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**Gender Quotas and the Substantive Representation of Women in African Politics:  
Case Studies of Botswana and South Africa.**

**By**

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**A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
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in the Department of Political Sciences, Faculty of Humanities,  
University of Pretoria.**

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## **DECLARATION**

I, Zainab Monisola Olaitan declare that this thesis titled ‘Gender Quotas and the Substantive Representation of Women in African Politics: Case studies of Botswana and South Africa’ is my work and has not been submitted for a degree at another university or institution. All citations, quotations, references and ideas have been duly acknowledged.

Zainab Monisola Olaitan.

## **Abstract**

The global adoption of gender quotas to facilitate women's participation in the political system has garnered attention beyond its initial objective. Although divided, most studies argue that the objective of quota to ensure the participation of women in politics has been achieved. While the other spectrum of the divide notes that for quotas to be deemed effective, they must contribute to transforming the political agenda. The transformation of the agenda must be such that the interests of women are duly protected within decision-making structures. This notion finds expression in the assumption that an increased number of women in politics (descriptive women's representation) will foster the protection of women's interests (substantive women's representation). Therefore, this study examined the relevance of gender quotas beyond its initial goal of mainstreaming women into politics into how it enables the substantive representation of women in African politics. Using South Africa and Botswana, two countries with different percentages of female Members of Parliament (MPs), this study embarked on a multiple case study analysis to interrogate how the presence of women in parliament influences legislative and policy outcomes on gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF).

The study employed a qualitative methodology as its approach of enquiry, a multiple case study as its research design, semi-structured interviews and legislative/policy outcomes on GBVF as its methods of data collection. Interpretative phenomenological analysis and thematic analysis were used as the two analytical frameworks to answer the research questions on the relationship between numbers and impact. The theory of the politics of presence and relational feminism were selected to provide theoretical foundation for the arguments made in the study; specifically, why it is necessary for women to represent women and how their presence creates impact.

The study found that the adoption of gender quotas by some political parties in South Africa especially the African National Congress significantly increased the number of women in parliament, but that Botswana is struggling in this regard. Due to their numbers in parliament, female MPs in Botswana and South Africa were able to form alliances to influence legislations and policies passed on GBVF. The study also discovered that there is a disconnect between the perception of impact by female MPs and women working in civil society organisations. In light of this, the study recommends that awareness should be created on the work that female MPs do in parliament to keep women updated on how their interests are being protected. Secondly, it

recommends that the governing party in Botswana should adopt a quota system to significantly boost women's representation in parliament, which further impacts the holistic representation of women in the country. And lastly, it suggests that other measures be implemented to reduce the burden on female MPs to ensure the substantive representation of women. This will allow for women's interests to be included in the larger political agenda and be advocated for by all parliamentarians.

**Keywords:** African politics, Botswana, descriptive representation, gender quotas, impact, numbers, South Africa, substantive representation.

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to 16-year-old Zainab who had the courage to rise above her trauma to dream of a future where she is able to contribute to knowledge production in order to drive positive change and make the world a safer place for young girls and women.

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## **List of Abbreviations and Acronyms**

ACDP	African Christian Democratic Party
ANC	African National Congress
AU	African Union
BCP	Botswana Congress Party
BDP	Botswana Democratic Party
BNF	Botswana National Front
BPfA	Beijing Platform for Action
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
DA	Democratic Alliance
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
EFF	Economic Freedom Fighters
FPTP	First-past-the-post
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GBVF	Gender-based violence and femicide
IDEA	Institute for Democracy & Electoral Assistance
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
IPA	Interpretative phenomenological analysis
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
MMP	Mixed Member Proportional
MP	Member of Parliament
NGO	Non-governmental organisations
PR	Proportional representation



