



Qualitative Comparative Analysis of Conditions Necessary for Increasing the Percentage of Women in African Parliaments

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Abstract

Many African countries have committed to supporting quests to include women in decision making platforms and many African national assemblies have women representation, however, the number of women representatives in parliament remain far from gender parity in many countries. There are, however, several notable cases where the number of women in parliament is relatively high, for instance, the leading country in the world in terms of women's representation in parliament, is in Africa. The factors that led to such a high performance are analysed in this chapter along with other countries that have achieved more than 40% of women representation in parliament. The chapter deployed a fuzzy set Qualitative Comparative Analysis approach to ascertain conditions that are necessary for African countries to maximize the number of women in parliament. The configuration of factors that lead to a high number of women in parliament are constituted by a constellation of factors such as electoral system, type of quotas, quota targets, reduction of gender gaps in significant indicators and the role of political parties.

Keywords: Gender Quota, Qualitative Comparative Analysis, Women in Parliament, Configurations



Introduction

Without gender quotas, African countries would struggle to effectively address gender parity in parliament. There are different forms of gender quota systems and the highest performing African countries in terms of gender parity in parliament do not have a homogenous gender quota system. It is in this light that this chapter embarks on a qualitative comparative analysis of African countries that have scored above 40% of women's representation in parliament so as to understand the conditions that have led to their achievement despite the differences in contexts. The chapter focuses on Rwanda, Senegal, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Carbo Verde and Ethiopia. All these countries have different gender quota systems, yet they have managed to perform well in terms of quotas for women in Parliament thus the presentation of a systematic cross comparative analysis to ascertain the conditions necessary for high gender parity performance in Africa.

The 2023 United Nations Women report states that the global gender parity will only be achieved in 130 years and unfortunately the world is still lagging in terms of parity in the political sphere (Folke & Rickne 2016, Sharma, Chawla & Karam 2021). This unequal proportion of female leadership at the political apex results from several factors including the patriarchal culture of the political sphere and access to finance for political activities. As a response to the existing gender inequality in the political sphere, many countries have implemented various affirmative action policies to ensure that the societies these countries represent reflect the central tenets of democracy, which is inclusivity.

Democratic countries are often viewed as nations that are proponents of equality regardless of race, religion, or gender, however, there is still a significant lag in gender parity in most spheres of democratic societies. For instance, according to the 2023 UN Women report on women in politics, the United States of America (USA) scored 33.3% representation of women in political decision making compared to Angola which stood at 37.9% although Angola scored significantly below the USA economically, in terms of gross domestic product (GDP) and

also scored poorly on the democratic principles of freedom (see Freedom House 2023). It is understood that the inclusion of women in parliamentary and ministerial roles gives legitimacy to democratic governments that have been dominated by men historically (Bush 2011). To make sense of the positive performance by countries that do not adhere to democratic principles, research shows that some electoral autocratic countries have implemented gender quotas so as to attract foreign aid (Bush & Zetterberg 2021). Regardless of the reasons for gendered affirmative action policies, the implementation of gender quotas has not been without challenges.

Research shows evidence of increased oppression or sabotage of women who benefited from gender quotas (Leibbrandt, Wang & Foo 2017; Berry, Bouka & Kamuru 2021). Gender quotas are affirmative action strategies designed to ensure that women have reserved and designated seats in national assemblies (Krook, Lovenduski & Squires 2009) and despite the challenges with implementation, they have been proven to elevate women's political representation (Rosen 2017). Clayton (2015) averred that more than 110 countries worldwide have restructured their constitutions to include quota-mandated gender policies to include women in parliamentary and ministerial seats. Despite the reforms for women's inclusion in political decision making, only 5 countries have reached gender parity in politics, namely; Rwanda, Cuba, Nicaragua, Mexico and New Zealand. Nicaragua (51.7%), Cuba (53.4%) and Rwanda (61.3%) exceed the UN gender quota target of 50% (UN Women 2023) whilst Mexico, New Zealand and the United Arab Emirates have all scored 50% (UN Women 2023). What is notable is that not all of the countries that have reached the 50% gender parity have legislated gender quota systems as only Rwanda, Nicaragua and Mexico have gender quota laws while Cuba and the UAE do not have official gender quota systems, but they have affirmative action policies and strategies to encourage women into decision making platforms (Luciak 2005).

It is evident that narrowing the gender gap requires intervention as opposed to relying solely on market principles to achieve gender equilibrium in the political and economic

sphere. Majority of the countries that have between 40% and 49.9% of women in parliament are in Europe and some of them do not have legislated gender quotas, for instance Andorra (UN Women 2023). The other countries that have performed well in terms of achieving over 40% of women parliamentarians are in Africa and Latin America and Africa has performed impressively because of Rwanda which sits on the number one spot. Although most of the countries that have scored above 40% are from Europe, all those European countries are smaller geospatially and in terms of population size with the exception being Mexico, South Africa, Argentina, Ethiopia, Namibia and Mozambique (UN Women 2023). These latter countries have all achieved above 40% women's representation in parliament.

Many governments in sub-Saharan Africa, Western Europe, the Middle East, Asia and America have implemented various kinds of quota systems such as voluntary quotas, legislative quotas and/or soft/informal quotas to ensure that women are adequately represented (Krook *et al.* 2009). According to the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (2004) there is growing support worldwide for the use of gender quotas as a measure to boost women's access to political bodies (Krook *et al.* 2009; Besley, Folke, Persson & Rickne 2017; Hughes, Paxton & Krook 2017). Most countries, as is the case with Rwanda, have a legislated or non-legislated quota of 30% for women in politics. In Africa, there are nine other countries that have scored between 30% and 39,9% in comparison to 16 other countries from various continents in the world ranking in the same range. (UN Women 2023) The rest continue to perform dismally in terms of women's representation thus, the importance of the call made at the 40th anniversary of CEDAW for increasing the gender parity target to 50% by 2030 because in order for countries to achieve gender parity, gender quotas are crucial.

