see individuals being able to express themselves freely in their own communities. According to Sarakakis, Rush, Grubb-Swetnam and Lane (2008), liberal feminists focus on the centrality of an ideal state that respects all its citizens, thereby granting and protecting equal rights and equal opportunities for women and men. Both men and women should be treated equally and enjoy equality of opportunities in order to achieve

their potential as human beings. However, women are seen as not intelligent enough and have no strength physically which makes them to be barred from participating in most societal events and therefore not fully utilised.

Wilson and Thompson (2001: 65) remarked that men would be found in places where there is power and women in spaces where there is less or no power at all. On the contrary, Jonasdottir (1988:168) remarks that women are not completely incompetent; however they have no expertise and influence. He went on to explain that influence means power that can be there but not seriously or willingly considered. According to Wilson and Thompson (2001: 67) 'power is exercised by controlling the agenda and mobilising biases in the system, thus determining which issues are important and which come into the decision-making arena'. In that way, those who are a threat to them can be ostracised (Lukes, 1986: 9).

Liberal feminists argue that both men and women should be given equal opportunities, access to education, and political rights. They want to see women being liberated and not oppressed based on their gender characteristics for example sexuality. There must not be a disregard of feelings when women are put into second gender class (Hanson, 2001: 553). The results of liberal feminism have been more opportunities for women participating politically and becoming economically dependent. Liberal feminists do not want anything new for women except for them to be treated equally and not discriminated against based on sex (Rosser, 2005: 2). The test is that with liberal feminism men values are regarded as common as these feminists do not challenge them. It is as if all women should try and behave like men in order to be accepted. Also, liberal feminism do not analyse any class of people or sexuality.

### **2.20.2 Marxist Feminism**

Marxist feminism is influenced by the philosophies of Karl Marx and Engles as they look at feminism in the lens of class. Marxist feminism believes that capitalism has been the cause of women to be oppressed. Some Marxist feminists in their studies focused on class division and compared women's work with their oppression and how they perceived themselves (Gimenez, 2005; Holmstrom, 1982); Jaggar, 1983; Malos, 1980; Young, 1980; Sarakakis *et al*, 2008). With Marxist feminism there is a belief that the means of production must be shared by all when capitalism as a system is replaced by socialism. Society plays an important role as class and status awareness determines the work that individual acquires. A woman begin by looking at her status in society which determines what job she might obtain

and that she is expected to conceive and raise children than to generate income. Marxist feminists focus on women having financial freedom looking at their status in terms of work and self-esteem as women not as individuals. They see the capitalist system as favouring men and encourage women to depend on men. The flaws of Marxist feminism have been the confusion of different financial groups between men and women and to focus on other aspects of life other than work.

### **2.20.3 Cultural Feminism**

Cultural feminism considers the importance of women's existence or principle in any community. There are philosophy women and men's essential characteristics and differences in emotions which single out women as exceptional. Cultural feminists, for example, Faderman (1981); Gilligan (1982) suggest that feminists here permit honesty, variety, and transformation when talking about women, considering how they speak and think. The fact that men and women are not the same biologically is important in considering the culture of women as they are responsible for reproduction. Women are regarded as caring and calmer which make feminists emphasise how essential women are in neutralising men. When women are involved there could be less fighting in different platforms and countries.

Cultural feminism aims to balance power between men and women as both parties have distinct qualities, behaviours, and experiences. There is a belief that women's ways of doing things is better than men's way in terms of culture.

### **2.20.4 Separatism Feminism**

Separatism feminists do not support heterosexual relationships as they believe that sexual differences cannot be changed. Separatist feminism does not believe in the involvement of men on feminine issues as men enjoy being dominant. Separatists are often wrongly labelled as lesbians. This allows women to see themselves in a different environment. Most feminists believe that it is a good platform for a start and for personal growth. Conversely, women do not certainly recommend long-lasting separation as it can be unhealthy for both men and women.

### **2.20.5 Socialist Feminism**

Social feminism does not separate individuals from the society they belong to (Bird and Brush, 2002; Prasad, Naidu, Ehrhardt, Winkel, Murthy, 2011). However, they explore at the

life of women in their communities in isolation. Social feminists support the Marxist feminism's dispute that women's oppression is caused by the capitalist system. There is a belief that colonisation, racism and patriarchy are attached to each other and entangled. For women to be free, both the financial and cultural causes of women's oppression must come to an end. Socialist feminism deals with issues of class, sex, race, ethnicity, nationality and sexual preference. According to Rosser (2005) capitalism and patriarchy are strengthening divisions in term of sex as far as work is concerned, at the same time ignoring the role played by women as child bearers. Socialist feminism is an inclusive way of creating social change. Women like men, are created basically by different dimensions.

### **2.20.6 Radical Feminism**

Radical feminism (Daly, 1973; Frye, 1983; Hoagland, 1988) focused on the way in which human relations in different communities are organised in relation to women's oppression. It generally revolves around the beginning of female biology and regaining the true nature of women. Radical feminism is all about the roles of both men and women based on their biological characteristics. MacKinnon (1987) argues that it is difficult for women put forward their experiences, lives, and needs at the centre of their lives. Women meet in community groups to share their common goals and knowledge (Rosser, 2005). Based on this, it is their sexuality that separates them from men (Wilson and Thompson, 2001: 71).

Miriam (2007: 211) introduced the concept heterosexualism and refers to it as a joining of societal, political and cultural powers which give others a privilege and a sense of entitlement. She was referring to the amendment to ban gay marriages in the United States of America (USA) as well as young women who were having sex outside of marriage. This was based on seeing young female bodies in some kind of mass culture and media such as advertisement, cosmetics and fashion which is how sexual activity is understood (Miriam, 2007, 212). With the use of technology, female body parts have become commercialised. Radical feminists encourage women to remove themselves emotionally and sexually from men in order to realise their full potential (Sarakakis *et al*, 2008).

## **2.21 THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AUTONOMOUS FEMINISTS AND POLITICAL WOMEN**

Kirkwood (1988 :19) explain that the main difference between the autonomous feminists and the political women is that the political women prioritised the democratic struggle, arguing that ‘there is no feminism without democracy’, while the autonomous feminists place a premium on the feminists struggle, insisting ‘there is no democracy without feminism’(Franceschet, 2005: 77). However, the autonomous feminists have lost much of their capacity to influence the direction of the movement, in large part because they have chosen to exclude themselves from arenas in which they could be more visible (Franceschet, 2005: 140). In addition, feminists have access to decision-making arenas, but have lacked the power to mobilise civil society around their ideals for progressive change (Franceschet, 2005: 140). The weakness of feminism in the political class reinforces its weakness in society, because feminist issues are not on the public agenda and have little support (Franceschet, 2005: 104).

### **2.21.1 Feminists versus the State**

Feminists, like other progressive activists, perceive the state as a unique vehicle in the struggle for social justice because the state had the capacity to bestow equal rights. According to Hawkesworth (2006: 96), the state can perform a number of activities such as to legislate policies, to redress historic exclusions and inequalities, to use its tax revenues toward redistributive ends. Furthermore, the state can provide all citizens with a decent quality of life, and change exploitive conditions of labor (Hawkesworth, 2006: 96). In targeting the state, feminists sought to force the official institutions of government to treat women and women’s concerns as matters of political importance (Hawkesworth, 2006: 96). Because feminists are unable to influence public opinion, the government does not feel the need to rely on them as bases of political support (Franceschet, 2005: 158). The group often suffers from the lack of resources, the lack of meeting space, and lack of clear goals and objective to ensure the group’s continued functioning (Franceschet, 2005: 148).

## **2.22 WOMEN AND VOTING RIGHTS**

The first country that allowed women to vote was New Zealand in 1893, and Australia followed in 1902, Finland in 1906, Denmark in 1915, and Norway in 1915 (Matland, 2010)

and other countries took between 50 to 60 years to reach the same outcome (Bergqvist, 2011: 158). In Switzerland, women only gained the vote in 1971 (Martin, 1993: 5), 123 years later than men (van der Gaag, 2004: 75). In Britain where women were granted permission in 1918, the first women member took her seat in 1919. In the USA where women got franchise as far back as August 1920. In France in 1968, there was only 8 women members in the National Assembly composed of 487 members. In Canada women had the right to vote only in 1920 (Martin, 1993: 5) but Asian women and men won voting rights only in 1948, and native women and men living on tribal lands won suffrage only in 1960 (Bayes, Hawkesworth, 2006: 18/9). White women in South Africa started voting in 1931, however Indians and coloured women were only allowed to vote in 1984, and African women not before 1994 (van der Gaag, 2004: 75).

### **2.22.1 Women's Interests**

In many parts of the contemporary world, states continue to represent some 'men's interests' at women's expense, denying women equal representation, reproductive freedom, education, health care, and equitable treatment (Bayes and Hawkesworth, 2006: 11). Women activists proved that women wanted change as they were then able to show their interest in politics, speak with one voice, and wanted to challenge the status quo (Dandavati, 2005: 67). Women's interests are not determined solely by gender, but are given further content by class, race, generational, and ethnic identities (Franceschet, 2005: 173). It is difficult for women in politics to promote women's gender interests, because the content of those interests is unclear (Franceschet, 2005: 172). However, women in the middle-class were able to hire services of other women to work in their homes in order to participate in politics (Dandavati, 2005: 72). Griffen (2004: 164) argues that women's interests, while not singular, in many instances need to be pursued in a collective way. The most obvious problem is that women are not a homogenous group, making the notion of women's interests vague and perhaps even meaningless (Franceschet, 2005: 102).

### **2.22.2 Women versus Women**

Martin (1993:6) argues that women must work towards creating a forum or platform to make their voices heard and ensure that their issues are not hidden. In order to work as a homogenous body, women need to know not only about the findings and reports of women studies and research projects, but also about the realities on the ground. Women can create an

environment where women leaders are welcome and supported. There are more women needed as role models for not only women but men as well (Klenke, 1996: 25). Women's groups working outside of government to press for radical change can give women in office leverage essential to legislative success (Bayes, Hawkesworth, 2006: 12). It is possible for women for vote for another woman candidate than men as they share the same experiences (Dolan, 2004: 14). 'Sisterly solidarity' has at times managed to bridge divisions in relation to specific issues (Sales, 1997: 179).

### **2.22.3 Women versus Men**

In New England in 1683, young girls were not allowed to attend school but had to be taught in their respective homes (Hawkesworth, 2006: 80). In the Nordic countries, the Viking societies allowed women relative equality with men as long as they possessed the heroic, self-assertive, and aggressive traits valued in men (William, 1920; Bystydzienski, 1995).

Women were not considered to be essentially different from men, having had the same right to property and to protection under the law. The attitude, however, changed considerably with the introduction of Christianity, which eventually established patriarchal families and promoted very different role for men and women (Bystydzienski, 1995: 18). The women's wing of the Church portrayed women only as child-bearer and people who should stay at home (O'Dowd, 1987; in Sales, 1997: 65). Women were encouraged to be feminine and not to join politics (Dandavati, 2005: 30).

Women are perceived, and see themselves, as more willing to talk to other groups, to compromise and to work together on issues of common concern. Women who work too closely with 'the other side' may be seen as unreliable (Sales, 1997: 178). Women are primary actors in informal politics while men tend to predominate in the formal political arena (Franceschet, 2005: 5), because such activism is more flexible, that is, it can be adapted to women's schedules, and is normally less demanding in terms of time and material resources, both of which women often lack (Franceschet, 2005: 6).

Men who occupy high positions feel threatened by women; they see women as their competitors and rivals and do not welcome these new competitors (Aryan, 2012: 85). Men regard the holding of high positions as their exclusive right and are not prepared to share

these with women. Political party leaders made sure that they keep 'winnable seats' for other males they have recruited, thus playing a 'gatekeeper' role that effectively excludes women (Hawkesworth, 2006: 101). Men use lobbying and networking to rise up the ladder of promotion, but women are barred from using these tools as men in high positions create their own cultural spaces and exclude women (Aryan, 2012: 85). The relationship between leadership and power rewarded men as they had more power in their homes and communities and were recognised as leaders (Duerst-Lhti and Kelly, 1995: 130).

Unfortunately, women leaders do appear to feel a need to exhibit or develop supposedly male qualities in order to be taken seriously, especially when national defence and security issues are at stake (Bennet, 2010: 13). However, female aggression still carries a stigma, and is considered unacceptable and deviant behaviour for women (Klenke, 1996: 144). The goal is to liberate both sexes from their previous limiting roles and character stereotypes, for women to become more independent and assertive and for men to become more gentle and caring (Carter, 1988: 177). The history of women and men shows that they have been having different relations at different levels with each other (Jonasdottir, 1988:164). According to Dandavati (2005:7), women can bring new ways of doing politics which can change how politics is conducted and the issues discussed.

Women and men need to have the same opportunities for education, occupation and equal wages for work of equivalent value (Aseskog, 2003: 153). Education has changed men's attitudes towards women (Aryan, 2012: 48). Higher education has prepared women to face society's challenges and to become leaders who shape policies, contribute to poverty reduction programmes and promote social and political equality (Aryan, 2012: 48).

### **2.23 WOMEN IN POLITICS AND FAMILY INFLUENCE**

Women are an important segment of the population (Kamau, 2011). Women also experiences great challenges posed by family, community and other political leaders when they show their interests in joining politics (Martin, 1993: 3). For decades, a male was regarded as the leader in the family and could be the only one who has a right to inherit this right (Rostami-Povey, 2012: 20). Women's subservience was revealed in the public code which converted married women into dependents of their husbands (Franceschet, 2005: 37). It can be stated that a number of women who have been leading or who have been prominent in their



countries have been associated with well-known politicians. Some of these women candidates have been wives and or daughters of male politicians (Valdes, 1998; Franceschet, 2005: 88). However, this kind of selection of women candidates has not been supported by most feminists. This is due to the fact that their selection is linked to the relations with a political male figure (Krook, 2010).

The world's first women prime minister came from Sri Lanka in 1960. Sirimavo Bandaranaike became the prime minister after the assassination of her husband who was also a prime minister (Bennet, 2010: 4). However, Bergqvist (2011: 157) pointed out that Vigdis Finnbogdattir was the first woman in the world to be elected president in a democratic election. India and Israel followed Sri Lanka when Indira Gandhi and Golda Meir became prime ministers in 1966 and 1969 respectively (Bennet, 2010: 4-5). Gandhi was the daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru. Benazir Bhutto from Pakistan became the fourth women president but was assassinated in 2008. Thompson (2004) remarks that Benazir seemed less threatening to rivals, who were able to rally around her more easily than had she been male. Bangladesh's Khaledi Zia's identity (1991-5) as a widow of the slain leader was the main element in her rise to power. Her physical attractiveness helped her career; 'people consider her extremely beautiful (Begum, 2006: 276).

Central African Republic was the first country in Africa to be led by a female prime minister in 1975. Margaret Thatcher, the 'Iron Lady' was the first European prime minister in the early 1980's (Bennet, 2010: 5). She was not related to any male politician. Michelle Bachelet of Chile became Chile's first female president in 2006 without any relation to a male political figure, unlike other female presidents who preceded her (Barnes and Jones, 2011: 113). With regard to Scandinavian countries, Norway and Iceland had female prime ministers in 1981 and 2009 respectively (Bergqvist, 2011: 160).

In Turkey, people saw a need to elect a woman president in order to restore democracy in 1983. However, Tansu Ciller's (1993-6) administration was viewed as corrupt as she 'build a huge financial fortune for herself' (Cizre, 2002; Bennet, 2010: 13) resorting 'to political patronage and nepotism' (Heper, 2002; Bennet, 2010: 13). According to Thompson (2004), in Bangladesh gender was less significant in Sheik Hasina's case (1996-2001) as people judge her on her record, not on which her father was. Klenke (1996: 10) pointed out that as leaders; women are undergoing some transformation as they still need to deal with marginalisation

and their social status. Bennet (2010: 13) argued that one must not expect different behaviours simply because of anyone's gender.

## **2.24 WOMEN ISSUES VERSUS POLITICAL PARTIES**

According to the women, politics means collective endeavour for social transformation that empowers that empowers women to fight any form of oppression, exploitation, injustice and degradation (Patel, 1993: 15). In traditional political stories, women are less in terms of numbers, their area is in the kitchen instead of public, so they play a minimal role as men's role is in business and politics (Daybell, 2004: 1). Most women focused on socio-economic issues as it is what affects them greatly and therefore had no desire to join politics (Franceschet, 2005: 74). Political parties are the ones that would give certain individuals access to the State because of the vast resources and the power they have (Dandavati, 2005: 5).

It is important for women to challenge how their problems are separated and deal with the fact that their demands are short-term although they are seen as dependent and inferior by certain bodies in the society (Dandavati, 2005: 60). Because women have been more marginalised politically and virtually any other sector of society, they have had more to gain and less to lose by altering the status quo (Tripp, 2007: 1). Rozas explained that at political meetings sometimes women have to 'shout and swear', which can be seen as trying to be a man as ladies are not supposed to do that (Franceschet, 2005: 91). Women candidates are however increasingly seen as an asset to the parties. Their strong links with local communities can be turned into electoral support (Sales, 1997: 65).

Historically, there have been many women who have been involved in politics (Martin, 1993: 2). However, like public offices, political parties continue to be male-dominant institutions (Hawkesworth, 2006: 101). Political parties viewed women's activities in community organisations as channels through which partisan support could be generated and reinforced (Franceschet, 2005: 50). Political parties acts as obstacles to women's participation in a number of ways (Franceschet, 2005: 85) namely by resisting the implementation of the gender quotas, selection that disadvantages women, cultural practices within the organization and continued monopolization of formal politics. Women have challenges when it comes to the way political parties do politics (Franceschet, 2005: 91). There are various forms used to

bring women into politics and that is the manipulation of electoral systems, the ideology orientation of the major parties and the pressure exerted upon them by national women's movements and social and cultural trends over time (Bauer and Britton, 2006: 6).

However, political parties are the ones that select women candidates to contest in the elections which can allow women to participation in politics (Matland, 2002). That means each political party is the key to women representation and participation. Some women are looking at political participation as undesirable and do not want to associate themselves with it, there are those who feel that women must present in the parties in order for their interests to be dealt with properly (Franceschet, 2005: 77). However, women who managed to get into leadership positions have had challenges pursuing their own independent plan (Sales, 1997: 66). There is always a clash or conflict when focusing on the political party's agenda and that of individual women and her political believes (Sales, 1997: 178-9). Women have a challenge of twofold loyalties as they serve the interest of the political party and that of the women's movements (Dandavati, 2005: 110). Commitment to a political party certainly means that one must be loyal to the political party than focusing on addressing gender matters (Sales, 1997: 179).

## **2.25 WOMEN'S WING OF A POLITICAL PARTY**

The role of women's sections inside major political parties has also been pointed out as a means of fostering more competitive and transparent recruitment and nomination processes (Saxonberg, 2000). Women have been relegated to a feminised and marginalised 'women's wing' within political parties (Goetz and Hassim, 2003: 10). The women's wings are so crippled by party control that in Zambia one woman parliamentarian remarked that the women's wings should be abolished since 'they are the biggest obstacle to women's political participation' (Ferguson, Ludwig, Katundu and Manda, 1995). On the contrary, women's organisations in the parties play an important role in mobilising women candidates and support for them once nominated (Lovenduski, 2002: 75).

### 2.25.1 Challenges faced by Women in Politics

In the 1920's lack of information and training was seen as a challenge to women's equal participation in politics (McGlen and O'Connor, 1998: 69). Women's lower psychological involvement in politics appears to be closely associated with levels of political information (McGlen and O'Connor, 1998: 66).

The parties often do little to prepare women for office, and provide little support for them once elected (Sales, 1997: 177). One woman official said-

*'I don't know if I will stand again. There are so many meetings. It takes up a lot of time, and I have three children.'* *'I wasn't expecting to win. I don't speak a lot in the council; I don't have a lot of confidence. I did not have any training, but they are talking about doing it now'* (Sales, 1997: 177).

*'They don't have enough confidence in themselves. At one of the meetings one woman said "I'm just a councillor." Could you imagine a man saying that? She was the only woman on her council.'* She continues to claim that men are sympathetic to women's greater involvement but *'you have to show them that you are not a threat.'* (Sales, 1997: 174).

Almost all opponents of the presence of women at high levels of executive power refer to women's weakness and inability to perform heavy responsibilities due to their strong emotions, in particular during menstruation, pregnancy, breastfeeding and childcare (Kadivar, 2012: 133). Women's lack of access to financial resources meant that many women were unable to campaign and stand as candidates for the municipal, local and parliamentary seats (Koolae, 2012: 140). Women have suffered a lot financially during elections due to lack of support for women candidates who are normally enjoyed by their male counterparts who could raise money through their networks in electoral campaigns (Franceschet, 2005: 89). Another type of barrier that women face derives from cultural and informal practices which tend to keep women in the private domain rather than the public field of politics (Franceschet, 2005: 90).

According to Aryan (2012: 38) 'obtaining higher education and receiving training, skills and expertise have increased women's awareness, their self-confidence, dignity, growth and development'. Educated women feel more independent and are confident to secure key roles in socio-economic and political positions (Aryan, 2012: 48). Once elected, women often find

the practical difficulties of council work overwhelming (Sales, 1997: 177). Once elected, women face a variety of reactions from male colleagues (Sales, 1997: 178).

Many women who participate in electoral politics suggest that political parties themselves are an important barrier to increasing the number of women in politics (Franceschet, 2005: 1). The politicking, dirty manoeuvring, manipulation and squabbling that goes on in most political parties has disgusted most women and they invariably withdraw from party politics (Martin, 1993: 4). While political parties are now more willing to have women on their slates; women are often regarded by male councillors with suspicion, particularly if they show any ambition, or independence from the party line (Sales, 1997: 176). McGlen and O'Connor (1998: 80) remarked that it is women who are responsible for failing to turn things around when it comes to their increased participation in politics.

Men regard the holding of high positions as their exclusive right and are not prepared to share these with women (Aryan, 2012: 86). Even those that have managed to remove many barriers and have occupied high positions do not express their capabilities fully (Aryan, 2012: 86). Women who break into leadership positions, moreover, usually have to fight male resistance to get there (McGlen and O'Connor, 1998: 89).

Interviews which were conducted in 1998, with women, revealed their lack of self-confidence about political matters (McGlen and O'Connor, 1998: 66). Once elected, most women develop the degree of confidence and self-esteem to express their point of view (Martin, 1993: 8). Snaevarr, an Iceland Ambassador to Latvia, Estonia, Sweden and Finland argued that 'it is out-dated to be in a position representing women by way of a female quota and to think that this is somehow justifiable. According to Snaevarr (1993: 15) 'women are going to get the positions for which they demonstrate the best talent, but that will require self-confidence'.

Many citizens still see politics as 'dirty' or 'corrupt' and reject the idea of an active political role for women in party affairs and campaigns (McGlen and O'Connor, 1998: 77). The idea that women's nature, their strong sensitivity, emotionality and weakness of wisdom and reasoning; does not allow them to be fit for positions of leadership and governance (Kadivar, 2012: 132). Those women who do want to compete for candidacies or leadership posts in the parties often face gender-based discrimination (Franceschet, 2005: 92). Women have limited

access to financial resources and there are enormous obstacles placed on their path by the family, education system, media and the civil law, customary and *shariah* (Aryan, 2012: 84). Valdes (1998) argues that the parties of the centre and left have also failed to support their female candidates financially.

Women often come to politics later in life due to childbearing demands (McGlen and O'Connor, 1998: 88). Some women would have a guilty conscious when they do not spend enough time with their families (Franceschet, 2005: 90). There is a need to challenge the idea that a home is where women belong and argue that she is a human being but with different capabilities and needs to men (Koolae, 2012: 141). Many women constantly challenge patriarchal gender relations and despite all the barriers, women are systematically struggling for change (Aryan, 2012: 87). Sometimes the way women speak and their conduct does not work in their favour, which results in them not seen as participant in meeting and therefore unable to air their views (Franceschet, 2005: 91). Dandavati (2005: 26) warns that women should not choose to be discriminated and humiliated in political spaces and should not relinquish the power they have at home by changing their interests. Women are more likely to live under a lot of poverty compared to their male counterparts (Lovenduski, 2002: 22).

Most political parties have not been in favour of the adoption of tools which would increase the number of women candidates to contest positions using gender quotas (Franceschet, 2005: 85). The electoral system shapes candidate selection in a way that disadvantages women (Franceschet, 2005: 85). A second way in which parties are a barrier to women involves the cultural practices and dynamics in a traditionally male-dominated environment (Franceschet, 2005: 85/6). Thirdly, political parties continue to monopolise formal politics, undermining any attempts by women who want to participate in the political process independently of partisan organisation (Franceschet, 2005: 86).

## **2.26 CORRUPTION AS A BARRIER FOR WOMEN TO JOIN POLITICS**

There is a belief that there is a connection between corruption and women's representation. Sung (2003), argues that corruption hampers human rights and increases gender inequalities in society. Corruption seriously limits the entrance of the majority of women to join political parties and even become government workers (Stockemer, 2011). He continues to say there is

a shortage of economic resources for women to join networks which is good for women as it allows them to stay out of all corrupt networks base on traditions and cultures.

### **2.26.1 Progress Made in Nordic Countries**

Most progress has been made in Nordic Countries, least in the Pacific and the Arab world (Bennet, 2010: 28). One of the Nordic countries Norway celebrated its 100 years of giving women the right to vote. Bystydzienki (1995: 20) argues that Nordic countries granted women the right to vote earlier than other Western nations. Norway was the first nation in which political parties voluntarily set quotas, stipulating that 'no gender should have more than 60 percent of slots on a party's nominating slate' (Bayes, Hawkesworth, 2006: 13). It must be noted that Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, form part of the Nordic countries with more than 23 million people. Nordic countries also include territories of the Faeroe Islands, Greenland and Aland (Aseskog, 2003: 147). There is a Nordic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministries where all the governments participate as equal partners. Gender equality has been one of the areas they wanted to focus on especially after the Beijing conference. The activities have focused on equal access to all structures that take decisions; equal financial position and gender equality in relation to work to name a few (Aseskog, 2003: 147-8).

### **2.26.2 Violent Attacks on Women**

The poor status of women in the workplace and their situation in communities has been connected to their harassment. (Wilson and Thompson, 2001: 61). It is said that when sexual conduct is invasive and unwanted it is referred to as harassment as it is not comfortable to the other person because it upsets and intimidates that person (Wilson and Thompson, 2001, 62). Harassment normally takes place in most cases when women enter workplaces where males are dominant. This is sometimes caused by the fact that women are seen in the workplace as females first before they are recognised as workers and harassment can spread in that fashion (Wilson and Thompson, 2001, 64). Ramzanolgu (1987) mentioned some practises of violence against women such as abuses, stares, scorns, intimidations, verbal abuse, and dirty jokes as mechanisms to show women where they belong.

In some Islamic countries such as Iran, Pakistan and Nigeria, women are sentenced to death if they have been found to have committed adultery by the leaders (Kerr, 2004: 21). Many have

been subject to attacks or threats of violence. As Mary, said *'it dangerous to be in politics, it can be a threat to your life...my sister had a gun attack after standing for the council'* (Sales, 1997: 177). In India, a women activist in Maharashtra was kidnapped, confined and repeatedly raped by the activist of a rural political party (Patel, 1993: 32).

### **2.26.3 Women's Involvement at Lower Level**

Gender is socially constructed definition of women and men (SDC, 2003) and thus gender perspective takes into account men's and women's differentiated roles and powers within society (Byrne, and Schnyder, 2005: 5). This has been a trend all over the world, which means that practically women should be at the forefront in terms of governance at local level.

However, UCLG in 2005 pointed out that women participation is far from equitable and it is estimated that women councillors only constitute 20% worldwide. Karam (2000: 71) pointed out that some women have indicated that governments have assisted them in ensuring that they have rights as women. Women in Tunisia especially those in parliament have mentioned that they would not be in parliament if there was no commitment from the State to ensure that they progress and represent themselves in parliament. Lange (2008: 1124) argue that participation from decentralised level to national level was mostly by women or liberal feminists, who wanted to use the state to pursue their needs. When women activists move from local to central level they leave a vacuum without grooming any other women. When people have not heard anything about local government reform and decentralisation, especially women, no one would question about rights and the elite group would use the opportunity to empower themselves. In addition, Lange (2008: 1139) mentioned that 'grassroot' women often find it hard to take the floor in public meetings as they are being ignored or ridiculed. According to Mugisha (2000: 1), women have indicated that women are not enjoying any support from men in their homes and their communities in order to participate publically in politics especially at local government sphere. This affects women participation to improve development as where there are gender inequalities experiences of poverty, illiteracy, and child mortality rate, are general attributes. There is a belief that power plays a big role as women are still marginalised and overlooked when decisions are made. It is the voices of the few elite group that are heard, poor people and women lose out in the participation process. (Mosse, 1995; Cornwall, 2003; McEwan, 2005: 973). Furthermore, research by Urban Governance (2000: 102) found women to be less corrupt and more



responsive to the needs of the communities. Therefore, there is a need to involve women at decentralised level of governance. There are some countries where women have fought for participation by organising themselves.

## **2.27 THE ROLE OF THE STATE ON WOMEN'S ISSUES**

Throughout the better part of human history, the State has served as a mechanism of women's oppression, passing laws that give men power to dictate the conditions of women's lives (Bayes, Hawkesworth, 2006: 11). International conventions and laws have assisted women to engage their governments to change the laws and ratify conventions related to women's rights (van der Gaag, 2004: 86). Part of the crisis of globalisation is that international organisations make decisions affecting ordinary people around the world in a non-transparent way (Msimang, 2004: 171).

Women have organised themselves and formed groups and movements to put pressure on governments to recognise them especially focusing on their rights and interest which made women to be involved in anti-colonial unrests and armed conflicts (Fluer-Lobban, 1980; Jayawarden, 1986; Yuval-Davis and Anthias, 1989; Paidar 1997: 4). Women have been part of different processes where they have engaged governments and participated in the formulation of policies which had force the State to recognise them as actors politically and therefore played a role in shaping the general culture in their countries (Paidar 1997: 4). Efforts to 'engender good governance' by increasing the number of women in elective and appointive offices has been another strategy to make states more responsive to women's concerns (Bayes, Hawkesworth, 2006: 12). Women are working together with the State as partners due to the influence of women's movements which cooperate and negotiate at the same level with other political actors. As power shifts at the State level, opportunities are created for movements seeking inclusion (Franceschet, 2005: 13).

It is not just the laws and regulations which are obstacles to women and have to be changed; people's perceptions will also have to be changed (Koolae, 2012: 141). Van der Gaag (2004, 88) argues that most women are ignorant as there are international laws which are protecting them as women and they are not even aware of the national laws as these laws are not communicated to them.

## **2.28 THE BRIEF HISTORY OF CIVIL SOCIETY**

Worldwide, there has been a large number of organisations which have been created by women to assist other women to come up with their own political agenda. These organisations have also dealt with gender audits and have scrutinised and participated in the formulation of government gender policies by working together forming coalitions. All of this has led to women's participation in democratic processes which has allowed governments to respond to their needs and concerns both in the private and public areas (Hawkesworth, 2006: 104). According to Klenke (1996: 45) women began to fight for their rights in the 1800, however, women's organisations started to emerge in numbers only a century later. While women were still looking for recognition, they also caused a lot of resistance which led to them being more oppressed and subordinated (Dandavati, 2005: 27). Highly trained civil rights organisers such as Ella Baker, Rosa Parks and Fannie Lou Hamer helped launch and lead the civil rights movement in the USA (Hawkesworth, 2006: 92). Women's associations, like other societal groups, have faced a whole range of state strategies to control and limit their autonomy (Tripp, 2000: 8). However in most cases, women's movement and groups have to face new challenges after the country had become democratic (Dandavati, 2005: 99). Failure to adapt to new realities may result in women's movement's disappearance as they may no longer be relevant.

In a new social order women need to safeguard the interest and the development of all citizens irrespective of which ethnic group the people belong to, class and gender (Klenke, 1996: 25). Furthermore, women have to ensure that there is participation of all groups in order to shape personal and joint awareness for women to find common challenges and solutions for all (Dandavati, 2005: 115). The exclusion of women means that the economy and society are denied the benefit of women's contribution to economic, social, cultural and political developments (Aryan, 2012: 87).

### **2.28.1 Cultural Challenges in Africa**

In many countries such as Uganda, Zimbabwe and Malawi, there have been problems with regard to the development of community organisations and the appearance of women's groups which seek to tackle gender issues in different areas and levels due to those countries being dominated by only one political party (Goetz and Hassim, 2003: 10-11). In 1986 when Yoweri Museveni's political party, the National Resistance Movement won the elections,

women's group made a noticeable arrival which was an unpredictable shift in Uganda at that time (Tripp, 2000: 1).

In Africa, common and customary law has generally discriminated against women. For example, in some countries women are not allowed to inherit, own or sell land, or to pass their nationality on to their children (van der Gaag, 2004: 87). In most countries in Africa, women are not afraid to drop their dresses in a critical public protest to indicate that they are child bearers and they can retract life. Sometimes when women's demands are not met, they would march naked to show that they are prepared to die trying (Turner and Brownhill, 2004: 169).

The challenge is that women in Africa depend on the agricultural sector for livelihood (Kamau, 2011). Most women in Africa have chores which include fetching water from the rivers, collecting wood to make fire and are responsible for cultivating the land in order to feed their families through farming (Ramosepele, 2011). Kamau (2011) argues that gender responsive policies require the participation of women in decision-making in order to ensure their rights and priorities are sufficiently addressed in legal frameworks, national and local policies and investment strategies.

In South Africa, after the end of apartheid, a coalition of women's groups, researchers, women candidates and women's worker's union groups presented a charter of women's rights, as a result the Constitution of South Africa made major provisions that ensured the equality of women in all spheres of life (van der Gaag, 2004: 87).