SADC Southern African Development Community

SONA State of the Nation Address

UN United Nations.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of Study

The widespread adoption of gender quotas to mainstream women into politics is one of the most significant “political developments of the modern era” (O’Brien & Rickne 2016:112). This is because enhancing women’s increased representation in politics is a top priority for governments and international feminist movements (Mansbridge 2005). Dahlerup (2006a) notes that while political parties in some countries adopted gender quotas on their own, many countries embarked on constitutional amendments as well as the passing of new electoral laws that motivated for women to make up a specified proportion of candidates for election in the national parliament. Krook (2006:113) attests that either as part of their mandate or in reaction to external pressure, political parties have enforced quotas to facilitate women’s participation into their national parliament. Dahlerup and Freidenvall (2005) argue that this sudden and widespread implementation of gender quotas has been labelled the ‘fast track’ to balanced gender participation in politics. Schwindt-Bayer (2007:289) adds that the adoption of gender quotas “raises both normative and empirical questions”, such as whether quotas are needed, the rationale for their adoption, and their effectiveness around the world. Works have also been written on the effectiveness of gender quotas in facilitating women’s parliamentary participation in the Global South. Dahlerup (2005:9) asserts that countries such as Rwanda, South Africa and Costa Rica are beginning to challenge the record for increased representation of women formerly held by Scandinavian countries. Indeed, quotas have been instrumental in mainstreaming women into politics globally, and Africa has not been left behind. Even though the situation is not the same across the continent because some countries do not have a quota system in place (International Institute for Democracy & Electoral Assistance [IDEA] 2021). This provides justifiable ground to state that in recent years, gender quotas have gained prominence as a widely accepted mechanism to correct the low participation of women in politics (Krook 2006:110).

Mansbridge (2005:622) argues that increased women’s participation in politics cannot be achieved without the adoption of gender quotas, and as a result, quotas contribute significantly to improving gender equality in democracies. Dahlerup (2008:322) notes that because quotas revolve around

issues of gender representation and feminist theory, they became an important research subject. Studies dedicated to understanding the implementation of quotas often highlight the significance of international pressure in pushing for equal gender representation in politics. Pande and Ford (2011) highlight that the first of such noted pressure is the setting of 30% target for women's political participation by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 1990, which was in response to rising civil society calls for practical measures to increase women's political participation. Notably, the UN Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) Women's Conference in 1995 provided credibility for quota calls advocated by women movements around the world. Pande and Ford (2011) note further that the 1995 BPfA Women's Conference strongly motivated the adoption of quotas by enjoining governments to foster women's participation across all decision-making structures. As a result, Baldez (2006:104) states that given that quotas come from outside the political system, with the endorsement of modern democracies and the approval of the international community, "quotas provide a sort of exogenous shock" that significantly influences the system.

Gender quotas should, in theory, redistribute power and acknowledge that the underrepresentation of women is a concern for democracy. However, researchers and feminist movements have been critical of the implementation of quotas in Africa because all too often actual political strategies are condensed into a single demand for gender quotas. This stems from the misconception that a singular mechanism is required to substantiate the ability of women to influence national and political agendas on the continent. This misconception is responsible for the swift adoption of gender quotas in Africa, and as a result, there has been widespread adoption of different types of quotas on the continent. Dahlerup (2006a) notes that South Africa, following its first democratic elections in 1994, is one of the first countries in Africa to adopt the voluntary party quotas. Although Uganda implemented reserved seats as far back as 1986, which other countries such as Sudan, Djibouti, Somalia, and Eritrea have since adopted. A pertinent feature of quota adoption in Africa is that they have frequently been implemented in post-conflict settings due to the ease in setting up new constitutions that include gender representation as part of the transition process. Sometimes, authoritarian governments employ quotas to facilitate women's political participation to improve their reputation. Additionally, the fact that women are beginning to clamour for inclusion in decision-making spheres beyond their traditional roles as mothers and wives as in the cases of South Africa and Senegal contributed to the implementation of quotas on the continent.