Dahlerup (2007) relayed that “quota advocates see gender quotas as a compensation for direct or structural discrimination against women and as an effective instrument for achieving gender balance in political institutions, which is considered essential for democratic development”. There are “three main

types of gender quota legislation currently in use across the world, the reserved seat, electoral candidate, and political party quotas, each of which intervenes at different point in the electoral process... some gender quotas are accompanied by mechanisms such as placement mandates and sanctions for non-compliance, which greatly strengthen the legislation” (Rosen 2017:83). Moreover, the “electoral candidate quotas like reserved seats quotas, electoral (or “legislative”) candidate quotas are also codified in national law” (Rosen 2017:85). Legislated candidate quotas regulate the gender composition of the candidate lists and are binding by law for all political parties in the election and they are mandated either through national constitutions or by electoral legislation. Reserved seats quotas involve legislated reservation of a certain number or percentage of seats for women members, implemented through special electoral procedures and they are mandated either through national constitutions or by electoral legislation (Dahlerup, Hilal, Kalandadze & Kandawasvika-Nhundu 2013). In the context of legislated gender quotas, there may be conditions on the position of women on the electoral list, for example, the zebra list method may be used which requires the candidates on the electoral list to alternate by sex. Chen (2009) differentiated between legislated quotas mentioned above and non-legislated which is popularly known as voluntary party quota. Voluntary party quotas are adopted by political parties and are set by the parties themselves to guarantee the nomination of a certain number or proportion of women and they are the most common form of gender quota usually borne out of strong advocacy by women within the parties.

Rosen (2017) reiterated that electoral candidate quotas target candidate lists submitted by political parties and that they require the nomination of a minimum proportion of female candidates by all political parties. This differs from the reserved seats approach because it intervenes at an earlier stage of the electoral process (Rosen 2017:85). Electoral candidate quotas “are most popular in proportional representation (PR) electoral systems where political parties elect multiple candidates to national legislatures” (Rosen 2017:85). Reserved seats, similar

to electoral candidate quotas, legally bind political parties to have a proportion of seats reserved for women (Rosen 2017). The difference is that electoral candidate and political party quotas, “regulate earlier stages of the electoral process that ultimately leaves the decision to elect women to voters or political party leadership” (Rosen 2017:90). In the context of the absence of gender quota systems, Wang and Muriaas (2020) have shown that centralized decision making of electoral candidates in political parties has implications on women's representation in candidate lists. The final nomination lists of electoral candidates is affected by the composition of nominating committees as well as bargaining power female aspirants have and in many instances, financial resources often play a role in influencing who ends up in the electoral candidate list (Wang & Muriaas 2020).

Gender quotas are only as successful as the policies and the electoral laws that are implemented (Dahlerup *et al.* 2013) and thus, if the laws and policies that enforce these gender quotas are not respected by political leaders, the effectiveness of the gender quotas to promote female political leaders may be thwarted. Caul (1999), Rosen (2016) and Dahlerup *et al.* (2013) reiterated that the electoral systems of a country have implications on the success of gender quotas. The three main electoral systems used worldwide are the proportional representation system, the plurality/majority system and the mixed system (Dahlerup *et al.* 2013). The proportional representation system is based on the premise that the overall votes that a political party obtains, translates into the seats the party represents in parliament and it is also the system that is most conducive to the effectiveness of voluntary gender quotas (Dahlerup *et al.* 2013).

The plurality/majority system is based on the notion that the political party that receives the most votes during an electoral period is the winner while the mixed system electoral system uses those two kinds of electoral systems, and the elected representatives are based on the voter's choice. There are two types of mixed systems; the parallel system as well as the mixed-member proportional system (Dahlerup *et al.*

2013). The countries analysed in this research have a similar electoral system, the proportional representation system except Senegal which has a mixed electoral system. According to the International Foundation for Electoral System (2001), gender quotas are shaped by formal and informal institutions to be successful as emphasised “Informal rules play a role in either fortifying gender quotas or weakening them” (Krook 2009). As an instance, Brazil has been struggling to increase women's representation in politics despite having gender quotas (Krook 2009) and this indicates that there are other factors involved which differ across the countries that influences the achievement of gender quota targets despite differences in terms of conditions that led to that outcome. The complexity of different causal factors leading to a similar outcome from many cases requires the use of Qualitative Comparative Analysis.

Methodology

A Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) of seven countries with more than 40% of women representation in parliament have been purposively sampled using a multi-stage purposive sampling technique. Cragun *et al.* (2016) shared that the QCA was initially developed by Dr. Charles Ragin for use in small or medium sample case study research. QCA is designed for small to intermediate number of cases (around 5 to 50 or even 100) that are too small for statistical analysis but too big for qualitative case research (Sehring, Korhonen-Kurki & Brockhaus 2013). The countries sampled differ in several characteristics, for instance, their electoral systems and gender quota systems. Although their characteristics differ, their different contexts yielded high gender parity performance in parliament thus the quest to understand which configurations have led to such outcomes. George and Bennet (2005) argued, “it is difficult to perform a controlled comparison” for the purpose of yielding reliable statistical results, thus the importance of deploying other methods to arrive at an explanation of the variations in the cases. QCA studies are configuration oriented since they perceive cases as a configuration of attributes” (Rihoux 2013 cited by Thomann and Maggetti (2020:362).

Secondly, the aim of QCA is enabling systematic cross case comparison (Sehring, Korhonen- Kurki & Brockhaus 2013:2). Cases have internal complexities which QCA helps us acknowledge and those internal complexities allow complex causations and counterfactual analysis. Ragin (2000) argues that the QCA, “on each case is understood as a specific combination of factors, which are called conditions and therefore, Ragin speaks not of ‘cases’ but of ‘configurations’” (Ragin 2000:64).