### **2.28.2 Americans and the Caribbean**

As early as 1766, Philadelphia women circulated a pamphlet entitled, 'Sentiments of an American Woman' proclaiming that women were 'born for liberty' and 'refused to be enchained by tyrannic governments'. In Boston in 1776, Abigail Adams expressed similar sentiments to her husbands, John, a prominent member of the Second Continental Congress, which was drafting the Declaration of Independence:

*'I long to hear that you have declared an independency-and by the way, in the Code of Laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make, I desire you would remember the Ladies, and be more generous and favourable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power in the hands of Husbands. Remember all men would be tyrants if they could.'*

*If particular care and attention is not paid to the Ladies, we are determined to foment a Rebellion (sic), and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice, or representation' (Butterfield, 1963) (Hawkesworth, 2006: 95).*

Despite more than 200 years of political effort, women remain backwards when it comes to the achievement of legal, political, or economic equality in the United States (Hawkesworth, 2006: 98). Other scholars focused on structural barriers such as education, occupation, and income that made it more difficult for women to assume positions of political leadership (Hawkesworth, 2006: 100).

Women's participation in electoral politics has expanded dramatically elsewhere in the region, for example Argentina, Cost Rica, Peru and Mexico, but has grown only slightly in Chile (Franceschet, 2005: 93). Women's movements in Chile have yet to play a stronger role in mobilizing support for women candidates (Franceschet, 2005: 93). However, women are doing far better in terms of their access to appointed positions in government than in their access to electoral positions (Franceschet, 2005: 85).

### **2.28.3 Arab States and North Africa**

In one Arab State which is Iran in 1952, the National Council of Women decided to sign a petition related to the rights of women including the right to vote. The National Council of Women as an amalgamation of different women's organisations demanded that women must be liberated financially and politically just like men (Rostami-Povey, 2012: 20/1).

### **2.28.4 Europe and Asia**

Women's groups recommended, among other things, family friendly working hours, and appropriate use of language, gender-neutral titles, a standard equal opportunities committee, which would be concerned with gender, race and disability, and working practices that would be different from those at Westminster (Chaney, Mackay, and McAllister, 2007). Women and Catholics were not recognised as citizens in Northern Ireland which barred them from participation in politics at all levels (Sales, 1997: 4).

When it comes to India, there was a Joint Women's Font which became powerful in terms of pressurising the State to consult organised women's when drafting legislation that would affect women (Martin, 1993: 8). The women's movement has had a comparatively weak

history in Turkey. It has been an elite movement in Indonesia. Bangladesh and Pakistan have had more non-elite involvement (Bennet, 2010: 31). In Iran, although women's participation started around the late 1800s, their mass participation was encouraged by the government in different fields of politics, for example in electoral campaigns and international conferences, (Koolae, 2012: 139). Today women in Iran enjoy more rights that they do in most countries in the Middle East (Rostami-Povey, 2012: 31).

## **2.29 WOMEN STRIVING FOR EQUALITY IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES**

In Philippines, decentralisation is fifty years, and for participation they involved NGOs, school and health boards, peace and order councils and women, in a number of successful projects. In the UK, women have established a Women's Local Government Society to encourage participation of women at local level and upwards (WLGS, 2009). Karam (2000: 66) pointed out that women in Argentina, Chile and Algeria can publicly demonstrate and participate in defending their families and communities. In Chile when women protest against anything, they dance the 'Cueca' showing that they can act together as women (Waylen, 2006: 16). In Argentina, women established a Local Women and Local Governance Programme aimed as empowering women along with incorporating a woman's' perspective in municipal policies (Urban Governance, 2000: 102). In Islamic countries where there are wars such as Algeria, Lebanon and Yemen, women have mobilised themselves and decided not to keep quiet but have begun to fight for their rights as women and to claim their full citizenship (Karam, 2000: 79). In a study conducted by Gender Links (2008: 1) it found that the country in the SADC region with more women representatives at local government was Namibia. The conclusion drawn by the study was that it is at local government where equality must start and the focus should be on ensuring that there are proper systems in places where it matters most.

## **2.30 ROLE OF WOMEN IN CIVIL SOCIETY IN SOUTH AFRICA**

Civil society played a crucial role in shaping the role of women in politics and in decision-making processes at local government level. Civil society representing millions of poor people and movement such as the United Democratic Party (UDF) revolted to force the apartheid government to provide basic services which includes accommodation for the people

energy, water, roads etc. in the townships. According to Seekings (1998: 201) the people who are protesting against services that were provided by the apartheid government at local government level did that in order to have a say and influence the decisions made which affected them. Women and youth were at the forefront of the struggle against segregation of public facilities at local government level in the 1980's. Ball (2004:11) argued that a lot of women in their local groups participated in the struggle against rentals which were high as well as services which were not adequately provided by the apartheid government. Civil societies play a major role in respect of accountability.

Goetz (2003: 42) asserted that the importance of civil society as the main demonstrating ground for launching policy and goals in relation to gender equity. It is where also there would be the creation of public support for women's interests and where women can be groomed for public participation. However, McEwan (2005: 975) characterised the civil society in South African as equally vibrant and possibly original, however, at the same time it is extremely separated due to vested interests and exclusions. Goetz (2003: 39) contended that it is important for communities to understand the needs, roles and rights of women's groups in order to organise resources that would assist when there are debates politically and socially. The government may perceive civil society groups as unnecessary or irrelevant subsequent to the promulgation of the Constitution. However, deepening exclusion of women at decentralised level, civil society intervention is critical, as Goetz (2003: 38) argue 'women lack effective fall-back position to use leverage in policy debates in the way that organised workers can do in industrial disputes'.

## **2.31 CONCLUSION**

The chapter has laid a foundation by reviewing literature on the aspect of democracy and the role that is played by the UN in promoting democracy and addressing gender issues. The chapter also dealt with the structures which are working together with the UN such as civil society, NGOs including Member States. In order to understand why governments decide to decentralize, the chapter focused on the meaning and different kinds of decentralization. Ribot's (2004) formal definition model demonstrates that the central government can transfer power to democratically elected and other institutions, for instance, NGOs and, businesses. However, the latter is accountable to their organisation and people they represent but not to

local population. The local elite group may take advantage of power, make profits and exclude communities and poor women. Ribot (2004) argues that when power has been transferred to other entities, it is not decentralisation. The formal definition model makes sense, but it could not be taken as it appears, as it does not specifically tackle women issues. What is missing is the role played by other stakeholders e.g. business and CBOs, where community needs could not be fulfilled by government. The challenge has been how one can guarantee that democratically elected local institutions and other entities find a *modus operandi* to work together and prioritise women interests. Decentralization should be regarded as an ongoing process and in order to be achieved, should not be treated as a once in a lifetime change of policy (Charbit, 2011). Women's representation becomes complicated as decentralization attempts to bring central government nearer to the people.

The chapter then focuses on different kinds of representation including social, political and proportional representation. The politics of presence was discussed as women have been marginalized and now have a chance to take a centre stage in political decision-making processes. The literature shows that women could be represented symbolically, substantively and descriptively. This is good where women as the majority feel that their interests are entertained by those that represent them. However, representation itself creates a certain class and does not guarantee full participation. The chapter shifts to focus on forms of participation, different spaces and theoretical models of participation which could be utilized by ordinary citizen including women. The literature then dealt with gender issues by looking at feminist theories, gender inequalities, and the role that is played by different parties in hindering or promoting women's political participation. The last focuses on progress made in different regions and the role that women are playing, fighting for equality at local level of government. However, statistics shows that the number of women has been low due to lack of motivation fear of failure and self-confidence, discrimination internal party politics and social constraints. The challenge may not be with local government and political parties but may be a lack of interest from women themselves in joining politics. The concern is whether there have been mechanisms for not only women but different stakeholders to deal with such barriers since the last local government elections in 2011, especially with forthcoming elections in 2016. What factors may have contributed to women's successful representation and participation in decision-making processes at local government level? Is there another way that could ensure that women's influence in decisions is felt at local government level

other than through representation? The next chapter deals specifically with local government issues and women in South Africa.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND WOMEN IN SOUTH AFRICA**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter dealt with important aspects of the topic such as democracy and decentralisation; participation and representation; gender and the role of the UN etc. The chapter dealt with different models and theories in relation to women and politics. Different stakeholders were discussed such as the role played by feminist and challenges faced by women in politics in order to understand the issues experienced by women at local government level. The chapter also deal with the role of civil society in other parts of the women and in South Africa with regard to the representation and participation of women in politics at local government level.

This chapter is addressing the issue of local government and women in South Africa. Local government was the sphere of government to be reformed in South Africa. Therefore, the chapter focuses on the history of local government under the apartheid government and how people of different races including women were treated. The chapter then explores the local government reforms starting with the commencement of negotiation. The local government legislative framework that involves the constitution which is the supreme law of the country is explored. The importance of traditional leadership and other stakeholders in the representation and participation of women in politics at local government level is also discussed. The focus then shifts to women's issues and their challenges at local government level. Lastly, the chapter looks at whether decentralization is working in South Africa.

#### **3.2 APARTHEID LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

When one read history books about South Africa, one would notice that it all started in 1652 with the arrival of the Dutch people in the Cape Colony to build a refreshment station. Black people including women and children had to provide services to the settler. It can be stated that for more than 300 years the rights of especially Black people including Coloureds and Indians had been grossly violated (Gildenhys, 1991: 115). In the 1940s, apartheid laws were

introduced which further segregated people according to racial, gender and ethnic grounds, where white people lived in urban areas and other races in semi-urban and rural places. Apartheid legislation, for example, Bantu authorities Act of 1951 led to the creation of the Homelands or Bantustans, namely, Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda, and Ciskei. This segregation led to White people to leave in towns and Black people in what is referred to as townships and in the Bantustans where the majority of Black people resided. Black people were forced to carry passes in order to be allowed in towns where Whites were residing (Eskridge, 2015). Homelands were declared independent and were not considered the responsibility of the South African government (Smith, 2003). In order to keep Black people away from white towns, chiefs in the Bantustans were used to serve the interest of the apartheid government (Mamdani, 1996). It became easier for white business owners to recruit cheap labour from these Bantustans as young men were recruited and employed in commercial farms and mines, and women were employed as domestic workers raising the children of their white masters at the same time doing some little farming themselves (Omer-Cooper, 1994; Penzhorn, 2005; Kemerink, Mendez, Ahlers, Wester and van der Zaag, 2013). Young men had to relocate to other parts of the country to find work and to feed their families. Men were given eleven month contracts in the mines leaving alone in single-sex compounds (Budlender and Lund, 2011). These contracts would be renewed each year with no benefits or protection when a person exits the mine be it on resignation or retirement.

As independency was never really granted for Homelands, and for those who moved to the cities, the apartheid government had another strategy for them. As stated above, there was segregation as people were divided according to their race and ethnic groups. The apartheid cities were demarcated into separate residential and commercial districts (Stanton, 2009) for white people who were the minority. Black people including Coloureds and Indians had to reside in areas which were tens of kilometers away from the cities. These areas had minimal infrastructure, no or little employment opportunities and were provided with minimal basic services (Maharaj, 1992).

There was a decentralisation of power to different local authorities using different laws and policies. These municipalities were created to become more accountable to central government which was the apartheid government. As a result, one can say at that time democratic decentralization was in a form of deconcentration because of the power that central government had. Municipalities were regarded by the populace as legitimate but

rather an extension of the apartheid government (Klug, 1993). Furthermore, government representatives were nominated and introduced to community members as councillors. Matheka and Buccus (2007: 14) pointed out that councillors were imposed as “community leaders” making decisions on behalf of women and communities. Lack of access to economic, education and health resources forced especially African women to stay in rural areas (Chagunda, 2004: 3). Women were excluded from being recognised as citizens and full participation as they were relegated to bearing children and caretaking functions which was seen as normal for them (Okin, 1979; in Jones, 1993: 27).

Women in the civic movement were at the forefront in the struggle against high rents and service charges (Beall, 2004: 11). Seekings (1998: 201) pointed out that residents emphasised the need to secure control over local decision-making processes. This demonstrates that local government existed in South Africa prior to 1994; however, ‘white’ minorities benefited the most from services. Also, women outside South Africa have been in the struggle for liberation while those within were attached to civil organisations. While in exile, Ruth Mompati of the ANC Women’s League was quoted as asking “*How can we South African women talk about equality when we are not yet recognised as human beings?*” (International Feminist Collection, 1981, cited in Greisler, 2004: 11). As a result, the apartheid government was compelled to unban political parties and commence negotiations for a new democratic South Africa in the early 1990’s. In fact Mandela had to make sure that each individual enjoy the rights and privileges of citizenship in South Africa (Eskridge, 2015). The main focus was on issues that were affecting the country as a whole. Local government matters were at the bottom of the agenda as it became the phase of government to be reformed. However, the constitution of the country, dealt with three categories of government. Also, everyone thought that the phase of confrontational social struggles had ended with apartheid as there was now equal citizenship and democracy (Evensen and Stokke, 2010).

### **3.3 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM IN SOUTH AFRICA**

This section focuses on local government reform which includes a brief history, negotiation processes, the new constitution, the quota system and the mechanisms in place for women’s representation and participation in South Africa.

### **3.3.1 Commencement of Negotiations**

During negotiations that commenced after the unbanning of all political parties and the release of all political prisoners in the early 1990s, there was a committee that was tasked to deal with local government matters. The Local Government Negotiation Forum (LGNF) was assigned through CODESA to deal with segregation, inequality, poverty and discrimination issues and make recommendations. Surprisingly, women were not well presented on the LGNF (Beall, 2004: 5). Beall (2004: 5) continues to say that women during the negotiation process were not aware of the importance of their strategy in local government to advance gender issues as the focus was on national and provincial transformation in the country. Consequently, women and traditional authorities were not a priority and were regarded as “interest groups” and their issues were built on institutions that already existed. As a result, the Local Government Transition Act 209 of 1993 (LGTA) was promulgated providing three phases of local government transformation namely: Pre-interim which was in the Negotiating Phase until the 1995/1996 local government elections; Interim Phase where Transitional Councils were formed until the 2000 local government elections; and lastly, Final Phase for the first Democratic Local Government post 2000 election period. That is where the new structures were introduced after the successful local government elections in the year 2000 (Rogerson, 2011).

### **3.4 THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK**

The department responsible for local government at national level has undergone name changes since 1994. The department responsible for local government was initially called the Department of Constitutional Development which was then later changed to the Department of Provincial and Local Government. However, in 2009 the name was changed again to the Department of Corporative Governance and Traditional Affairs (Rogerson, 2011: 150). The department has been instrumental in the development and implementation of policies for municipalities. However, it is the constitution of the country that has a section which is specific for local government.

### **3.4.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996**

In April 1994, the first non-racial democratic elections were held in South Africa. This does not mean that there was no democracy in South Africa before 1994. The emphasis is on non-racial elections because all races were allowed to vote after 1994. There were democratic elections which only allowed white people in South Africa to vote and not the majority Black population. The involvement of Black people in the elections marked the beginning of a new culture of participation. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996 (Constitution) is regarded as the supreme law of the country, with the Bill of Rights contained within it. Chapter 2 has a clause on equality which reveals a guarantee to promote gender equality and ensure that women enjoy equal rights. Myakayaka-Manzini (2002: 2) pointed out that the Constitution has several rights which ensure that even the poorest of the poor, most of whom are women benefit and improve their quality of life. The Constitution also makes provision for the historically disadvantaged groups to be protected in the newly introduced socio-economic rights (Mentjies, 2007: 261). There are now three layers of governments and that is national, provincial and local, which are different, mutually dependent, and interconnected and also guarantee decentralisation.

Furthermore, Chapter 7, section 152 of the Constitution states that local government should provide democratic and accountable government for local communities; and encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government. Mogale (2005: 136) argues that more power and resources should be taken down to the people through different organisations at local government in order to increase their participation. Govender (2008) argued that the implication is that public participation should extend beyond the periodic election of local councillors. Hence the White Paper on Local Government (1998) was released.

### **3.4.2 The White Paper on Local Government of 1998**

The White Paper on Local Government (1998), which is considered as the “mini constitution” entrenches developmental local government as that, “which is committed to working with communities to find sustainable ways to meet social economic and material needs and improve quality of their lives”. The White Paper aims to ensure that municipalities advance instruments for community participation in policy commencement, preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes. Its focus is on resources and

efforts in relation to individuals in different communities and groups which were previously side-lined including women by removing obstacles to equal and effective participation.

Furthermore, the White Paper (1998) allows municipalities “to assess the impact of their strategies on women and ensure that the needs and interests of women are incorporated into municipal planning processes”. In addition, the emphasis is on accountability that strengthens the role of councillors for the benefit of all community groups including women. Political parties were also encouraged to adopt a quota system in order to address gender inequalities at all levels of governance. According to Campbell and Childs (2008: 3) political parties take interest in and compete for women’s votes.

### **3.4.3 Local Government Specific Legislation**

Local government is made up of municipalities. The White Paper on Local Government (1998), states that municipalities should ensure that there are representatives from different groups which were previously marginalised who can contest the elections including women. The White Paper also addresses the issue with regard to the delegation of roles and powers to committees within the municipal council to ensure participation in the council’s decision-making processes. In order to show commitment to decentralization of power, municipal legislation has since been developed, and the following two would be briefly discussed:

- Local Government Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998; and
- Local Government Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000.

### **3.4.4 Local Government Municipal Structures Act No. 117 of 1998**

This Act states that there must be a development of mechanisms that would ensure that there is consultation and participation of citizens and community in local governance. Section 19(2) (c) and 3 of the Municipal Structures Act, directs municipalities towards a new culture of governance that complements representative democracy through participation. The government ensured decentralization by introducing three main types of municipalities (see Table 2.1 below) in terms of the Municipal Structures Act No. 117 of 1998. This was done to bring government closer to the people at the same time attempting to redress the gender imbalances of the past as explained above.

**Table 3.1: Categories of Municipalities in South Africa**

<b>Municipal Categories</b>	<b>Description of Categories</b>
Category A: Metropolitan Council	A municipality that has exclusive and legislative authority in its area
Category B: Local Council	A municipality that has exclusive and legislative authority in its area with category C municipality within whose area it falls
Category C: District Council	A municipality that has municipal executive and legislative authority that includes more than one municipality

Source: Nyalunga (2006)

Metropolitan areas are defined as large urban cities and local councils, smaller cities and towns, whereas district councils cover wider geographical, low-population areas than local councils. The Structures Act (117 of 1998) makes provisions for elections; design and operation, including the condition that half of the candidates on the political party list should be women (Swift, 2005: 2). Furthermore, the Act makes provision for the formation of ward committees which advise the local municipality on local matters. It also allows for the participation and equitable representation of women in ward committees in order to influence decision-making processes of the council.

### **3.4.5 Local Government Municipal Systems Act No. 32 of 2000**

Section 17 of the Local Government Municipal Systems Act makes provision for local community to participate in the affairs of the municipality through political structures. Chapter 2 of the Act stipulates the encouragement of community participation, consultation and involvement in the activities and functions of municipalities (Republic of South Africa, 1998). The participatory form of democracy is evident in the Municipal Systems Act (32 of 2000) where a community consist not only of the structures, functions and administrators of the municipality but also the communities, residents and ratepayers of the municipality (Cameron, 2001: 112). It gives communities the right to participate in the decision-making

processes of their municipality and contribute in the drafting of the Integrated Development Planning, performance management etc. Ramphele (2004: 3) argues that these systems and mechanisms have begun to enhance decision-making, planning, resource allocation, service delivery and day-to-day administration. Therefore, women may have input on decision-making processes regarding services and projects the council should embark upon.

### **3.5 TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP**

No process of socio-political transformation in Africa, be it democratisation, political liberalisation, or simply regime change, can be regarded as complete if no consideration has been given to the question of traditional leadership (Osaghae, 1997: 5). The role of traditional leadership became an issue and stirred the transformation process as stakeholders had different views. In a move to appease traditional leadership and those calling for elected local representatives, the South African multi-party negotiation forum decided to recognize traditional authorities and elected local councils, as primary institutions of rural local government (Fikeni, 2008).

Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework (TLGF) Act 41 of 2003 provides for the recognition of traditional communities and traditional leaders in South Africa. Traditional leaders must be represented and participate at all levels of government. At local level, the traditional councils' functions are as follows: supporting municipalities in facilitating community involvement in development planning processes; communicate community needs to municipalities and other spheres of government; recommend appropriate interventions to government to bring about development and service delivery ; promoting indigenous knowledge systems for sustainable development; participating in the development programmes of municipalities and other spheres of government; and participating in the development of policy and legislation at local level (Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework, 2003). The Act makes provision for Traditional Councils to have at least 30 members, a third of which must be women.

The Act also states that when the number of available women to participate is inadequate; the Premier may determine a lower threshold. That means that there might be a limited amount of women's representation in Traditional Councils, which may affect decision-making



processes. There is a difference between elected rural councillors and traditional leaders. The difference is that councillors may be replaced together with political parties in an election, which is not the case with traditional authorities (Ntsebeza, 2004: 87). Succession to chieftaincy is hereditary (Beall, 2006) and this is different from democratic governance. The chief would provide space for participation in decision-making by calling for *imbizo* (a Zulu word for a gathering) which would exclude women (Ntsebeza, 2005; Mlalukomo and Patel, 2012). In addition, the White Paper on Local Government requires municipalities to inform and consult with chiefs about municipal projects or programmes within the chiefs' area (Mlalukomo and Patel, 2012).

The Constitution itself has sometimes made vague developments as there are rights it claims to protect and at the same time aims to promote equality in the Bill of Rights protecting people against discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, sex, for instance, but on the other hand also encourage people to enjoy cultural practices (Mentjies, 2007: 261). That means that traditional authorities will always have the power to make decisions on behalf of women irrespective of whether or not women are present.

Beall *et al.*, (2005: 760) argue that women under the traditional system are defenceless, even when they do have rights, those rights are partial as they do not have access to common resources which are not associated with any male relatives, for example husband or father and do not enjoy full representation in the Traditional Council. Women may have been intentionally excluded from public organisations with the use of a classified and male-controlled system as well as the employment of customary laws which have been oppressive to women (Beall, Mkhize and Vawda, 2005: 760). Piper and Deacon (2006: 15) contend that the representation of traditional leaders appears to be another instance in which national legislation only embodies an ideal which is very imperfectly approximated in practice, like women's representation. However, Galvin (1999: 88) remarked that the 'function of local government structures will depend on whether administrative officers, elected officials and traditional authorities succeed in finding a *modus operandi* to work together'. Traditional authorities are recognised in the prescribed means that, they are playing a vital role to the attainment of economic progress and political stability at local level (Tonwe and Osemwato, 2013).

### 3.6 QUOTA SYSTEM

It must be noted that the South African government has no position on the issue of a quota system, but relies on political parties concerning the presence of women ward and PR councillors at local government level. Beall (2004: 5) contends that quota directives work just well in the environment of vigorous activism and consistent checking by women organised in their communities. In a study conducted by Moon and Fountain (1997) in the Australian Parliament, they argue that once women are in Parliament, they are likely to be judged on merit rather than on their gender. Currently, the ANC is the only party that uses the quota system to improve representation and participation of women in government institutions. It is the ANC Women's League that wanted the party to adopt the quota system on the lists of candidate standing for elections (Hassim, 1999: 205). The Democratic Alliance (DA) and Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) opposed the use of a quota system to increase the number of women representatives. Both political parties assume that as 'more women enter the workforce, as discriminatory practices such as job stereotyping are removed and educational opportunities are spread evenly between the sexes, women will move into the public political realm in greater numbers'.

Research shows that the 'women's section in political parties can play multiple roles: attracting women voters and women members; encouraging women to stand for election to party leadership positions and legislatures; acting as support network for women politicians and creating women's policy' (Freeman, 2000; in Curtin, 2008: 494). Women representatives are 'selected and elected in the same way as their male colleagues as party representatives of a geographical and not a sex-based constituency' (Childs, 2004: 26). Nonetheless, there are fewer women candidates available for selection because of internal party problems to elect women as leadership and community restraints on seeing women joining politics (Hassim, 1999).

Surprisingly, many women politicians who benefit from gender quota believe that being elected in this way considerably decreases their credibility towards their male colleagues making their position even more difficult (Geisler, 2004: 35). Basically, there is no agreement among advocates for women even within different political parties in terms of how equality could be realised and at the same time they cannot agree on how to employ the quota system

in their organisations (Hassim, 1999: 204). Todes, Sithole and Williamson (2007) pointed out that women are more represented in PR seats controlled by political parties, yet ward councillors are seen as closer to communities and as more representative. Furthermore, women who are elected based on PR are disconnected from the communities that elected them into power and this allows them to be more accountable to their political parties and certain individuals within the party than the people who voted for them (Reynolds, 1999: 9). The next section will look at the prescripts promulgated to ensure decentralization and that women are represented in local municipalities.

### **3.7 WARD COUNCILLORS AND WARD COMMITTEES**

The White Paper on Local Government of 1998 states that ‘ward councillors serve as a link between the ward community and the rest of the government for proper consultation with local communities with respect to the planning and implementation of provincial and national programmes impacting on the ward’. Some of the duties of the ward councillors are as follows:

- Play greater role in community representation;
- Work closely with ward committee members;
- Chair and convene ward committee meetings;
- Ensure greater ownership of ward committees;
- Build accountable and effective local political leadership;
- Become more accountable to the community and their diverse interests and needs;
- Ensure that full and proper records of minutes are kept related; and
- Appoint a person to attempt to resolve a dispute where necessary (White Paper, 1998; Notice 965, 2005; National Framework, 2009).

It must be noted that ward councillors and ward committees have no power to make decisions but can communicate their concerns and complaints, and attend public meetings to participate in municipal processes (Davids, 2006: 17). Nonetheless, municipal council decisions are taken by a majority vote of councillors. Therefore, the majority of councillors after consultation with people at ward level may make informed decisions for the benefit of the population including women. In a study conducted by Allen (2012), women have ‘consistently been found to be more likely to drop out after just one term as a councillor’.

Councillor drop out 'is the process by which a councillor stands down from their council duties for reasons other than losing at the ballot box' (Allen, 2012).

Ward councillors and ward committees have faced a number of challenges as new structures at the lowest level of government according to studies. The 2004/05 National Ward Committee Survey revealed that less than half of the respondents were able to affirm that ward committees do in fact impact on council decisions (Sibeko and Junge, 2005: 43). Piper and Deacon (2006: 23) stated that regardless of how much support they have, ward committees are as effective as their councillors. Studies have also shown that councillors do not fully appreciate their role as public representatives, and the quality of leadership is often lacking (Cameron, 2001: 114). Former President Mbeki urged local government to look at nature and quality of interaction between ward councillors and committees, when ward committee members complained about ward councillor's lack of communication and interaction in 2004 (Benton, 2005). McEwan (2003) remarked that the ongoing 'transformation at the level of local governance invites reflection upon the potential impacts of democratic transformation on the lives of the most marginalised people, the majority of which are women'. Having discussed the background and the prescripts that allow for women's participation and representation at local governance level in South Africa, it is crucial to also look at how they have been elected into positions.

### **3.8 WOMEN IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP AT GLOBAL LEVEL**

The United Cities and Local Government study showed that within 15.466 municipal cities in 78 countries, 20.9 percent of the 'world's councillors were women and the percentage remained constant over the past decade' (UCLG, 2003). The percentage of women mayors was only 9 percent which is considerably to be less. This data shows that with the exception of Latin America, in no region of the world there was a consistently higher proportion of women in local councils than in national parliaments. This survey further found that 'the average proportion of women in local councils for the 52 countries reporting was just 15 percent' (UCLG, 2003). These statistics are 'not different from the global average of women in national parliaments; and that in leadership positions, the proportion of women was even lower; for instance, 5 percent of Latin American municipalities are women' (UCLG, 2003).

More women can be found at local government level rather than at national level as affirmative action and the quota system have been employed more at local level of governance. At least that is what is taking place in countries like Namibia, Uganda, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, France and many Latin American countries. As a result, this information shows that local government is probably not pretty good and a progressive field for women to participate freely. Women, in fact have challenges with regard to political commitment at local government level than at national level to some extent due to the power of male domination (UNRISD, 2005)

### **3.8.1 Women's Status in South Africa**

Although there are structures within which women to participate at local government level, a study by Todes *et al.* (2007) shows that women are more organised at centralised level with the establishment of the National Gender Machinery. Consequently, women in parliament played major role in impacting on issues and projects which touched on women directly for example accommodation, water and, fairness (Myakayaka-Manzini, 2002:3). The HDI Report (UNDP, 2009) ranked South Africa 26<sup>th</sup> out of 109 countries due to women sharing seats in parliament, as legislators and managers for instance. However, it exposes inequalities in opportunities in selected areas.

In a study conducted by Maharaj and Maharaj (2004: 265-266) reasons for low participation and representation of women are 'lack of motivation, lack of self-confidence, fear of failure, discrimination, lack of support from families due to cultural and traditional prejudices. Councillors conceded that much depended on their ability to substantiate their view-points or arguments' (Maharaj and Maharaj, 2004: 266). Furthermore, they found that it is acceptable in politics for political party members to have caucus meetings and reach agreements on certain issues as it unifies the party (Maharaj and Maharaj, 2004: 267). McEwan (2003: 471) argues that 'the ways in which women can access power and resources at the local level and their lived experiences of citizenship are still poorly understood, especially with regard to the majority of women still marginalised by the legacies of apartheid'.

### **3.8.2 Statistics**

According to the StatisticsSA (2013), there are more women than men in South Africa and the female population is on average poorer than the male population. The first local government elections after 1994 took place between 1995 and 1996 and men became the majority in local councils with women only constituting 19% of councillors (Robinson, 1995). Hassim (1999: 204) pointed out that there were improvements in certain recognised structures as a number of gains were made at formal level, and these gains were won as a result of the elite influence instead of a number of women's organisations. Nevertheless, the following local government elections in the year 2000, women were more organised and had more power than before in such a way that women councillors constituted 28.2 % (Beall, 2004:9). The former Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Mr Shiceka requested that more women participate in politics at local government level especially as ward councillors and committee members. He was quoted as stating that "Since 2006, women councillors have been increasing from 29 to 40 %...I don't see why this cannot be increased to 50% in the next forthcoming elections" (BuaNews, 2009). The next South African local government elections will take place in 2016. As Geisler (2004: 15) puts it "national decision-making in South Africa ranks amongst the highest in the world, but traditionalism seeking to constrain women has been on the rise on the ground".

### **3.9 FREE BASIC MUNICIPAL SERVICES BENEFITS FOR WOMEN**

When services are not delivered at local government level, women are the most to suffer. When the services are not enough it impacts directly on women as they are the one dealing with day-to-day activities around the house. The South African government had to introduce strategies and programmes which would benefit poor citizen especially the elderly, women and children. Local government has provided poor households free basic municipal services. Households that have been identified as poor are those with a monthly income of less R1500 per month. In order to eradicate poverty, poor households have to make an application to be assessed before qualifying for the free basic services package. Presently, 'no official poverty line exists for South Africa, so policymakers, researchers and other institutions use a range of unofficial poverty lines to measure the incidence, depth and severity of poverty in the country' (Bhorat, Oosthuizen and van der Westhuizen, 2012). However, one must state that households in communities are benefiting from this.

After 1994, poor black people including older persons, children and war veterans in South Africa have been relying on social grants. Between 1997 and 2009 the number of individuals receiving social grants increased from 3 million to 13.4 million (Bhorat *et al.*, 2012). Women who had children of less than 15 years of age have been collecting money for Child Support Grants. Some of these women use the money to also pay for basic services provided by the municipality.

According to Bhorat *et al.* (2012), the ‘proportion of households qualifying for free basic services remains higher in rural areas, and in provinces with a larger concentration of households living in rural areas, such as KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and Limpopo’. It is women who would experience difficulties as most men are working in the mines in Gauteng and only comes home once or twice a year. However, local governments are struggling to provide basic public services (Frodin, 2011) and this has led to the increase in violent service delivery protest action in South Africa.

### **3.9.1 Service Delivery Protest Action in South Africa**

Even with a number of prescripts being introduced at local government, there has been an increase in the number of protest actions. Between 2007 and 2009, the average number of service delivery protests has increased from 8.73 to 19.18 per month, while the percentage of violent protests increased from 41.66% in 2007 to 54.08% in 2010 (Naidoo, 2011). According to Mattes (2008) ‘not only do people see local government as more corrupt than any other government institution, their levels of performance approval and trust in political institutions are inversely related to the proximal distance between them and that institution’.

Channels of participation may have been monopolized by local political elites promoting their own interests (Evensen and Stokke, 2010). With local elites, ordinary people in South Africa are tired to seeing ‘cats and their kittens’ becoming fatter at their expense. Communities display their anger by destroying building and burning them down as well as attacking local government officials for example councillors in their homes (Hamhill, 2015).

The extraordinary degree of hostility that characterized the protests since 2004 was directed towards local government in general and the ward councillors in particular (Seethal, 2012).

Ward councillors and political leaders are accused of being invisible until the election time where there is a door-to-door campaign.

### **3.10 IS DECENTRALISATION WORKING IN SOUTH AFRICA?**

Municipalities are designed to have somewhat smaller authorities are supposed to be higher recognised and respected as ‘they are closer to the people and maximize opportunities for autonomy, participation, representation, accountability and responsiveness’ (Paddison, 1983; Sharpe, 1988; Totemeyer, 1988; Hanekom, 1988; and Kendall and Louw, 1989).