Pande and Ford (2011) assert that of the different types of quotas, reserved seats are the most adopted because compared to others, they guarantee the election or appointment of women in positions of power. By virtue of this assurance, they have been the most effective in ensuring increased women's participation in politics. In spite of this assured path, some countries set the target for gender representation below the recommended 30% goal, thereby limiting the extent to which women's political participation can be improved in comparison to countries with higher targets. A case in point is Niger and Djibouti, they both set their reserved seats target below 20%, which does not bid well for increased women's representation. However, Eritrea, Uganda, and Burundi have more than 30% of their seats reserved for women, which has significantly increased women's participation in leadership positions. We cannot entirely argue that the increased level of women's political participation is solely due to quotas, but we can deduce that quotas have been instrumental in facilitating the increase. The effectiveness of gender quotas is better demonstrated when one examines countries with more than 30% women's representation; for example, countries such as Rwanda, Sweden, and South Africa adopted gender quotas to ensure the inclusion of women in their national legislatures (Inter-Parliamentary Union [IPU] 2022).

In exploring the effectiveness of quotas as a pathway to increasing women's presence in legislatures, scholars such as Paxton *et al.* (2010), Jones (2009), Krook (2009) note that there is an increasing interest in their broader consequences beyond ensuring descriptive women's representation. Mansbridge (2005:622) argues that quotas guarantee women's descriptive representation because "descriptive representation is important and necessary for the protection of the interests of descriptively represented groups in the society". The focus on this relationship stems from the assumption that by virtue of gender quotas facilitating women's increased participation in politics, their inclusion in the political sphere will translate to better living conditions for women, which means that women's political participation is expected to result in putting women's issues on the decision-making table and change for the better (Childs & Krook 2009). This is a major reason Phillips (1995) argues that quotas should not just seek to increase the number of women in politics but also work to influence the political agenda and the system at large. It has been suggested that because women have different experiences than men, female politicians should make a special contribution in politics and push for reforms that benefit women as a group (Schwindt-Bayer 2010). As a consequence, gender quotas provide opportunities to generate a mandate effect in which women elected through a quota mechanism are obliged to

represent women substantively (Franceschet & Piscopo 2008). Zetterberg (2013) confirms that quotas impact political institutions regardless of the structural framework in which they are established because of their transformative nature. These assumptions are a function of the equation that numbers equal impact. In this case, it means that descriptive women's representation necessarily leads to substantive women's representation. This is not to argue that quotas have not been helpful in ensuring some form of representation for women, but that there is a need to look beyond quantity to quality. There is a need to interrogate the relevance of quotas not just as a means to ensure women's descriptive representation in politics but also how it enables the substantive representation of women in Africa.

Unlike descriptive representation, substantive representation is much broader than numbers. It entails establishing an enabling environment for female politicians to work under to achieve policy and legislative outcomes that favour women and society in general. This includes advancing women's rights, introducing women-friendly policies, and reducing the rate of gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF). Particularly looking at the problem of GBVF, the argument concerning the effectiveness of quotas in Africa must focus on how the entry of women into politics translates to the introduction of legislations and policy to address the growth of this problem. This is in consideration of the fact that GBVF is now recognised as a crucially important dimension of wider gender inequalities and gendered power relations in all societies of the world (McIlwaine 2013:65). However, it is acknowledged that all violence is inherently gendered, and that men can be victims as well as perpetrators of violence (Cockburn 2001). Although women and men experience violence and conflict in different ways, as victims and as perpetrators, and for different reasons (Moser and McIlwaine 2001), the focus is often on women because of the high percentage of women affected compared to men.

Miller (2008) examines how rising female suffrage in the United States contributed to increased spending on sexual reproductive healthcare, demonstrating that men and women have different policy preferences. Besley and Coate (1997) argue that the preferences of policy makers are often reflected in the type of policies implemented. Accordingly, a dearth of female leadership results in the direct underrepresentation of women's interests in decision-making structures. Improved representation of women's policy interests can be achieved by using quotas to increase the number of women in political positions. Gender quotas can be deemed democratic to the extent that they make candidate nominations more inclusive by necessitating the involvement of women.

