
Party Governance Structure and Women Participation in Political Processes in Pakwach District Local Government, Uganda

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Abstract

The study examined the relationship between party governance structure and women participation in political processes in Pakwach District Local Government, Uganda. The study employed a descriptive survey research design based on quantitative and qualitative research approaches. A total of 381 people involved in party governance structure and political processes in Pakwach District Local Government from which a sample was selected; a sample size of 195 respondents was selected to participate in the study. The respondents were selected using stratified and simple random sampling procedures. A quantitative data/surveys /questionnaires were administered to a sample of women involved in the political process; and interviews conducted with key informants, including women political leaders, party officials, community members and CSOs. A total of 195 questionnaires were sent out and all were returned (100%). The study concluded that there is a moderate significant relationship between party governance structure and women participation in political processes at Pakwach District Local Government as such the current party government structures give opportunity for women to participate in political process. Therefore, it was recommended that the current party government structures should be further strengthened to give opportunity for women to participate in political process.

Keywords: Multiparty system, women participation, political processes.

Introduction

Women's political participation is a key aspect of democratic governance and social progress UN reports (2020). It serves as a barometer for measuring inclusivity and gender equality in a nation's political landscape (Sharon et al., 2023). In Uganda, as in many other countries around the world, women's participation in the political process has been a matter of concern, particularly in the context of the IPU's Multiparty Politics (2020) reports. Uganda has therefore put in place measures to promote women's political participation, including constitutional provisions, gender quotas and affirmative action policies. However, there remains a gap between policy implementation and the actual representation and involvement of women in the political arena. By examining the experiences and perspectives of women in Pakwach District Local Government, this research seeks to shed light on factors that contribute to the current state of women's participation and identify potential strategies for improvement (Ntirandekura et al., 2022). According to Kate Millett (1970), an American feminist writer and activist in her book on "Sexual Politics", a woman refers to "an adult female human being". Therefore, women's participation in the multi-party political process is an important indicator of gender equality and democracy in any society. However, the level of women's participation in Uganda's multiparty political system remains an area of concern. This research focuses on Pakwach District Local Government, a region in Uganda, to examine the relationship between the multi-

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party system and women's participation in political processes and to identify potential strategies to enhance their participation. The study examined the structure of party governance and women's participation in political processes in Uganda, taking the case study of Pakwach District Local Government. In this study, party governance structure was perceived as the independent variable and women's participation was perceived as the dependent variable. Party governance structure was measured by party structure and engagement, internal democracy and transparency, while women's participation was measured by electoral participation, proportion of women competing for leadership positions, equal leadership opportunities, proportion of electoral seats held by women and leadership positions held by women.

Statement of the problem

Despite the existence of a multi-stakeholder framework, women's participation in Pakwach District Local Government in Uganda remains significantly low (Clerk to Council, 2023). This poses a critical problem as it prevents the achievement of gender equality, undermines democratic representation and limits the potential contribution of women in local decision-making processes. According to ULGA (2023) data published on their website (www.ulga.go.ug) regarding LCVs across the country shows that out of 146 districts in Uganda, there are only 07 female district chairmen and 139 male district chairmen. However, these figures show the differences that exist between men and women in the multi-party-political process in Pakwach District Local Government, and even when taken in relative terms, such under-representation of women at various levels of governance results in a democratic deficit (UN WOMEN, 2018). It is against this backdrop that the study was compelled to explore and provide evidence-based insights that can inform policymakers, government agencies and development partners in designing and implementing gender-responsive strategies to improve women's representation and active participation in the political process. in Pakwach District Local Government, Uganda (Zowena et al., 2023).

Objective

To examine the relationship between party governance structure and women participation in political processes at Pakwach District Local Government;

Hypothesis

Party governance structure is significantly related to women participation in political processes at Pakwach District Local Government.