The 1998 White Paper on Local Government and most of the prescripts that have been promulgated bears remarkable similarities with the local government laws in the United Kingdom. However, the challenge has been with the implementation and the non-adaptation to the situation on the ground (Frodin, 2011). Manor (2001) in his analysis of South Africa, ‘suggested that decentralisation needed to be introduced on the basis of an existing and functioning civil service’ and this was not the case in 1990. He warned that an extremely complex system might result in a catastrophe. According to Frodin (2011) ‘many politicians and officials in the new regime had little or no practical experience before they were appointed’. This includes both men and women especially of African origin as they took over the running of the municipalities after 1994.

Institutions cannot merely be designed like building, but have to be collectively accepted by a critical mass (Frodin, 2011). Evensen and Stokke (2010), pointed out that ‘even if institutions for local governance are designed to facilitate popular participation and representation, rather than simply a way of decentralizing and privatizing state obligations, the extent to which channels of participation are available and used by groups in society seems to be varied at best’.

Frug (1996) stated that there is a need to design the governance system so that it can be changed when its defects become apparent. Koelble and Siddle (2013) are of the view that municipalities must be relieved of the functions they cannot discharge. According to Evensen and Stokke (2010) remarked that the contact between individuals in the community and their



local government in comparison with other African countries has been very low in South Africa.

Within the municipalities, there is shortage of staff and those that are there are not trained properly to perform effectively their duties. Koelble and Siddle (2013) stated that ‘a civil service, rather than a cadre of political appointees, has to be put in place to enable the municipalities to operate adequately and fulfil the myriad requirements placed upon them’. Other challenges raised by Koelble and Siddle (2013) was that municipalities are having a challenge raising revenue or avoid fruitless expenses, there is ‘misappropriation of funds, elite capture and corruption, and general lack of service provision, particularly in the poorer areas of the country’.

It must be noted that several African states including Benin, Cape Verde, Ethiopia and Gambia in 2008; Botswana, Morocco, Mozambique, Senegal and Swaziland in 2009; Burundi and Namibia in 2010; and Lesotho and Zambia in 2011 held their local government elections (Seethal, 2012). In South Africa, a record number of 121 political parties participated in the 2011 elections, and a total of 53.596 candidates contested the elections, 29.570 as ward candidates and 23.278 as proportional list candidates (Seethal, 2012) and most of them were women.

### **3.11 CONCLUSION**

The literature on South Africa shows that women in civil society fought against apartheid policies. The culture of participation changed when those women were placed in multiple public institutions after 1994 and they are now organised centrally. It would be interesting to find out how women are gaining support from other women, and working with community organisations and leaders in this era of decentralisation.

The Constitution, Bill of Rights, promises to address gender equality for men and women. However, the White Paper (1998) considers women an “interest group” and municipal prescripts provide women’s participation and equitable representation in order to influence decision-making processes. The prescripts also promote relations between municipalities and political parties but have no methods of sanction or enforcement. The challenge is how

government can commit itself to addressing gender equality and increase women's representation to solely depend on political parties which central government has no control over and no position on the quota system.

Also, voting is based on some ideas constructed within political parties at a decentralised level which affects women's representation. In this era of decentralization, it would be interesting to know how democratic political parties think and act, in relation to women's representation and participation in decision-making processes. How is the ruling party implementing the quota system? Are there any strategies to empower women and are women elected in this fashion taken seriously by their male counterparts during council meetings?

During apartheid, government imposed "community leaders" to take decisions on behalf of women and communities. Interestingly, the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework (TLGF) Act (41/2003) allows the Premier to determine a threshold, should there be an insufficient number of women. The fact that such a clause appears in the Act, undermines the intelligence and the status of women. Women could even take the government to court for this Act to be reviewed or amended. It may be possible those women were not involved during the negotiations or that their influence was minimal. Therefore, it becomes crucial for this study to explore the influence of culture and family in shaping women's representation and participation in this era of decentralisation.

The literature shows that ward councillors and ward committees form the lowest structure of government with only ten members, ensuring community participation in decision-making processes. However, the 2004/05 National Survey shows that less than half of the respondents affirmed the impact of this structure in council decisions. Must be wondering, then what the purpose is of having such a structure that limits representation and participation while having no influence on decisions. Where are councillors taking the mandate from? Otherwise, women would continue to be marginalised in terms of their representation and participation in decision-making processes at local government level.

Although democracy is new in South Africa and local government was the last sphere of government to be reformed, it is crucial to recognize that gender equality is guaranteed in the Constitution. However, it becomes complicated when there are contradicting prescripts committed to redressing gender imbalances, at the same time showing that women are not a priority but simply an "interest group". With women, unlike many other structures, their

biological cannot change; therefore, their representation and participation in decision-making processes need no further emphasis because they are close to local government and the majority. Councillors were interviewed to share their experiences in relation to the main aim of the study. As Ball (2004: 2) remarks “Until the interests of women have been represented at local level, the system is not fully democratic”. The current study then addresses the methodology adopted in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous two chapters on literature review showed that gender issues could best be addressed in democratic societies where women could be represented and participate at all levels of government. The role of different stakeholders has been critical in ensuring that women's interests receive proper attention when decisions are made especially at local government level. However, women's representation and participation at local government level was never a priority in South Africa, as the focus was on nation building in order to redress the imbalances of the past. Women were simply considered one of the "interest groups". South Africa has held four successful democratic local government elections, between 1995 and 2011, where the number of women representatives continues to be a challenge. It transpired that women are the majority, poor and very close to local government, yet, currently they are organised at the central rather than the local government level. However, government prescripts made provisions for women's representation and participation in decision-making processes at local government level. At the same time, women had to rely on the adoption of a quota system by political parties for their representation to improve.

It has become crucial to investigate how women are represented and participating at decentralised levels of governance especially in decision-making processes that affect their daily lives. This chapter focuses on the methodology adopted in meeting the main objective of the study which is summarised below, brief background about all municipalities involved, research design, population, sampling approach, data collection and analysis, ethical considerations and delimitations.

#### **4.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The main aim of the study was to investigate the extent to which women are represented and participating at local government level.

The specific objectives of the study were:

- To establish the impact of women's representation and participation in decision-making processes at local government level;
- To investigate the extent to which women representatives are gaining support from other stakeholders (civil society, political parties, communities, other women etc.) in addressing gender issues at local government level;
- To analyse the personal strategies that women councillors adopt in order to maximise their contribution to decision making processes in local government contexts;
- To identify barriers and challenges related to the representation and participation of women at local government level; and
- To explore successful factors contributing to increased representation and participation of women at local government level.

### **4.3 KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The research study responded to the following key questions:

- Q1: What is the impact of women's representation and participation in decision-making processes at local government level?
- Q2: To what extent is women representative gaining support from other stakeholders in addressing gender issues at local government level?
- Q3: What strategies are adopted by women councillors to maximise their contribution to decision making processes in local government contexts?
- Q4: What are the barriers and challenges related to their representation and participation?
- Q5: What are the success factors contributing to increased representation and participation of women at local government level?

### **4.4 BRIEF PROFILE OF MUNICIPALITIES**

This study involves metropolitan, districts and local municipalities from two different provinces, namely, KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape.

## **4.5 KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE**

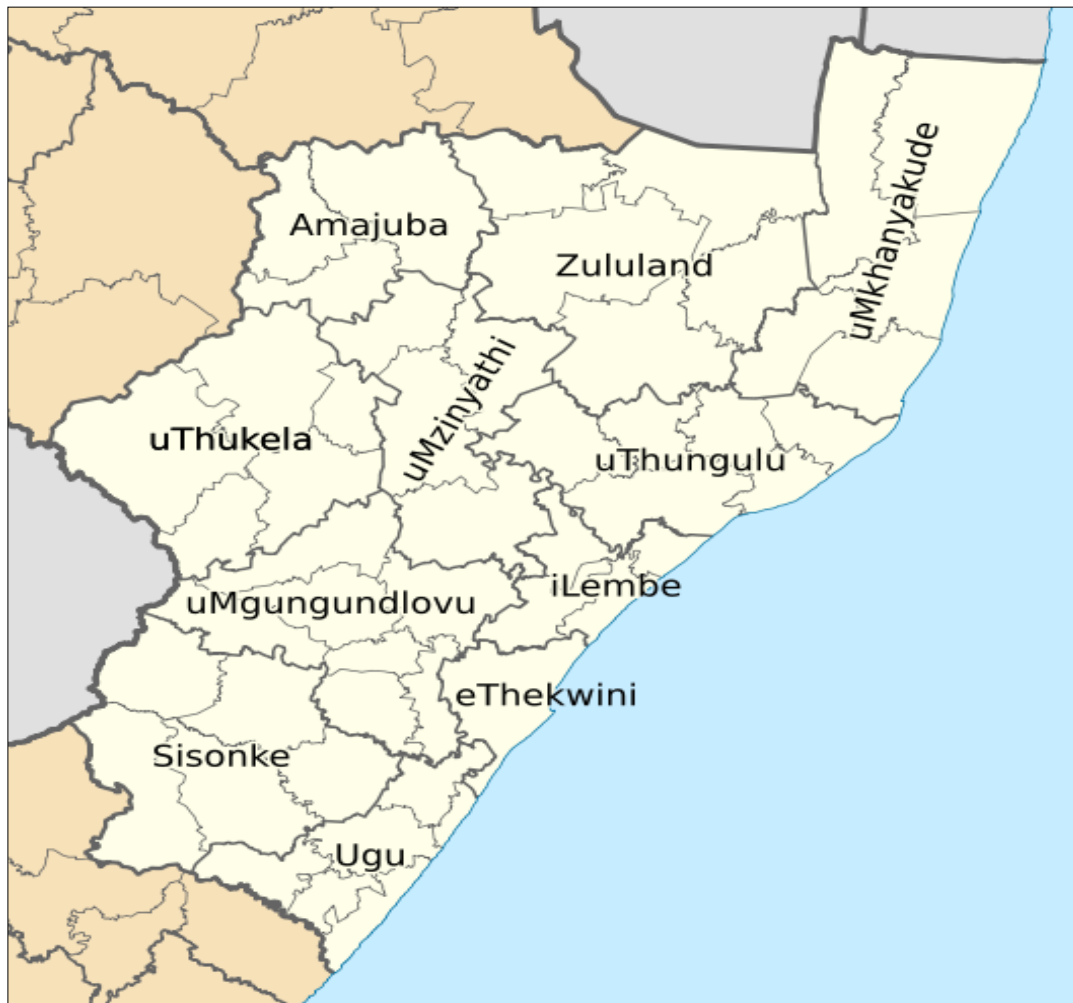
South Africa is currently made up of nine Provinces and KwaZulu-Natal is one of them. The ‘provincial estimates showed that KwaZulu-Natal had the largest share of the South African population at 21 percent of the population, followed by Gauteng with 20, 2 percent and the Eastern Cape with 14 percent’ (South African Government Information, Online, 04 July 2012). KwaZulu-Natal has more than 10 million people living on 92 100 square kilometres of land (South African Government Information, Online, 04 July 2012). Of these, about 5,08 million people live under conditions of poverty and 74 % of these poor people are in rural areas (KwaZulu-Natal OTP; 2005: ii). The Province has eleven (11) District Municipalities and uMgungundlovu is one of them.

### **4.5.1 uMgungundlovu District Municipality**

uMgungundlovu District Municipality has a total number of 872 717 residents (uMgungundlovu IDP, 2009) scattered in urban, semi-rural and rural residential areas. Basically, all seven (7) local municipalities under uMgungundlovu District Municipality cover an area of approximately 8.5000 square kilometres and the majority of its 927 834 people speak Zulu (Census, 2001). The seven local municipalities under uMgungundlovu District Municipality are, Richmond Local Municipality; Impendle Local Municipality; uMsunduzi Local Municipality; uMkhambathini Local Municipality; uMngeni Local Municipality, iMpofana Local Municipality; and uMshwathi Local Municipality. However, the focus will be on four municipalities under uMgungundlovu District Municipality. And those municipalities are uMsunduzi Local Municipality, uMngeni Local Municipality, uMshwathi Local Municipality and uMkhambathini Local Municipality.

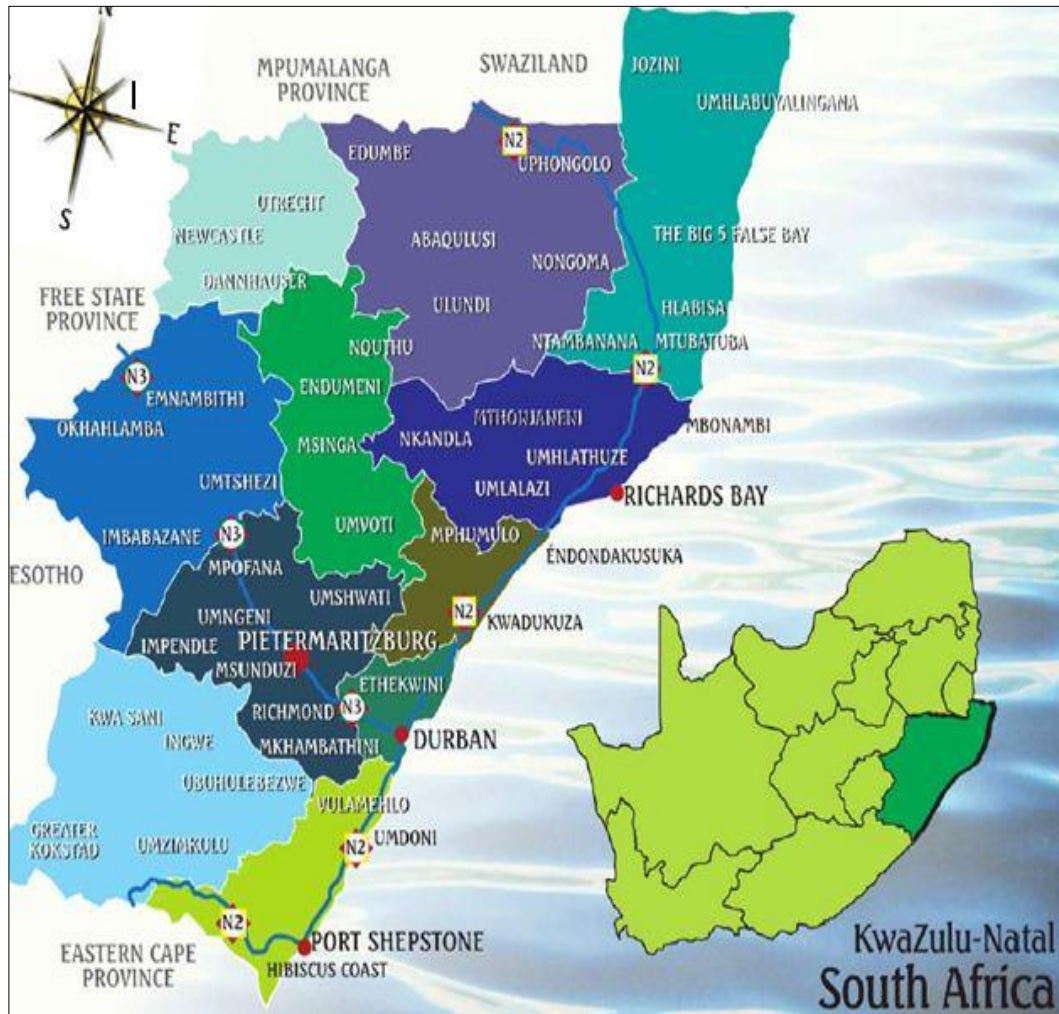
Ward councillors, women and men are preferred due to the small number of wards within the local municipalities under uMgungundlovu District Municipal Council.

**Figure 4.1: Map of KwaZulu-Natal District Municipalities**



Source: Htonl (2012)

**Figure 4.2: KwaZulu-Natal Municipalities**



Source: KZN Top Business (2012)

#### **4.5.1.1 Msunduzi Local Municipality**

This local municipality extends over 649 square kilometres and comprise attributes of the urban and rural South Africa under its jurisdiction. The total population is estimated at 616.733. Msunduzi Local Municipality has the second largest city, called Pietermaritzburg which is also the capital city; and an urban centre in the province of KwaZulu-Natal (Msunduzi SDF Review, 2009). At the same time, one third of population reside in tribal areas where infrastructure improvement is urgently needed (Msunduzi Municipal Report 2007/8). Another reason is that women constitute 53% of the population (Msunduzi Municipality IDP 2006/11).



The municipality has a total number of seventy three (73) councillors. There are thirty seven (37) wards under Msunduzi Municipality. During the 2011 local elections, eleven (11) females were elected as ward councillors. Proportional Representation councillors come from political parties such as the ANC, DA and IFP, Minority Front (MF), and the National Freedom Party (NFP). It must be noted that both men and women may have more information about female ward councillor issues and their influence in decision-making processes within the municipality.

#### **4.5.1.2 UMngeni Local Municipality**

This municipality is named after the river uMngeni which runs through the town of Howick. The town which was established in the 1940's offers superlative lifestyle and is famous for its Howick Falls and the Midmar Dam. The total population is approximately 84 783 and the municipality covers 1.567 square kilometres.

There are twelve (12) wards under uMngeni Municipality. Only four (4) women have been elected as ward councillors compared to their male counterparts which is eight (8) males. However, more women have been elected as PR councillors which is ten (10) compared to two (2) male PR councillors. All the councillors represent only two political parties, the ANC and the DA.

#### **4.5.1.3 UMkhambathini Local Municipality**

The UMkhambathini Local Municipality located along the south eastern boundary of uMgungundlovu District Municipality and adjoins Richmond and Msunduzi Local Municipalities to the west, uMshwati to the north and eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality to the east (Mkhambathini Municipality, 2012). It covers an area of approximately 917 square kilometres and is the second smallest municipality within uMgungundlovu District after Impendle Local Municipality. The total population is estimated at 46.566 people. It must be mentioned that Impendle and uMkhambathini Local Municipalities are the most rural in nature of all municipalities in the District. According to the Mkhambathini Municipality Report (2011) the population is slightly imbalanced with females outnumbering their male counterparts.

There are seven (7) wards under this municipality and there are fourteen (14) councillors in total. Political parties represented are coming from parties such as the ANC, NFP, DA and

IFP. It must be noted that there are no female ward councillors at Mkhambathini Municipality. However, there is only one female PR councillors from the NFP.

#### **4.5.2 eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality**

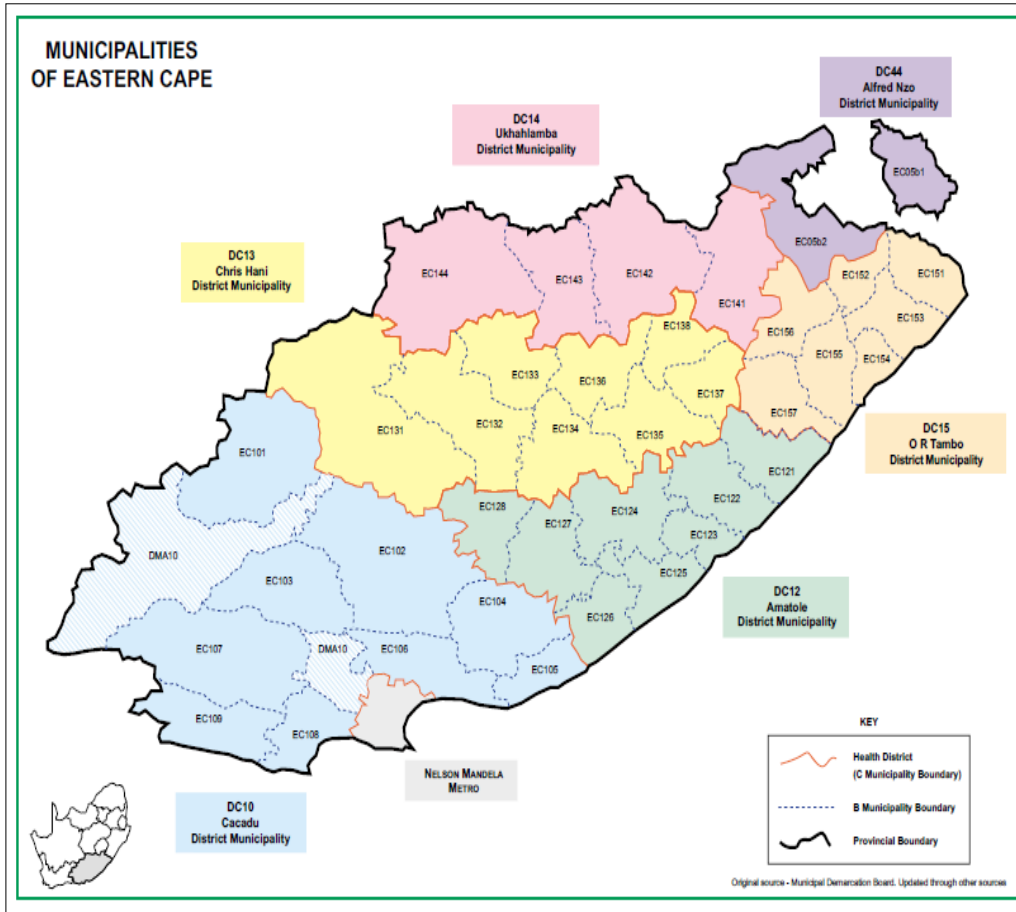
eThekweni Municipality is a metropolitan municipal with an executive mayor based in Durban. Durban is the largest city in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal and is the third largest city in South Africa. The city of Durban has been called ‘the largest Indian city outside India’. However, eThekweni Municipality include other small towns around Durban. It is known for its warm and subtropical climate and extensive beaches. Furthermore, the Port of Durban is the busiest port in South Africa. The municipality extends over 2.297 square kilometres which comparatively larger than other cities in the country (eThekweni Municipality, 2012). The municipality is regarded as the economic hub of the Province with its international and local tourist attraction due to its hospitality industry and its Zulu speaking nation’s rich history. Its population is approximately more than 3.5 million.

Prior to 2011 local government elections, the municipality had 100 municipal wards. Due to political changes and demarcations, eThekweni municipality now has 103 wards. The total number of councillors is 205 with 105 serving as PR councillors. There are 138 males and 67 female councillors. It must be noted that there are more males elected as ward councillors than females. The males elected as wards councillors constitute 89 wards and females 14 wards. The females appointed as PR councillors are more than males at 53 and males at 49. The political parties represented are the ANC with 126 councillors; DA 43; NFP 10; MF 11; (Independent) IND 1; African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP) 2; Congress of the People (COPE) 1; TA 1; APC 1; IFP 9.

#### **4.6 THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE**

The Eastern Cape Province is situated in the eastern part of South Africa and has two metropolitan municipalities, namely Buffalo City and Nelson Mandela. It is also divided into six district municipalities which are Cacadu; Amatole; Chris Hani; Ukhahlamba; Alfred Nzo and O.R. Tambo. There are thirty seven local municipalities under all district municipalities.

**Figure 4.4: Municipalities of Eastern Cape**



Source: EWISA (2012)

#### 4.6.1 Alfred Nzo District Municipality

The Alfred Nzo District Municipality previously had two local municipalities prior to 2011 local municipal elections namely, Matatiele Local Municipality and uMzimvubu Local Municipality. However, due to political changes two more municipalities have been added and those are Mbizana Local Municipality and Ntabankulu Local Municipality. The two municipalities have been taken away from O.R. Tambo District Municipality. The researcher chose only one local municipality under this district.

#### **4.6.1.1 UMzimvubu Local Municipality**

UMzimvubu Local Municipality covers an area of approximately 2506 square kilometres and has a population of about 220 636 people. This local municipality is mainly rural as the homes of most of the people are in the rural part (uMzimvubu Website, 2012). There are two urban focal points under this municipality and that is Mount Ayliff and Mount Frere. The larger part of the land has traditional housing. The population comprise of 53.9 percent females, predominantly African 99.8 percent. It is estimated that 4 percent of the population has some form of physical disability with more men than women afflicted.

There are twenty seven (27) wards in total under this municipality and sixteen (16) of those wards are headed by female councillors. Also, the municipality has fifteen (15) female PR councillors and twelve (12) male PR councillors.

### **4.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The research methodology focuses on the research design, population and sampling, data collection instrument and data analysis.

#### **4.7.1 Research Design**

According to Ghauri and Gronhaug (2005: 56) a research design 'is the overall plan for relating the conceptual research problem to relevant and practicable empirical research. In order to obtain required results, an exploratory research was conducted. The main aim was to formulate a problem for more precise investigation or develop working hypotheses from an operational point of view, aimed at discovering ideas and insights (Kothari, 1990). The design is less structured, simple and flexible enough to explore different aspects of the problem being studied. Typical techniques used in exploratory research include case studies and historical analysis which can provide both qualitative and quantitative data (Hussey and Hussey, 1997: 10).

A qualitative research was used in this study. The purpose of qualitative research is based on researcher immersion in the phenomenon to be studied, gather data which provide a detailed description of events, situation and interaction between people and things providing depth and detail (Cooper and Schindler, 2006, 198). There are advantages and disadvantages of

qualitative research. One of the advantages are that it offers richness and detail, meaning that the in depth study conducted in a focused area allow for ‘thicker descriptions’ of the specific social situation (Denscombe, 2003, 280). However, the fact that results cannot be generalized from a qualitative study to a larger population is considered a fundamental weakness, according to Cooper and Schindler (2006).

#### **4.7.2 Population and Sampling**

Cooper and Schindler (2006, 714), defines population as the total collection of elements about which we wish to make some inferences. A sample is used by researchers to study a representative segment rather than the whole population because of costs, time and material constraints (Krishnaswani, 2002). According to Gill and Johnson (2010: 131) the size of the sample, together with its geographical dispersion, have a bearing on the researcher’s decisions about how respondents are to be contacted and the requisite information to be elicited. The initial target population in the study was an equal number of male and female ward councillors, where possible, from each of the local municipalities under different district and metropolitan municipalities in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. The municipalities in these two different provinces are unique. For example, the municipality in KwaZulu-Natal has been chosen because it is primarily urban with a mixture of suburbs and informal settlements especially eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality. The Eastern Cape is mostly rural whereas municipalities under uMgungundlovu in KwaZulu-Natal is a mixture of semi-rural and semi-urban and was also chosen for convenience purposes as well. For the targeted municipalities, the total population is 369 ward and PR councillors.

In KwaZulu-Natal, eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality and three (3) local municipalities under uMgungundlovu District Municipality were involved.

EThekweni Metropolitan Municipality has a total number of 205 councillors, where 103 are ward councillors. Eighty nine (89) of the ward councillors are males compared to 14 female ward councillors. When it comes to PR councillors the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality has 102 PR councillors of which females are more than male at 53 compared males at 49. Seven (7) women councillors and thirteen (13) women PR councillors were interviewed. Seventeen (17) male ward councillors and three (3) male PR councillors were interviewed. Therefore a total number of twenty four (24) ward councillors and sixteen (16) PR councillors under eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality were interviewed.

The municipalities under uMgungundlovu District Municipality are Msunduzi local Municipality with 73 councillors; uMkhambathini local Municipality with 14 councillors; and uMngeni Municipality with 23 councillors. Msunduzi Local Municipality elected twenty six (26) male and eleven (11) women ward councillors. Seven (7) of the eleven (11) women ward councillors participated in the study. Only five (5) male ward councillors were interviewed. Five (5) women PR and only three (3) male PR councillors participated in the study. As mentioned above, Mkhambathini Local Municipality has no single woman ward councillor but all seven (7) wards elected male councillors. The municipality has only one (1) female PR councillor and six (6) male PR councillors. For the study, four (4) male ward councillors and were interviewed. Three (3) male PR councillors and one (1) female PR councillor were interviewed. With uMngeni Local Municipality only three (3) women and one (1) male ward councillors were interviewed. Six (6) women PR councillors were interviewed. No male PR councillor was interviewed under uMngeni Local Municipality.

**Table 4.1: Councillors in each municipality**

PROVINCE	MUNICIPALITY	TOTAL NO. OF WARDS	TOTAL NUMBER OF COUNCILLORS	FEMALE WARD COUNCILLORS 2011	MALE WARD COUNCILLORS 2011	PR FEMALE COUNCILLORS 2011	PR MALE COUNCILLORS	SAMPLE FOR THE STUDY
KWAZULU-NATAL	EThekweni Metropolitan Municipality	103	205	07	17	13	03	<b>40</b>
	Msunduzi Local Municipality	37	73	07	05	05	05	<b>20</b>
	UMngeni Local Municipality	12	23	03	01	06	00	<b>10</b>
	UMkhambathini Local Municipality	7	14	00	04	01	03	<b>08</b>
EASTERN CAPE	Mzimvubu Local Municipality	27	54	06	10	05	05	<b>26</b>

<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>186</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>104</b>
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In the Eastern Cape one (1) municipality, uMzimvubu Municipality with 54 councillors from the Alfred Nzo District Municipality participated in the study. For this study, six (6) women and ten (10) male ward councillors participated. Five (5) male and five (5) female PR councillors were interviewed.

In order to achieve the goal of the study, in KwaZulu-Natal 78 out of 341 councillors were interviewed, in the Eastern Cape, 26 out of 54 councillors took part from the only municipality that was targeted. Depending on their availability, when female ward councillors are less than the number required, all of them were interviewed. When females or males are more than the number required under each municipality, the researcher tried to find an equal number of males and females were involved as the study aims to get an equal proportion. However, this became impossible as ward councillors become engaged with their communities. The researcher interviewed councillors from different political parties as some municipalities could not indicate whether there were independent ward councillors. As a result, there were twenty three (23) women ward councillors; thirty seven (37) male ward councillors, thirty (30) women PR councillors and fourteen (14) male PR councillors that participated in the study. In relation to the number of councillors who participated, sixty (60) of them were elected ward councillor and forty four (44) were PR councillors.

#### **4.7.3 Data Collection**

In qualitative research approach, interviews are usually taken to involve some form of conversation with a purpose through engagement by interviewer and interviewee around relevant issues, topics and experiences during the interview itself (Mason, 2002: 225). In-depth semi structured interviews was adopted to allow the participants to be flexible when responding to questions. According to Kothari (2009) the in-depth interview method is the way of getting information personally from the interviewee. The researcher in this study conducted interviews face-to-face. However, where face-to-face interviews was not possible due to geographic dispersion of the respondents, technology, such as telephone was used. In this study, there was a need for basic questions to be answered pertaining to women's representation and participation at local government level posed to targeted councillors. The researcher used an interview guide. Welman and Kruger (1999, 167), define an interview guide 'as a list of topics (note, not specific questions) which have a bearing on the given

theme and which the interviewer should bring up during the course of the interview'. These questions were compared with the research problem several times, partly to test the consistency between the two and partly to see whether these questions are thorough and correct enough to find out what one want (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2005: 134).

The interview guide had 17 questions, which were mainly open ended. This assisted the researcher to obtain ample information regarding the extent to which women are represented and participating in decision-making processes at local government level under each municipality. The interview was between 40 minutes to more than an hour long, which was adequate for the necessary data to be collected. Data was also collected using secondary information such as annual municipal reports, national policies and local government prescripts and other publications.

#### **4.7.4 Data Analysis**

The data collected as indicated was qualitative such as opinion, challenges and other views of the target population regarding the study. The interviewer had to compile the complete report as soon as possible after the conclusion of the interview. Content analysis was used in this study. Bryman and Bell (2007: 726) defines content analysis as an approach to the analysis of documents. In-depth interviews which can provide good results is used in association with an interpretist view of evidence analysis, can also be used with content analysis, which is essentially a positivistic evidence (Remenyi; Williams; Money and Swartz, 2002:59). Themes were induced from the interview data. Data was presented in the form of tables, graphs and percentages.

#### **4.8 RESEARCH ETHICS**

Terreblanche, Durrheim, and Painter (2006, 563) defines research ethics as a field of applied ethics that seeks to ensure that welfare of research participants is protected. Confidentiality will be considered in this study as it entails issues of ethics in the research, which is defined by Gilbert (2001: 45) as a matter of integrity and high standards of principled sensitivity to the rights of others. Confidentiality involves respect for human dignity and protecting the respondent's anonymity. Permission was granted by the all municipalities. Definitely, as mentioned above, certain ethical measures were considered during the study.



#### 4.9 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was limited to ward councillors, in only about two provinces out of nine provinces of South Africa. It focused on the representation and participation of women councillors in decision-making processes within their local councils, therefore, it would be difficult to generalise the study. The fact that telephonic in-depth semi structured interviews were conducted on such as sensitive issues serve as a limitation in this study.

#### 4.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter has outlined the methodology that was utilised. The methodology has covered the research design, compared qualitative and quantitative research designs, target population, data collection and analysis, ethical consideration and delimitations of the study. However, the main aim and objectives were first outlined, followed by the rationale and brief background of different municipalities from different provinces in South Africa in order to understand where respondents are coming from. It transpired that municipalities in KwaZulu-Natal have a strong Zulu and traditional authority culture and is facing challenges with the recent influx of people causing great demands for local government services. This is in contrast with what is taking place in the Eastern Cape Province where men are faced with disability challenges.

A qualitative approach was adopted and more than one hundred councillors were interviewed from the targeted population. As appearing in the guide for the telephone interviews, Table 4.2 below shows specific aims and research interview questions that respondents were asked in order to achieve the main aim of the study. Having adopted the methodology outlined above, the findings of the study are presented in the next chapter.

**Table: 4.2 Specific Aims and Interview Questions**

Specific Aims	Interview Questions
To establish the impact of women's representation and participation in decision making processes at local government level	Do you feel that women are actively participating and represented in decision-making processes and meeting at local government level?