While we celebrate the increase in the number of women elected, there is need to consider the bigger issue: the representation of women's interests. The importance of gender quotas must be understood in the perspective of the larger political environment. Despite different normative contexts offering different opportunities and restrictions for quota adoption and implementation (Krook *et al.* 2008), a few normative issues permeate almost all quota campaigns and are voiced by both proponents and opponents of quota reform. The most obvious criticism is that women who are elected using quotas might not work to modify policies that discriminate against women. The fact that these measures are gender quotas that seek only to increase the number of women in political decision-making, separate from any obligations to change policy outcomes, is overlooked even though this point speaks to a great deal of research on the relationship between the descriptive and substantive representation of women. Mansbridge (2005) poses a strong case against quotas by arguing that it is almost inevitable that they will increase essentialist attitudes. These essentialist attitudes make it difficult for people to approach their identities flexibly and performatively, perpetuate stereotypes, and entrap group members in the customary perceptions of the group. Such essentialist attitudes, for instance, are demonstrated in the claim that men cannot adequately represent women and the implication that women cannot adequately represent men. The idea that only women can speak for other women implies that any woman can speak for all women.

Based on the foregoing, this study sought to investigate the utility of gender quotas as a means to ensure the substantive representation of women in Africa. Specifically, it explored how quotas impact legislative and policy outcomes on GBVF in two case studies (Botswana and South Africa) in Africa. Both countries have a gender quota system in place: South Africa has a very high presence of women in its parliament at 46% and Botswana has 11% of its legislative seats occupied by women, tilting towards low presence of women. Similarly, there is a high rate of GBVF in both South Africa (Saferspaces 2020) and in Botswana (Chiramba *et al.* 2018). These variables helped create grounds to argue whether high numbers of women in parliament is necessary to create impact.

## **1.2 Research Problem**

Gender quotas have been seen as the golden ticket to ensure women are represented in the political space, and more than 100 countries have already implemented them. Dahlerup (2006a) substantiates this by asserting that the adoption of gender quotas represents a significant shift

towards a precise strategy with ends and means. The potential for an increase in women's representation is heightened when quotas are used. With this strong faith in the efficiency of quotas to ensure women's political participation, the questions become to what extent can quotas ensure representation of women and whether it is only by increasing the number of women in politics or does it also foster a better quality of life for the general women populace. Schwindt-Bayer (2009) argues that while quotas effectively increase women's numeric representation, the longer impact of quotas, particularly if they influence the operations of institutions, are still up for debate. Barnes and Holman (2020) assert that quotas redefine the political system by reshaping the legislature descriptively and parties' perceptions of an ideal candidate.

The debates over the relevance of quotas have resulted in gender quotas being "perhaps the most radical and intensely debated reform in the area of gender equality" (Zetterberg 2009:715). Some proponents argue that the general objective of quotas, which is to enhance women's political participation, has been achieved, and others contend that in order for quotas to be effective, they must transform institutionalised gender roles and guarantee that the interests of women are represented (Clayton & Zetterberg 2018; Nugent & Krook 2016). The reliance on gender quotas to facilitate descriptive women's representation often leads to studies overlooking the impact that the presence of women in politics has for women's substantive representation. Numbers are a first step towards ensuring the visibility of women in the political system, however, that is not the ultimate end for women's political representation.

Hence, the discourse around the success of quotas needs to progress beyond how many women are in political office to how it benefits the lives of women. The assumption that once women get into politics, the lives of the general women populace will be better off is a slippery slope that needs to be addressed not just to confirm or debunk it but to avoid the easy way out for political leaders in addressing women related issues. This need raises a fundamental challenge of how quotas help better the lives of women beyond ensuring women take up space in politics. While extensive studies have been carried out in different parts of the world to address this, Africa has not benefitted much from it, which is why it was important to interrogate the relevance of quotas specifically within the African context. Secondly, there is a dearth of studies that focus on particular legislative and policy issues to measure the effectiveness of quotas in engendering the substantive representation of women in politics. This study specifically used the issue of GBVF, which has a high prevalence rate in Africa, to measure the effectiveness of gender quotas in enabling women's

substantive political representation. Looking at the prevalence of GBVF in both case studies spurred the need to understand whether the presence of women in politics yields positive results for women in Africa, and if it does, how does gender quotas fit into the discussion.