Methodology

The researcher used a descriptive survey research design based on quantitative and qualitative research approaches. The reason of choosing this design was that, the researcher focused on the links among a smaller number of attributes across a sample of cases depending on the resources available and the size of the target population. The researcher quantified social phenomena particularly issues conducted and problems that are prevalent in the society. The researcher collected the information that can describe and help the researcher in understanding social life. The design was based on both qualitative and quantitative approaches where data collection is done based on questionnaires and interview guides. This is intended to explore more detailed information and the aspects which

remain unrevealed during quantitative analysis, qualitative data was collected. This data/information was collected through key informant interviews technique. It is a useful technique which provides more useful and in-depth knowledge in less time and limited cost. The study populations included a total of 381 people involved in multiparty political process in Pakwach District Local Government from which a sample was selected.

The sample size was determined using appropriate statistical calculations, considering the population size of women involved in the political process in Pakwach District Local Government. In summary, the method for determining the sample was purposively selected by the researcher and was determined by the number of respondents from each category.

The Slovene's formula used to determine minimum sample size

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Na^2}$$

Where, N= Total Population

n=sample size

a= correlation coefficient 0.05)

$$n = \frac{381}{1 + 381(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{381}{1.9525}$$

$$n = 195$$

Therefore, a sample of 195 respondents was selected to participate in the study. Therefore, data was analyzed inform of tables, frequencies and percentages using SPSS & STATA (Nelson et al., 2022).

Results

Table 1: Pearson product moment correlation between Party Governance Structure and Women participation in political process.

Variables Computed index		Party Governance Structure	Women participation in political process
Party Governance Structure	Pearson Correlation	1	.499**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	179	175
Women participation in political process	Pearson Correlation	.499**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	175	191

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

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Results in Table above show the Pearson product moment correlation was applied to establish the relationship between Party Governance Structure and Women participation in political process and the results indicate that the two variables have a statistically positive moderate and significant relationship ($r=.499^{**}$ $p<0.000$) (Nelson et al., The

Women participation in Political processes at Pakwach District Local Government		SD	D	NS	A	SA	TOTAL
Women participate in voting of electoral positions	F	2	1	9	55	125	192
	%	1	0.5	4.6	28.2	64.1	98.4
Majority of candidates that vied for leadership positions were women	F	27	72	43	35	16	193
	%	13.8	36.9	22.1	17.9	8.2	99
There exist equal opportunities of political leadership for women in Pakwach District	F	30	47	15	68	32	192
	%	15.4	24.1	7.7	34.9	16.4	98.5
Senior position in political offices are held by women in Pakwach District	F	59	54	26	35	19	193
	%	30.3	27.7	13.3	17.9	9.7	99
High proportion of electoral seats are held by Women in Pakwach District	F	53	64	23	29	24	193
	%	27.2	32.8	11.8	14.9	12.3	99

well stipulated and adherence to party governance structure more increased Women participation in political process

Table 2 above: Results on Women participation in Political processes at Pakwach District Local Government

2023)

Results in Table above show that majority (92.3%) of the respondents were in agreement that Women participate in voting of electoral positions, 1.5% were in disagreement while 4.6% were not sure. This implies that majority agree that women participate in voting of electoral positions. Majority (50.7%) of the respondents were in disagreement that Majority of candidates that vied for leadership positions were women, 26.1% were in agreement while 22.1% were tot sure. This implies that Majority of candidates that vied for leadership positions were women.

Overwhelming majority (51.3%) of the respondents were in agreement there exist equal opportunities of political leadership for women in Pakwach District, 7.7% were not sure while 39.5% were in a disagreement. This implies that majority of the respondents agreed that there exist equal opportunities of political leadership for women in Pakwach District. Overwhelming majority (58%) were in disagreement that Senior position in political offices are held by women in Pakwach District, 27.6% were in agreement while 13.3% were not sure. This therefore implies that most senior positions in political offices are not held by women in Pakwach District. Majority (60%) of the respondents were in disagreement that High proportion of electoral seats are held by Women in Pakwach District,

27.2% were in agreement while 11.8% were not sure. This means that High proportions of electoral seats are not held by Women in Pakwach District.