A configuration is “a specific combination of factors (or stimuli, causal variables, ingredients, determinants, etc. On the other hand, the main premise of QCA is that of multiple conjunctural causation, which means that (1) most often not one factor but a combination of factors will lead to the outcome; (2) different combinations of factors can produce the same outcome; and (3) one condition can have different impacts on the outcome, depending on its combination with other factors and the context” (Rihoux 2007:367).

QCA is used to analyse the conditions that lead to high performance of efforts for gender parity in the political sphere. The heterogeneity of the countries that are being analysed is acknowledged thus the deployment of the qualitative comparative analysis of countries that have met the gender quota target. The study is characterized by comparative design which deploys intra and cross comparison of 7 non-randomly selected cases. “We can define a comparative study as a study of a limited number of cases with the purpose of studying variation by use of non-statistical designs and methods” (Bukve 2019:162). The selection of cases/configurations is determined by gender representation in terms of women in parliament. This project began with the widely accepted argument that gender quotas increase women’s representation in historically male dominated political spheres which led to seeking data on countries with the highest number of women in parliament. This was followed by an analysis of the countries that have reached the UN target of 50% women’s representation in parliament which was non-statistical. The focus involved geo-locating the countries with 50% of women in parliament and it was evident

that they were all in the global South except for New Zealand (UN Women 2023).

QCA is designed to cope with complexity and the influence of context. It is based on two assumptions: combinations of factors, rather than on any one individual factor and secondly that different combinations of factors can produce similar changes (Ragin 1984 cited by INTRAC 2017:1). Comparative case study design involves more than one case therefore more cases were sought and this led to the second category of countries that have performed above 40% and that is when the study yielded 29 cases. Bukve (2019) explained that to make a “thorough analysis of each case, a comparative analysis may probably handle a data set of 20–50 cases” (Bukve 2019:163). Although the cases focused on do not range within the 20–50 cases mark, Bukve (2019) argued that a comparison can still be made with fewer cases. There are 29 countries that have performed above the 40% and only 7 are from Africa thus the sampled configurations. The 29 countries that have achieved more than 40% of women in parliament are found in Europe (15), Africa (7), Latin America (4), Middle East (1), Oceania (1) and Asia (1) (UN Women 2023).

The elimination of non-African cases was partly shaped by the fact that all of the European countries that scored high in women's representation in parliament were all very small countries compared to the majority of African countries that scored above 40%. This analysis constituted the second level of reduction of cases to arrive at the sample of cases one is interested in. This process of elimination and primary analysis of cases constitutes a multi-stage purposive sampling strategy which aided in the justification of case selection. The first and obvious case/configuration is Rwanda because it ranks first in terms of gender parity in parliament. Rwanda is followed by South Africa, then Senegal, Namibia, Mozambique, Carbo Verde and Ethiopia. All of these configurations are heterogenous in terms of electoral systems and gender quota systems and the section that follows entails an overview of each configurations' electoral system, gender quota systems and electoral performance in terms of gender parity.

Results

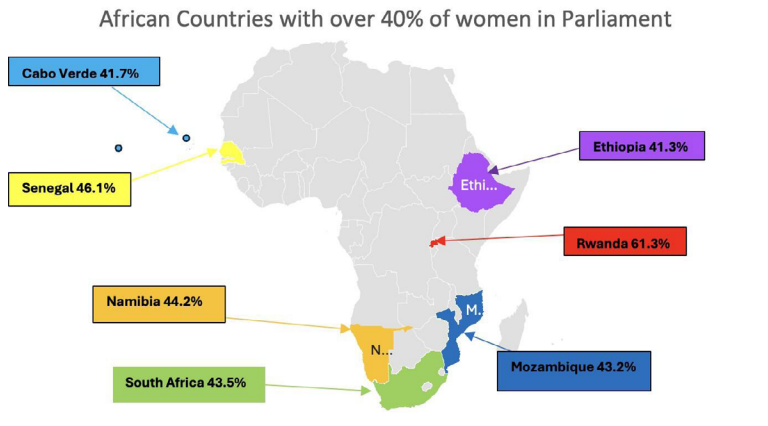


Figure 5.1: African Countries with over 40% of women in Parliament. Source: Author

Rwanda

The republic of Rwanda has a bicameral parliamentary system which consists of two chambers, namely the 80 seats chamber of deputies and the senate which is made up of 26 seats. Out of the 80 seats, women occupy 49 seats and the 2023 data shows that there are 9 women who are members of the senate (UN Women 2023). The chamber of deputies consists of elected members and 24 seats are reserved for women who have been elected by councils. The seat reservation system is also extended to the youth and a representative of the federation of the association of the disabled. Two seats go to the youth and one to the federation. It is worth noting that the current speaker of parliament is a woman (Republic of Rwanda n.d).

The ruling party in Rwanda is the Rwandan Patriotic Front and in 2003 the party introduced gender quota in its constitution, dictating that 30% of the National Executive Committee must be made up of women and they recently elected a woman to become its deputy chairperson (Xinhua 2023). The current female majority in parliament is not a first phenomenon

for Rwanda because in 2008 the chamber of deputies also had a female majority (Burnet 2019). The senate is, however dominated by men who constitute 65% of Senate. The powers of the Senate extend to the approval of appointments of state officials and the supervision of the legislative power of the president as well as the national assembly (Republic of Rwanda n.d).

The main opposition party, the Social Democratic Party/ Parti Social Democrate (PSD), which occupies 6 seats in the current electoral cycle has 2 women who are representing the party as members of parliament consequently reaching the 33% mark of women's representation. All political parties in Rwanda are mandated by law to advance 30% of women leaders in their parties (Dutta 2023) and the 2024 electoral candidate list submitted to Rwandese electoral body showed that the lists submitted had more than 40% of women candidates which is higher than the legislated quota target. In the context of this project, Rwanda ranks first in terms of the Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI) report of 2020 and it also ranked first for the sub-index of political empowerment of women with 0.563 followed by SA, Ethiopia, Namibia, Mozambique, Senegal and Cape Verde.