Part of the discussion centred around looking at the variables that impact women's performance while in office, and hence, the quality of their representation in parliament. It helped answer questions around why, in spite of so many women in politics in South Africa, for example, women continue to suffer the brunt of GBVF. To adjudge that quotas have been successful in South Africa because of the high number of women in parliament is to ignore the issues that continue to bedevil women in the country. This is why it was important to conduct research on how gender quotas as a corrective tool for ensuring gender equality work towards the substantive representation of women, and thereby, shift the discourse of women's political representation from a perspective of just numbers to that of impact.

### **1.3 Research Aim**

This study aimed to interrogate the relevance of gender quotas beyond their use to mainstream women into politics to how they can enable the substantive representation of women in Africa.

### **1.4 Research Objectives**

- To investigate whether there is a relationship between numbers and impact with regards to women's political representation in Africa.
- To re-examine the debate on the relevance of quotas beyond being a pathway for mainstreaming women into politics.
- To use the issue of GBVF in Botswana and South Africa to measure the effectiveness of gender quotas in enabling women's substantive representation in politics.
- To explore alternative pathways to the substantive political representation of women in the selected case studies and Africa in general.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

- What is the relationship between numbers and impact in terms of women's political representation in Africa?



- Do gender quotas have relevance beyond being a pathway for mainstreaming women into politics?
- How do gender quotas impact policy and legislative outcomes on GBVF in Botswana and South Africa?
- What alternative pathways are there to ensure the substantive political representation of women in Botswana, South Africa, and Africa in general?

## **1.6 Methodology**

### **1.6.1 Methodological approach**

The methodology describes the systematic process by which the study is carried out and the epistemological assumptions that support it (Murphy *et al.* 2010). The methodological approach is crucial since it provides the framework for the entire research project. This study adopted a qualitative methodology as its approach of enquiry in a bid to address the research questions posed. Bryman (2015:264) explains qualitative methodology “as a research tool that engages the understanding of the social world through an examination of the interpretation of that world by its participants”. A qualitative methodology seeks to understand contextual meanings behind specific issues using individual experiences, social processes and other factors based on local knowledge and understanding (Leedy & Ormod 2001 cited in Mohajan 2018:23). In contrast to quantitative research, qualitative research enables the researcher to evaluate and explain occurrences in a much more thorough and descriptive manner. Thus, it means that the experiences, feelings, and opinions of the participants of this study were represented appropriately to give a thorough understanding of the research questions. Mohajan (2018:24) states that qualitative methodology focuses on the way people interpret and understand their experiences in order to understand their social reality. The use of a qualitative approach is primarily justified by the recognition that truth, meanings, and knowledge are not unique to the researcher but are relative and socially created (Olaitan 2020). Silverman (2016) opines that it is frequently used to comprehend, outline, and clarify social phenomena by examining the experiences of specific people or groups. Flick (2018) notes that exploring deeper meanings and new discoveries are a particular focus of qualitative research. In addition to providing deeper insights into issues or aiding in the development of ideas and hypotheses for potential quantitative research, qualitative research is primarily exploratory and

used to explore underlying perspectives (Khan 2014). This study that sought to understand if and how the presence of women in politics benefits the general women population required a nuanced and context-driven understanding of the phenomenon under study. Hence, a qualitative methodology was the best option as it establishes the relativity and context-specificity of knowledge. More specifically, the research aimed to understand the relevance of gender quotas beyond mainstreaming women into politics to how it protects the interest of women using GBVF. These issues required a focused and detailed understanding that was best achieved using a qualitative methodology.