	<p>What factors may have contributed to the high or low number of women councillor representation?</p>
<p>To investigate the extent to which women representatives are gaining support from other stakeholders (communities, political parties, other women etc.) in addressing gender issues at local government level.</p>	<p>Do you feel that women contributions during meetings are taken seriously by male counterparts?</p>
	<p>How has culture and family support shaped women's councillor representation and participation at local government level?</p>
	<p>To what extent are male counterparts supporting gender issues at local government level?</p>
	<p>What training has been provided to sensitise council members and communities concerning gender issues?</p>
	<p>What strategies are in place to empower women at local government level?</p>
	<p>Do women support each other irrespective of political affiliation, when women related issues (building crèche, clinics, and community projects) are raised in meetings?</p>
	<p>If (the answer to Q11 is) 'No' what has contributed to the non-support to issues related to women raised by women.</p>
	<p>What support are you as a woman representative gaining from other women in the communities?</p>
	<p>Do you feel that enough women are being groomed by political parties for</p>

	representation at local government level?
	How do you work with other community leaders and organisations as a councillor?
To analyse the personal strategies that women councillors adopt in order to maximise their contribution to decision making processes in local government contexts.	What strategies/behaviour do women adopt in order to participate fully in decision-making processes at local government level?
To identify barriers and challenges related to the representation and participation of women at local government level.	Have you ever felt discriminated against based on race or gender while executing your duties?
	If 'Yes' how was the issue reported and addressed
	What barriers and challenges have you been faced since becoming a woman representative at local government level?
	How did you overcome those barriers?
To explore successful factors contributing to increased representation and participation of women at local government level.	What factors have contributed to your successful representation and participation of women as a councillor?

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **PRESENTATION OF DATA**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter focuses on the analysis of data collected from respondents interviewed using an interview guide as discussed in the previous chapter. Interviews were conducted telephonically due to geographical location of the researcher and the respondents. The in-depth semi-structured interview guide allowed flexibility for both the researcher and the respondents to add or elaborate on points made when answering questions. The interview guide has eighteen questions divided into two sections. The first section has respondents' demographic data which is described in the form of graphs and charts. The last section of the interview guide focuses on respondent's experience of women's representation and participation at local government level. The findings are then analysed and presented in the form of tables which list themes followed by the frequency of responses given by respondents. The findings are presented according to specific aims as highlighted in previous chapters. It must be noted that at times, respondents gave more than one answer to certain questions and therefore the frequency of responses is not always equal to the number of respondents interviewed.

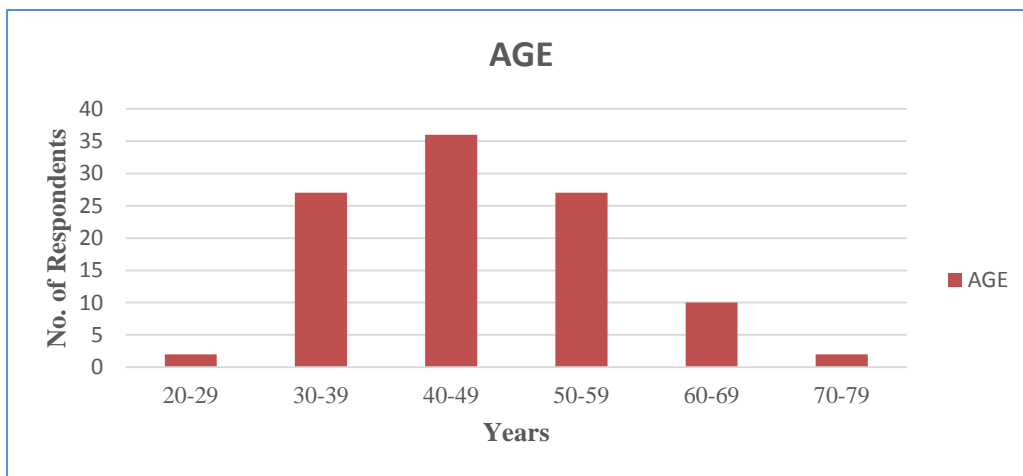
#### **5.2 DEMOGRAPHIC SAMPLE**

As mentioned in the methodology chapter, there were one hundred and four interviewed respondents in this study from different municipalities in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal Provinces. The researcher decided to include women and men PR councillors from all political parties within each municipal council which participated in the study. The ward and PR councillors included in the study represented the Democratic Alliance (DA), Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), Minority Front (MF), African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP), National Freedom Party (NFP); African Independent Congress (AIC); Congress of the People (COPE); African National Congress (ANC) and independent parties (see Figure 8 below).

Therefore, findings are presented according to councillors experiences on women's representation and participation at local government level.

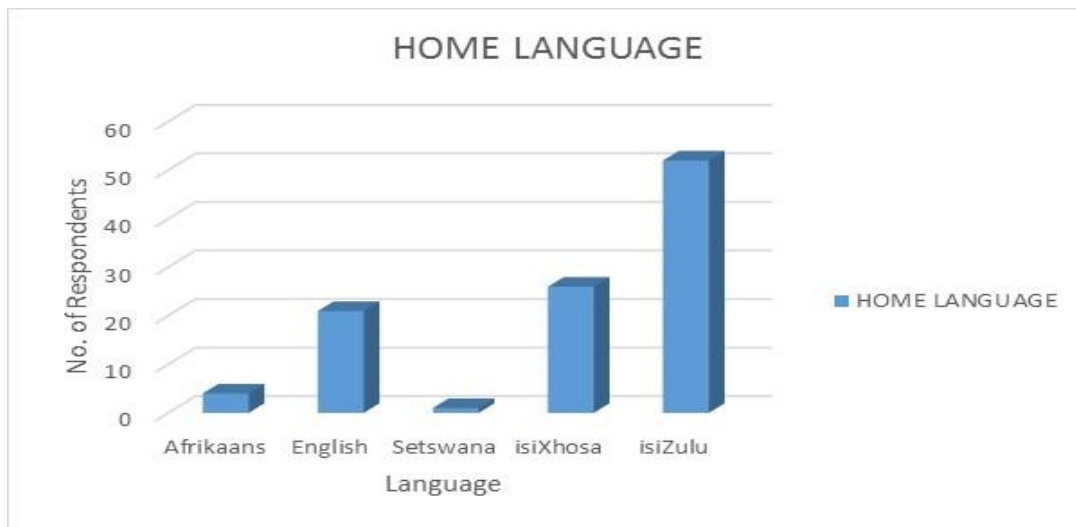
In order to be able to best describe the sample, respondents were each asked questions related to their gender (discussed above), age, home language, marital status, number of dependents, highest level of education, occupational background, political party, and years of active political participation. Their demographic profiles are presented in graphs below.

**Figure 5.1: Description of Respondents by Age**



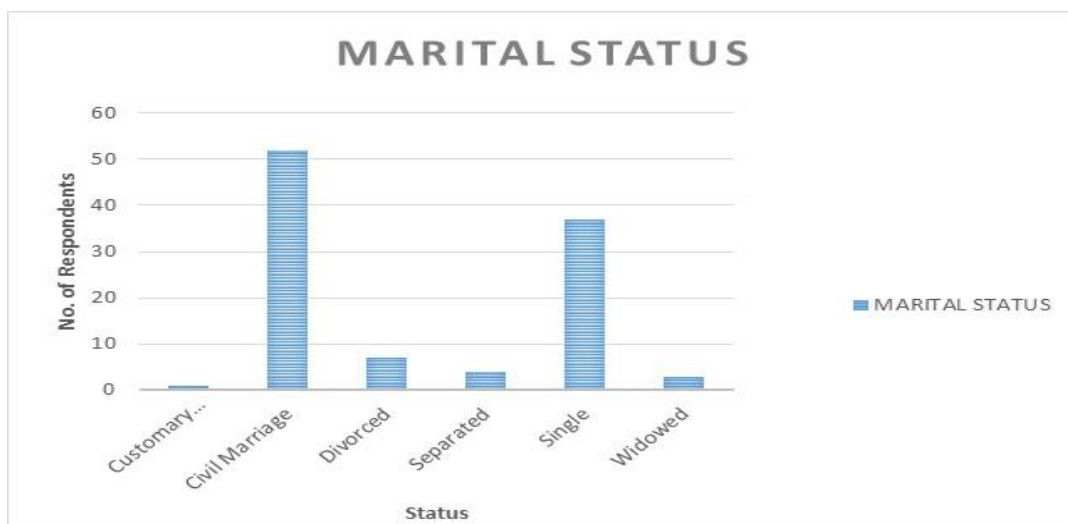
From the above figure, it can be seen that a large number of respondents, thirty six (36) were between age 40 and 49. There were twenty seven (27) respondents for each category of people between the ages 30 to 39 and 50 to 59. Only ten (10) were between 60 and 69, and two (2) between 70 and 79. On average respondents were 49 years of age.

**Figure 5.2: Description of Respondents by Home Language**



It can be seen from Figure 5.2 that the majority of respondents speak isiZulu as a home language at fifty two (52). Zulu speaking people are based in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal where most of the respondents came from. All respondents (26) from uMzimvubu Local Municipality spoke isiXhosa. It must be noted that some of the respondents speak English as a home language and are Whites, Coloureds and Indians at twenty one (21).

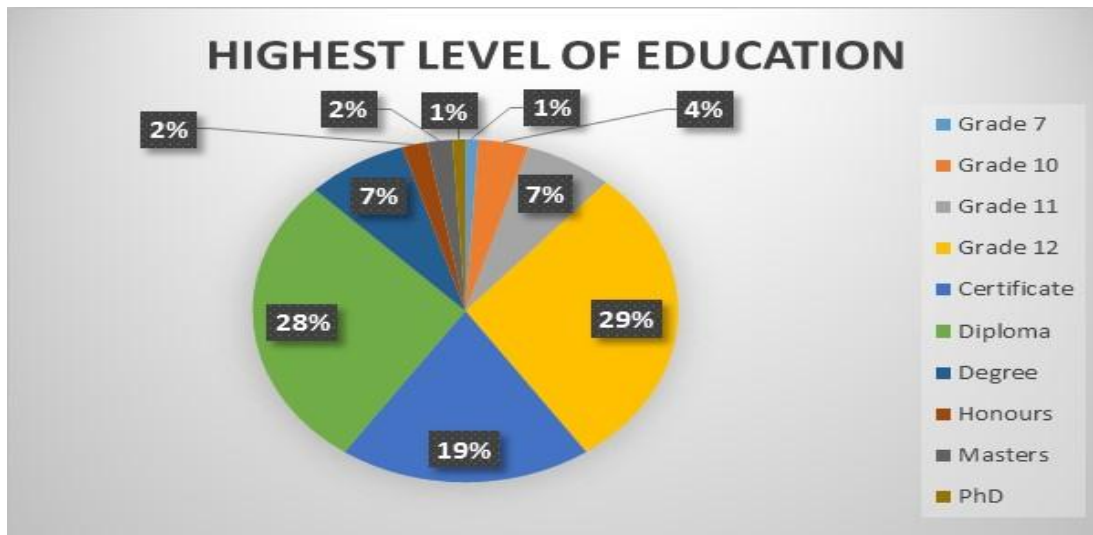
**Figure 5.3: Description of Respondent by Marital Status**



The above Figure 5.3 describes the marital status of respondents interviewed showing that a large number of respondents were married (n=52). One (1) of the respondents had to put emphasises on the type of marriage he was under. Thirty seven (37) of the respondents were

single as they were also not asked whether or not they had partners, cohabiting etc. Seven (7) respondents were divorced, three (3) widowed and four (4) in separation.

**Figure 5.4: Description of Respondents by Highest Level of Education**



It can be seen from the figure above that the 29% (n=30) of respondents interviewed had Grade 12 (passed high school) as their highest level of education. Twenty eight percent (n=29) had diplomas and seven percent 7% (n=8) had degrees which are both three year qualifications. Nineteen percent (n=20) had certificates as their highest qualification. One percent (n=1) had doctor of philosophy degrees. Other respondents had grades equivalent to secondary school level Grade 11 (n=7), Grade 10 (n=4) and Grade 7 (n=1).

**Figure 5.5: Description of Respondents by Occupational Background**

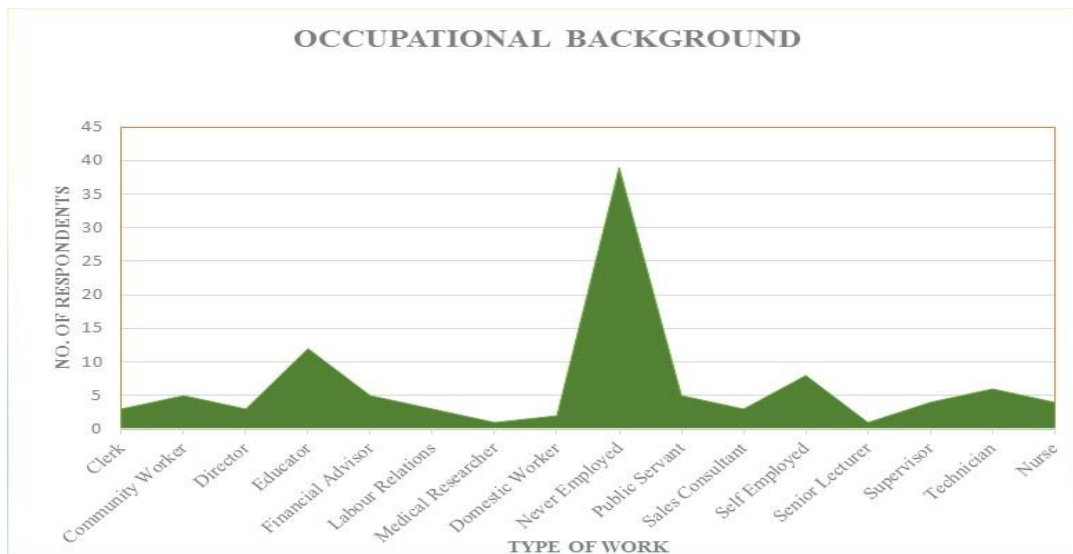
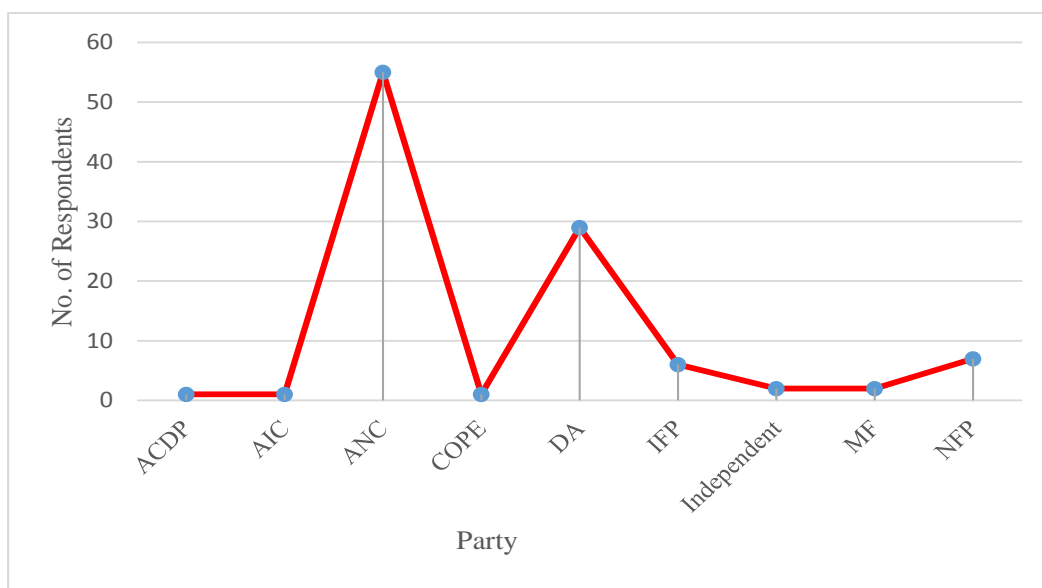


Figure 5.5 above describes the occupational background of respondents interviewed. It transpired that a large proportion of respondents (n=39) interviewed had not or never worked before being elected as councillors. It is noticeable that some of the respondents were self employed (n=8) and others were qualified as educators (n=12). However, respondents had different work expertise ranging from domestic worker to senior lecturer.

**Figure 5.6: Description of Respondents by Political Party**





As mentioned earlier, respondents represented different political parties in KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape. The majority of respondents fifty five (n=55) were from the ANC, followed by the DA with twenty nine (n=9); the National Freedom Party (NFP) with seven (n=7); IFP with six (n=6). There were also two respondents from the Independent parties (n=2) and two from Minority Front (MF). The African Christian Democratic Party ACDP, Congress of the People (COPE) each had one respondents (n=1).

**Figure 5.7: Discription of Respondents by Years of Political Participation**



The above graph indicates each respondent's number of years of active political participation, which include years before being elected councillors. The number ranges between 6 to 54 years. The data collected from the interviews were analysed using content analysis as mentioned in chapter four and the findings are presented according to the aims of the study.

### **5.3 Aim 1: To establish the impact of women's representation and participation in decision-making processes at local government level**

In order to understand the impact of women's representation and participation in decision-making processes, each respondent was asked three questions that appeared in the interview

guide. Question one of the interview guide required respondents to state whether or not they felt that women were represented and actively participating in decision-making processes and meetings at local government level. The majority of the respondents mentioned that women are represented and participating in decision-making processes. Respondents indicated that women are part of the executive council and responsible for other sub-committees within the council. There were also respondents who felt that they could not say yes or no because some women are represented but not fully participating as highlighted in Table 5.1.

**Table 5.1: Women’s Representation and Participation in Decision-Making Processes**

Themes	Frequency of Responses
Yes, number has improved and women are participating	68
Yes and no, women are represented but not fully participating	7
No, women are not participating at all	16
No, women lack confidence	13

From Table 5.1 above it can be seen that four themes emerged from the responses received from one hundred and four respondents. Sixty eight (68) respondents interviewed indicated that women representation and participation in decision making processes have improved. Respondent 26 pointed out that *“the executive committee is dominated by females and they are part of the decisions that are taken. We as [women] councillors are the majority ...even the Deputy Mayor is female”*. Respondent 55 remarked that women are *“equally represented and they are ‘chairs’ of committees”*. Respondent 93 indicated that *“women are represented and participate fully because the subcommittees are led by women”*. Another respondent (Respondent 29) remarked that *“everybody plays a key role, whether it is in committees or full council”*. Respondent 7 argued that *“in the council, she is the mayor who does not intimidate anyone...but in the rural areas women are not free to talk but follow what men are saying. They were never developed as before izimbizo (traditional gatherings) were attended by men. So it is new for them”*.

Respondent 46 mentioned in isiZulu that *“ayikho lento yokuthi kuzokhuluma amadoda, abantu besifazane bayingxenywe yomhlangano”*. This can be loosely translated as *“there is no mentality that men only speak; even women are part of the meeting”*. Respondent 39 stated

that *“they are, most women are councillors and mayors...can debate in the council...our mother and sisters never got a chance”*. Other respondent said women are *“well represented and very active...bayancedisa kakhulu (loosely translated as ‘they assist a lot’)”*.

Sixteen respondents felt that women are not participating at all in decision making processes at local government level. Respondent 34 said *“women are not participating because they cannot stand pressure”*. Respondent 11 pointed out that *“women are not participating because they are being undermined...”* In addition, Respondent 30 stated that women are *“definitely not (participating)...for some reason, men have been a majority when it comes to decision-making and policies...ungayikhuluma indaba (loosely translated as ‘you can raise a point’), but women are not participating”*. Another respondent said *“women seem very quiet. I think they must realise (that) they are important”* (Respondent 92).

Thirteen respondents felt that women are not confident enough themselves. One respondent pointed out that *“there is a gap because we were not there and were not considered as important in meeting...so abazethembi (they lack confidence). There are political parties which believe that women are not capable of taking decisions”*. Respondent 34 pointed out that *“women lack confidence...irrespective of challenges, they lack support from other people...in terms of the mindset, men think they do not want to be led by women”*. Respondent 6 argued that women *“are part of us, but they are not confident and they can’t speak out...however, slowly they are coming out...am worried because the number has decreased from three to two in the council”*. In addition, Respondent 102 mentioned that *“Women still need capacity especially black women...they lack self-confidence”*. Another respondent stated that *“we have a female mayor and she cannot facilitate a discussion...have never heard women saying sensible things”* (Respondent 1). Respondent 83 said *there is not enough representation, when it comes to meetings, they must show that they are capable...siyasaba (we are scared), we are 33 percent, not 50 percent”*. Another respondent raised a point that women *“are not a majority and they are scared to make decisions...they choose males”* Respondent 50.

Although a number of respondents were positive about women’s representation and participation in the decision-making processes, seven respondents were of the view that women are represented but not participating fully. For example, Respondent 66 stated that *“to a certain extent...seventy percent do participate, not all of them”*. Respondent 13 said

“women are represented in numbers, but in terms of taking decisions it is only males who take decisions”. Some of the respondents had mixed feelings about women’s representation and participation in decision-making processes. One respondent stated that “some are but some don’t...those who are experienced are participating” (Respondent 9). Respondent 73 said “Yes and no...yes as they are there in numbers in council meetings but in consultation meetings women do not understand how the municipality works”. Another respondent pointed out that “they do, but not hundred percent...kukhona izinto ezingenzi...kufanele kube khona izinto ezenziwa ngabantu besifazane bebodwa”. This means that “there are things that cannot be done...there must be things which must be done by women only”.

The second question, which is question three of the interview guide asked respondents to state factors contributing to high or low number of women councillors at local government level. The majority of respondents were consistent in their responses that the number of women councillors was low. However, there were those who felt that the number is high and stated their reasons as highlighted in Table 5.2 below.

**Table 5.2: Factors Contributing to High/Low Number of Women Councillors**

High/Low	Themes	Frequency of Responses
Low	Lack of confidence	17
	Cultural influence	13
	Women in competition with each other	12
	Lack of interest in politics	6
	Women not recruited by political parties	8
	Women threatened by community members	5
	Lack of formal education	16
	Politics still male dominated	5
	Women elect men into positions	10
	Lack of involvement in community structures	11
	Family responsibility	9

High	Participation in community projects and structures	7
	Quota system	15

The above Table 5.2 shows thirteen themes and the frequency of responses. Seventeen respondents indicated that women lack confidence in themselves as one of the factors contributing to their low numbers and participation. Respondent 88 stated that *“the problem with women, they are not **confident** in themselves...who would be confident in you if you are not confident in yourself”*. Respondent 42 pointed out that *“some women find it hard to take responsibility and make decisions on their own and take additional responsibility...lack of confidence, and the ‘second rate citizen’ mentality is still there”*. Respondent 32 mentioned that *“women are inferior; it is lack of motivation and self-confidence”*. Respondent 19 stated that *“women do not have confidence, when it comes to the issue of being councillors, uNkosikazi akana kuma kula ndawo (loosely translated as ‘a woman cannot stand in front of the people’)...amakhosikazi akaze acinge (women cannot think)”*. Another respondent shared her experience and stated that *“ndiqonde okokuba andikho redi ngesikhathi ndikhethwa kwi (I thought I was not ready when they nominated me in the) first term. I then prepared myself to be a PR”* Respondent 53.

**Cultural influence** was another factor raised by thirteen respondents that were interviewed. It must be mentioned that cultural influence involves lack of trust of women by men and by community members. Respondent 18 mentioned that *“culture is affecting the nomination of women even ecaweni abantu besifazane ngeke bakhokhele bame phambi kwamadoda...indlela esikhuliswe ngayo ithi umntu obhinqileyo soze akhokhele”* (loosely translated as *‘even in church women would not lead and stand in front of men...the way we were brought up dictates that a woman cannot lead’*). Respondent 59 stated that *“we are having doubts in women leadership and we feel that only males do qualify...there are decisions where before they are taken, a man has to sweat...the community would feel that women are weak to make those decisions”*. The culture has taught us that *‘umfazi akanasifuba’* a Zulu saying, loosely translated *‘a woman cannot keep a secret’*. Another interesting comment came from Respondent 21 who stated that *“50/50 quota system is good but kuthathwa noba ngubani, ubone nje ukuthi yinkunkuma kodwa ngoba ngumama...kukhona aba useless ngoba asazi uzoyinceda ngani i community”* (loosely

translated as *'they take anyone and you see that the person does not know anything but elected just because she is a woman...there are those who are useless we do not know how they can assist the community'*).

Twelve respondents also raised a factor that **women are in competition with one another**. That means that they are not supporting each other. Respondent 37 stated that *"to me the number is low in all structures...we as women allow some of these things to happen, because we just stay at home, yet others have been successful...we are weak and we find ourselves being used and feel that others are better...but I can say that women are better leaders because they understand things better"*. Respondent 43 stated that *"abekho (they are not there)...ingcindezi yabantu besifazane, ikwabanye abantu besifazane (loosely translated as 'the success of women lies in the hands of other women')"*. Respondent 104 mentioned that *"women undermine each other...there are PR councillors but as women we don't support each other"*. Another respondent stated that *"I do not know cause its open for everybody...they are the majority but do not trust each other...they always choose men"* Respondent 7. Respondent 58 raised the point that *"usually women are not viewed as leaders and they must be under somebody else care always...it will take time for people to accept us...even us as women we have a pull-her-down syndrome...no sisterly support even when we see that the person is capable of holding that position...age is another factor as female age quickly than males"*. In addition Respondent 9 pointed out that *"with the quota system...women did not want to elect other women in a meeting...but a Women's League person had to force them to nominate a woman...they do not trust each other...the community at large does not trust a woman...even as a political party, we don't...asking ubani? noba umabani angakwenza oku? (loosely translated as "this person or that woman can do this?)"*. As mentioned above, another factor which has contributed to the low number identified by six respondents interviewed was **lack of interest** in politics. Respondent 12 raised several factors with his comment mentioning that women are not supporting one another, family responsibility issue and also women not interested in politics. He stated that *"most women are not interested in politics...even in the community if someone is a lady interested in politics, she can get criticized by other women as she might be viewed as a person who wants to sit around men. Insulting word may be uttered...women have lots of responsibilities like leading the family...the number of women is more than that of men. Men sometimes do not want to take responsibilities"*.

Eight respondents were of the view that **political parties** are responsible for the low number as they are not recruiting women. Respondent 57 stated that *“I don’t think political parties do look for female candidates...some groups do respect females”*. Respondent 4 pointed out that *the party’s Women’s League is slow in recruiting women from rural areas*. Respondent 89 mentioned that *“numbers are affected by the fact that political parties rely on the number of candidates who put up their names”*. However, Respondent 63 was of the view that *“if the ANC did not have an opposition there would be more women”*.

Furthermore, five respondents mentioned that women are **threatened by community members**. Respondent 73 stated that *“it’s not easy for women...there are areas where they are threatened especially in KwaZulu-Natal...some women can’t face those challenges”*. Respondent 4 stated that *“maybe the way politics have been introduced especially during the unrest...community members still threaten councillors...they march against them and threaten to burn their houses”*. Respondent 6 mentioned that *“women are afraid of being killed and they are very sensitive”*. Respondent 30 stated that *“women are more prone to emotions...we should be like crocodiles...there is always violence in politics...it’s not easy for females and that is why we are afraid”*.

**Formal education** is another factor mentioned by sixteen respondents that has contributed to the low numbers and less participation of women at local government level. Respondent 4 remarked that *“because of lack of education, rural women are used by other people when they want something from them, for example, votes...no capacitation of rural women”*. *“When women are nominated, they decline to take positions because they are not politically matured, feel inferior and lack education in general”*, continued Respondent 4. Respondent 50 stated that *“there is a way of discriminating people in politics...other people are not true politicians but are here to show how educated they are...class is another issue...let’s talk about recruiting people at the age of fourteen and give them formal and political education...right now its numbers not capabilities”*.

Five respondents also felt that politics is still **male dominated**. Respondent 47 stated that *“for now there is no balance but we are trying to encourage women to be part of us...when it comes to ward councillors, they are struggling...with PR the number is bigger”*. Respondent 40 pointed out that *“wards do not choose females...they don’t trust them...the whole township is dominated by men...in the council they are a majority”*. Respondent 32 mentioned that *“prior, women were afraid of talking politics...but even now men are bossy within political*

*parties*". Respondent 38 raised another point when she mentioned that *"50/50 is here but it is covered with PR councillors...most of the ward councillors are males"*.

Ten respondents indicated that the number is low because **women elect men** into positions. Respondent 19 pointed out that *"the quota system is good but also a challenge...women are a majority... many women attend meetings but they nominate men...difficult to change the mind set...we have only 2 percent or 3 percent of women ward councillors"*. Respondent 66 stated that *"the number is low, even the 50/50 quota system does not assist as people must know politics...women do not understand politics but go to church...now there is money involved, they are interested...they also choose a man instead of another woman"*. Respondent 34 mentioned that *"the constitution is assisting...the industry is still male dominated but it is women who vote for men"*.

The representation and participation of women in politics at local government level has been affected by their lack of involvement in **community structures** according to eleven respondents interviewed. Respondent 26 pointed out that *"two things that can assist women. Firstly,...to be well known and to participate in certain structures. Secondly, it is gender equality because of laws...there are people who are not happy to see women in leadership position...according to some of them, with my age and gender I should not be with them ...men don't respect women in leadership positions and they also influence community members "*. Respondent 100 stated that *"there are no community organizations and structures anymore where women would influence decisions and 'toytoy' where possible...women used to meet and discuss issues that were affecting them, their children and the whole community...now it's just the extension of political branches...this is a sad state"*.

**Family responsibility** was another factor raised by nine respondents interviewed. Respondent 2 said *"it is not easy to leave home and take public office...women are fully committed already with extended family members"*. Respondent 30 stated that *"a woman would look at her children and step back, because she is very protective of her children"*. Respondent 71 pointed out that *"women have other commitments as they have to raise a family...it is difficult when you have a husband...others are afraid of dying and leaving their children behind...other women are staying with their in-laws...so family commitments do not go hand-in-hand with politics"*.



A number of respondents indicated that the numbers are **high** for two different reasons. Firstly, seven respondents that were interviewed mentioned that **participation in community projects and structures** contributed to the high number of women councillors. Respondent 23 stated that *“there are women involved in community development projects and are leaders of support groups, for example, Siyayinqoba; Ubuntu Trust; and others participate in crime prevention...end up being elected as councillors”*. Respondent 17 mentioned that *“community outreach work with women has assisted in electing women into position...otherwise we would have had men only”*. In addition, Respondent 11 said *“women do care and the community would say they want that one to be our councillor and give reasons...civil society organisations are still relevant especially for women”*. Respondent 10 supported this by stating that *“men do not take notice of certain things...you elect a man alibale yijiki (who will be just a drunkard), angahoyi (won’t attend to community needs) sometimes noba angabi (become non-active) active”*. Respondent 3 said that *“women are more sensitive and work with their communities...the community understands them better and can easily communicate with them”*.

Secondly, fifteen respondents indicated that the **quota system** is another factor which has contributed to the high number of councillors at local government level. Respondent 64 stated that *“the 50/50 quota system allows both men and women to be equal especially in the council”*. Respondent 56 indicated that *“within the ANC it’s 50/50 but not with other political parties...we need more women ward councillors”*. Respondent 41 added that *“it is the ANC’s constitution that has brought women into politics”*. Respondent 3 indicated that *“since the quota system was introduced the numbers are high”*. According to Respondent 2 *“Political parties are playing a big role”*.

The last question asked was, question four of the interview guide requiring respondents to state whether they felt that women’s contributions during meetings were taken seriously by male counterparts. The relevant themes and frequency of responses are tabulated in Table 5.3 below.

**Table 5.3: Women’s Contributions taken seriously by Male Counterparts**

Themes	Frequency of Responses
Yes, women are treated as equals	55

Yes, depending on knowledge and contribution	31
No, women are being undermined by men	14
Do not know	4

The following can be noted in Table 5.3, that fifty five respondents pointed out that woman were **treated as equals** in the council. Respondent 65 stated that the “*committee I sit on is headed by a woman and it is a Muslim female...getting as much airtime as males...she enjoys very high profile*”. Respondent 4 pointed out that “*their views are heard and supported...even in community meetings they are the majority and all their views are heard*”. Respondent 87 said that “*women are smarter than us and we do take their views...thina sinesibindi, kodwa bona bahlakaniphile (we are brave but they are intelligent)*”. Respondent 25 pointed out that “*women are taken seriously. Some of us have been long with the organization...but your point must be valid...the background also counts*”. Respondent 18 said “*women are leaders in this municipality...they are taken seriously as they are clear in what they are saying*”. Respondent 14 pointed out that “*bayasiphulaphula ootata noba bebona ukuthi ngabo abanolwazi (men listen to us even though they are more knowledgeable)*”.

Thirty one respondents indicated that women are taken seriously but it depends on their **knowledge and contribution**. Respondent 6 pointed out that “*depending on who has raised the issue and how she has raised it...but there is always some counteraction...not always recognized by male-counterparts*”. In addition, Respondent 37 stated that “*they listen to us but sometimes we feel as minors...kukhona ukudeleleka nokubizwa ngamagama (loosely translated as ‘sometimes they undermine and call us names’)...it will take us some time...men look at your weak points to bring you down as a woman especially when you show some intelligence*”. Furthermore, Respondent 36 argued that “*very few are taken seriously but we as women contribute to that because we do not do the research...do not prepare yourself for the meeting...you just repeat something that was said by somebody else...they are very few who come prepared*”. Respondent 11 said “*it depends on whether you are in their good books. If another woman raises a point, they support it even if it something that was said before*”. Respondent 8 pointed out that “*sometimes when there are few women, they are not*

*taken seriously especially if not well informed...it important to challenge them*". Respondent 68 said *"yes...because sometimes as men we use force but females always intervene...so we take them seriously because of their experience in certain things"*. Respondent 7 raised another point that *"women do not talk a lot but very tactful and can come up with solutions"*. According to Respondent 12, there *"is still a complex affecting them as some are harsh and aggressive"*. Respondent 75 said *"only those who are experienced are taken seriously, but others are not...like myself if I can come for the second term I would be wiser"*.