South Africa

The Republic of South Africa follows a bicameral system consisting of parliament and the National Council of Provinces (NCOP). Parliament ordinarily has 400 seats and the NCOP which is equivalent to the upper house, consists of 54 seats, however, in 2019, parliament announced that it had a total of 446 members of parliament, 53 from the NCOP and 393 from the National Assembly. There were 7 vacancies which included the seats of women who were listed for MPs as three female MPs had resigned that year and in 2023 two more women who were cabinet ministers also resigned from being MPs. Despite the resignations, the ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC), still met its voluntary quota of 50% of women who are deployed as MPs (Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Presidential Center for Women and Development 2024).

The ANC has a clear stance on gender parity and this has also reflected in the number of ministers the president of the country and the ruling party has appointed to cabinet. Prior to the 2024 elections, there were 14 women who are ministers out of a total of 29 ministries. This composition is 2% short of the 50% mark but the member of the Eastern Cape provincial legislature called for the legislation of the gender quota system across all members of the commonwealth (Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Presidential Center for Women and Development 2024). South Africa's voluntary quota approach makes way for non-compliance with the 50% gender quota system. The main opposition party, the Democratic Alliance (DA) does not have a gender quota policy and it only managed to send 31 women to serve as MPs compared to the 46 men serving as MPs. The DA also deployed 4 out of 13 members to represent the party at the upper house National Council of Provinces (NCOP) (Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Presidential Center for Women and Development 2024). There remains a gap between men and women when it comes to political empowerment. The sub-index shows that South Africa stands at 0.497 on the matter but does relatively better with 0.649 for economic participation and opportunities (World Economic Forum 2020). The country has also managed to close the gender gap when it comes to educational attainment for men and women.

Senegal

Once a bicameral parliamentary system, the Republic of Senegal's national legislature became unicameral after the 2012 dissolution of Senate demanded by the populace. The national assembly is made of 165 seats, some of which are designated from election outcomes from the proportional representation system as well as the plurality system's block party vote (Brayan & Baer 2005), however, Senegal is still experimenting with a suitable electoral system for the country. In the 2022 elections, the electoral body of the Republic of Senegal received a list of candidates from different political parties, coalitions and individuals. The party lists had to have 97 names for the regions and 68 names for the national list which in total made up 165 candidates for the National assembly.

The list of candidates from the parties needed to be supported by the voters before submission to the electoral body which meant that each potential candidate needed 0.8% of the registered voters to sign their candidature in order to qualify to be on a list of candidates for the national assembly (Brayan & Baer 2005). The names on the list from each political party or coalition list needed to have a 'one-female, one-male' sequence as a way of implementing the 50% gender quota and on the voting day, the voters were given several lists with candidate names and their professions. The voters directly voted for each candidate, unlike in the South African case, where the voter elects a political party then the party chooses whom to send to parliament based on its list chosen by the party and not endorsed directly by the general electorate (Brayan & Baer 2005).

The Senegalese model gives the voter an opportunity to vote based on the list of candidates that might make it to parliament, however, there are debates concerning reforming the countries' electoral system. The country initially had a pure proportional representation system, but in 1978, the electoral system changed to a parallel system and the changes have transpired two times thus affecting the plurality system implemented. It is worth noting that the candidature for the presidential election does not conform to the gender quota law and the constitutional council in 2024 published a list of 19 candidates with only one being a woman who ended up pulling out of the race which was eventually won by Ousmane Sanko. Upon assuming presidential office on the 5th of April 2024, the young president appointed a cabinet of about twenty-five ministers and five state secretaries of which only four were women. This can be attributed to his party not having firm and enforceable laws that require gender balance on public representatives (Scialoja 2024).

It should be noted that Senegal has a legislated gender quota of 50% which was achieved through the Senegalese women's movement that pushed for gender Parity Law in the National Assembly (Bojang 2024). Despite the legislated gender quota of 50% as well as the rejection of party lists that do not have 50% of female electoral candidates, the country is still

3.9% short of achieving the 50% target. This can be attributed to rules about the order of candidates on the lists which means although a party can meet the legislated gender quota target, but having the names of women candidates does not guarantee equal representation of incumbents thus the importance of the Zebra placement rule. Political empowerment is crucial for Senegal to succeed in achieving its gender parity goals. As per the data released under the 2020 Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI) report, Senegal is still far from closing the gender gap in political empowerment as well as economic opportunities and participation. The country ranks the last in this study when it comes to GGGI.

Namibia

The Republic of Namibia has a bicameral system for its legislative functions. The parliamentary system is made up of the national assembly (lower house) and the national council (upper house). Namibia's electoral system and local government legislated 30% quota for local level elections. The Local Authorities Act of 1992 and the Regional Councils Act 1992, state that Namibia has a minimum 30% requirement for women in local government. The Local Authorities Act 1992 states that

“the members of a local authority council shall be elected on party lists at a general election and each party list shall contain as candidates for such election:

a) In the case of a municipal or town council consisting of 10 or fewer members or a village council the names of at least three female persons; b) In the case of a municipal council or town council consisting of 11 or more members the names of at least five female persons” (Morna, Tolmay & Makaya 2021:57).

The inclusion of female candidates solely depends on the party's voluntary will to include more women. The country's national assembly achieved 50/50 gender equality through different political parties' voluntary and mandatory policies to include more women in leadership positions without any sanctions from

the government forcing these political parties' hand to include women (New Era 2024).