### **1.6.2 Epistemological position**

Olaitan (2020:7) notes that qualitative research is multifaceted and pluralistic, and therefore, emphasises the political or social aspects of social research. Punch (1999:140) states that the term “social is human construction, framed and presented within a set of discourses and conducted in social context with certain sort of social arrangements, involving especially finding cognitive authority and power”. This view adheres to a constructivist epistemological viewpoint that contends that knowledge and truth are products of our interactions with the outside world rather than existing in another realm. On the other hand, the positivist worldview, which can only be reached by scientific inquiry, tries to understand reality independently of the researcher. Creswell (2017) asserts that there are two basic paradigms that influence how knowledge is obtained, namely interpretivist and positivist. Quinlan *et al.* (2015) note that a positivist paradigm is an objective framework for understanding in which the researcher views reality as an objective state that can be understood by everyone. This type of approach is based on the understanding that reality exists outside of the knower’s world and may be learned through positivist techniques of knowing since humans do not affect how reality is seen (Babbie 2011). This strategy works best when combined with quantitative approaches because they look into verifiable facts to address a research issue (Salkind 2012). Its weakness, however, is that the immense complexity of the social phenomenon makes its quest for objectivity and exquisite standards of scientific research and analysis unachievable. Additionally, it may be inflexible and challenging to use (Khan 2014).

On the other hand, constructivism lends its wings to the interpretivist paradigm, which acknowledges that “meanings are constructed not discovered” (Crotty 1998:66). Interpretivism requires the researcher to interpret elements of the study and to appreciate the differences among

people. Crotty (1998:67) states that “it is an anti-positivist stance that looks for culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life world”. De Vost *et al.* (2017) assert that another way of understanding reality is the interpretivist paradigm in which human interpretations are used to determine truth rather than an objective universal standard. Fusch and Ness (2015) corroborate this by stating that reality in constructivism is socially formed through interaction and cannot be universally or objectively understood in all situations. The interpretivist worldview is aware that each person’s reality is created by the meaning they give to their experiences. Salkind (2012) asserts that research based on this paradigm collects information that can be used to define meaning in the participants’ worlds through qualitative approaches like interviews. Based on this, this research succinctly captured the interpretivist paradigm as the perceptions and experiences of the participants were central to answering the research questions. More so, the construction of reality based on the experiences and opinions of the participants rest on the interpretation done by the researcher, thereby lending credence to the understanding of what the interpretivist paradigm is about.

### **1.6.3 Research design**

Research design is “a plan that describes how, when and where data are collected and analysed” (Ngulube 2015:8). Kumar (2015) notes that the research design serves as the framework for the study, allowing the research questions to be addressed in a way that is acceptable, effective, and efficient. This study used a multiple case study design i.e., Botswana and South Africa in a bid to contextualise the numbers and impact argument while providing a balanced context. A case study is a comprehensive description of an individual or group case and its analysis (Mohajan 2018). Lewis (2003) argues that a case study design enables the generalisation of numerous perspectives either through the collection of different data sets or the creation of multiple accounts from a single method (cited in Gray 2014). Yin (2015:4) explains that “case study research is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context especially when the boundaries between the context are not clearly evident”. In social sciences, a case scenario is typically researched instead of the full population (Creswell 2017). When conducting research, case studies can be used to swiftly gather data and can be applied to unusual samples (Ritchie & Lewis 2011). Case study design helps the researcher choose a population within a given location to study a broad phenomenon and give a thorough and detailed analysis of

the phenomenon under study (Khan 2014). Yin (2015) asserts that case study investigates a contemporary phenomenon in its real world, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clear.

Yin (2009) proposes four main types of case study designs, namely single case holistic, single case embedded, multiple case holistic, and multiple case embedded. A multiple case study includes two or more cases or replications across the cases to investigate the same phenomena (Yin 2017). Yin (1994) compares the use of the replication strategy and asserts that replication is carried out in two stages, namely a literal replication stage in which cases are selected to obtain similar results, and a theoretical replication stage in which cases are selected to explore and confirm or disprove the patterns identified in the initial cases. Multiple case studies are selected so that individual cases either predict similar results or predict contrasting results. When the purpose of the study is to compare and replicate the findings, the multiple case study produces more compelling evidence so that the study is considered more robust than the single case study (Yin 2017). Multiple case study enables the researcher to analyse the data both within each case and across the cases (Yin 2003). According to Creswell (2013), a multiple case design explores a real-life multiple bounded system through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information. This study used a multiple case study design, which enables replication (Gray 2014). The intended conclusion for a case study can be either illustrative or confirmable, and this study uses the case studies to confirm whether there is a relationship between numbers and impact in Africa. The explanation of a case study provided above helped justify the study's use of case studies to answer its research questions.