Fourteen respondents indicated that women are **undermined** and not given equal status in the council. Respondent 99 pointed out that *"men do not want to acknowledge a contribution made by a woman...they want issues to be raised in their own version...they do not admit that women are playing a pivotal role...they use us like a carbon paper"*. Respondent 26 stated that *"no, men want only their contributions to be heard, but technically they make you feel as if the idea is not enough...ideas are not taken seriously...I know they will not take my point because I raised it"*. Respondent 13 said *"if I am supported by other females, they do not give us the support...but when I am supported by another man they become convinced"*. Respondent 3 argued that *"women councillors are being undermined especially PR councillors...they are oppressed because they were not elected...it depends on the individual councillor"*. Respondent 14 pointed out that *"Women are always challenged by males who put benchmarks, fear...they fear that women are intellectuals... men don't give you status...if you want to maintain, you must fight for it and you end up showing them your terrain"*. Lastly, four respondents stated that they **do not know** whether women's contributions are taken seriously by their male counterparts. Respondent 31 stated that *"I do not know"*. Respondent 89 said *"I don't think so...actually angazi (I do not know)"*.

#### **5.4 Aim 2: To investigate the extent to which women representatives are gaining support from other stakeholders (civil society, political parties, communities, other women etc.) in addressing gender issues at local government level.**

In order to determine the extent to which women representatives are gaining support from other stakeholders (internal and external), respondents were asked eight questions. Respondents were first asked to state how culture and family support have shaped women councillors, which is question two of the interview guide. The respondents' answers are tabulated in Table 5.4 below.

**Table 5.4: Culture and Family Support for Women**

<b>Culture/Family Support</b>	<b>Themes</b>	<b>Frequency of Responses</b>
Culture	Culture is gradually changing	21
	Women are still treated as minors	9
	Changing because of the changing laws	7
	More opportunities for 'white culture' than 'black culture'	4
	Women need buy-in from traditional leaders and or religious leaders	12
	Culture does not allow women to hold certain positions	5
Family	Depend on marital status	18
	Depend on the husband	15
	Depend on family involvement in politics	23
	Depend on individual background in politics	9
	Depend on the residential area, whether it is urban or rural	4
	Women want to dominate at home	6
Culture and family support	Do not know	3

As can be seen from Table 5.4, in respect of cultural support, twenty one respondents indicated that culture is **gradually changing**. Respondent 59 said “*although culture is changing, it needs a woman to be aware how to separate politics and family...but when she gets home she must become a mother...there are thing culturally that are not allowed...the head of the house is the husband*”. Respondent 63 stated that “*culture is not a problem now...the challenge is the mindset as it is very rare to see a woman being discriminated against...African culture is very dynamic...bathi ‘Lelizwe elikaMthaniya’ (as Zulu saying that ‘this nation belongs to Mthaniya’) who was a woman.*” Respondent 11 mentioned that

*“Women work with people from different cultures and helps you understand diversity issues”*. Respondents 6 said *“You can call a woman ‘Ndabezitha’ (Zulu way of showing respect only to men by using his clan name) which was never the case before”*. Respondent 7 remarked that *“women are not confident as they nominate men...family tradition that the wife cannot be outside the premises after 10 at night...people come at night to report matters...females need to follow men’s tradition...go and resolve the matter”*.

Nine respondents indicated that women are **still treated as minors** with regard to culture. Respondent 43 stated that *“our culture dictates that a woman should not be outside the premises at a certain time...there is discrimination”*. Respondent 36 added that *“if you are married you must do your duties as a woman...you cannot come back at 01h00 everyday...your husband might understand but your in-laws won’t...you cannot leave a four-month old baby for a week attending a conference”*. Respondent 69 added that *“certain aspects of culture affects black women...they still have to consult like children”*. Respondent 37 pointed out that the *“Zulu culture still look at women as minors...we need to educate our communities...even more about our different cultures”*.

Seven respondents indicated that culture is changing only because of the **laws of the country** which have changed. Respondent 103 said *“the ANC and government make provision for every structure to include women”*. Respondent 12 stated that *“we have been led by men and traditional leaders for too long, but the constitution has changed that...however, there are those who still feel that we must not be in leadership positions”*.

Four respondents indicated that there are more opportunities for **‘white culture’ than ‘black culture’**. In that way they were differentiating between white women having better opportunities than black women due to cultural differences. Respondent 35 said *“to white women, it is a career and a talent sometimes...but to blacks it is like you are a loose, rude woman”*. Respondent 66 remarked that *“it is easy for women of other races...whites get hundred percent support”*. *“In the black culture because of violence and intimidation...women are weak and cannot stand the pressure that comes with politics”*  
Remarks Respondent 6.

Twelve respondents mentioned that a woman would need a **buy-in from traditional leaders** and or religious leaders before she could participate in politics. Respondent 74 stated that

*“culture and religion have very strong believes, so bringing them together is very important...men before were like heads of the house”*. Respondent 29, a female stated that *“I was a ward councillor...my brother supported me, the priest and church members gave me support and blessings”*. In addition, Respondent 26 stated that *“the community trusted me but culturally there are people who should assist you as a woman...religious and traditional leaders both gave me support”*. Respondent 11 said *“traditional leaders do respect women councillors...but they must dress in a proper way...they must not wear trousers and must have a way with language”*.

Five respondents felt that culture does not allow women to hold **certain positions in society**. Respondent 49 indicated that *“we have not broken the stereotype because women are not allowed to hold certain positions”*. Respondent 23 added that *“people must not leave their culture behind and change...in the rural areas things must be done in a certain was and a woman is expected to be with other women...I am not supposed to lead and they do not see me as a councillor...men do not want to be told by a woman what to do...in a meeting you need to show them who you are , otherwise they will take over the power that you have as a woman...for them to respect, you must always be accompanied by a male or a group of men”*. Respondent 24 continued to say *“when it comes to the family, they see you as being disrespectful when you are into politics and that you cannot lead them because they paid lobola for you”*.

In terms of family giving support, eighteen respondents indicated that family support **depends on your marital status**. Respondent 55 said *“women are free but in the Indian communities women are reluctant to get into politics because there are so many chores”*. Respondent 27 said that *“it is better when you are single...I stay with my daughter and sister...I am able to follow my passion”*. Furthermore, Respondent 61 stated that *“it is better for me...I am single and there is no one who ask me questions when I come back late...I stay with my brother and my sister’s child”*. According to Respondent 15 *“people would say they will not be led by a woman when there are men in the community...worse when you are single...they say asizuphathwa yintombazana noba yinkazana sibe singabafazi”* (loosely translated as *‘we cannot be led by a girl or a single woman when we are married women’*).

Fifteen respondents indicated that a woman would have to gain the **support of her husband** before participating actively in politics. Respondent 41 pointed out that her *“husband is an ex*

*Member of Parliament and ex councillor...I have hundred percent fantastic support*". However, Respondent 10 stated that *"women are bullied...when you leave without your husband present or without his permission...there is a fight...you need to come back home before he arrives...they just demand too much respect"*. Respondent 42 said *"women need 100% support...women should do the shopping, cooking...cannot make it without the support of her husband"*.

Twenty three respondents indicated that the participation of women **depend on the involvement of family members in politics** as one can be politically educated at home from her father, brother, husband and other family members. Respondent 33 stated that *"I was very lucky, my husband was a politician...our life in this house is politics...when I am not at home my kids will tell people that I am attending a meeting somewhere...but I do balance things as I respect my culture as an African woman"*. Respondent 91 stated that *"depending on whether they are involved or believe in politics...if they understand politics, it is easier"*. One of the respondents said *"Family forms part of society...when you work, you work together with your family...you work very hard"* Respondent 2. In addition Respondent 34 stated that *"your background can boost your confidence...family can make you do things with pride"*. Respondent 19 said, *"I found a note under my pillow from one of my children stating 'sicela ukunakwa nathi', [meaning we need attention as well]"*. This shows that family must understand and give support where necessary. According to Respondent 9 *"politics must be in the family or they must understand politics or she must come back with bread in order to get respect at home"*.

Nine respondents indicated that participation **depends on the individual background in politics** as the family can support you. Respondent 38 pointed out that *"you cannot get here without family support...even the upbringing counts"*. Respondent 37 said *"they make sure I get better and my kids are supportive"*. Respondent 77 a female, remarked that *"because of the background, very few are politically clued up...they do not know deep politics...women are seen as helpers other than playing an active role...because of political education in my home, we debate about politics"*. According to Respondent 11 *"a woman may be fulltime in politics...she may neglect her family because of political commitments...it's difficult for me to attend relatives funeral as I am always busy"*.

Six respondents felt that the **area that the family resides** in might have an impact on the support a woman is getting from other family members. Respondent 90 said that *“it depend on whether it is an urban or rural area...the husband might not support you”*. Respondent 31 stated that *“families in the cities are better...in rural areas women are still a step back but are very strong...they do not see themselves as individuals”*. According to Respondent 24, *“when a woman is walking up and down the road talking to people about politics...we conclude that she comes from a loose family”*. However, Respondent 17 stated that *“women wear trousers in council meetings now and they are free to say whatever they want to say...but they are not married most of them”*.

Five respondents mentioned that women who are into politics, **they dominate at home**. Respondent 15 said *“When women enter politics they want to dominate at home which is not what equality is all about”*. Respondent 12 pointed out that *“most of the time women are heading their families even when there is a husband...they just want to be in control of everything”*.

Three respondents indicated that they do not know whether culture and family is affecting the participation of women in politics. One respondent stated that he does not have any female close to him and therefore trust that they do get support (Respondent 41). Another respondent (Respondent 53) said *“I do not know much... but in most cases they do”*.

The second question, question five of the interview guide, dealt with the extent to which male counterparts were supporting gender issues at local government level. The themes and responses are tabulated in Table 5.5.

**Table 5.5: Male Counterparts Supporting Gender Issues**

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Frequency of Responses</b>
Gender balance in all structures	48
Idea raised must make sense	22
No full understanding of gender issues	11
Males do not support gender issues	23



Forty eight respondents indicated that there is **gender balance** in all structures of the council. Respondent 68 stated that *“it starts from the structure and caucuses...so we express ourselves there...it is driven by our policies and the constitution”*. Respondent 19 said *“we try and balance things, consider gender issues...in most projects, gender is looked at”*. Respondent 73 stated that *“they do support...when choosing a structure there must be a balance...but they sometimes forget about quota...you cannot choose a person who is not vocal and cannot debate”*. Respondent 29 said *“within the DA, everybody is treated equally...no women’s brigade or league”*. Respondent 43 pointed out that *“in the structure women would choose men...we do not want to see another women getting recognized and becoming better than us”*. Respondent 7 stated that *“with izimbizo women are encouraged and get support from males”*. Respondent 60 said *“we ensure that there is 50/50 and they are empowered”*. Respondent 62 added that *“it is not an option my brother, but a must...they can do better than us”*.

Twenty two respondents indicated that males are supporting gender issues **depending on whether or not the idea raised is making sense**. Respondent 9 stated that *“political culture is good no matter whether you are a woman or man...as long as it is making sense...when we agree, we agree as the ANC not as men or women”*. Respondent 12 pointed out that *“our interests are different but it depends on the area...sometime they support us”*. *“They do support us but our needs are different”* said Respondent 22. Respondent 33 said *“it is the community that is important...we organize meeting and consult people to get ideas”*. Respondent 41 said *“I don’t think so”*. Respondent 6 pointed out that *“men are supporting issues raised by women as they are now property owners”*.

Eleven respondents indicated that there is **no full understanding of gender issues**. Respondent 17 said *“the standing committee look at the needs of the community in terms of the infrastructure...not men or women”*. Respondent 2 said *“No specific gender issues, but people’s issues are discussed to better their lives”*. Respondent 21 stated that *“I do not understand much about gender issues...but we normally go to people and ask them about their needs and the council will look at the budget”*. Respondent 56 said *“there is no full understanding really...it is only highlighted in the month of August and October which is the cancer month”*. In addition, Respondent 38 said *“men would pass remarks and say you now want to do your own stuff, as if gender is about women”*. Respondent 50 pointed out that *“they have a women’s month and we felt isolated...we don’t have a men’s month”*.

Respondent 95 said *“I am not sure, but I support all programmes”*. Respondent 104 said *“There is a problem of different understanding at this stage between males and young people...we never gave them political education about gender as there is a vacuum, yet we work in the same terrain...it has caused some misunderstanding around policy issues”*.

Twenty three respondents felt that **males do not support gender issues**. Respondent 8 said *“sithi amadoda apha, soze itshintshe lonto...aba bafakwe nje ukuba babe nathi”* (we are the males here, and that will never change...women are just here to assist us). Respondent 11 stated that *“they want to dominate...we wanted a sports ground by the school...no one listened to me because I am a female”*. Respondent 14 said *“bafuna ukuthetha ngamacala abo...kulandela ngemva okwabantu besifazane (they want their side to be heard...then deal with women’s issues)”*. According to Respondent 51 there are *“more soccer fields than netball court...why?...it is all about males”*. Respondent 89 pointed out that *“men do not attend gender meetings...Women’s Brigade is the wing not the body...the wing cannot fly without the body...even the body cannot do anything on its own”*. Respondent 48 said there *“are males who are older and not happy to being led by women”*.

The third question, question six of the interview guide, relates to training that has been provided at local government level to sensitise council and/or community members about gender issues. Table 5.6 shows the themes and frequency of responses.

**Table 5.6: Training Provided to Sensitise Council/Community Members**

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Frequency of Responses</b>
No training provided	63
Have attended few courses	41

Table 5.6 shows that the majority of respondents (n=63) indicated that **no training** has been provided to sensitise council and/or community members. Respondent 23 said *“if ikhona ndirhalela ukuya (if there was any, I wish I can go there)”*. Respondent 80 said *“we do not have an office or heard that there was a person to deal with gender issues”*. Respondent 30 pointed out that she is *“not aware of any ...it is only NGO who used to talk about such things”*. Respondent 99 said *“there is nothing done by the municipality”*. Respondent 34

pointed out that she is “a gender activist but ngifike ngikuphethe ngesandla (loosely translated as ‘I joined the council with it’). Respondent 40 said that “it is bad...councillors are chosen but not trained”. Respondent 100 said “the focus is on women’s league which has not done much for women”. It must be noted that some respondents mentioned that they would never attend any gender training because gender was not more important than community issues.

Forty one respondents pointed out that they have attended **few courses** that sensitised them on gender issues. Respondent 25 said the MEC provided “training for women councillors regarding women’s confidence, conduct in meetings, questions, dress code...it took a week”. Respondent 7 said “I attended training in 2007/08...but nothing after that”. Respondent 49 stated that “there are number of programmes put forward over the years...national government and NGOs have pushed for gender equity...councillors are fairly well equipped”. Respondent 62 said “I attended only training dealing with violence and social ills”. Respondent 3 pointed out that “it is only NGO that has assisted both sexes”.

The fourth question asked respondents about strategies in place to empower women at local government level. Forty four respondents mentioned that there were **no strategies**, as indicated in Table 5.7 below.

**Table 5.7: Strategies to Empower Women**

Themes	Frequency of Responses
No strategies to empower women	44
Strategies introduced but never materialised	18
Responsibility of political parties	6
Civil society has strategies for women empowerment	13
Yes, there are strategies	21
Do not know	2

Respondent 41 stated that *“nothing from the municipality, but it has been coming from CoGTA who has been sending women for training”*. Respondent 31 said *“they talk of women’s month but all they do is breast cancer and AIDS...this is not empowerment...need more structured interventions”*. Respondent 13 said *“not yet in this municipality but we celebrate women’s day”*. Respondent 2 said *“nothing...the money is for youth projects”*. Respondent 78 said *“there are no specific programmes for now except women’s month...other are short courses which are not gender based”*.

Six respondents stated that it was the responsibility of **political parties** to introduce strategies to empower women. Respondent 49 stated that *“it is political parties that must call for 50/50 ...but still males are a large group”*. Respondent 10 pointed out that *“One is elected and trained by parties otherwise if you cannot perform we get somebody who can perform better”*. Respondent 65 said *“let’s face it...there is a month of august dedicated to women but parties are not doing much...do not think it’s going to last long...there is Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma and Helen Suzman who are there not because of quota but have worked hard to be where they are”*.

Thirteen respondents stated that **civil society has been having strategies** for women empowerment. Respondent 79 said *“only NGOs have provided programme to empower women”*. Respondent 98 stated that *“civil society organisations have trained people like myself...they have good programmes for women ...for example, women in development”*.

Eighteen respondents indicated that there were strategies which **unfortunately never materialised**. Respondent 42 pointed out that *“the Employment Equity Act encourages women to be empowered but there is no direct programme to support that here...I don’t think it goes that deep enough to show that you are entitled to that ...rural women don’t have anything”*. In addition, Respondent 30 said *“strategies are there but to what extent is still questionable...only in business 80%...not on political empowerment”*. Respondent 14 stated that *“Although the council was led by a woman since 1996, her focus was not on empowering women. ... even in IDP, there is nothing on women empowerment”*. Respondent 25 said *“nothing, but there are courses like project management...problem is that they send emails...some of us are technologically challenged”*. Respondent 16 indicated that *“most of the time zidityaniswa ne youth programmes (loosely translated as ‘they combine it with youth’)”*. Respondent 11 pointed out that *“there is a women’s forum...but I do not know what*

*it is doing...women do not like each other but they want their interests to be entertained...we do not know what is happening to the funds*". Respondent 8 felt that the *"strategies are there but not taken seriously or implemented...no spread across especially in rural area, no service"*.

Twenty one respondents indicated that **there are strategies** at local government level to empower women. Respondent 40 stated that *"there are strategies...I managed to get Grade 12... but personal commitment is important"*. Respondent 32 said that *"there was a seminar organized by COGTA"*. Respondent 37 remarked that *"the government in the province is there to empower women to understand local government"*. In addition, Respondent 26 said *"there have been a workshop and training for women councillors where we talked about challenges with the MEC"*. Furthermore *"the MEC as programmes for women councillors to empower them"* said Respondent 64. Respondent 22 pointed out that *"there is a special programme unit, responsible for the celebration of women's day"*. Respondent 9 added that *"there are strategies such as women in agriculture and support groups"*.

Two respondents stated that they **do not know** whether there are any strategies to empower women at local government level. Respondent 47 stated that *"angeke ngazi ngoba kuvesane kubizwe bona abesifazane (loosely translated as 'I would not know as only women would be called')"*. Respondent 20 said *"maybe there are programmes...I don't know"*. Respondent 4 stated that he was *"not aware of any"*.

The fifth question, question eleven of the interview guide asked respondents whether or not women support each other irrespective of political affiliation, when women-related issues are raised in meetings. Themes and frequency of responses can be seen in Table 5.8 below.

**Table 5.8: Women Supporting Each Other Irrespective of Political Affiliation**

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Frequency of Responses</b>
No, women do not support each other	28
Sometimes women support each other	26
Yes, women fully support each other	39
Do not know	11

As can be seen above, twenty eight respondents indicated that **women do not support each other**. Respondent 83 said “*there is a big problem there...I do not know what is wrong with women*”. Respondent 11 stated that “*from their different forums...women hate each other*”. “*Women are shy and do not nominate other women*”. Respondent 64 added that “*women are women; it is their nature...instead of supporting a woman, women support men*”. Respondent 25 said “*no one would visit you even when you are in hospital...women are working in silos*”. Respondent 102 indicated that “*thina bantu besifazane sibukelana phansi, angazi noma uma umuntu ekhuphuka ubukela abanye phansi yini...angazi! (loosely translated as ‘we females undermine each other, I do not know whether once one gets a higher position makes her undermine the others... I do not know’)*”. Respondent 36 said “*we see each other as competition other than colleagues*”. Respondent 37 stated that “*yithina esibhekela phansi (we are the one that undermine each other)...if I do one thing wrong bayasizakala abesifazane (women are the one who would laugh at you)...we do not give support to one another and bad mouth each other bese eyasizakala amadoda (men would be happy with the situation)*”. Respondent 78 added “*no, politics comes first*”. In addition, Respondent 59 said “*politics is politics...even when you have valid point...they do not support*”. Respondent 14 said “*Women have a bad culture and glaring jealousy...women agreed when two pipes had to be installed, knowing very well that more were needed as water is close to women*”.

Twenty six respondents stated that **sometimes women do support** each other. Respondent 1 said “*however, it is according to one’s political party*”. Respondent 66 stated that “*but you see which political party that person is coming from...at the end of the day, we agree that the issue affects women instead of political parties*”. Respondent 9 indicated that “*women support each other unless the idea the political party position does not allows them...we have a caucus before the council meeting*”. Respondent 30 said “*we do in a way...we share stories...but there are personal issues...across parties it is not bad, but within we do not support each other*”. Respondent 34 pointed out that “*they support each other when they want a raise in salaries...other than that, they consult their political parties*”. Respondent stated that “*women judge each other and conclude that the other woman thinks she is better...there is jealousy and pride*”. Respondent 87 said “*there is a challenge because when a man talks we think it is okay...it depends on who is talking with women*”.

Thirty nine respondents indicated that **women fully support each other** in meetings. Respondent 92 said “*women often gang up where they sense there is something coming...not*

*all women are iron ladies*". Respondent 4 stated that *"as women we speak with one voice...they lead committees as well"*. Respondent 19 said *"they do support each other...and always stand firmly"*. Respondent 69 felt that *"they support each other regardless of politics"*. Respondent 85 said *"yes, they close ranks very quickly"*.

Eleven respondents stated that they **do not know** whether or not women are supporting each other. Respondent 64 said *"I never noticed"*. Respondent 48 said *"I do not know, it is yes and no...politics is a different game"*.

The sixth question (question twelve of the interview guide) asked respondents to state reasons contributing to the non-support of women-related issues. It must be noted that only respondents who mentioned that women do not support each other responded to this question. The themes and frequency of responses can be seen in Table 5.9.

**Table 5.9: Contribution to Non-Support of Women Related Issues**

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Frequency of Responses</b>
Women compete with each other	36
Political party influence	12
No response	6

From Table 5.9 above, it can be seen that most respondents (n=36) felt that women are in competition with each other. Respondent 25 pointed out that *"naturally there is a problem...even if they do know each other in the street, they do not greet each other...without uttering a word, and they would question why she is wearing those shoes"*. Respondent 16 stated that *"they just do not trust each other"*. Respondent 60 added that *"maybe it is lack of confidence and inferiority when you meet people beyizinto ezithile noma benezinto ezithile* (loosely translated as *'when they have a certain status or have accomplished certain things'*). Furthermore, Respondent 35 said *"we women we like competition too much and we lose focus and direction...even when it is not necessary"*. *"Competition...we always want to be the best over the other person"*, according to Respondent 88. Respondent 73 said *"it is inferiority complex, ignorance and jealousy"*. Respondent 70 remarked that *"we do not welcome or appreciate each other...a woman is not important to another woman"*.

Twelve respondents indicated that political party influence has been the contributory factor to women not supporting each other. Respondent 47 said *“different political parties and influence...what is sad is that it is the community that is suffering”*. Respondent 59 stated that *“according to my understanding of politics...political parties are not the same so as their teachings or political education...we sometimes see each other as enemies...it is our politics that need to be changed not only political parties”*. Respondent 82 said *“it is because of their political views”*. Some respondent who mentioned that sometimes women do not get support from other women preferred not to respond or could not think of any reason.

Question thirteen of the interview guide asked respondents about the support they are gaining from other women in communities. The relevant themes and frequency of responses are illustrated in Table 5.10.

**Table 5.10: Women Support from Other Community Women**

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Frequency of Responses</b>
Support gained through women’s groups	19
Support gained through community structures	32
Support gained through ward committees	3
Depending on councillors work ethics	16
Depending on councillors attitude	2
Depending on the issue	7
Depending on community and race	3
Women gain limited support from other women	12
Support gained from both males and females	5
No support from community women	19
Do not know	8

From the list in Table 5.10 above, nineteen respondents indicated that women support is gained through **women’s groups**. Respondent 37 said *“they give you full respect because they trust you and understand the problems women are facing...it is amazing”*. Respondent 61 stated that *“civil society is very crucial as they give you support...it gives me reason to go on”*. Respondent 30 indicated that *“people are quick to identify a leader...working as an activist in a social movement taught me to work as a professional...communication and*



*feedback is important as well*". Respondent 100 indicated that *"women's society clubs encouraged me to stand firm in this position...they also guide me and advise me to change something"*. Respondent 19 said *"women from social clubs have...other from community organizations"*. Respondent 72 indicated that *"from women's League, they are bound to work together...as a woman, you must be reachable"*. Respondent 20 pointed out that *"We have a women's group teaching women craft and provide material for them to be self-sufficient"*. It was mentioned by one of the respondents that *"Women talk freely with women councillors than men councillors"*. Respondent 11 said *"most of the time I work with women from my community. I am still young so they advise me on how to behave and to be humble and I do that...again I am transparent with my reports to the community"*.

Thirty two respondents indicated that support is gained through **involvement in community structures and projects**. Respondent 33 said *"I do receive support...you have to work with everybody as a councillor...be involved in community projects...we are there for the community"*. Respondent 25 mentioned that *"I visit churches, community functions attend special events...they also invite me...in that way I become visible"*. Respondent 14 indicated that she *"works with women as the chairperson of the Women's Forum...I have introduced it in my village"*. Respondent 78 said *"what is important, she should be visible, recognize other women and speak the same language especially in funerals, schools, community events etc."* Three respondents felt that they only receive **support from ward committee members**. Respondent 54 stated that *"councillors are placed by the people and they must be honest...there is a good relationship between councillors and communities through ward committees...a lot of women give support in that structure...workshop have taught me how to deal with them"*. Respondent 95 said *"I do get support from the ward committee members"*. Respondent 13 mentioned that they *"are slow in support, but I do speak with them...about 80 percent of them attend meetings...the ward committee is 80 percent female"*.

Two respondents mentioned that for women councillors to get support from other women in the community, it **depends on that councillors work ethics**. Respondent 53 said *"you must be careful and know which community organization to work closely with...they can get you into trouble and find your feet in the mud"*. Respondent 36 stated that *"sometimes they do...depending on how you interact with them...how you respond is very important"*.

Sixteen respondents indicated that support is gained, **depending on the councillor's attitude**. Respondent 41 mentioned that she is a *"PR councillor but I address people everywhere...I go out myself...Indians do not do things on their own"*. Respondent 17 said *"you need to be at their level with women...talk about cattle when dealing with the farming community...stop to be the untouchable"*.

Seven respondents mentioned that women councillors do get support, but it **depends on the issue** on the table. Respondent 67 said *"I do get support, but there are expectations...the questions would come from women...who is going to benefit first"*. Respondent 7 said *"some have a progressive outlook other a conservative one...depending on the issue really...women are capable of making decisions on their own"*.

Fourteen respondents mentioned that **they do not get any support from other women** in the community. Respondent 70 said *"women can be their own worst enemies...they go against each other"*. Respondent 26 mentioned that *"no support at all...it's another challenge...I wish I can call them all and discuss this...females have jealousy, especially in my age group...only elderly women respond positively"*. Respondent 24 said *"they do not...I have to learn quickly how to play the game"*.

Twelve respondents felt that the support women are gaining from other women in the communities is **limited**. Respondent 40 said *"it is very rare to get support from other females...if you are weak they can destroy you"*. Respondent 35 indicated that *"30 percent does support, but 70 percent check whether you are delivering or not...most of them leave you to fend on your own...I do get support...but you cannot please everybody"*. Respondent 1 said *"sometimes they but the support is limited...women sometimes are afraid because I am a member of the DA"*. On the other hand, some respondents indicated that they received limited support from the community women. Respondent 15 pointed out that *"Women choose you but when you are there they leave you on your own and then see mistakes"*. Respondent 19 said *"They are rude. Man supports you more"*.

Five respondents indicated that councillors **gain support from both males and females** in the community. Respondent 27 said *"you must be humble and never judge a person but assist everyone"*. Respondent 21 stated that they *"receive support but from both males and females...we are like izimpimpi zomphakathi (community whistle-blowers) as the DA"*.

Three respondents mentioned that **different communities and races** could give or not give you support as a women or a person of another race. Respondent 62 stated that *“sometimes they do not support...there is a tendency of undermining each other...Indian communities are not interested on issues affecting black communities in the informal settlements...they have their own issue...democracy is still young”*. Respondent 22 mentioned that *“they do...but we do not have many issues in the rural area but interested in service delivery issues”*. Respondent 7 indicated that *“in rural areas, a woman would need a man who will back her up...it might be cultural and the upbringing...it will take time”*.

Some respondents were **not aware of any support** gained by women from other women in the community. Respondent 76 said *“I have never been close to them to check if they are receiving any support from community women”*. Respondent 73 stated that *“I am not sure when it comes to the community...one thing I know bayeyana (loosely translated as ‘they undermine each other’)”*. Respondent 57 said *“I do not know”*.

The next question, question fourteen of the interview guide asked respondents to state whether they felt enough women were being groomed by political parties for representation and participation at local government level. Table 5.11 below has themes and frequency of responses.

**Table 5.11: Enough Women Groomed by Political Parties**

<b>Yes/No</b>	<b>Themes</b>	<b>Frequency of Responses</b>
No	Women are not groomed at all	36
No	Only quota system works	17
No	Women learn on the way	26
No	I do not know	6
No	Political parties not doing enough	9
Yes	women are groomed at branch level	7
Yes	within youth after that ‘no’ grooming	3

Table 5.11 above shows that thirty six respondents indicated that women are **not groomed at all** by political parties. Respondent 22 said *“there is nothing really for women...it depends on the community whether they see you as active”*. *“Depending on the person, political parties do not...I had to do it myself and nominate people from within my branch”* said Respondent 77. Respondent 79 added that *“even in structures within the party...males do not support because women are a threat to them now”*. Respondent 35 mentioned that *“within the party there is a low number of women...no one wants to groom women especially other women are not interested...bancama ukukhetha umuntu wesilisa (loosely translated as ‘they would rather choose a male’)”*. Respondent 81 said *“I have never seen any specific programme introduced to groom women by political parties”*. Respondent 20 mentioned that they *“need political training for women to come out of their shell”*. Respondent 42 said *“not at all...in fact there are about seven women who are leaving because of age...it would be difficult to replace us and strike a balance...politics is still quite violent and risky...there are threats...people associate politics with corruption and violence”*.

Seventeen respondents stated that political parties are not grooming women but it is only the **quota system** that is working for women. Respondent 24 stated that *“within the ANC, it was the Women’s League which raised the quota issue”*. Respondent 26 said *“we rely on the quota system...otherwise; there is nothing for women within and outside the party”*. Respondent 48 said *“it is the ANC that believes in the quota system and has groomed women...the DA has few women, IFP three women and ten males, MF all males, ACDP all males, NFP three women and eight males”*. However, Respondent 2 stated that *“We do accept everyone interested but on merits...quota systems do women disservice and not assist them”*.

Twenty six respondents indicated that women are not groomed by political parties but they **learn on the way**. Respondent 71 said *“I learned on the way. Our children must be educated and recognise that politics is there”*. Respondent 94 said that *“Those who are educated and join politics, they do not understand political dynamics”*.

Some of the respondents (n=6) indicated that they **do not know whether or not** political parties are grooming women for representation and participation at local government level. Respondent 4 said *“nothing that I know of...not for women”*. Respondent 63 stated *“I do not know...I never gave myself a chance to learn what parties are doing”*. Respondent 64 said *“I*

*do not know about that...but what I know is that once women are in positions they are not discriminated against”.*

Nine respondents indicated that political parties are **not doing enough for women** as they are also not discouraging anyone. Respondent 17 stated that *“although I consider it part of training...it is only, door-to-door which is also voluntary as anyone can do it”*. *“There are workshops within the party but nothing specifically for women”* according to Respondent 3. Respondent 5 said *“we are not doing enough when it comes to grooming women to be leaders of tomorrow”*. *“Depending on whether or not you are willing to learn...political background is important”* Respondent 40 added. Respondent 70 stated that *“I do not feel they are doing enough...you need junior structures...it is a problem now as there are no active community organisations”*. Other respondents indicated that there has been a power struggle for position within the political party. In addition, respondents indicated that it has been a work in progress. Respondent 8 said *“It is changing gradually; we cannot function without the presence of women...good to hear the other side so as to make right decisions”*

Seven respondents were of the view that enough women were being **groomed by political parties at branch level**. Respondent 14 indicated that *“women are being groomed especially when they are called to learn about leadership and be able to answer questions asked by the people”*. Respondent 94 said *“the Women’s League has so many programmes where women are trained”*. In addition, Respondent 99 stated that *“some branches have meetings, sub regions and BEC where women are being groomed”*. Respondent 76 mentioned that *“in my organization, there are opportunities for women...last week we attended a Councillors Dialogue for women and there are few courses that can be attended by women...it is up to the individual to attend”*.

Three respondents indicated that women were being groomed by political parties **but only within the ‘youth’ stages**. Respondent 29 said *“with the DA, we do not differentiate between males and females...we believe in equal opportunities...Young Leader’s Programme is there”*. Respondent 38 indicated that *“as the ANC...we start from the Youth League where we were prepared because membership is open to everybody...political education is the key in terms of attracting young people and join politics...that is not enough for women though”*.

**5.5 Aim 3: To investigate the personal strategies that women councillors adopt in order to maximise their contribution to decision-making processes at local government level.**

In order to achieve this aim, only question eight of the interview guide was asked. The question required respondents to state strategies or behaviour that women adopt in order to fully participate in decision-making processes.

**Table 5.12: Strategies/Behaviours Women Adopt**

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Frequency of Responses</b>
None, women are treated as equals	34
Depending on the social network	26
Aggressive and arrogant	7
Dress beautifully	5
Self-confidence	6
Education	5
Intimate relationships	7
Mobilization at branch level	2
Never took notice	12

As can be seen from Table 5.12 above, thirty four respondents indicated that there was nothing different as **women were treated as equals** at local government level. Respondent 57 indicated that *“it is difficult because I do not see women differently to males...some people do but I do not”*. Respondent 6 stated that *“here, there are older women who are not interested on anything”*. Respondent 16 said *“There is equality before the council... I do recognise women coming with different perspective sometimes but no mechanism are used by them to behave strangely”*. Respondent 3 pointed out that *“It is about issues raised...if you do not know, you shut your mouth or else you risk being labelled as a fool...once in this category it is difficult to come out”*.