The national assembly is made up of 96 elected members, 46 of whom are women. The president appointed an additional eight non-voting members, five of whom are women. The 6th national council is however severely imbalanced, it has six women who serve as council members out of the 42 seats indirectly elected by regional councils. Similar to the South African case, Namibia does not have a legislated gender quota system but the governing party, Southwest Africa People's Organisation, (SWAPO) has its own gender quota policy introduced in 2013. The main opposition, the Popular Democratic Movement (PDM), acknowledges that to address the injustices of the past women need to be included in leadership structures, however there are no specific policies or acts that force the party to include more women in national structures. Bauer (2004) argued that the country's closed list proportional representation system coupled with voluntary gender quota has yielded increased number of women's representation in parliament.

Although there is no legislated gender quota policy in Namibia, all political parties in 2019 submitted candidate lists that had over 40% of women's representation except for two parties. One of the two parties had 35% of women on its candidate list and SWAPO's list had 51% of women candidates which can be attributed to the fact that SWAPO has a voluntary gender quota of 50% (Nyaungwa 2004). In 2023, the then president, Geingob declared a woman by the name of Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah as his successor yet after his death in 2024, a male incumbent became president. Mrs Nandi-Ndaitwah will, however, however remained the ruling party's candidate that appeared on the ballot box of the 2024 elections and won (Nyaungwa 2024). The official opposition party, the Popular Democratic Movement does not seem to have a voluntary gender quota policy in place as it only had 6 women out of its 21 members deployed to parliament as members of the National Assembly (Parliament of the Republic of Namibia n.d). Similar to the previous countries, Namibia needs to increase

its efforts to empower women politically, 0.369 achievement of the closure of the gender gap is not desirable. The country's satisfactory performance in terms of economic participation and opportunities as well as education attainment does not correlate with the dismal performance of 0.369 when it comes to political education (Parliament of the Republic of Namibia n.d).

Mozambique

The Republic of Mozambique has a unicameral legislative body consisting of 250 seats. The incumbents are elected by the electorate through the proportional representation system. Mozambique does not have a legislated gender quota system, but the Frente de Libertação de Moçambique/Mozambican Liberation Front (FRELIMO) has a 40% gender quota and by its standard, it has surpassed its target by 3.2% (GenderLinks 2019). "None of the other parties have any form of quotas in place" (GenderLinks 2019:no page). FRELIMO is the only party with a voluntary quota list and because of that, it managed to secure 73.5% of the votes in 2019. FRELIMO deployed 79 women to serve as MPs at the assembly, making women's representation 42.9%. Resistência Nacional Moçambicana/Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO) received 24% of the national vote and it managed to only deploy 25% of its candidates to the parliament (GenderLinks 2019). If Mozambique had a legislated gender quota system with a target of 50%, the combined number of votes FRELIMO, RENAMO and the Democratic Movement of Mozambique (MDM) received in the 2019 elections would have achieved gender parity in parliament. Although the constitution requires that men and women should have equal participation in all spheres of the country, there is no formal regulated quota system.

Moreover, had Mozambique's Constitutional Council approved all the presidential aspirants to run, Mozambique would have had its first woman presidential candidate but unfortunately she and two others did not meet the Constitutional Council's criteria of 10 000 signatures from supporters to qualify to run for elections (Fauvet 2024). According to the European Union Observation Mission Mozambique (2019), the national elections resulted in women occupying 41.2% in parliament and

the number grew to 43.2% in 2023. The figure is far from the 50 percent that was committed in the 2008 SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, however, the ruling party, FRELIMO, as well as the leading opposition, RENAMO, are committed to their voluntary gender quota targets of 40% and 30% respectively (Gender Links 2020). Other political parties have no official policy on women leadership or women participation in their structures, these include Mozambique as a country not having any electoral gender quota law and consequently there are no sanctions for political parties that fail to include women in their structures. The poor performance in terms of closing the gender gap for political empowerment needs intervention (World Economic Forum 2020).

Cabo Verde

The republic of Cabo Verde is an archipelago off the coast of Senegal in West Africa. Similar to Mozambique, it's legislative system follows a unicameral national system whereby the national assembly has a total of 72 seats (International Foundation for Electoral Systems 2001). Cabo Verde has a legislated gender quota target of 40% for women in political leadership and elections are held every 5 years and facilitated through the proportional representation list. The “party lists [are] presented at the municipal level. Each municipality must have at least two seats” (Fall 2012:56). Each political party contesting the elections must submit a list of candidates and the first two candidates must be of the opposite sex thereafter one in three candidates on the list must be of a different sex. Cabo Verde’s political system is a semi-presidential one where the president is directly elected by the citizens. “Cape Verde organises presidential and legislative elections simultaneously... the current electoral system favours a bipartisan system dominated by two parties...” (Fall 2012:49). During the 2021 elections, Partido Africano da independencia de Cabo Verde/the African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde (PAICV) came on top as the ruling party dominating parliament with 40 seats closely followed by the Movimento para Democracia/Movement for Democracy (MPD) which obtained 30 seats (Lansford 2023).

“Efforts are made to reflect gender balance in the devolution of duties of political governance in general and in the electoral system in particular. At all levels, women are integrated into decision-making bodies. In this regard, the constitution and electoral law provide that for legislative and municipal elections, the lists must be balanced” (Fall 2012:61).

The political parties in Cape Verde must comply with the Electoral code of 1999 which dictates 25% of women ought to be elected however this was not adhered to (Wang, Muriaas & Bauer 2021). The lack of punitive measure for lack of adherence is a problem that requires intervention because no party actively introduced measures to ensure that the code was implemented so it could qualify for a reward. However, “[w]omen activists at the time pushed for a gender quota with sanctions for non-compliance, whereas other stakeholders, predominantly male politicians, argued against quotas” (Wang *et al.* 2020:85). This demand is crucial especially in contexts where resistance to change, despite legislative measures are present. This dilemma should also serve as a lesson for advocates of gender quotas in other countries to propose sanctions for non-compliance and the strengthening of electoral institutions to enforce compliance.