#### **1.6.4 Justification of case studies**

To understand how gender quotas engender the reduction of GBVF in Africa, this study used South Africa and Botswana as case studies. The two case studies were selected to develop a nuanced understanding of the subject under study and to theorise about women's political representation in Africa with particular focus on Southern Africa. The subject of women's political representation is not a new phenomenon in the social sciences; however, depending on the angle from which the researcher is looking, a certain level of novelty can be drawn. This study looked at women's political representation from a different angle through its interrogation of the relevance of gender quotas in the substantive representation of women. Hence, either a focused demography or a

specific understanding of what substantive representation entails was necessary to theorise about such a broad issue. This study chose to situate the theorising within specific contexts, which is one of the justifications for using case study. Using South Africa and Botswana provided the study with a canvas upon which the arguments can be made to enable further generalisation to other African countries. The subject under study was broad, necessitating specificity and depth to situate the general issue in a setting conducive to producing quality work, which the case study design provided. The increased opportunity for observation provided by the case study approach allowed the researcher to better appreciate the interplay of some relationships in the chosen case studies, which helped to produce a high-quality theory.

Another important justification was to allow for a comparative analysis on the research questions using a case with a high number of women in parliament and one with a low number of women in parliament, which the selected case studies represent. The differences in context between the cases also helped establish needed nuance in the analysis that helped answer whether numbers equal impact in women's political representation in Africa. Specifically, South Africa is one of the few countries in Africa with above 40% women representation in their national parliament yet has an increased rate of GBVF cases, making a good case for research that seeks to understand whether there is a relationship between the number of women in politics and the impact on women's lives. Botswana has just 11% women in its national parliaments but also has the problem of GBVF. Hence, the selection of these two case studies provided for a different systems design framework that allowed for a comparison. While comparison was not the major reason for the selection of these cases, it helped to cross-examine the findings on whether the presence of women in politics translates to the protection of women's interests.

The third justification for these case studies was the drive for a valuable contribution to the discourse of numbers and impact. Most studies on the subject use a single case study approach, but this research used a multiple case study to situate its findings within a rich and balanced context. Selecting South Africa with high number of women in parliament and Botswana with low number allowed a balanced generalisation of the discourse at hand. Therefore, this study's findings will be easily replicated for countries with high number of women in parliament and countries with low number of women in parliament.

In summary, the justification for selecting the case studies were the need for nuanced and contrasting contexts to allow for comparative analysis of the research question; the uniqueness of South Africa and Botswana with regards to women's representation; and finally, the drive for a significant contribution to knowledge through the careful generalisation that a multiple case study provides. These justifications served as the basis for the meticulous selection of South Africa and Botswana as the case studies for this research.