Twenty six respondents indicated that it **depends on the social network** that a woman belongs to. However, there were respondents who felt that women charm men and/or team up with powerful groups in order to maximise their contribution to decision-making processes. Respondent 14 said *“They use powerful male dominated groups in order to survive when*

*there are turbulences*". Respondent 20 indicated that *"it depends on who you know...but we don't have many problems in this municipality"*. Respondent 8 indicated that *"it depends on your network or friends...these relationship are affecting service delivery a lot...we are one party but do not get along because of these networks with the party"*.

Seven respondents indicated that women adopt the strategy of being **aggressive or arrogant** to maximise their full participation in decision-making processes. Respondent 42 remarked that *"a woman would become more aggressive...I would like to say assertive but won't...sometimes they resort to personal issues rather than the problem"*. Respondent 38 indicated that *"others they pretend to be males by using harsh language...what is important is to put your point across...they want to stamp authority...it works for some...you need facts, no need to shout"*. In addition, Respondent 36 said *"women develop arrogance...become defensive...they do not gang up...but arrogance is there"*.

Five respondents indicated that women **dress beautifully** to maximise their participation and attention in meeting. Respondent 14 said *"They dress beautifully; you would think that they will talk sense"*. Respondent 50 indicated that *"it's their nature...they want attention...and love status"*. Respondent 67 mentioned that *"I do not see that as an issue...you do not dress well in order to get favours"*. Respondent 99 said *"dress is important, but does not make a difference"*.

Six respondents indicated that women are **self-confident** which makes them to be well disciplined, polite, and speak with respect. *"It is self-confidence...they do not need approval from any other person"* according to Respondent 73. Respondent 5 said *"there are times during arguments where a woman would say, you are saying this because I am a woman...they are very sensitive"*. Respondent 26 said *"confidence is important especially when you are given a position...there are people in the political structure that you work with...there are also officials that you use and we suspect some are corruption...what makes men not to trust us women, is because a woman would be in a relationship with a senior official that is married...perhaps that is why men won't take us seriously...may be you were my role model but I did not know how you got the position...when you join the council men would propose and insist that you fall for him...if you do not, you will not be treated good...you will hear female colleagues saying why didn't you sleep with him...even if I have not said anything"*.

Five respondents mentioned that **education** is another strategy that is used by women to be noticed in the council. Respondent 60 said “*with political education...they have become very vocal in community meetings*”. Respondent 86 mentioned that “*women engage themselves in debates most of the time*”. Respondent 34 said “*understanding the industry is important as there is no qualification needed...it depends on the (political) background*”. Respondent 95 indicated that “*the motto is if you want to be independent then empower yourself by getting educated...no one will give you political freedom...educate yourself*”.

Another reason mentioned by respondents (n=7) is the **relationship which become intimate** that favours certain women to be noticed. Respondent 49 said “*it is hearsay...I cannot be sure whether they have bribed their way to the top*”. Respondent 37 said “*some do things that are not right...others they just deserve to be there...in most cases we tend to focus on what women are doing, but not look at what males are doing...we are all capable...if it happens that I fall in love with someone within the council, it’s because I am not married...it must be personal, as a human being people have feeling*”. Respondent 25 stated that “*in most cases, women are weak...politics is a dirty game...if you are weak, they can use you...but they are approached by males...males are the culprits by nature*”.

Two respondents mentioned that there is no need to adopt any strategy when you have **mobilised people** at branch level. Respondent 63 said “*they are strong in their branches...they mobilise strongly and are respected by communities...they do not depend on anybody*”.

Twelve respondents stated that they **never took notice** of women adopting different strategies in order to participate or influence decisions in the council. Respondent 64 indicated that he has “*never noticed...never saw anyone behaving strangely or otherwise*”. Respondent 43 mentioned that she “*has never paid attention*”.

#### **5.6 Aim 4: To identify barriers and challenges related to the representation and participation of women at local government level.**

In order to identify barriers and challenges, four questions that appeared in the interview guide were asked. The focus was also on establishing whether or not there were mechanisms available to address such barriers and challenges. It must be noted that the researcher decided



to address this question for not only women councillors but for all respondents to share their experiences.

Question nine asked respondents to state whether they ever felt discriminated against based on race or gender while executing their duties. Themes and frequency of responses are tabulated in Table 5.13 below.

**Table 5.13: Discriminated Against Based on Race and Gender**

Themes	Frequency of Responses
No, never experienced any discriminated	56
Discriminated against based on race	18
Discriminated against based on gender	21
Discriminated against based on other grounds such marital status, language and social status	9

As indicated in Table 5.13 above, fifty six respondents **never experienced** any kind of discrimination while executing their duties. Respondent 59 indicated that his “*ward covers Indian and White communities...but never experienced any discrimination...but our problems are not the same*”. Respondent 49 said “*personally no...but we still look at colour...we have become one country but not one people*”. Respondent 94 added that he has “*three informal settlements in my area, but never experienced any discrimination as a White man*”. Respondent 44 indicated that “*we are of the same race, kodwa kukhona ukuthathana kancane (loosely translated as ‘sometimes we look down upon each other’)*”. Respondent 17 said “*sisemaphandleni thina, futhi abantu abamnyama bodwa (meaning ‘we are in the rural area and its Black people only’)*”. Respondent 10 stated that “*the Chief can listen to me because I am always accompanied by the people I work with*”.

Eighteen respondents indicated that they experienced discrimination based **on race** rather than on gender. Respondent 88 said “*ninety percent Indian community in my ward...sometimes they remind that I am Black and do not have skills to perform...and you do not care about us...they sometimes discriminate me...they are very few who support me...most of those who support me are Blacks because they understand our issues as Black people*”. Respondent 62 stated that “*the majority of Blacks and minority of Whites in my ward*”.

*who are rich, have not accepted me because of age and race respectively*". Respondent 57 mentioned that *"in the council meetings racist comments are made by the ANC members, but nothing is really done"*. Respondent 36 mentioned that *"as a PR councillor, I was once deployed in Phoenix...I am black and female...they said you do not know anything because you are Black"*.

Twenty one respondents indicated that they had been discriminated against based on **gender** only. Respondent 94 said *"sometimes men would just undermine you as a female...you receive a call and the person would say ngicela ukukhuluma noBab' uKhansela (can I speak to Mr Councillor)"*. Respondent 38 mentioned that she *"was once deployed in South Korea where the cabinet was male and they did not accept me because I am a female...can you imagine"*. Respondent 61 mentioned that *"there was a community meeting discussing crime...as a PR councillor, I raised an issue and suggested that police be called, but men felt that it was not appropriate...I felt that I was weak because as men they felt that they could solve the issue"*. Respondent 33 said *"I was at the sport stadium...they said we do not want females here and pointed a firearm at me"*. *"Hostel men did not want a female to stand in front and tell them what to do...initially it was difficult"* Respondent 101 remarked. In addition, Respondent 25 said *"it was Christmas for elderly people and one elderly man did not get the ticket...he said 'hheyi wena ntombazana, usindela ukuthi uyintombazane ukube owesilisa ngabe ngiyakushaya' (loosely translated as 'Hey you girl, you are fortunate because you are a girl, if you were a men, I would have hit you')"*. *"We cannot be led by a woman especially a widow, as traditional leaders would say and continue...uphuma kuyiphi I family loyamntu? (which family does she come from?)"*. Respondent 13 mentioned that if there is a community meeting *"they say, that girl is coming and do not recognize me as a councillor... as if I am different from other councillors"*. Respondent 19 said *"Being a woman who is single, they do not respect you...A community member can give you a lift home and people would suspect that you are going out with him or they would say 'yini umfazi angasenzela yona' meaning 'what it is that a women could do for us'"*.

Nine respondents indicated that they were discriminated against based on **other grounds**. Respondent 43 said *"executive committee member of another party sexually insulted me in public"*. Language was also raised as another reason for being discriminated against by the councillors. Respondent 41 mentioned *"I do not speak isiZulu and I feel excluded sometimes"*. Respondent 24 mentioned that *"family background can affect you...there is less*

*acceptance from rich families and their children*". In addition Respondent 8 indicated that *"although we are all Blacks, we do not love each other....they would pass remarks...they want to know about your family or you must be rich or come from a rich family...you need to shut up and listen to them"*. Respondent 21 said *"when you are a DA working with ANC councillors a lot...they still want to believe that the DA is for White people...if you stand up to make a point, then you are White"*. Respondent 5 added that *"because of political party issues especially representing DA, people should understand current politics...not what happened in the past"*.

The second question, question ten of the interview guide is a follow up to the previous question. The researcher asked the respondents how they reported or addressed the issue of discrimination while executing their duties. Table 5.14 shows the themes and frequency of responses.

**Table 5.14: How Discrimination was Reported and Addressed**

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Frequency of Responses</b>
No mechanism to report	21
Never reported	9
Reported to another structure	18

The above Table 5.14 shows that twenty one respondents indicated there are **no mechanisms** to report or to make sure the issue is addressed properly. Respondent 14 said *"As a PR councillor, I am floating but ward councillors have mechanisms outside their constituency"*. Respondent 3 pointed out that *"If undermined because of your skin colour, it is a mental gymnastics...you need to prove your capabilities"*.

Nine respondents mentioned that they **never reported** the issue because of different reasons. Respondent 5 stated *"I just ignored it because these are just attacks to derail us...so I just proceeded with what I was doing"*. Respondent 67 said *"I just worked hard in order to get respect"*. Respondent 29 said *"I deal with people by proving myself that I can work and I can deliver"*. Respondent 25 mentioned that she *"apologized and organized the ticket for him the following year...he thanked me"*. Respondent 35 said *"I dealt with the community directly...give them feedback"*. Respondent 63 said *"I cannot report something that has hurt*

me...I deal with it myself...I do address individuals after the meeting”. Respondent 65 pointed out that “you need to have thick skin as a politician...I had to proceed and ignore them”.

Eighteen respondents stated that they reported to **another structure** for the issue to be resolved. Respondent 62 said “I just spoke to one official from the municipality to come and speak to those families”. Respondent 57 indicated that she “reported the matter to the speaker...but they continued...they are not good in terms of making decisions...at the end of the day, they need us”. Respondent 24 said “I talked to the Chief and ward committee members...it was part of the agenda...ayizunceda eyokuba ndingubani wakabani (it does not matter who am I), abantu abanandaba nomndeni ophuma kuwo (people do not care which family you come from)”. Respondent 32 pointed out that “committee members managed to address it...addressed within the party”. Respondent 2 added that she reported the matter to the police...they apologized”. Respondent 26 said “it came from the tribal authority...I reported it and they were requested to apologise...I accepted the apology”. Respondent 27 pointed out that “the committee at the hostel was told to respect my position and that anything they need or want... they must report to me”.

Question fifteen of the interview guide asked respondents to identify barriers and challenges that women representatives have been faced with since becoming councillors. It must be noted that not only women councillors were asked this question but also male councillors in order to have their perspective on the challenges faced by women councillors’ .Table 5.15 shows themes as mentioned by respondents during the interview.

**Table 5.15: Barriers and Challenges of Councillors**

Themes	Frequency of Responses
Politics and political parties	25
The role of municipalities and councillors	14
Lack of municipal council support	12
Community projects not completed	10
Family issues	7
Lack of resources like budget	12
Threats from community members	7

Age and gender	5
Traditional authority versus municipal council	3
Lack of support for women programmes	4
No barrier or challenges	5

Twenty five respondents were concerned about the way **politics and political parties** affect councillors when performing their duties. Respondent 19 indicated that *“camps are destroying the organization...people tend to follow abantu (individuals) not umbutho (movement)...which lead them to doing wrong things”*. Respondent 78 mentioned that *“sectionalism is the problem...ngoba kunamagumgedlela akhavarisha noma kumosheka (because people gang up and cover each other even things go wrong.)*. Respondent 81 said *“they would say, you are only a PR councillors, I am a ward councillor...meaning you are useless and its only ward councillors who are important and their political parties”*. In addition, Respondent 38 mentioned that *“people do not understand the difference between a PR and a Ward councillor...PR councillors are deployed and report in a certain committee and visit certain areas...so there is a problem with double reporting...the challenge is that there is a structure in that area and it is a challenge if I am not the chairperson and we (PR and ward councillor) are both reporting on the same issue”*. Respondent 17 mentioned that there *“are fifteen villages which are scattered and people do not see projects going”*. Respondent 16 said *“the opposition has a tendency of influencing people and tell them wrong things”*. Respondent 67 said *“my predecessor was male and he spoke badly about me...but I was chosen by the people...community accepted me and I report back in order to make them aware”*. In addition, Respondent 8 mentioned that *“a former male councillor influenced people not to vote for me...I have called him to assist me but as the chairperson of the branch he has not done so...the mayor is also taking sides and I am being undermined because I am a teacher and female maybe”*. Respondent 6 said *“community capacitation is important...people do not support ideas but political parties...ward councillors have not scheduled any meetings with the community”*. Respondent 1 said *“people are not free to interact with us as the DA...within the Da there are barriers, White people want everybody to work and deliver”*. Respondent 52 mentioned that *“service delivery is not going as people expect...people do not understand the processes that must be followed by the council and at the end of the I would be the one not delivering...maybe the challenge is that issues I raise are not taken seriously because I am independent...it does not get the attention it deserves...I*

*cannot get the support from the speaker's office". Respondent 63 said "politics is politics, I had enemies when I became a councillor for the first time...others will be permanent enemies and with other we will reconcile".*

Fourteen respondents indicated that the public has not been capacitated in terms of understanding of **the role of municipalities and councillors** at local government level. Respondent 16 said *"some of them do not want to understand how the municipality works even when you explain it to them and the policies...they just do not care about the policies and procedures...at the end it's like the councillors is unable to deliver".* Respondent 14 indicated that *"people from the villages do not understand how local government works...they must receive proper education about the IDP so that they understand about projects and that the next councillors would continue from where it was left off by the previous councillor".* Respondent 7 mentioned that *"communities are impatient...they have not been told about municipal procedures and they are not interested but want service delivery".* Respondent 39 remarked that *"to be a councillor you do not go to any special school...so you need to learn more about politics, policies and guidelines...by laws are important too".* Respondent 53 stated that *"people do not understand that we do not take decisions but we are just in the middle...whenever the municipality fail they think it is the councillor that has failed them".*

Twelve respondents felt that there was not enough support from the **municipal council** itself. Respondent 24 said *"the highest deployment is a challenge...once they are there, they start to believe in themselves and do not trust that other councillors can do the job...if you raise a question they see you as a reactionary...genuine councillors are being side-lined...it affects decisions which are individually driven instead of collectively driven".* Respondent 19 also stated that *"service delivery in the municipality is mixed with politics, that is why we have service delivery protest...camps are destroying people...money is also not enough for the municipality...cannot fulfil IDP projects...people end up fighting when funds are moved because of crisis".* Respondent 5 felt that *"council officials are not transparent and they are misleading people...we cannot work like that, councillors do not have the same vision and goals".* Respondent 54 said *" people expect you to do miracles...they want you to be everything, a doctor, lawyer, snake catcher...people do not understand that you cannot change the policies to benefit individuals...they then do not like you... create a bad impression...match against you and smash your car...the community want to listen to good*

things”. Respondent 69 mentioned that *“there is a rise in demand for delivery...yet there is a process that needs to be followed”*.

Ten respondents felt that **community projects** are a challenge for them to deal with and stated different reasons for that. Respondent 90 said *“service delivery is slow and ward councillors are seen as not delivering...there are procedures to be followed and people do not understand that...after joining the political party, people do not know what to do...there is no political education”*. Respondent 22 mentioned *“you will not be loved by everybody, awusiyona imali (you are not money)...some of us have Grade 12 and people rate you by your education and feel that you have no right to lead them”*. Respondent 59 said *“there is no schooling or college for councillors...you learn in the field and people think there is a lot of money involved...people are interest in certain projects, yet the municipality has its own plans...you apply and get frustrated when they do not assist you”*. Respondent 78 also said *“when there are projects or community meeting to discuss issues, people do not participate and do not come up with solutions, they just want to criticize only...they do not understand that the budget is small in municipalities”*. Respondent 11 remarked that *“projects are not completely done...three of them were never completed...never given the right reasons but told it would be re advertised...then the community see me as a bad person”*. Respondent 9 said *“it is very difficult to satisfy community members, they are interested in different things...the budget is the issue”*. In addition, *“the community would demand that houses be build and even protest...sometime they work with other community organisations that are against what the municipality is providing...at the same time they disrespect you as a woman and a leader”*. Furthermore, respondent 72 said *“service delivery issues such as housing are a challenge...you do not have means as a councillor to provide houses as it need budgeting...it not easy to tell people that it would be delivered in three years’ time”*.

Seven respondents mentioned **family issues** as another barrier and challenge when performing their duties. Respondent 17 also mentioned that *“there is jealousy as I come from extended family with polygamy...sometimes they oppose whatever I do or say in meetings”*. Respondent 15 said *“it is jealousy from other family members...they just want to see me doing nothing”*. Respondent 34 remarked that *“jealousy not from close people only but from others...there is that pull-her-down syndrome”*. Respondent 49 stated that *“you cannot attend to your family when you are a councillor...you also cannot deliver because the ruling party give preference to its councillors and resources are given to them”*.

Twelve respondents felt that **resources** are a challenge at municipal level and affects their performance and interaction with members of the community. Respondent 22 also mentioned that *“our work is voluntary but resources are not enough...there is no leave or bonus, just work 365 days”*. Respondent 16 continue to say that *“service delivery issues and projects are not finished...community member will take it to the streets and protest...most of the time there is no budget”*. Respondent 13 said *“budget constraint is a challenge...a financial year would end without a single project completed for the community...we really cannot delivery”*. Respondent 30 pointed out that *“resources because you can have a good plan and strategies...whose in the throne at the time affect the plan...if you are not coming from a ruling party you must forget...even business people bayubuka ukuthi uqhamuka ngaphi (loosely translated as ‘they check which party you are representing’)”*.

Respondents were also concerned that **other issues** which have been affecting them since they became councillors. Seven respondents mentioned that threats from community members have affected them as councillors. Respondent 26 stated that *“threats from other leaders at ward level have led me to have bodyguards now...I have enemies...even people I have trusted...everybody thinks I have money...okusele ukuthi bathi ngiyathakatha manje (what is left is for them to claim that I am a witch now)”*. In addition Respondent 32 said *“I have been threatened by community members”*. Another respondent felt that age and gender has been a challenge for her. Respondent 35 said *“community members decided that they won’t be led by a girl...I was attacked at home ...there were shootings but fortunately no one got injured”*. Respondent 69 said *“being female and find people fighting is a challenge because you are scared yourself...you also receive threatening calls cause money is involved and they think it is for them...the moment you buy a car or hairpiece...they would say usedle izimali zethu (she has use our money for personal gains)...local government is where things are happening and there are temptations...your immediate family feels unsecured”*. Respondent indicated safety at night and another mentioned crime as barriers in executing their duties. Respondent 2 said *“I do not feel safe at night...but a man can travel anywhere at any time. Women are vulnerable at night”*.

Three respondents mentioned that the challenge is the conflicting role in the eyes of community members, which is played by Traditional Leaders and municipal councillors is affecting their performance. One respondent said *“the traditional authority is not satisfied with me as the projects are handled by the municipality...Chiefs can be difficult as you have*



to work in all districts not for a specific place...then it is the role of the traditional council versus local municipality...CoGTA can provide training to avoid competition as we are working with the same people”. Respondent 2 said “there is a problem when there is death and the family has no money to bury their member...i have to do something like approaching community and business people around the area for assistance”. Furthermore, respondents felt that there are “not enough programmes to assist women...they are the majority but most feel neglected as there is nothing happening for them at local government level”. Respondent 16 said “I organised block-making for women, now there is grass and equipment went missing...getting paid was a problem...they want to get free groceries from you”. Respondent 64 said “there are informal settlements in my area...so illegal (electricity) connections are a challenge...communities are in loggerheads and I have to be in the middle to resolve this issue”. Respondent 15 said “People want houses but unemployment and poverty level is high”.

Question sixteen of the interview guide aims to address how respondents overcame barriers and challenges since becoming councillors at local government level. The themes and frequency of responses are tabulated in Table 5.16 below.

**Table 5.16: Overcoming Barriers and Challenges**

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Frequency of Responses</b>
Hold a meeting	15
Draw up a plan	6
Report to a higher structure	14
Political education	12
Family support	8
Support from senior authorities	10
Never done anything	22
Still dealing with it	3

From Table 5.16 above, it can be noted that fifteen respondents indicated that **meetings** were held in order to address the barriers and challenges. Respondent 81 stated that “when there are meetings, I just join the community on the floor and pose questions to the ward councillor”. Respondent 18 said “it is important to know influential people and engage them

*cause some need special attention...still ingxaki yesabelo (the problem is villages) especially the population, we cannot collect money because we are in a rural area and it will take time to develop and increase the revenue...leadership must tackle it at national level, as it starts from the top". "The sub-regional leadership came to check but I did not have a problem...he is a PR councillor now" said Respondent 67. Respondent 4 said "I invite relevant councillors to work with me, the NPO and CBO...out of nine, only one is difficult". "I created a sub-committee for men and women in order to work together with them...mix people who understands your office and those who do not understand and people must be of different ages too...the police were involved but did not investigate or report back to me about progress" Respondent 34 alluded. Respondent 53 said "public meetings are important; inviting departments where there is a need...officials should come and address the public". In addition, Respondent 59 pointed out that "I learnt from my predecessor...If you had a meeting, you need to give feedback and explain...do not be afraid to tell them good and bad news".*

Six respondents indicated that they had to **draw up a plan** in order to overcome barriers and challenges. Respondent 49 indicated *"I diarise everything and talk to my family...I plan in advance"*. Respondent 63 said *"I drew up a three months programme...it was very risky"*.

Twelve respondents indicated that **education especially political education**, writing reports and inviting relevant officials to come to meetings assisted them. Respondent 19 said *"we must not talk about political parties but political education and service delivery...workshops should include traditional leaders...leadership must be visible and visit regions and branches in order to unite the organization"*. Respondent 6 indicated that *"the council should teach people about politics...the speaker should address ward committee members"*. Respondent 99 said *"members must be work shopped so that they can call into order leaders that are going astray...hold accountable those who have been deployed...especially oMayiwele as we call those who always support without necessarily criticizing whether it would benefit the community"*.

Ten respondents mentioned that they had to **report to higher structures** for the issues to be resolved. Respondent 72 stated that *"if people do not understand, I seek the intervention of people higher...as an organization, we visit the villages to address the people with ANC members, Branch Executive Committee iyazama ukubabeka endleleni (they try to put people*

on the right track)”. Respondent 11 said “*contractors are being paid in advance and do not pay workers...reported the matter to the sub-region but we did not have meetings...the letter went to the province...I was choose as a secretary but still the chairperson does not want to have meetings*”. Respondent 2 indicated that “*structures such as the Women’s League has been approached...ask for assistance from business people*”. Respondent 52 said “*there is commitment from Speaker’s office and Mayor’s office*”. Respondent 81 pointed out that “*I approached the management office...but budget is an issue*”.

Eight respondents mentioned that they received **support** from their families or from senior authorities to deal with issues properly. Respondent 8 said “*the former chairperson is in the BEC, has a lot of influence and political knowledge...he is supporting and mentoring me...I became humbly but in meetings I do tell him directly*”. In addition, Respondent 64 said “*mayor is very supportive of ward councillors*”. Respondent 41 indicated that her husband was her mentor because of the support from him.

Other respondents indicated that they have **never done anything or they are still dealing** with the challenges. Respondent 17 said “*I keep my mount shut and assist the family member*”. In addition, Respondent 15 mentioned “*I do not say anything and I ignore it completely...I also report back to the community but people may not be satisfied*”. Respondent 9 said “*I am still trying to have community meeting*”. Respondent 26 remarked that “*I tried politically but in vain...I then prayed...inhliziyo isho okunye, umlomo usho okunye (my heart tells me something else, my mouth is saying something else)...as still dealing with it*”.

### **5.7 Aim 5: To identify successful factors contributing to increased representation and participation of women at local government level.**

The last aim of the study which was to identify critical success factors contributing to increased representation of women councillors, was addressed by asking respondents one question, question seventeen of the interview guide. The aim of the question was for respondents to share success stories that could be adopted or adapted by other women to increase their representation and participation at local government level. Table 5.17 show the themes and frequency of responses below.

**Table 5.17: Factors Contributing to Successful Representation**

Themes	Frequency of Responses
Participation in community projects and meetings	51
Trust and respect for people	17
Education	19
Loyalty to the political party	15
Previous work experience	12
Confidence	2
Passion and patience	4
Honesty	11
Openness and transparency	5

Fifty one respondents in Table 5.17 above indicated that one of factors that contributed to successful representation and participation as councillors was their involvement **in community projects and meetings**. Respondent 59 pointed out *“I stated working for my community before even the introduction of councillors in my area because I love doing community work...I volunteered to assist people...education and being a Christian, lending people an ear and respecting them has contributed to where I am today”*. *“To work with the community and have passion of helping people...for them to realize that you deserve to be a councillor...I started in politics early and have experience”* added Respondent 76. Respondent 2 said *“I am a people’s person and community knows me and loves me...I have respect for the people...family support has contributed a lot”*. Respondent 56 mentioned that *“God and spirituality...my community support and volunteers across the ward and the political party”*. Respondent 4 said *“working with my community and NGOs in my area, volunteering on HIV and AIDS projects, transport road safety and other projects...been a chairperson of committee for our local clinic...caring for the sickly and HIV positive people...I know who can assist and projects are moving...also working with previous councillors for years helped me as I gained experience from them”*. Respondent 11 pointed out that *“been active in the community as a young person, reported on matters, volunteered and invited council members to visit my community...I fought for community members to get employed...ward committee members are very close to me including the traditional council and principals in schools”*. Respondent 3 pointed out that *“volunteering for more than twenty*

years, assisting sickly people and working with women's groups has helped me to be noticed and recognized by my people...visible to the community". Respondent 16 said "I attend meeting outside my area and come back with information...honesty, humble and respect is important...talent in convincing people as I resolve issues...I love God". Respondent 70 mentioned that "being reachable to the people at any time...I move from village to village and speak to the people...am visible and ask for a slot where possible". Respondent 16 said "I involved myself in assisting with identity document issues, pensioners and children to obtain social grants".

Seventeen respondents indicated that **trust and respect** for the people was their most successful factor. Respondent 25 pointed out "I grew up here, studied here, stayed here and never changed my lifestyle...you must humble yourself and apologise where possible...speak the truth all the time and people will trust and respect you". Respondent 18 said "Respect yourself as a woman at home and outside...people must trust you and your tongue".

Nineteen respondents mentioned that **education** was one of the critical factors for successful representation and participation at local government level. Respondent 53 indicated that "one must listen to people because everybody is important...organize workshops for the people to teach them about politics and business...do not take decisions on your own". Respondent 13 said "education is not the only key, you need to be flexible...xa abantu bethetha (when people speak) you have to listen...ungabaphakameli futhi ungazenzeli (do not have pride and do not what you want)". Respondent 14 mentioned that "My political party made a base for me by taking me to the university through scholarship". Respondent 74 said "socialization is knowing yourself and respecting other people...use every opportunity to study...learn each and every day". Respondent 36 mentioned that "there is no college for councillors and you are expected to perform...I love working with people...go an extra mile and get fulfilment...education is the key if you was to be successful...need to continue studying". Respondent 42 said "going to a Catholic school and education especially political education and community involvement is important...took a portfolio on gender issues". Respondent 48 pointed out that "education and hard work...listen to the community, been a lecturer for over twenty years...it is a privilege to be a councillor...been involved in sports".

Fifteen respondents indicated that **loyalty to the political party** assisted them to be where they are today. Respondent 51 said "it is the ANC and its constitution that made me to be

where I am today”. Respondent 23 pointed out that “I attend political party meetings, volunteered and provided my services for the organization as a marshal...has organized meetings...am also observant in terms of what is going on within the community”. Respondent 19 said “Volunteering for my party using my money... patience with people, self-confidence and loyalty to my political party”. Respondent 37 remarked that “participation in meeting inside and outside the party...volunteering where possible”. Respondent 40 added that “the ANC has recognized me...listen to your elders and be a people’s person”.

Twelve respondents indicated previous **work experience** as another factor that contributed to their successful representation and participation at local government level. Respondent 99 pointed out that “background which comes from working with community and for the community...I worked as a police reservist which gave me some real responsibility and in knowing a certain amount of laws...honesty and openness...even if they do not like what you are saying...respecting people is also important”. Respondent 65 pointed out that “long media exposure...worked for the newspaper and reported there on weekly basis...as a teacher you need to think on your feet...I am highly educated and exceptional communication skills...have also published two books”. Respondent 22 said “I have been a ward councillor for ten years with experience...I follow up on matters, have respect for my people...I report back, moving from one village to another village”. Respondent 92 said “My father worked for local government and I was also employed to deal directly with local government”. Respondent 24 pointed out that she has “served the community as a teacher and later principal...used to take people to government for help and also worked with young people, pensioners and assist poor people...I bring projects and contractors to the area...it is cold up here, so I get warmth and respect from all people”. Respondent 27 said “I was working and never dreamt of it...the nature of my work contributed to knowing community needs...dedication, and passion is important...make sure there is development...it is difficult to work with officials, but you must push”. Respondent 30 added that “being a nurse is almost everything...I then wanted to change policies as a politician...policies are overshadowed by party politics”.

The other themes that appear in the table above are **passion and patience, openness and transparency, honesty and confidence**. Respondent 102 said “my ward is fifty percent Black and fifty percent Indian...honesty has worked for me even if it hurts for a short while...you need to service your ward, be hands on...be caring for the people”. Respondent

83 said *“it is to be closer to the people, dedication”*. Respondent 5 pointed out that *“honesty, transparency, feedback, visibility, communication and talking about current issues has contributed massively”*. Respondent 39 said *“listening, love for your job and people, dedication and make sure you overcome challenges using different tricks”*. Respondent 43 pointed out that *“be patient...be in touch with the community...be truthful...be open and transparent...listen for you to be listened to”*. Respondent 50 said *“persistence, political discipline...it does not matter how brilliant you are...the attitude important...humble yourself and deal with issues...politics goes with passion”*.

## **5.8 CONCLUSION**

The purpose of this chapter was to analyse and present data collected from interviewed respondents in the form of common themes, graphs and tables. The findings have shown that although women are the majority at local government level, the number of women ward councillors was low. The study noted that politics is still male dominated. This is exacerbated by the historical background of the two provinces, KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape. None-racial local government democracy is in its infant stage in South Africa. There is limited participation of women councillors in decision-making processes as women seem not to be confident in themselves and are in competition with each other. Similarly, very little has been done by the political parties and other stakeholders in terms of supporting women councillors. The findings showed that no training or strategies are in place to empower women and political parties are not grooming women for representation and participation at local government level. It was also noted that women councillors are treated the same and no gender issues were entertained separately by the council. This chapter has further identified barriers and challenges experienced by all councillors at local government level. Findings are showing that the public perception concerning the role of councillors has been a challenge together with high unemployment and poverty level. Finally, this chapter highlighted participation in community structures and projects, access, trust and respect for people as the most critical factors for successful increased representation and participation at local government level. The next chapter focuses on the discussion of the findings in this study.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

#### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

This study is positioned to make a very important contribution to the field of gender and politics at local government level. It undertakes more significant and timely research on variables critical to successful participation and representation especially of women in the process of transformation at local government in South Africa. Local government is the last sphere of government to be reformed and women are regarded as the most marginalised group as they also constitute the majority of the population in South Africa.

This chapter focuses on the discussion of the findings presented in chapter five. The chapter presents the overview of the study, the discussion of the findings according to each aim and the summary of major findings.

#### **6.2 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY**

The study began by discussing gender issues especially women in relation to representation, participation and the decentralisation of power in democratic countries. Chapter two highlighted the importance of democracy and described that democracy addresses not only political issues but also include inequality matters such as gender and race. The study focused on international organisations like the UN which has provided assistance to member States to promote democracy and decentralise local governance structures as well promote women's representation and participation in politics. The UN created different platforms to address gender equality issues, for example, Commission on the Status of Women, Beijing Conference etc. This was very strategic especially to deal with discrimination and social exclusion of some interest groups including women. Although, there has been progress in certain areas like education, men still dominate positions of power in politics. Culture and structures hinder women to advance in the political arena. The study touched on the UN and the involvement of civil society and NGOs in relation to women and gender issues. Both these institutions deal with societal and political needs of the community in relation to the



State. It is the role of governments in all democratic countries to work with community organisations for accountability purposes and the implementation of policies adopted by all relevant stakeholders. The African Union has also encouraged States to promote the equal participation of women in politics. However, some countries have done fairly well, while others still do not take gender issues as a priority as they are still dealing with their own unique challenges.

The study revealed that governments decentralise to promote democracy and empower people through representative and participatory form and for narrow political advantages. There are different kinds of decentralisations namely, administrative, fiscal and democratic decentralisation. For this study, democratic decentralisation gives women and other diverse group's power to influence the outcome of decisions which are affecting them. Furthermore, government decentralise for different reasons such as off-loading costly tasks. It showed that decentralisation was good for women when linked to democracy as it improves efficiency, equity, and reduces poverty. Ribot's (2004) Formal Decentralisation Definition Model emphasised that central government should transfer power to democratically elected institutions because of accountability to local population, the majority of whom are women.