Interestingly, in 2019, with just 23 percent of the women in the national assembly, the country adopted the Law on Gender Equality, that aimed at ensuring a 40 percent quota for women in the electoral lists (United Nations 2019). In 2021 the national assembly had 41.7% of women parliamentarians despite the country scoring very poorly on the 2020 Global Gender Gap Index’s gender parity in political empowerment with a sub-index of 0.163. The country is 0.275 points away to closing the gender gap according to the Global Gender Gap Index and it is doing relatively well in terms of closing the gender gap for economic participation (0.790) and education attainment (0.972) (World Economic Forum 2020).

Ethiopia

The Federal Republic of Ethiopia’s parliamentary system is called the Federal Parliamentary Assembly and in Amharic,

the national language of Ethiopia, it is የፌዴራል ፓርላማ ምክር ቤት, romanized: Ye-Fēdēralawī Parilama Mikir Bēt. Ethiopia's legislative system consists of two chambers, the House of Federation and House of People's Representative. "The House of Peoples' Representatives is the highest authority of the federal government. Members of the House of peoples' Representatives shall be elected from candidates in each electoral district by a plurality of the votes cast by the people" (House of People Representatives of the FDRE n.d). Ethiopia also follows a bicameral system made up of the House of People's Representatives (HoPR) and the House of Federation (HoR) with a total number of 547 seats (House of People Representatives of the FDRE n.d). The house of people's representatives has 195 as the number of women (Inter-parliamentary Union n.d (IPU) n.d). In the 2021 elections, there were 289 women who contested the elections out of a total of 1817 candidates which means women candidates constituted 15.91% of the candidates (Interparliamentary Union n.d). In the end Ethiopia's national assembly had 195 women who have been elected out of 470 making the current composition of women in the Federal parliament a total of 41.5% (Inter-parliamentary Union n.d).

This number can be attributed to the quota policies of the ruling party which won the 2021 elections with a majority of 448 seats. The Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Front, popularly known as the Prosperity Party, is the ruling party and it introduced the voluntary quota for its party in 2004. The party reserves 30% of the candidacies for women (Muhammed & Ayenalem 2023:4). The country exceeded its gender quota target and deployed 41.3% of women to parliament. The main opposition party, the Ethiopian Citizens for Social Justice (Ezema), formed in 2009 after a coalition of a number of political parties, has 4 seats in the House of Representatives and all of the members are men. According to the constitution, "Members of the House of the Federation shall be elected by the State Councils. The State Councils may themselves elect representatives to the House of the Federation, or they may hold elections to have the representatives elected by the people directly" (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 1995:n.p).

The former president of the Democratic Republic of Ethiopia is a woman, she was elected by the house.

Although Ethiopia has an electoral system and law that force political parties to be inclusive of women in their structures, the electoral laws lack comprehensive, clear norms, standards and strategies to ensure that women participate inclusively in all key institutions. Women participation in the national assembly is encouraged and is above the regional average of 24.1 percent, sitting at 38.8 percent, which is motivated by voluntary party gender quota. Moreover, “there are no legislated gender quotas for any level of government, and gender quotas for women’s participation and leadership in political parties are voluntary” (CEEPS 2021:5). There are no sanctions or actions taken against any political party for not introducing or having laws that are gender inclusive.

To achieve greater women’s representation in parliaments, there are other factors that are crucial, namely economic and political empowerment of women (Le & Nguyen 2021). These two factors are shaped by other interlocking factors such as education, financial resources, networks, legal barriers et cetera (Conway 2001). Education has been found to have a correlational relationship with women’s political engagement, evident in the case of Burkina Faso in the studies by Djemai and Kevane (2023). Education does not only shape women’s political behaviour, but it also increases women’s interest in running for office (Le & Nguyen 2021). Empirical data shows that the role of education in women’s political consciousness and political education specifically helps shape women’s political behavior (Fox & Lawless 2014). Fox and Lawless (2014) also noted other factors contributing to women’s lack of political ambition namely exposure to politics at a young age and parental influence. They concluded that political socialization is crucial for increasing women’s political ambitions (Fox & Lawless 2014). Compared to the earlier discussed countries, Ethiopia scored 0.427 on the political empowerment sub-index and 0.568 for women’s economic participation and opportunities. However, the country scores significantly better on reducing the gap between men and women in terms of attaining education. Compared to other

countries in this study, Ethiopia performs the least in terms of gender parity in education attainment which consequently plays a role in influencing women's political participation (World Economic Forum 2020).

QCA Analysis

In short, the above data on Rwanda, South Africa, Senegal, Namibia, Cape Verde, Ethiopia and Mozambique shows us that Rwanda has the highest number of women parliamentarians. It ranks first globally while South Africa ranks 11th globally but second in Africa followed by Senegal at 46.3% of women in parliament. Women in Namibia's parliament occupy 46 seats out of a total of 104 seats. Women in Mozambique's national assembly is over double the size of the Namibian parliament with 108 women parliamentarians ranking Mozambique fifth in the African continent and 19th globally. Carbo Verde, which is a small island country off the coast of West Africa near Senegal, ranks 6th in Africa boasting of 41.7% of women in parliament while Ethiopia has 195 women parliamentarians out of 472 parliamentarians making it rank 7th in the African continent and 25th in the world. Each of the countries that have more than 40% of women in parliament have an existing quota system but the types are different. Rwanda, Senegal and Carbo Verde have a legislated quota system and two of the countries met their target. Rwanda's performance was over double the target set out legislatively while Carbo Verde went beyond the target with just 1.7%. Mozambique and Ethiopia are also over achievers even though their quota system is different from that of Rwanda and Carbo Verde as they employ a voluntary gender quota system. Rwanda overachieved by 31.3% followed by Ethiopia which surpassed its voluntary target by 11.3% while Mozambique scored beyond its 40% target by 3.2% and Carbo Verde went beyond its target by 1.7%.