Discussion of Findings

There is a moderate significant relationship between party governance structure and women participation in political processes at Pakwach District Local Government as such current party government structures give opportunity for women to participate in political process. For instance, Kabeer (2001) argues that the internal organizational structures of political parties can either facilitate or hinder women's participation (District et al., 2023). Accordingly, Tripp (2010) highlights the importance of party rules and regulations in promoting gender equality in political parties. She asserts that internal party guidelines and mechanisms that promote women's inclusion, such as gender quotas, can significantly increase women's participation in local government politics.

This therefore implies that the existing party legal and Regulatory frameworks support women participation in political process. Similarly, results reveal that majority 76.9% of the respondents were in agreement that there are women affirmative action policies implemented in political parties, 5.1% were in disagreement while only 16.4% were not sure. This implies that the three are women affirmative action policies implemented in political parties since majority agreed. Overwhelming majority (56.4%) were in agreement that the Political parties place women candidates in more promising party list positions than others, (24.6%) were in disagreement that Political parties place women candidates in more promising party list positions than others and (17.4%) were Not sure. This means that Political parties place women candidates in more promising party list positions than others. Majority (71.8%) were in agreement that Political parties have structures that favor women participation in political processes, while (9.8%) were in disagreement and only (16.9%) were Not sure. This implies that Political parties have structures that favor women participation in political processes. Simple majority (66.7%) were in agreement Political parties practice internal democracy, 15.3% were in disagreement while 17.4% were NOT Sure. This implies that Political parties practice internal democracy. Simple majority (56.9%) were in agreement that Political parties have transparent nomination procedures that offer the best prospects for women to emerge as candidates, 22% were in disagreement while 20.5% were Not sure. Simple majority (62.6%) were in agreement that Political party laws have provisions aimed specifically at enhancing women 's political participation, 13.3% were in disagreement while 23.6% were Not sure. This means that Political party laws have provisions aimed specifically at enhancing women's political participation.

Majority (65.1%) were in agreement that Political parties declare equal rights and opportunities for women and elder members to participate in politics, 16.4% were in disagreement while 18.5% were Not sure. This implies that agreement that Political parties declare equal rights and opportunities for women and elder members to participate in politics.

Majority (69.2%) were in agreement that Party policy documents provide platforms for women to participate in political processes, 9.5% were in disagreement while 20% were Not sure. This implies that agreement that Party policy documents provide platforms for women to participate in political processes.

Simple majority (65.6%) were in agreement that Political parties' policies reflect women interests, 19% were Not sure while 14.3% were in disagreement. This implies that Political parties' policy reflect women interests.

Majority (61.5%) were in agreement that Party manifesto ensure women representation in key party bodies, 16.4% were in disagreement while 21% were Not sure. This implies that agreement Party manifesto ensure women representation in key party bodies.

Lastly on investigating if Party manifestos prioritize policies that are relevant to women; 61.5% were in agreement, 21% were NOT Sure, and 16.9% were in disagreement.

Conclusions

The study concluded that that majority of the respondents were in agreement that the existing party legal and Regulatory frameworks support women participation in political process, women affirmative action policies implemented in political parties since majority agreed, Political parties place women candidates in more promising party list positions than others, and have structures that favor women participation in political processes as well practice internal democracy; Arguably that Political parties have transparent nomination procedures that offer the best prospects for women to emerge as candidates.

Furthermore that Political party laws have provisions aimed specifically at enhancing women's political participation, Political parties declare equal rights and opportunities for women and elder members to participate in politics, party policy documents provide platforms for women to participate in political processes, Political parties policies reflect women interests, Party manifesto ensure women representation in key party bodies and that Party manifestos prioritize policies that are relevant to women.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion, it was recommended that since there is a moderate significant relationship between party governance structure and women participation in political processes at Pakwach District Local Government as such current party government structures should be further strengthened to give opportunity for women to participate in political process.

Secondly, affirmative action should be implemented by political parties with maximum efforts in order to encourage more women from participating in the political processes in Uganda.

Lastly, transparency in nominations should be strengthened to encourage more women to participate because this will help them to build more confidence in their political parties.

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