Furthermore, chapter two dealt with representation and political representation in order to address the issue of women's representation in all levels of government and politics. The politics of presence is taking care of and ensure that women have one of their own speaking for them. It showed that women could represent themselves or be represented by other actors. The study then dealt with four different elements of representation, namely formal, symbolic, substantive and descriptive representation in relation to women at local government level. This part is important as there are different views that women must represent themselves, whereas other scholars feel that women's interest can best be served irrespective of the presence of women in different structures. On one hand, the literature showed that women representing themselves may not guarantee that their interest would be entertained as anyone interested in women's issues can stand in for them. In addition, the interest of their political parties might probably receive priority. On the other hand, women's absence led to their interest being overlooked. Proportional representation is one strategy adopted by certain political parties in increasing the number of women in politics in various countries.

Participation was part of the literature review, looking at why and where citizens should participate in politics. However, there are challenges as citizens especially women are not fully utilising these opportunities for different reasons. The study considers three theoretical models of participation in relation to women in politics namely, cognitive engagement model, civic voluntarism model and social capital model. These models are significant for the study as cognitive engagement model focuses on those individuals who would read and talk about politics with friends and family. These individuals must have some level of education for this type of participation so as to make informed decisions in terms of joining politics, choosing or supporting a candidate and or a certain political party. With civic voluntarism model, participation in politics depend on the resources such as family income, social status and leisure time that the person has which motivates him or her to participate in politics. Social capital model is when individuals engaged in social and voluntary networks, trust each other and can do anything for any member in that particular network. Education is playing a big role in terms of individual participation in these social networks as they interact with people who are more trustworthy. Men have benefited from social capital over the years because that is where they discuss key issues, from economic, culture, social to political matters. While women are busy at home taking care of the children and keeping the house warm for the husbands and the whole family.

Since this study is on gender issues at local government level, the literature review chapter then focused on the significant aspects which have been perceived to separate men and women. The study focused that power relations, wealth and education which creates inequalities between the sexes. Feminists would like to see men and women being treated equally at all levels and not discriminated against based on gender (Dandavati, 2005). The study showed that there are different types of feminism namely, liberal, Marxist, cultural, separatism, socialist, and radical feminism. In the feminist struggle, there is no democracy without feminism *visa versa*. Feminists feel that the State should bestow equal rights for the benefit of previously disadvantaged groups, although the State does not rely on them as feminists. While feminists are focusing on women equal rights, the study discovered that women's interests are not a homogenous group. However, women can create a platform where their voices can be heard. In that way, women can be able to introduce a new form of doing politics.

The study discovered that most women who participated in politics and led different countries in the world had families, relatives or husbands who had been or were into politics. Some of these family members had been assassinated and a woman would then be elected or just take over and lead the country. Nevertheless, political parties continue to be male-dominated institutions and women in politics are seen as a threat sometimes. The women's sections of political parties are not assisting much in terms of ensuring that women are elected into executive positions of the political party. The study also shows that women face different challenges when trying to participate in electoral politics as women often see politics as a dirty game. Corruption and violent attacks are one of the hindrances of women in joining politics at local government level.

The literature review chapter then focused at the progress made in Nordic countries, Americas and Caribbean, Arab States and North Africa, Europe and Asia and cultural changes in Africa. The study then looks at women's involvement in politics at a lower level of government, brief history of civil society and the role of women at local government level in South Africa.

Chapter three which is the second part of literature review basically focuses on local government and women in South Africa. The background shows that colonial and apartheid policies resulted in highly unequal societies where women were recognised as second class citizens. There was decentralisation of power during apartheid days, however, different laws were used for different race groups. Municipalities were more accountable to central government than to the people. Women had to stay at home in rural areas and were excluded from full participation in politics. However, those in urban areas had to find other means of fighting the apartheid government system. Women in civil society organisations fought against apartheid policies, but were not well represented during local government negotiated transition and were referred to as an 'interest group'.

The study highlighted the history of South Africa's transition from apartheid to independence democracy when international organisation was putting pressure on countries to address gender inequalities at local government level. Chapter 2 of the 1996 Constitution demonstrates a commitment to promote gender equality and Chapter 7 encourages the involvement of communities for democratic and accountable government. The literature showed a number of prescripts promulgated that ensured equitable representation and

participation of women in local government structures. However, the South Africa government did not take any position when it comes to the quota system. As a result, representation of women is only possible through the adoption of quota system by political parties. Statistics showed that the number of female ward councillors began to show a decline since the first non-racial local government elections were held in 1995. In the last local government elections the number went down from 40% to 38%. The next round of local government elections will be held in 2016.

The study also revealed most women rely on social grants for survival and some use the money to pay for basic services provided by municipalities. In addition, there has been an increase in service delivery protests at local government level in South Africa where women are the majority. This raises a lot of questions as to whether or not decentralisation is working in South Africa. The discussion of findings will be elaborated on in relation to the literature reviewed in chapter two and chapter three of the study. The same structure of following specific aims of the current study will be used in discussing the findings.

### **6.3 Aim 1: To establish the impact of women's representation and participation in decision-making processes at local government level**

In the literature, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966 lays the legal basis for the principle of democracy under international law particularly, freedom of expression; freedom of association and; the right to peaceful assembly. The UN Democracy (2013) states that people must have a say in decisions that affect their lives and can hold decision-makers to account, based on inclusive and fair rules, institutions and practices that govern social interaction. The UN General Assembly has reiterated that people must participate freely in all aspects of their lives be it politically, socially, economically and even culturally in any democratic system (UN Global Issues, 2013). The CEDAW calls on the State to take measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political, public and private spheres (Democracy Reporting International, 2011). It also reiterates the importance of women's representation in the political life in order to participate in the formulation of government policies and the implementation thereof. Furthermore, women's active participation on equal terms with men at all levels of decision-making is essential to the achievement of equality. Article 9 of The African women's Protocol required States to increase the representation and participation of women at all levels of decision-making, and

ensure that this representation and participation are effective (Gawaya and Mukasa, 2005: 45). This includes their representation and participation in decisions that are taken at local government level.

In the findings chapter, 65% (n=68) of respondents reported that women the number of women has improved and women are active participants at local government level. Only fifteen percent (n=15) of the respondents reported that women are not participating in meetings where the decisions which affects them are taken. Some respondents (13%) felt that women are not represented and participating in decision-making processes due to lack of confidence in themselves. This means that although women are recognised, they are not fully utilised as the majority in the population. The findings of this also shows that very few respondents (7%) felt that they are represented but not full participating even when given an opportunity in the meetings.

In order to gain more insight, the researcher felt that it would be better to discuss each of the above responses separately. The respondents from different municipalities in KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape were asked whether women's representation and participation at local government level have any impact in decision-making processes. The results as indicated above show that women are part of the executive council and responsible for other sub-committees within the council. The researcher learned that women have been part of the council since the local government was reformed in South Africa. One of the respondents pointed out that *"the executive committee is dominated by females and they are part of the decisions that are taken. We as [women] councillors are the majority ...even the Deputy Mayor is female"*. Another respondent stated that *"they are, most women are councillors and mayors...can debate in the council...our mother and sisters never got a chance"*.

From this response, one can deduce that women are definitely represented and participating in the council due the positions of influence they hold within the council. This is in line with the PRIA International Academy (2015) which pointed out that decisions that are made with greater participation would be better informed and more relevant to diverse interests in society as compared to those made by national authorities. Furthermore, the literature talks about the politics of the presence. The politics of presence is a belief that it is not just that people should have someone who speaks for them, but that they have one of their own speaking for them, someone who broadly shares for their experiences (Childs and Cowley, 2011). Women are aware of the issues which affect them and can be able to raise them in the

council meeting for debate before decisions are taken. They may be debating some of these matters with other women in other formal or informal forums outside the municipal councils. The literature talks about the importance of formal representation which allows women in government to express their concerns following that institution's rules and procedures. This is in contrast with Grugel (2002: 5) who argued that women are everywhere economically disadvantaged compared with their male counterparts and consequently participate less in politics and have less influence over policy-making. In a democracy, when diverse groups including women are represented, they may influence the outcome of whatever decisions that are made. According to the literature presented, institutions on their own might not guarantee that there is democracy but good leadership can ensure that the representation and interests of different groups are considered. To promote democracy and empower people at local government level, it is important for government to decentralise. According to Ribot's Formal Definition of Decentralisation, central government should transfer power to democratically elected institutions of local government for the benefit of the entire population. Ribot's definition shows that only democratic decentralisation leads to greater efficiency and equality because of representation. There is also an issue of accountability with Ribot's definition. Democratic local institutions and elected officials are more accountable to central government and the local population. This would work better if implemented properly as the central government is trying to bring government closer to the people the majority of whom are women. Women are mostly affected by the decisions taken at local government level as most of them are poor according to the literature. It transpired in the study that an increase in women's political representation matters not only because it enhances women's capabilities (Sen, 1985; Hill, 2003; Peter, 2003), and therefore their well-being, but also because it can have an impact on the quality of governance and the effectiveness of policies (Bonomi, Brosio, and Tommaso, 2013). When women are represented and participating in decision-making processes, socio-economic issues affecting them such as service delivery and, infrastructural development would be addressed much quicker.

Furthermore, from the response above "*our mother and sisters never got a chance*", one can also deduce that before women were substantively represented at local government level. According to the literature in the study, substantive representation is when the representative 'acts for' the represented (Tornquist, 2009: 6). This means that anyone who share the same views, interests and ideas was given a chance to fully participate in elected bodies in politics

and represent women. However, elected women may promote and enact policies that are in line with their interests, such as promotion of their status and opportunities through legal measures and or the provision of appropriate service (Bonomi, Brosio, and Tommaso, 2013). Women in the rural areas were also symbolically represented as there would be a perception that their husbands or men were fairly and effectively representing them especially in the traditional structures. However, women have not benefited from this arrangement as they continue to be marginalised according to the literature in the study. Hence they are now content with the fact that they are represented and participating in politics.

The study shows that, women can be represented in the form of descriptive representation. That is when there are women standing for other women because they look alike, have the same experience and have similar interests. Bauer and Britton (2006: 3) even assumed that women's interests will be better represented simply by electing more of them. Nonetheless, it transpired in the study that descriptive representation could lead to symbolic or substantive representations. It was argued by Zetterberg (2009) that women's presence has little or no impact on the political engagement of female constituents. Even so, literature shows that it is proportional representation which has assisted in increasing the number of women to participate in decisions taken at local government level. The 1996 Constitution (Republic of South Africa) has a clause on equality which promotes gender equality. The literature shows that prescripts such as the Local Government Municipal Structure Act and Local Government Municipal Systems Act allow for the equitable representation and participation of women at council and ward level in order to influence decision-making processes. Hence, the increase in numbers and their participation in politics at local government level

Furthermore, the results also show that although represented, women are not participating at all (15%) and that they lack confidence in themselves (13%). Participation must begin at the lowest level (Kroukamp, 2002) where people could be informed about local issues, needs and attitudes as it enhances the democratisation process (Meyer *et al.*, 2002). This is good for women as they are directly affected and knows what is needed to be addressed by their municipalities. According to the literature, participation is the engine that drives representation (Cho and Rudolph, 2008). Basically for individuals to participate politically, they must pay attention to politics according to the Cognitive Engagement Model. The literature in this study revealed that individuals including women must may use various sources of media such as newspapers, social media, have a political conversation with friends

and family members in order to influence and make informed decisions. What is crucial in this model is the issue of education as women need to understand political processes and be able to digest political information. According to Himmele and Himmele's (2011) Total Participation Techniques, which deals with participation and the order of thinking, individuals can have high or low order thinking in relation to participation. One can state that women with high cognition and high participation are the ones who are fully participating in the decision making processes at local government level. As it can be seen from this study, respondents had tertiary qualifications such as diplomas (n=29); degrees (n=8); higher education certificates (n=20) and a doctoral degree. Other respondents had finished high school (n=30). This means that a significant number of respondents in this study have are educated. However when women's participation is limited, it is an indication that they have been less engaged in other types of political activities. The last statement allowed the researcher to look at the Civic Voluntarism Model discussed in the literature.

Civic Voluntarism Model argues that people who are having resources such as wealth, job, leisure time, and family income and are educated, they tend to be motivated to participate in politics. Once more education is regarded as a measure of resources. According to the literature, education give them self-confidence and a greater sense of efficacy which promotes their involvement in politics (Whiteley, 2005). Again, the study revealed that women are not participating in decision-making processes and that they lack confidence in themselves. It must be mentioned that both men and women interviewed had the same view about women not participating in meeting where decisions are taken. One respondent stated that *"some are but some don't...those who are experienced are participating"*. This makes experience to be another important resource when it comes to the participation of women and their influence when decisions are made at local government level. Other important reasons mentioned by respondents for women to participate in decision-making processes at local government, were political parties who believed that women were not capable of taking decisions and lack of support from other people.

Furthermore, the literature revealed that social capital is crucial when it comes to participation. Social capital refers to interaction between individuals in voluntary associations and can generate interpersonal trust. It appeared that social networks give individuals more opportunities for resources and support (Prasad *et al.*, 2011). These are some of the reasons this study found as to why women are not participating at local level to influence decisions.



In the literature, Putman (2000) mentioned two types of social capital, namely bonding and bridging social capitals. Men have been benefiting with bonding because they managed to form strong ties as a homogenous group for all these years of political dominance. Bridging social capital can be good for women as it connects diverse groups irrespective of the background as long as there is an interest in joining the network.

When it comes to question of stating whether the number of women councillors at local government was high or low, the study revealed that the number was low. The factors mentioned by the respondents contributing to the low number of women councillors were: lack of confidence; lack of formal education; cultural influence; women in competition with each other; lack of involvement in community structures; women electing men; women not recruited by political parties; lack of interest in politics; family responsibilities; women threatened by community members and the fact that politics is still male dominated. The number of factors reflects the background of how women have been perceived generally not only in South Africa but all over the world as discussed in the literature reviewed. Basically, it is how women have been traditionally socialised and how decisions have been taken on their behalf. It is crucial to understand why men and women behave differently when it comes to politics. According to the literature reviewed, gender inequality is in unequal power relations at all levels (Rostami-Povey, 2012: 2). Power is exercised by controlling the agenda and mobilising biases in the system, thus determining which issues are important and which come into the decision-making arena (Wilson and Thompson, 2001, 67). Those which threaten the interests of the powerful are frequently marginalised or set aside (Lukes, 1986: 9).

One respondent who is a male remarked that *“some women find it hard to take responsibility and make decisions on their own and take additional responsibility...lack of confidence, and the ‘second rate citizen’ mentality is still there”*. Another male respondent stated that *“women do not have confidence, when it comes to the issue of being councilors, uNkosikazi kana kuma kula ndawo (loosely translated as ‘a woman cannot stand in front of the people’)...amakhosikazi kade acinge (women cannot think)”*. Furthermore, another respondent had another perspective that relates to **culture**, he pointed out that *“culture is affecting the nomination of women even ecaweni abantu besifazane ngeke bakhokhele bame phambi kwamadoda...indlela esikhuliswe ngayo ithi umntu obhinqileyo soze akhokhele”* (loosely translated as *‘even in church women would not lead and stand in front of men...the*

*way we were brought up dictates that a woman cannot lead*'). From the response mentioned above by the respondents, one can deduce that women are seen as weak and not capable to lead or make informed decisions. This is in line with McGlen and O'Connor (1998: 69) who felt that women's lack of information and training is the main barriers to the full and equal participation of women in politics.

It transpired in the study that not only men perceived women as **lacking confidence** in themselves, women had the same view as one of the female responded by stating that *"ndiqonde okokuba andikho redi ngesikhathi ndikhetwa kwii (I thought I was not ready when they nominated me in the) first term. I then prepared myself to be a PR"*. According to the literature reviewed in this study, women are supposed to be evenly and equally represented in all the structures where decisions that affect them are taken. However, men are usually in locations where power resides, women often where there is little or none. It is difficult for men to understand all these processes which are caused by biological characteristics. The literature shows that men are regarded as strong, independent and dominant; they are responsible for providing for the family, functioning in the public sphere and thus, participating actively in the political life of the country (Dandavati, 2005: 26). Women are considered as weak, dependent, subordinate and responsible for raising children and fulfilling all household and religious duties (Dandavati, 2005: 26). The literature in this study also indicated that women are primary actors in informal politics while women dominate formal politics. It is informal in a sense that it is more flexible and fits into their schedule therefore less demanding in terms of time and resources. Koolae (2012: 140) women's lack of access to financial resources meant that many women are unable to campaign and stand as candidates for the municipal, local and parliamentary. Most of women in South Africa remained in the Homelands and rural areas where there was lack of access to economic, education and health resources (Chagunda, 2004). In urban areas, civil society organised women in the fight for basic services especially in the townships. This means that political parties can play a role in ensuring women's presence and participation in decision-making processes at local government level.

One respondent mentioned that *"numbers are affected by the fact that political parties rely on the number of candidates who put up their names"*. **Political parties** are responsible for the low number of women as they are not recruiting them. This is in line with what the literature shows that political parties acts as barriers to women's participation in a number of

ways (Franceschet, 2005: 85) namely by resisting the implementation of the gender quotas, selection that disadvantages women, cultural practices within the organization and continued monopolization of formal politics. The literature revealed that not all political parties have adopted the quota system to ensure the increased number of women in meeting where decisions which affect them are taken. The political parties not only enjoyed a great deal of power and controlled a large number of resources, but also determine who would gain access to the state (Dandavati, 2005: 5). The women subdivision within the political has been seen as a biggest obstacle to women's political participation. On the contrary, women's organisations in the parties play an important role in mobilising women candidates and support for them once nominated according to Lovenduski (2002: 75). Political parties are the gate keepers to women's participation in politics because it is largely as candidates from particular parties that women stand for political office (Matland, 2002). The White Paper on Local Government in South Africa encourages political parties to adopt a quota system in order to address gender inequalities. Nevertheless, relying on political parties has not been good enough to ensure women's representation and political participation.

In the findings chapter, twelve respondents raised a factor that **women are in competition with one another**. One respondent pointed out that *“with the quota system...women did not want to elect other women in a meeting...but a Women's League person had to force them to nominate a woman...they do not trust each other...the community at large does not trust a woman...even as a political party, we don't...asking ubani? noba umabani angakwenza oku? (loosely translated as “this person or that woman can do this?)”*. This is in contrast with the literature which states that women are also more likely to vote for a woman candidate than men and are more apt to see women candidates as sharing tier concerns (Dolan, 2004: 14). The literature also shows that women are not a homogenous group and that their interests differ at a particular time. Furthermore, class, race, ethnic identities also determine their interests (Franceschet, 2005: 173) but may, in many instances need to be pursued in a collective way (Griffen, 2004: 164). Women should not be competing with each other. According the literature, women must work towards creating a forum or platform to make their voices heard and give greater visibility to women's issues (Martin, 1993:6).

The results also showed that six respondents interviewed mentioned women's numbers are affected by their **lack of interest** in politics. *“most women are not interested in politics...even in the community if someone is a lady interested in politics, she can get*

*criticized by other women as she might be viewed as a person who wants to sit around men. Insulting word may be uttered...women have lots of responsibilities like leading the family...the number of women is more than that of men. Men sometimes do not want to take responsibilities*". The literature reviewed revealed that States continue to represent some 'men's interests' at women's expense, denying women equal representation, reproductive freedom, education, health care, and equitable treatment (Bayes, Hawkesworth, 2006: 11). This is in contrast with Dandavati (2005: 67) who stated that women activists proved that women wanted change as they were then able to show their interest in politics, speak with one voice, and wanted to challenge the status quo.

**Formal education** is another factor mentioned by sixteen respondents that has contributed to the low numbers and less participation of women at local government level. One respondent pointed out that *"because of lack of education, rural women are used by other people when they want something from them, for example, votes...no capacitation of rural women"*. *"When women are nominated, they decline to take positions because they are not politically matured, feel inferior and lack education in general"*. According to the literature in this study, education makes women to feel independent and confident to secure important roles in society including political positions. This is not in line with what Aryan (2012: 48) stated when he said education has changed men's attitudes towards women. Obtaining higher education and receiving training, skills and expertise have increased women's awareness, their self-confidence, dignity, growth and development (Aryan, 2012: 38). However, since women are now represented at local government level, one can deduce that higher education has prepared women to face different challenges and to become leaders who shape policies and promote social and political equality.

The findings show that the number of women is low because **women elect men** into positions. One of the respondents mentioned that *"the number is low, even the 50/50 quota system does not assist as people must know politics...women do not understand politics but go to church...now there is money involved, they are interested...they also choose a man instead of another woman"*. According to the literature, males have been seen as leaders in many societies around the world. The literature revealed that a male was regarded as the legitimate head of the family and enjoyed more favourable inheritance rights (Rostami-Povey, 2012: 20). Although, this might be the case, evidence in the study showed that women themselves may avoid politics altogether and focus on activities with and for other women

(Franceschet, 2005: 74). According to the literature, women are the majority of the population in South Africa which means they are the one who vote for men. Evidence in the literature showed that the overall number of women councillors declined in the 2011 local government elections. One can deduce that from the council and the community, it is women that are electing men. McGlen and O'Connor (1998: 80) remarked that it is women who are responsible for failing to turn things around when it comes to their increased participation in politics.

In the findings chapter, five respondents also felt that politics is still **male dominated** that is why the number of women is low. One respondent mentioned that “*prior, women were afraid of talking politics...but even now men are bossy within political parties*”. The literature reviewed in this study link male domination with different factors that keep women oppressed. Social and Marxist feminists argue that capitalism has been the cause of women to be oppressed. Capitalism perpetuates the subordination of women by enforcing their economic dependence on men. Other scholars believe that the capitalist system must be replaced by the socialist system in which the means of production belong to one and all (Sarakakis, *et al.*, 2008). MacKinnon (1987) contends that with patriarchy, women have difficulty placing their experiences, lives, and needs in central focus in their everyday lives and environments. The literature revealed that class, and division are the major factors in women's oppression, paying attention to the intersections between women's work and women's self-perception. Evidence in the literature shows that male party leaders tend to recruit other men to run for ‘winnable seats’, thus playing a ‘gatekeeper’ role that effectively excludes women (Hawkesworth, 2006: 101). Furthermore, with male dominance, Aryan (2012: 85) pointed out that men use lobbying and networking to rise up the ladder of promotion, but women are barred from using these tools as men in high positions create their own cultural spaces and exclude women. Moreover, men regard the holding of high positions as their exclusive right and are not prepared to share these with women (Aryan, 2012: 86).

It must be noted that in the findings chapter, five respondents mentioned that women are **threatened by community members**. The respondents mentioned that women cannot go to certain areas because they are threatened. In addition, community members march against councillors and sometime burn their houses and women cannot face those challenges. This is in line with the literature reviewed where in India a women activist was abducted, confined

and repeatedly raped by other activists (Patel 1993). Sales (1997) in his study stated that on women mentioned that her sister had a gun attack after standing for the council.

The representation and participation of women in politics at local government level has been affected by their lack of involvement in **community structures** according to eleven respondents interviewed. One respondent stated that there are that “*two things that can assist women. Firstly,...to be well known and participate in certain structures. Secondly, it is gender equality because of laws...there are people who are not happy to see women in leadership position...according to some of them, with my age and gender I should not be with them ...men don't respect women in leadership positions and they also influence community members* ”. In addition to this another respondent said “*there are no community organizations and structures anymore where women would influence decisions and 'toytoy' where possible...women used to meet and discuss issues that were affecting them, their children and the whole community...now it's just the extension of political branches...this is a sad state*”. Evidence in the study showed that, women express a general feeling that they lack the support and consent of men both at household and community levels in order to participate at local level (Mugisha, 2000: 1). Furthermore, according to Lange, (2008: 1139) ‘grassroot’ women often find it hard to take the floor in public meetings as they are being ignored or ridiculed. Nonetheless, a research by Urban Governance (2000: 102) found women to be less corrupt and more responsive to the needs of the communities.

**Family responsibility** was another factor raised by nine respondents interviewed. One respondent remarked that “*women have other commitments as they have to raise a family...it is difficult when you have a husband...others are afraid of dying and leaving their children behind...other women are staying with their in-laws...so family commitments do not go hand-in-hand with politics*”. According to the literature in this study, women often come to politics later in life due to childbearing demands (McGlen and O'Connor, 1998: 88). Most women admit to experiencing guilt over the time they spend away from their families (Franceschet, 2005: 90). There is a belief that a women's place is in the home in term of patriarchal gender relations.

A number of respondents indicated that the numbers are **high** for two different reasons. Firstly, seven respondents that were interviewed mentioned that **participation in community projects and structures** contributed to the high number of women councillors. The UN

strongly encourages governments to continue to support the role and contribution of civil society; in particular NGOs and women's movements in ensure community participation of women in different countries (UN General Assembly, 2012). In the literature, Landsberg, Mackay and Ngwens (2005) argues that civil society is the realm in which citizens associate with one another in order to ensure that government and State institutions respond to their needs and are accountable to them. Civil society has assisted women to group themselves for different purposes. It transpired in the literature reviewed that in countries like India and Argentina women would participate in protest actions and electoral campaigns. That has led government and other stakeholders to find and consult all women's groups before passing any legislation that affects women. Women who have been active in these community structures would then be recognised by community members. These may be encouraged to represent their communities at local government level.

Secondly, fifteen respondents indicated that the **quota system** is another factor which has contributed to the high number of councillors at local government level. According to the literature reviewed, proportional representation has contributed significantly to the increased number of women in the council. This is in line with what Ballington (1998b) that the PR system allows women to be equitably represented on the political party lists. When women are on the political party list, they are able to represent their parties in the council and serve as PR councillors. The aim is to increase their numbers as voters prefer to continue to vote for men leading women to remain under-represented. The literature in the study stated that even with a fifty percent quota increase, the probability of voting for a man is always higher than the probability of voting for a woman (Bonomi, Brosio, and Tommaso, 2013). It appears in the literature that the South African government has no position on the issue of a quota system but relies on political parties to ensure that women are represented. In addition, not all political parties have adopted the gender quota system. The study shows that only the ANC adopted the system. Other parties such as the DA and the IFP choose women based on merit. The literature also revealed that even women believe that being elected this way considerably decreases their credibility towards their male colleagues. This was confirmed by one respondent who stated that *"50/50 quota system is good but kuthathwa noba ngubani, ubone nje ukuthi yinkunkuma kodwa ngoba ngumama...kukhona aba useless ngoba asazi uzoyinceda ngani i community"* (loosely translated as *'they take anyone and you see that the person does not know anything but elected just because she is a woman...there are those who are useless we do not know how they can assist the community'*). One can deduce that the

quota system has been working for certain women to gain exposure. However, it would take time for the number to reach the required level as their participation is based on the political party they have joined.

In this study, the results with regard to whether women's contributions during meetings were taken seriously by male counterparts, 53% of the respondents reported women are treated as equals in the council. Thirty percent of the respondents indicated that women are taken seriously but it depends on their knowledge and contribution. Thirteen percent (13%) of the respondents stated that women's contributions are undermined by men. With four percent (n=4) respondents who pointed out that they do not know whether women's contributions during meetings are taken seriously by male counterparts. The results in this study are in line with the literature which stated that although male are seen as dominant in politics and women seen as weak gender and unable to perform their duties, women can demonstrate their capabilities and abilities as equal partners to their male colleagues (Koolae, 2012: 141). It appears that becoming involved in decision-making processes, women can deal with those issues competently irrespective of their numbers in leadership positions. Once women represent themselves, they are treated like anybody else, depending on the individual's knowledge and contribution in the meeting. Therefore, one can conclude that women's representation and participation has a major impact in the decision-making processes at local government level.

**6.4 Aim 2: To investigate the extent to which women representatives are gaining support from other stakeholders (civil society, political parties, communities, other women) in addressing gender issues at local government level.**

The aim of the current study was also to investigate the extent to which women representatives are gaining support from other stakeholders such as civil society, political parties, communities, other women etc. in addressing gender issues at local government level. Respondents were asked how culture and family support have shaped women's councillor representation at local government level. The researcher when asking this question, wanted to also find out how respondents understand and deal with their diverse gender roles within the municipalities as well as outside.



From the results displayed in Table 5.4 of this study, it can be noted that the majority of the respondents (15%) reported that **culture** is gradually changing. When asked for the reasons why they are saying culture is changing, respondents stated that the situation requires a woman who is able to separate politics and family, deal with the issues of changing the mindset and understand diversity matters. It must be noted that under this question the researcher allowed respondents to share their views freely, therefore one respondent may touched on both culture and family or just one of the factors. One respondent mentioned that “*You can call a woman ‘Ndabezitha’ (Zulu way of showing respect only to men by using his clan name) which was never the case before*”. There are respondents who pointed out that the current situation requires women to obtain buy-in from traditional leaders and or religious leaders (9%). Other respondents said culture is changing because of the changing laws (5%). There were respondents who felt that cultures is negatively affecting women as they are treated as minors (7%); more opportunities for ‘white culture’ than ‘black culture’ (3%) and that culture does not allow women to hold certain positions (5%). Evidence in the literature showed that most of the countries are democratic and governments are aware of the complaints and problems and are now responsive of the local needs (Loh, 2013). Furthermore, traditional forms of political representation have been re-examined where citizens play a greater role in decisions that affects them (Governder 2008). This requires the inclusion of the previously marginalised groups of people including women to be part of the decision-making processes. According to the literature, the new laws have changed the public opinion with regard to traditional gender roles and norms and a new gender consciousness which is important to achieve greater equality and equity between males and females. According to Fikeni (2008), traditional authorities were recognised as primary institutions of rural local government after 1994 in South Africa. The TLGF Act 41 of 2003 also allows for the representation and participation of women in all decision-making processes taken by the traditional council. According to the literature, the above-mentioned Act makes provision for the council to have more than 30 members, of which a third must be women. Therefore, culture has been affected and gradually changing as it allow people including women to focus on their individual needs. This is in line with Klenke (1996: xi) when he remarked that gender is a significant cultural rather than an individual difference or democratic variable has important implications for individuals and organisations.

In terms of family giving support respondents pointed out that it depends on **family** involvement in politics (17%); one’s marital status (13%); the husband (11%); individual’s

background in politics (7%); women domination at home (4%) and; the residential area whether urban or rural (3%). This is in line with Martin (1993) when he stated that women face tremendous opposition from the family, community and male political leaders, if they decide to enter politics or public life. Women's subordination was reflected in the civil code which converted married women into dependents of their husbands (Franceschet, 2005: 37). It is not surprising that a large number of women who are named as candidates are wives or daughters of high-profile male politicians (Valdes, 1998; Franceschet, 2005: 88). The literature also shows that even women who have led their countries, had family relatives or husbands who were politicians. Countries mentioned in the literature reviewed are Central African Republic; India; Sri Lanka; Norway; to name a few. Very few women led their countries without being linked to a family member actively participating in politics for example, Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom. The literature shows that if one comes from a political family, it is highly likely that the person irrespective of gender might gain support from other family members. With women in South Africa, there is lack of support due to cultural and traditional prejudices.

The results in Table 5.5 of the findings chapter dealt with the extent to which male **counterparts** were supporting gender issues at local government level. The majority of the respondents reported that there is gender balance in all structures of the council (46%). Twenty one (n=22) respondents indicated that males are supporting gender issues depending on whether or not the idea raised was making sense. However, there were respondents who felt that there was no full understanding of gender issues within the council (11%). Also, twenty two percent respondents reported that males do not support gender issues at local government level. Evidence in the literature showed that, gender inequalities and different limitations are imposed on women by family structures and society (Aryan, 2012). It must be noted that when respondents were asked this question, most of them reported that issues discussed in the council are not gender based but they focus on the needs of the communities. Nevertheless, they are raised first within their respective political parties. The literature revealed that commitment to a political party inevitably means that gender issues take second place to party loyalty according to Sales (1997:179). This has resulted to gender issues not being fully understood by the respondents. However, when it comes to the structures within the council, women are always represented and therefore there is a gender balance. Most importantly, irrespective of whether one is male or female, the idea put forward by any councillor must make sense.

With regard to the question of whether **training** has been provided at local government level to sensitise council and or community members about gender issues, the results show that 61% of the respondents reported that no training has been provided to council and or community members. Whereas 39% of the respondents mentioned that they have attended few courses that sensitised them about gender issues. However, the researcher learned that the courses that the respondents were referring to were not specifically addressing gender issues, but gender issues would be mentioned only in passing during training. According to the literature, lack of information and training has been some of the barriers for women's full and equal participation in politics (McGlen and O'Connor, 1998). The literature in the study revealed that once elected, women face a variety of reactions from colleagues (Sales, 1997) and other stakeholders. The literature stated that local government serves as a training ground for women who can move from local to national assemblies (Stevens, 2007). Based on the above, one can deduce that women's representation and participation at local government is negatively affected by the absence of training as other stakeholders may have difficulty understand the role and the importance of women in the decision-making processes.

In this study, the results with regard to whether or not there are **strategies** in place to empower women at local government level, the majority of the respondents (42%) reported that that there were no strategies at local government level. Twenty percent (n=21) of the respondents reported that there were strategies in place. Other respondents stated that there were strategies introduced but never materialised (17%); political parties should have strategies (6%) and; civil society have strategies (13%). Lastly, two percent (n=2) of the respondents reported that they do not know whether there were any strategies to empower women at local government level. The lack of strategies to empower women at local government level is in contravention with African Union's Women's Decade 2010-2020 which aimed to empower women through top-down and bottom-up approach that is inclusive of grassroots participation (Kamau, 2011).