Namibia, Senegal and South Africa are the least performing in terms of reaching their targets. Namibia and South Africa do not have legislated gender quotas but their political parties, especially the ruling parties employ voluntary quotas through their ruling political parties that have 50% target. Senegal on the other hand has a legislated gender quota

policy, yet the January 2023 data shows that the country's national assembly has 76 women parliamentarians which is 46.1% of all the parliamentary seats. In the 2022 elections, Senegal needed 7 women to meet its legislated gender quota target. The difference between the countries that met their targets versus the ones that under-achieved is the target of the various countries. South Africa, Namibia and Senegal have a target of 50% women's representation in parliament while the highest performing country's target is 30% yet it over performed by 31.3%. If Ethiopia had a legislated 40%, it would still have performed over its target by 1.3%. Senegal underperformed despite having sanctions in place for non-compliance with the 50% gender quota compliance. This shows that the existence of sanctions does not deter failure to meet targets. Despite the shortfall of the Senegalese legislature to reach the 50% legislated quota target, a qualitative comparative analysis of the configuration of high gender parity performance is useful. The table below provides us with a presentation of conditions necessary for countries to achieve gender quota targets they gender parity or at least perform relatively well.

Fuzzy Set, the large dot constitutes indicates a perfect score of 1 which signifies a strong or great presence of the factor. Factors that were equated with 1 are legislated quotas, 50% quota targets in each case, ruling parties with voluntary quotas of 50%, official opposition parties with 50% gender quota targets, the presence of laws that sanction non-compliance, an electoral system characterized by proportional representation and a score of between 1 and 0.750 for economic participation, education attainment and political education have also been equated with a big dot ●.

○ The following factors were equated with a donut symbol because they were not perfect conditions but remain significantly influential hence the scoring of 0.66. The factors that were calibrated to equate 0.66, symbolized by a donut, are as follows: the existence of reserved seats for women in parliament, a ruling party with 40% gender quota target and for the official opposition, 40% gender quota target attained the same weight. Other factors that were equated with the

donut/0.66 are countries which scored between 0.749 and 0.500 for the global gender parity index's sub-indexes, namely the political empowerment sub-index, economic participation and opportunity sub-index and education attainment sub-index. The smallest dot indicates the presence of a condition, but it is not as strong compared to the factors that scored 1. The factors in this category that scored 0.33 were voluntary quota, quota targets of 30% for the ruling parties and the official opposition. In terms of the sub-indexes, a score between 0.499 and 0.250 are also represented by a small dot .

The absence of quotas, targets, sanctions, any other electoral system as well as poor performance of below 0.250 when it comes to political empowerment, educational attainment and economic participation and opportunities were scored 0 which is represented with \emptyset .

Below is a table that captures the fuzzy set qualitative comparative analysis. The LQ (Legislated Quota), LQT (Legislated Quota Target), RPQT (Ruling Party Quota Target of), OOQT (Opposition Party Quota Target), S (Sanctions), PRES (Proportional Representation), EcoP (Economic Participation), EduA (Education Attainment), PoIE (Political Empowerment) represent conditions and the AT (Achievement of Target) represents the outcome.

Case	LQ	LQT	RPQT	OOQT	S	PRES	EcoP	EduA	PoIE	AT
RW	●	·	·	·	\emptyset	●	⊙	●	⊙	●
MZ	·	\emptyset	⊙	·	\emptyset	●	⊙	●	·	●
CV	●	⊙	⊙	⊙	●	●	●	●	\emptyset	●
ET	·	\emptyset	·	\emptyset	\emptyset	●	⊙	●	·	●
SN	●	●	●	●	●	●	⊙	●	·	\emptyset
NA	·	\emptyset	●	\emptyset	\emptyset	●	●	●	·	\emptyset
ZA	·	\emptyset	●	\emptyset	\emptyset	●	⊙	●	·	\emptyset

Figure 5.2: The fuzzy set qualitative comparative analysis.
Source: Author

There are seven African countries that have achieved more than 40% of women's representation in parliament, out of that number, only four countries have reached their quota targets, namely Rwanda (RW), Mozambique (MZ), Cabo Verde (CV) and Ethiopia (ET). These countries have different gender quotas, two of them are legislated and the targets differ, namely 30% for RW and 40% for CV and the other two have voluntary quotas of 30% but managed to deploy 40% women to parliament. Although Rwanda has 30% legislated quota, the political party candidate lists has more than 40% of women electoral candidates. Thus the 40% threshold is critical for maximizing the chances of the deployment of women to parliament. The cross comparison of the four countries that achieved their targets shows that a proportional representative electoral system (PRES) and Education attainment (EduA) are factors that are crucial for the achievement of the target but are not sufficient to achieve gender quota targets. This is corroborated by the presence of the same PRES and EduA conditions in Senegal (SN), Namibia (NA) and South Africa (ZA) which fell short of meeting their own gender quota targets.

It is useful to note though that the latter three countries have a 50% gender quota targets unlike the other four countries mentioned earlier, nevertheless, Rwanda with its 30% gender quota, managed to deploy more than 60% of women in parliament thus the importance of analysing the conditions that lead to achievement of set targets. In Rwanda, the configuration of Legislated Quotas (LQ) + Proportional Representation Electoral System (PRES), Educational Attainment (EduA) coupled with reduction of gender gaps for political empowerment and economic participation and opportunities, albeit not strong factors, constitute a crucial configuration to achieve gender parity and more. Studies have consistently shown that gender quotas have a positive impact on engendering national legislatures. Matlosa (2008) averred that electoral reform is crucial in ensuring gender equality in the electoral sphere and found that the proportional representation electoral system does a play a role in increasing the number of women in

public leadership. The role of education in enhancing women's participation in decision making remains significant.