From the results displayed in Table 5.8 concerning whether women **support each other irrespective of political affiliation** when women issues are raised in meeting, it can be noted that respondents had different views. There were respondents who reported that women do not support each other (27%); sometimes women support each other (25%); women fully support each other (37%); and those who did not know (11%) whether women were

supporting each other. One of the respondents stated that “*Women hate each other, it is in their blood*”. It must be noted that the response came from people of different races and both men and women that women do not support each other. The literature revealed that women are not a homogenous group therefore their interests differ at any particular time. In Celis and Childs (2012) stressed that women are not a homogeneous group but a heterogeneous group, so their interests are not homogeneous. Women unlike workers fighting for high wages are unable to have one common goal at a particular point in time because of their difference in class, ethnic group, race etc. Evidence in the literature shows that mediating factors have proven to be multiple: the external political environment; extant institutional norms; the impact of party affiliation, ideology and cohesion; differences among women representatives; representatives’ newness; institutional position, including front and back bench, and government or opposition membership; committee appointment and leadership; women’s caucus presence; and wider vagaries of policy making (Bratton and Ray, 2002; Carroll, 2001; Chaney, 2006; Childs and Withey, 2006; Dodson, 2001; Gotell and Brodie, 1991; Hawkesworth, 2003; Kathlene, 1995; Reingold, 2000, 2008; Swers, 2002; Thomas, 1994; Trimble and Arscott, 2003; Weldon, 2002).

In the findings chapter, Table 5.9 shows responses about the reasons contributing to the **non-support** of women related issues by other women at local government level. It must be noted that only respondents who mentioned that women do not support each other responded to this question. Sixty seven percent (n=36) of the respondents reported that women are in competition with each other. Twenty two percent (n=22) of the respondents reported that women do not support each other due to political party influence. Of course, 11% respondents who preferred not to respond to the question. The researcher can state that some did not respond because they have never seen gender as an issue in the council. There were also respondents who preferred not to say anything because they really never paid any attention to women and their issues or they could not think of any reason. What the researcher discovered was that there were also female respondents who chose not to respond. With regard to whether women councillors were gaining **support from other women** in the community, the respondents had different views. It must be noted that sometimes one respondent would mention more than one reason. Respondents who stated that they were gaining support reported that the support was gained through women’s groups (15%); community structures (25%); and ward committees (2%). Other respondents reported that support is gained depending on the councillors’ work ethics (13%); councillors’ attitude (2%);

the issues (6%); and community and race of the councillor (2%). Other respondents reported that there was no support from community women (15%); and support from other women is limited (10%). Few respondents reported that they do not know whether there was any support for women councillors from other women in the community. The researcher learned that it was difficult for other respondents to respond as they were only PR councillors with no wards. Their interaction with communities is where and when there was a need or at the request of the council, wards councillors, or community members. Respondents who were PR councillors also indicated that interacting directly with community members from a certain ward has created a lot of tension between ward councillors and them. The researcher also learned that where there was a male ward councillor, community women would request a female PR councillor to come to their women's group as the male might not be that much interested in women's issues.

From the results displayed in Table 5.11 of the findings chapter, it can be seen that respondents felt that no women are **groomed by political parties** for representation and participation at local government level (35%) and that women learn on the way (25%). Likewise, other respondents reported that women are not groomed by political parties, it is just the quota system that is working for women (16%). Some respondents reported political parties are not doing enough to groom women for representation and participation at local government level (8%); and some do not know what political parties are doing (6%). Few respondents reported that women are been groomed by political parties at branch level (7%); and within youth and no grooming after that (3%). In the literature in this study, Dolan (2004: 13) remarked that increased representation of women and minorities can increase communication between government and members of these groups who may mistrust unrepresentative government and increase the quality of policy deliberations through the contributions of those voices had previously been excluded. However, in South Africa political education is not taught at school level or at tertiary level. The literature in this study shows women moved to national level after 1994 leaving a very large gap at local government level. It must be noted that women may be educated but political education is another field that must be pursued on its own. Political parties could market themselves to women so that they change their perception on politics in general and think of becoming politicians. If women are seen as assets to the political parties, those parties would ensure that they are groomed in order to take leadership positions in future. The literature revealed that

women are used by political parties because of their strong links with local communities which can be turned into electoral support (Sales, 1997).

**6.5 Aim 3: To investigate the personal strategies that women councillors adopt in order to maximise their contribution to decision-making processes at local government level.**

In this aim of the study, the researcher sought to investigate **personal strategies** that women councillors adopt in order to maximise their contribution to decision-making processes at local government level.

The results in Table 5.12 of the findings chapter show that 33% of the respondents reported that there was nothing different as women were treated as equals at local government level. However, there were respondents who reported that it depends on the social network that women belong to (25%). Other respondents mentioned different strategies such as being aggressive and arrogant (7%); dress beautifully (5%); self-confidence (6%); education (5%); intimate relationships (7%); mobilisation at branch level (2%). Also there were respondents 11%, who reported that they never took notice of women adopting different strategies in order to participate or influence decisions in the council. This is in contrast to what Franceschet (2005) who pointed out that woman have to adopting masculine behaviour in the meetings by shouting and swearing in order to be heard. Furthermore, Bennet (2010: 13) remarked that women leaders do appear to feel a need to exhibit or develop supposedly male qualities in order to be taken seriously. However, there is no need for women to behave in this fashion as the findings of this study show that women do not need to exhibit any strange behaviour for them to be taken seriously in meetings and maximise their contribution to decision-making processes at local government level. According to the literature, gender should not be the only factor to determine individual's behaviour (Bennet, 2010).

**6.6 Aim 4: To identify barriers and challenges related to the representation and participation of women at local government level.**

The focus of this aim was to establish whether or not there were mechanisms available to address any barriers and challenges that women are facing when participating and executing their duties at local government level. It must be noted that the researcher decided to address this question to not only women councillors but for all respondents to share their experiences. Local government has been the last phase of government to reform. It so happen in South

Africa that both males and females of all races began to work together for the first time at local government level after 1994 bearing in mind the history of South Africa which make this study to be more significant.

The research findings show that the majority of the respondents at 54%, never experienced any **discrimination based on gender or race**. Nonetheless, twenty percent (20%) of the respondents reported that they had been discriminated against based on gender while executing their duties. Only 17% of the respondents reported that they had been discriminated against based on their race. Some respondents reported that they had been discriminated against based on grounds other than race and gender, but mentioned marital status, language and social status (9%).

Gender and race are very sensitive subjects in South Africa as the literature revealed considering at the history of the country. It must be noted that respondents who indicated that they had been discriminated against based on gender, all of them were women councillors. It was not only African women but women of all races in the council that experienced some kind of discrimination within and outside the council.

The researcher had to make a follow up where respondents who indicated that they did experience some discrimination while executing their duties and had to indicate how they **reported or addressed the issue of discrimination** at local government level. Forty four percent of the respondents reported that there were no mechanisms to report or to make sure the issue is properly addressed. Thirty seven percent (n=18) of the respondents indicated that they had to report the issue to another structure for it to be resolved. Nineteen percent (n=9) of the respondents reported that they never reported the issue for different reasons. It must be pointed out that other structures mentioned by the respondents could be political parties, community structures and structures within the council.

When respondents were asked about **barriers and challenges** that they have been faced with as councillors, the majority of them mentioned challenges outside the council. In order to obtain more information, the researcher allowed them to comment on those barriers and challenges. The majority of them reported about politics in general and assistance from their political parties (24%); the role of the municipalities and councillors (13%); lack of municipal council support (11%); community projects not completed (10%); family issues

(7%); lack of resources like budget (11%); threats from community members (7%); age and gender (5%); traditional authority versus municipal council (3%); and lack of support for women's programmes (4%). Very few respondents reported that there were no barriers (5%). Respondents mentioned political parties because they are the key to their representation and participation at all levels of government in South Africa. Although at local government level voters vote for the individual, however, political parties have a lot of influence in term of who is going to represent the party in a particular ward as a councillor. From the results in this study, it also transpired that the role of municipalities and councillors is still a challenge amongst community members. This means that community members have not been capacitated in terms the powers municipality might have and the role of the councillors when dealing with community issues and needs.

Table 5.16 of the findings chapter show that how respondents **overcame barriers and challenges** since becoming councillors at local government level. As mentioned above, responses are from both male and female councillors. The results with regard to barriers and challenges are summarised as follows:

- Holding meetings;
- Drawing up plans;
- Reporting to higher structures;
- Political education;
- Family support; and
- Support from senior authorities.

It must be stated that a large number of the respondents reported that they have never done anything (n=22) and very few are still dealing with the challenges (n=3). This is a concern that councillors would prefer not do anything when faced with challenges. It shows that there are no structures or such assistance has never been communicated to the councillors to use whenever there is a necessity. It also leaves a huge gap as community members would embark on a protest action, should they feel that their needs are not attended to by their municipality which might put the lives of councillors at risk some times.



### **6.7 Aim 5: To identify successful factors contributing to increased representation and participation of women at local government level.**

The research findings in Table 5.17 show the **success stories** shared by both male and female councillors related to their increased representation and participation at local government level. The aim was to take these successful factors in order to assist others especially women to adopt or adapt in future to increase their representation and participation at local government level. It must be noted that one respondent may have identified several factors. Therefore the number of responses was not the same as the number of respondents.

The majority of the respondents (38%) reported that participation in community projects and meetings has assisted them to be elected as councillors at local government level. Other respondents reported factors such as trust and respect for people (12%); education (14%); loyalty to the political party (11%); previous work experience (9%); confidence (1%); passion and patience (3%); honesty (8%); and transparency (4%). The results show that being visible and participating in community projects is the main factor which has made respondents to be where they are today. It is based on an individual's commitment and participation to community matters which secured their election as councillors. This goes hand in hand with working with people of all races and ages by showing respect in order to gain their trust. It must be noted that most of the respondent who were of the view that loyalty to their political parties contributed significant to their representation and participation at local government level were PR councillors, males and females. The literature reviewed in this study revealed that education is one of the important resources which give respondents confidence together with previous work experience. Therefore, one can deduce that working and being involved in community projects and structures, having some level of education and respecting people are the main factors that made respondents to be elected as councillors.

## 6.8 SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

Specific aims, interview questions and main findings are presented in Table 6.1.

**Table 6.1: Summary of Major Findings**

Specific Aims	Interview Questions	Main findings
To establish the impact of women's representation and participation in decision-making processes at local government level	Do you feel that women are actively participating and represented in decision-making processes and meeting at local government level?	The number of women has improved and women are participating in decision-making processes at local government level.
	What factors (if any) may have contributed to the HIGH or LOW number of women councillor representation at local government level?	<p>The number of women councillor representation is LOW because of the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of confidence</li> <li>Lack of formal education</li> <li>Cultural influence</li> <li>Women in competition with each other</li> <li>Lack of involvement in community structures</li> <li>Women elect men into positions</li> <li>Family responsibility</li> <li>Lack of interest in politics</li> <li>Women not recruited by political parties</li> <li>Women threatened by community members</li> <li>Politics still male dominated</li> </ul> <p>The number of women councillor representation is HIGH because of the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quota system</li> <li>Participation in community projects and structures</li> </ul>
	Do you feel that women contributions during meetings are taken seriously by male counterparts?	Women are treated as equals during meetings and they are taken seriously by their male counterparts depending on knowledge and contribution.
To investigate the extent to which	How has culture and family support shaped women	Culture is gradually changing. However, those living in rural areas would need buy-in

<p>women representatives are gaining support from other stakeholders (civil societies, political parties, communities and other women etc.) in addressing gender issues at local government level.</p>	<p>councillor representation at local government level?</p>	<p>from traditional leaders and or religious leaders. Support also depend on family involvement in politics, marital status and the husband.</p>
	<p>To what extent are male counterparts supporting gender issues at local government level?</p>	<p>There are no specific gender issues discussed at local government level. However, there is gender balance in all the structures. At the same time there are those who feel that males do not support gender issues, the ideas raised must make sense. Lastly, there is no full understanding of gender issues</p>
	<p>What training has been provided to sensitise council members and communities concerning gender issues?</p>	<p>There is no training provided to sensitise council and community members on gender issues.</p>
	<p>What strategies are in place to empower women at local government level?</p>	<p>There are no strategies in place to empower women at local government level.</p>
	<p>Do women support each other irrespective of political affiliation, when women related issues (building crèche, clinics, and community projects) are raised in meetings?</p>	<p>Women do fully support each other when women related issues are raised. There is a larger portion of respondents who felt that women do not support each other. Sometimes women do support each other.</p>
	<p>If (the answer to Q11 is) ‘No’ what has contributed to the non-support to issues related to women raised by women.</p>	<p>The reason women do not support each other is because they compete with each other.</p>
	<p>What support are you as a women representative gaining from other women in the</p>	<p>Support is gained from both males and females; Through community structures;</p>

	communities?	Women's groups; Depending on the councillors' work ethics. A large portion of respondents also felt that there was no support from community women.
	Do you feel that enough women are being groomed by political parties for representation at local government level?	Women are not groomed at all for representation at local government level; Women learn on the way and respondents believe that it is only the quota system works for women.
To analyse the personal strategies that women councillors adopt in order to maximise their contribution to decision making processes in local government contexts	What strategies/behaviour do women adopt in order to participate fully in decision-making processes at local government level?	Women are treated as equals in the council. However, some make use of social capital or networking as a strategy to participate fully in decision-making processes at local government level.
To identify barriers and challenges related to the representation and participation of women at local government level	Have you ever felt discriminated against based on race or gender while executing your duties?	A large number of respondent indicated that they have never experienced any discriminated against based on race or gender while executing their duties. There are some who indicated that they have discriminated against based on race or gender.
	If 'Yes' how was the issue reported and addressed?	Respondent have no mechanism to report challenges. However, some reported issues to another structure.
	What barriers and challenges have you been faced since becoming a women representative at local government level?	The barriers mentioned by respondents include, Politics and political parties The role of municipalities and councillors Lack of municipal council support

		<p>Community projects not completed</p> <p>Family issues</p> <p>Lack of resources like budget</p> <p>Threats from community members</p> <p>Age and gender</p> <p>Traditional authority versus municipal council</p> <p>Lack of support for women programmes</p>
	How did you overcome those barriers?	<p>Hold meetings;</p> <p>Draw up a plan</p> <p>Report to higher structures</p> <p>Political education</p> <p>Family support</p> <p>Support from senior authorities</p> <p>Other respondents have never done anything to overcome barriers</p>
To explore successful factors contributing to increased representation of women at local government level.	What factors have contributed to your successful representation of women as a councillor?	<p>Factors include:</p> <p>Participation in community projects and meetings</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Trust and respect for people</p> <p>Loyalty to the political party</p> <p>Previous work experience</p> <p>Honesty</p> <p>Confidence</p> <p>Passion and patience</p> <p>Openness and transparency</p>

## 6.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed and analysed the results of the findings in detail. The next chapter concludes the study based on the findings and thereafter suitable recommendations will be anticipated.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **7.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter dealt with the discussion of findings. One can state that the current study has been able to accomplish the desired outcomes with regard to women's representation and participation at local government in South Africa. This chapter focuses on the conclusions and recommendations that can be drawn based on the discussion of the results presented in chapter six. The objectives, key research questions, and delimitations of the study are first highlighted. The chapter also make recommendations for future research on women's representation and participation at local government level.

#### **7.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The main aim of the study was to investigate the extent to which women are represented and participating at local government level.

The specific objectives of the study were:

- To establish the impact of women's representation and participation in decision-making processes at local government level;
- To investigate the extent to which women representatives are gaining support from other stakeholders (civil society, political parties, communities, other women etc.) in addressing gender issues at local government level;
- To analyse the personal strategies that women councillors adopt in order to maximise their contribution to decision making processes in local government contexts;
- To identify barriers and challenges related to the representation and participation of women at local government level; and
- To explore successful factors contributing to increased representation and participation of women at local government level.

### **7.3 KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The research study responded to the following key questions:

Q1: What is the impact of women's representation and participation in decision-making processes at local government level?

Q2: To what extent is women representative gaining support from other stakeholders in addressing gender issues at local government level?

Q3: What strategies are adopted by women councillors to maximise their contribution to decision making processes in local government contexts?

Q4: What are the barriers and challenges related to their representation and participation?

Q5: What are the success factors contributing to increased representation and participation of women at local government level?

### **7.4 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

According to Cooper and Schindler (2006), all research studies have their limitations, and the sincere investigator recognises that readers need aid in judging the study's validity. This study is no exception as there were limitations identified by the researcher.

Firstly, this study was tailored specifically for different municipalities in KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape, therefore cannot be generalised for all municipalities. Secondly, telephonic in-depth semi structured interviews were conducted on such a sensitive issue serves as a limitation. This is because there was no budget for the study and the researcher had to call respondents who could not be reached especially those who reside in the Eastern Cape. Thirdly, initially the researcher targeted only ward female and male councillors. However, PR female councillors had to be included due to the low number of women ward councillors in certain municipalities. The next section deals with conclusions related to each aim of the study.

## **7.5 CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY**

It was stated in the beginning of the study that in order for the research to be conducted effectively aims had to be established as appeared above to guide the research. This chapter discusses conclusions according to each aim.

### **7.5.1 Aim 1: To establish the impact of women's representation and participation in decision-making processes at local government level**

The study has provided evidence that the number of women at local government level has improved. The findings do, however, show that the presence of women in the council was due to the prescripts which have encouraged women's equal representation in all structures at local government level. Although the number of women elected as ward councillors is fluctuating, the researcher found that there are more women PR councillors which may probably be regarded as good in terms of exposing women to politics. According to the literature presented, women are supposed to be equally represented. Nonetheless, the study provided evidence that the number of women are low and factors contributing were lack of confidence in themselves; lack of education; lack of involvement in community structures; women competing with each other; women electing men; cultural influence; women not recruited by political parties; lack of interest in politics; family responsibility; women threatened by community members. The factors found in this study reflect the experience of South Africa which may be evident in other parts of the world in terms of how women have been socialised. Surprisingly, findings also showed that women are treated as equals in the council, depending on the individual's contribution. Therefore, one can deduce that women are having an impact in the decision-making processes at local government level through their representation and participation.

### **7.5.2 Aim 2: To investigate the extent to which women representatives are gaining support from other stakeholders (civil society, political parties, communities, other women etc.) in addressing gender issues at local government level.**

The findings indicate that culture has negatively affected women with regard to their representation and participation in politics. Women still need a buy-in from traditional leaders and religious leaders depending on whether they reside in urban or rural areas. This



means that poor women from rural areas are still affected by culture and would be excluded from full participation. However, the findings also show that culture is gradually changing. When it comes to family, the study found that women's representation and participation depends on family involvement in politics, marital status and the husband. Evidence in the study shows that there are no specific gender issues discussed and no full understanding of gender issues at local government level as political party and community issues take preference. Women would continue to be marginalised as the majority and socio-economic issues affecting them would continue to be overlooked. But the findings do show that there is gender balance in all structures at local government level. Simultaneously, the study revealed that no training is provided to sensitise members about gender issues and no strategies are in place to empower women. The literature states that local government serves as a training ground for women who can move from local to national assemblies (Stevens, 2007: 78). Women who participated in the struggle against apartheid moved to multiple institutions at the national level, leaving a huge gap at the local level. When there are no strategies to empower women locally, their representation at all levels would be negatively affected.

The study provides evidence that irrespective of political affiliation women fully support each other. There were a large number of respondents who felt that women do not support each other because they are in competition with each other. One of the respondents indicated that when women mentioned that they political parties gave them mandate, they do not support that irrespective of how brilliant the ideas are. This means that respondents were more accountable to their political parties than the local population. When it comes to women receiving support from other women in communities, they gain it from community structures; women's groups; and it also depends on that councillors work ethics.

The findings of the study show that there are no specific programmes by political parties to groom women for representation and participation at local government level. Therefore, one can conclude that women representatives are not gaining any support from the council and their political parties in addressing gender issues at local government level.

**7.5.3 Aim 3: To investigate the personal strategies that women councillors adopt in order to maximise their contribution to decision-making processes at local government level.**

The study found that women representatives have not adopted any strategies to maximise their contributions to decision-making processes at local government level. What is very interesting is that women are treated as equals. However, social networks are playing their role in politics and just like men, women belong to some. This shows that women are now professionals who gaining respect as politicians at local government level. Looking at the brief history of South Africa and the results of this study, it shows that they are a forgiving nation.

**7.5.4 Aim 4: To identify barriers and challenges related to the representation and participation of women at local government level.**

Evidence in the study shows that respondents never felt discriminated against based on race or gender. Respondents both male and female have been able to work with diverse people in South Africa. It must be noted that those experienced discrimination based on gender were women. Some respondents who indicated that they have been discriminated against based on race. The study found that there were no mechanisms to report or to ensure that the issues are properly addressed and resolved.

With regard to barriers and challenges that both male and female representatives have faced, the study found them to be politics and political parties; the role of municipalities and councillors; lack of municipal support; community projects not completed; family issues; lack of resources like budget; threats from community members; age and gender; traditional authority versus municipal council; and lack of support for women's programmes. Local government is undergoing transition; therefore communities including women are not well capacitated regarding to their role as a community and the role of the political parties at local government level. That would lead to another phase where communities would learn more about the role of the municipality versus the role of councillors and the traditional council. Chapter 7 of the Constitution encourages the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government. It is the role of the municipality to educate members of the public about the role of councillors. The literature reviewed showed that

municipalities should take active steps to ensure that representatives from marginalised groups such as women and the poor stand for elections. When women have different perception about councillors, obviously they would not be interested in joining politics, but would march against councillors. The study revealed that representatives overcome these barriers and challenges by holding meeting; drawing up a plan; reporting to higher structures or senior officials; relying on family support and educating people politically. Therefore, one can conclude that the most important barriers and challenge is public perception concerning the role of these different structures that exist at local government level.

#### **7.5.5 Aim 5: To identify successful factors contributing to increased representation and participation of women at local government level.**

The study provided evidence that participating in community projects and meetings; trust and respect for people; education; loyalty to the political party; work experience; confidence; passion and patience; honesty; and openness and transparency were some of the factors that contributed to successful representation and participation at local government level. This study shows that people elect candidates that are accessible to them which have been the intention of decentralisation. Accessibility then becomes a lesson for women in obtaining representation and participation at local government level.

### **7.6 CONTRIBUTION TO THE BODY OF KNOWLEDGE**

The study displayed a great deal to women's representation and participation in decision-making processes in relation to decentralisation, democracy, and gender. It showed the significant role that can be played by women at local government as they are the majority of the population but poor and mostly still marginalised. The study showed that although prescripts allow women to be recognised as representatives in all structures, they are willing to participate fully in decision-making processes. They are affected by lack of confidence which could be addressed by factors that this study managed to raise. The factors are the importance of training of people on gender issues; to have strategies to empower women by both political parties and government; political parties to groom women in order to have a pool in future.

The study revealed the absence of civil society which had been a field where women used to voice their frustrations before 1994. The findings have shown that there is no platform for political education for women as most of the women's issues have been centralised. According to this, one can say that there is an understanding now that representation would lead to participation in decision-making processes at local government level.

The study found that women once there are part of the council, they are treated as equals which was the most important contribution of this study. Since local government is new in South Africa, this study might be the first one at this level of study that has focused on women's representation and participation at local government level.

## **7.7 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings summarised in this study, the following recommendations are noted:

- The first and crucial step is to obtain a buy-in from influential people, either the Mayor or the Speaker of the Municipality, in order to ensure strategies are in place to address gender inequalities at local government level. When strategies are incorporated in the municipal plan, women's representation and participation would increase.
- It is recommended that a gender 'champion' and a gender committee be appointed, which will include male and female councillors. The committee should involve other stakeholders such as civil society organisations and political parties, which will assist in addressing gender issues within their organisations and with the involvement of communities. This will in a long term increase women's representation and participation at local government level.
- It is also recommended that funds be allocated for the committee to execute its functions. Instead of relying on political parties, men and women from communities would participate and receive training on gender issues and the role of women and their participation in decision-making process at local government level. Possibly, bursary opportunities may present itself, as the interest develops which will increase women's representation and participation at local government level.

## **7.8 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

The following recommendations for future research are offered:

It is suggested that a study is conducted on the role of civil society organisation on gender equality as they played a major role during apartheid years building a feminist constituency. It is unfair for women to wait for government and political parties to determine their social status when it comes to representation and participation at local government level. This will assist in finding out the whereabouts of women in the era of decentralisation.

Further research should be done on women's representation and participation at local government level involving all municipalities. This might be time consuming but however crucial as each municipality in all provinces continue to face different challenges due to legacies of apartheid. Communities are facing different challenges hence the increase of service delivery protest of late in South Africa.

## **7.9 CONCLUDING STATEMENT**

It is widely accepted that apartheid policies and legislation are to be blamed for the existing local government system challenges (Nyalunga, 2006: 19). The South African government had good intentions by promulgating prescripts that bring government closer to the people. Women as the majority and the most marginalised group have a change to influence decisions that affects their lives. This study showed that although there is low number, limited participation, no training, no strategies to empower women, political parties not grooming women and no mechanisms which ensured that gender issues are addressed. It is interesting that women are treated as equals and their contributions are taken seriously by council members. Therefore, when women participate in numbers, they would shape the municipal agenda and influence the decisions that are taken for the benefit of all. Flyvbjerg (1998: 5) argues that 'democracy is not something a society 'gets'; democracy must be fought for each and every day in concrete instances, even long after democracy is first constituted in a society. If citizens are not engaged in this fight, there will no democracy'. Indeed, in this era of decentralisation, women and men should fight for gender equality, as both would in the long term benefit from women's representation and participation in the decision-making processes. From this study, is clear that nothing is being done to increase women's representation and participation at local government level.

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# **INTERVIEW GUIDE**

## **TOPIC**

### **WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION AND PARTICIPATION IN THE ERA OF DECENTRALISATION**

#### **QUESTIONS FOR ALL RESPONDENTS**

##### **SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA**

- Gender
- Age
- Home Language
- Marital Status
- No. of Dependants
- Level of Education
- Occupational Background
- Political Party Represented
- Years of Active Political Participation
- Date of Interview

##### **SECTION B: GENERAL QUESTIONS**

- 1) Do you feel that women are actively participating and represented in decision-making processes and meetings at local government level?
- 2) How has culture and family support shaped women councilor representation at local government level?
- 3) What factors (if any) may have contributed to the high/low number of women councilor representation at local government level?
- 4) Do you feel that women's contributions during meetings are taken seriously by male counterparts?
- 5) To what extent are male counterparts supporting gender issues at local government level?
- 6) What training has been provided to sensitize council members and communities concerning gender issues?

- 7) What strategies are in place to empower women at local government level?
- 8) What strategies/behaviour do some women adopt in order to participate fully in decision-making processes in local government?
- 9) Have you ever felt discriminated against based on race or gender while executing your duties?
- 10) If 'Yes' how was the issue reported and addressed?
- 11) Do women support each other irrespective of political affiliation, when women related issues (building crèche, clinics, and community projects) are raised in meetings?
- 12) If (the answer to Q8 is) 'No' what has contributed to the non-support to issues related to women raised by women.
- 13) What support are you gaining as a woman representative from other women in the communities?
- 14) Do you feel that enough women are being groomed by political parties for representation at local government level?
- 15) What barriers and challenges have you been faced since becoming a woman representative at local government level?
- 16) How did you overcome those barriers?
- 17) What factors have contributed to your successful representation of women as a councilor?

MSUNDUZI MUNICIPALITY

**OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER**  
**Tel: 033- 392 2541**  
**Fax: 033 392 2208**  
Email: [nonhlanhla.mkhize@msunduzi.gov.za](mailto:nonhlanhla.mkhize@msunduzi.gov.za)



05 December 2012

**FROM: The Speaker**

Cllr. V. Baijoo

**TO: University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN)**

Mr. Majola

---

Dear Sir

Referring to the letter of your request regarding a study that you are doing under the University of KwaZulu-Natal, as the Speaker of this Council I have no objection with your institution conducting this survey on our Councillors.

This is submitted for your attention.

Yours faithful,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'V. Baijoo', is written over a horizontal line. Below the signature, the initials 'V.B.' are written in a smaller, cursive font.

---

**The Speaker**  
**V. Baijoo**  
**033 392 2541**

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**uMngeni Municipality**

PO Box 5  
3290  
Howick, South Africa

Tel: +27 (33) 239 9266  
Fax: 033-3304183  
Email: [manager@umngeni.gov.za](mailto:manager@umngeni.gov.za)  
Website: [www.umngeni.gov.za](http://www.umngeni.gov.za)

Our Ref.:  
Your Ref.: .....  
Date: 21 November 2012

Office of the Speaker

ATT: Mr. B.K.Majola  
University of KwaZulu – Natal  
Faculty of Law and Management  
Private Bag X54001  
Durban  
4000

e-mail: [majolabk@gmail.com](mailto:majolabk@gmail.com)

Dear Sir

**RE: REQUEST TO UNDERTAKE RESEARCH**

Your undated letter requesting to do the research at our municipality has reference.

Please note that Council has no objection to you doing this research. You are however requested to send the schedule for interviews beforehand so that necessary arrangements with councillors can be done.

I trust you will find the above in order.

Thank you

Cllr T.P.Mchunu  
Speaker

**Private Bag X04  
Camperdown  
3720**



**Tel : 031785 9300  
Fax: 031 785 2121**

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**Office of the Mayor**

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To : Mr Kwazi Majola  
University Of Kwazulu Natal

From : Office of the Mayor

Date : 05 December 2012

Subject: : Study at Mkhambathini Municipality

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We thank you for choosing our organization to be a part of your study, and would like to inform you that we would be honored to assist in any way required.

We look forward to meeting with you. Please contact our office should you require any information.

Thank You

Office of the Mayor





**UMZIMVUBU**  
LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

Our ref: UMZ/1/3

Attention: Mr. Mraz Majola

The school of Management, Information Technology and Governance

Faculty of Business Management

Private Bag 10159

Durban

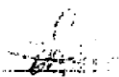
4000

Dear Sir

This letter is to acknowledge the receipt of your letter requesting for permission to conduct research on *Men's Representation and Participation in the Era of Democracy*.

Your request has been granted, however I would like you to communicate in advance of the expectation on conducting this research on the grounds that the Office is not to be the Councilors or will you conduct the interviews in their own time.

Yours faithfully

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Z.O. SIBISI

SPEAKER

1st Floor, Umzimvubu House  
Private Bag 10159  
T. 031 285 0000 / 031 285 0167  
E. www.umzimvubu.org.za

UPHULISO KUMHAYI WONKE



**Office of the Speaker**

City Hall  
Dr. Pixley KaSeme Street  
PO Box 1014  
Durban  
4000

Tel: (+27) 311 2015  
Fax: (+27) 311 2032  
Website: <http://www.durban.gov.za>

11 June 2013

Attention: Brian Kwazi Majola

Dear Mr B K Majola

**RE- CONDUCTING OF A RESEARCH ON ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY COUNCILLORS**

Your letter received on 29 May 2013 refers:

This serves to confirm that permission is hereby granted to you to conduct your research/interview on Women's Representation and Participation in the Era of Decentralization with eThekweni Municipality councillors to enable you to complete your studies.

You have to make necessary arrangements with those Councillors that you will be interviewing. Herein please find the list of Councillors and their contact numbers.

Should you require further information you can contact the Office of Speaker on 031 311 2015.

Yours in community development.

  
.....  
**CLR LOGIE NAIDOO**  
**SPEAKER: ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY**

**INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT**

I, **BRIAN KWAZI MAJOLA**, am a student currently registered for the PhD, at the Westville Campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. A requirement for the degree is a dissertation and I have chosen the following topic:

*Women’s Representation and Participation in the Era of Decentralisation.*

Please note that this investigation is being conducted in my personal capacity and does not reflect any plans of the university to conduct any similar research. I can be reached at [majolabk@gmail.com](mailto:majolabk@gmail.com) or 082 8234355. My academic supervisor is Dr T.I. Nzimakwe, based in the School of Management, Information Technology and Governance on the Westville campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. He can be contacted at [nzimakweth@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:nzimakweth@ukzn.ac.za) and telephone number 033 260-2606. The aim of the research is to investigate the extent to which women are represented and participating at local government level.

Due to the in-depth knowledge required to make a meaningful contribution to this study, you have been selected to participate in the interview in order to provide the required information. The interview will be recorded to ensure accuracy of the information collected. The information gathered for this study will include data retrieved from this interview. Please note that neither your name nor that of your organization you represent will be included in the report. The interview questions guide and the information that will be submitted in these interviews will only be seen by me, the research supervisor and the examiner. Your anonymity is of utmost importance and will be maintained throughout the study.

Your participation in answering the interview questions is completely voluntary and you are in no way forced to continue participating in the interview. You have the right to withdraw at anytime during the study.

I appreciate the time and effort it would take to participate in this study. I would be grateful for your participation as it would enable me to complete my dissertation and degree, but it will also help provide a greater understanding the extent to which women are represented and participating at local government level.

**Please complete the section below:**

I, ..... (Full names of participant), hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at anytime, should I so desire.

Signature of Participant: .....

Date: .....



UNIVERSITY OF  
**KWAZULU-NATAL**  
INYUVESI  
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

31 January 2013

Mr Brain Kwazi Majola 206519194  
School of Management, IT and Governance  
Westville Campus

Dear Mr Majola

Protocol reference number: HSS/0022/013D

Project title: Women's Representation and Participation in the Era of Decentralisation

**EXPEDITED APPROVAL**

I wish to inform you that your application has been granted Full Approval through an expedited review process.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. Please note: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Professor Steven Collings (Chair)

/pm

cc Supervisor: Dr Thokozani Nzimakwe  
cc Academic Leader: Professor KK Govender  
cc School Admin.: Ms Hlengiwe Ngcobo

Professor S Collings (Chair)  
Humanities & Social Sc Research Ethics Committee  
Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, 4000, South Africa

Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 3587/8350 Facsimile: +27 (0)31 260 4609 Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za / snymanm@ukzn.ac.za

Founding Campuses: ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville

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