Based on Rwanda's performance, it is evident that a configuration of a proportional representative electoral system (PRES), education (EduA), a ruling party that nominates 40% of women electoral candidates (RPQT40) including a 40% quota target (QT40), whether legislated, soft or voluntary serve as a strong combination of factors that create favourable conditions for gender parity in the political sphere. However, two cases (MZ and ET) in the data table shows us that a proportional representation electoral system as well as relative closure of the gender educational opportunity gap are the most influential conditions for the achievement of set quota targets as these conditions exist in all the countries that have attained their gender parity target for women in parliament. A combination of PRES and EduA alone, however, are insufficient thus they need to be anchored by the presence of a voluntary quota target of at least 30% for ruling parties and women's economic participation and opportunities.

The reason for the argument of insufficiency for exclusive PRES + EduA is due to the fact that all of the cases in the study have PRES and have scored well in terms of the reduction of the gender gap in educational attainment and opportunities, yet those countries did not reach their own country targets. Senegal is a good example that the presence of all necessary conditions for a country to achieve its gender quota target do not guarantee achievement of set targets. Senegal has legislated gender quota of 50% which applies to all political parties. The electoral body of Senegal has sanctions in place for political parties that fail to submit electoral candidate lists with 50% of female candidates and similar to all the other cases, Senegal is also doing relatively well in terms of women's education attainment but Senegal still failed to meet its 50% legislated gender quota target. The reason for this lies in the order of the candidates on the lists submitted to the country's electoral body. This means that the electoral lists have 50% of women candidates but because the country's electoral body does not have a zebra gender rule pertaining to

candidate listing, male candidates tend to dominate the top tier of electoral lists.

A configuration of a quota system, PRES + EduA + RPQT₄₀ + EcoP serve as the most effective configuration for the achievement of at least 40% women's representation in parliament. It is however crucial to aim for gender parity and efforts to achieve parity can also be influenced by the role of the official opposition parties. For instance, South Africa has PRES+ EduA+ RPQT of 50% + voluntary quota target of 50% and EcoP* but it backtracked on its gender parity performance during its 2024 elections instead of increasing. The country did achieve gender parity in the 2019 elections, but the ranking dropped after a number of its female MPs resigned. The country's latest gender quota performance can be attributed to the fact that the ruling party, the African National Congress ceased being the majority party in the 2024 electoral cycle and the second largest party in South Africa, the Democratic Alliance with 55 seats in parliament, does not have a gender quota policy. The ANC deployed 78 women making its female MPs account 53% of ANC parliamentarians versus the 37% of female MPs from the DA.

Despite the ANC having more women to parliament, the lack of gender quotas for the major opposition parties has affected the country's gender parity performance. This highlights the importance and impact of a legislated gender quota system. Countries such as South Africa should consider legislating gender quotas to ensure that political parties have a certain proportion of women candidates on their electoral lists which should be coupled with clear rules regarding the gendered order of candidates on electoral lists. Although other factors have been calibrated in a way that suggests inadequate condition compared to ideal conditions described earlier and symbolized as a big dot, all factors are crucial in attaining gender parity. This means that even though Ethiopia managed to overachieve its 30% gender quota target by having over 40% of women representatives in parliament, for the country to achieve gender parity of 50%, it must work to improve on all the factors that constitute a configuration that leads to gender parity in politics. Of course, QCA "is a non-additive and non-linear method that

emphasizes diversity, acknowledging that different paths can lead to the same outcome” (Tian, Liu & Zhang 2023:5). This is evidenced by the results in the data thus whatever factors are combined, the achievement of 50% of women in parliament will require strong configurations mentioned earlier.

Another consideration that could fast track the achievement of gender parity in politics is the suggestion of gender quotas for men. This involves curbing the overrepresentation of men in leadership. Weeks (2018) averred that male elites have, in most cases, been the ones who ratify the adoption of gender quotas thus, it should not be too difficult for men to adopt gender quotas for men aimed at capping the number of men in the helm of the political sphere.

Conclusion

This chapter sought to provide an analysis of conditions that are necessary for the achievement of gender parity in politics. The chapter analysed seven African countries that managed to deploy over 40% of women politicians to parliament. The analytical approach used was a fuzzy set Qualitative Comparative Analysis to assess complex cases that could not be simplistically explained with a single causation factor. The chapter compared cases which achieved its set target vs the cases that did not regardless of all having reached a target of over forty percent. The analysis revealed that a combination of a gender quota system, proportional representative electoral system, a quota target of over 40% for women candidates, educational attainment and economic empowerment increases the chances of achieving gender parity in politics. Although education has proven to have correlational relationship with political participation, lack of formal higher education has not been a barrier to the deployment of parliamentarians or even the cabinet in South Africa. In 2018, the Mail & Guardian reported that the official opposition party’s chief whip, the then minister of energy and the minister of human settlements only had high school education. The chapter has also shown that countries can achieve their own gender quota targets, whether they are 30% or 40%, through different combinations. For instance, education and an electoral

system constitute a configuration that can yield positive results. A combination of an electoral system that is characterized by proportional representation, ruling party quota targets of 40% and the same for the official opposition, closing the gender gap for education, economic participation and economic empowerment are necessary conditions to achieve 50% for women in parliament. Electoral systems also have an influential role in enhancing women's political participation, but this chapter has discussed the cluster of characteristics that shape women's representation in parliament. The factors discussed in this chapter do not specifically focus on the magnitude of the constituencies and districts women candidates come from, it also falls short in focusing on the magnitude of the political parties as these have also been found to have a determining factor by Hinojosa, Kittilson and Williams (2021).

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Gender and Feminist Meditations

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