### **1.6.5 Data collection**

Ritchie and Lewis (2011:35) define data collection “as the different methods by which a researcher collects data from participants for the research. The term data suggests diverse ways in which the researcher obtains information from the participants”. The study used both primary and secondary data to understand how gender quotas affect the rate of GBVF. For the first primary data, semi-structured key informant interviews with 43 participants were carried out to add strength and depth to the relationship between numbers and impact in Africa. The key informants were female MPs from both case studies and women from civil society organisations (CSOs) working in the gender space in South Africa and Botswana. According to Ritchie and Lewis (2011:35), an interview “is a conversation to gather information, it involves an interviewer who conducts and coordinates the interview with questions and an interviewee who responds to the researcher's questions”. Face-to-face interview can also be conducted over the phone, by email, or in person. A formal encounter between two or more people, typically a researcher and participants, constitutes an interview. Hague *et al.* (2016) assert that in an interview, questions are posed in relation to a specific subject to learn more about the participant. Interviews are useful for learning the background to a participant's experiences, obtaining in-depth knowledge about a topic, or learning about a participant's perspective about a thing. This study used in-depth interviews as one of the research instruments to collect data. The interviews were semi-structured to allow for modification to enable the researcher to probe the participants further when the need arose. This type of interview allows a greater flexibility of coverage, allows the interview to go into novel areas, and tends to produce richer data. Due to its flexibility, the researcher's role in a semi-structured interview is to facilitate and guide rather than dictate what will happen during the encounter. More so, the interview does not have to follow the sequence on the schedule, nor does every question have to be asked or asked in exactly the same way for each respondent. The interviewer may deem it

appropriate to ask a question earlier than it appears because it follows from what the respondent just said.

Secondly, the researcher collected different legislative and policy outcomes that have been passed on GBVF in Botswana and South Africa within a 12-year period (2010–2022). These legislations were used to trace the impact female MPs have on the legislative process by investigating how the number of women in parliament translates to the number of gender-focused bills. It interrogated whether the presence of women in parliament means there are more legislative and policy outcomes passed to address GBVF.

For secondary data, the study used data from journals, articles, textbooks, literature, and published works written by scholars on the subject of gender quotas, descriptive representation, and substantive representation of women in Africa and globally. These sources were used to probe the relevance of gender quotas and to examine the debate on the significance of gender quotas in ensuring descriptive and substantive representation of women.

#### **1.6.6 Study population**

The larger population on which a study is focused is called the population of the study. The people who belong to this demography share characteristics that make them pertinent to the study. Due to the size of the current study's population, a sample was taken to minimise the time it took to reach every member. The population selected for this study fell in two groups: firstly, female MPs, and secondly, women working in the civil society space in the selected case studies. The specific criteria for the female MPs were that they must be serving in the national parliament and their party must be represented in the national parliament. For the women in civil society, the criteria were that they must be working in sectors related to gender issues, particularly GBVF, to allow them to contribute richly during the interview process.

#### **1.6.7 Sampling technique**

Quinlan *et al.* (2015:169) state that “the sample of the research refers to a selected group of individuals that are representative of the population. A good sample gives all the information needed from the target population”. The researcher used purposive sampling, specifically the snowball sampling technique, to get participants for the study. Purposive samples are used when

particular people and events are chosen because they are known to be able provide information that cannot be gained from other sample designs (Maxwell 2017). In this kind of sampling, the researcher exercises some degree of judgement about who will provide the best perspectives on the phenomenon of interest and invites these participants into the study. A crucial component of purposeful sampling, sometimes referred to as criterion-based sampling, is the specification of sample criteria, which entails identifying the proper sample criteria for the participants or directing researchers to difficult-to-reach persons. Ritchie and Lewis (2011:107) assert that “it involves selecting sample units based on known characteristics which might be socio-demographic or might relate to factors such as experience, profession etc.”. The benefit of this is that the researcher is familiar with the population under study. Snowballing, which is a form of purposive sampling, was used for this study because of the difficulty of accessing female MPs in the selected case studies. Snowball sampling is useful for research into hidden populations where there are difficulties locating, gaining access to, and recruiting participants. This kind of sampling was quite relevant to the study as it was difficult to find a group of female MPs in the same space, and thus, participants were asked to recommend other female MPs for the interview. This entailed finding research participants who were recommended by another participant and who in turn recommended the name of another participant to the researcher (Cohen & Arieli 2011:424).

### **1.6.8 Sample frame**

Due to the large size of the study population, the researcher employed a certain sample size to represent the larger study population. The researcher benchmarked 20%<sup>1</sup> of female parliamentarians from each case study to be interviewed. Using percentage factors in the numbers disparity of female MPs in both case studies and helped ensure a more accurate representation of each case as South Africa has significantly more female MPs than Botswana. South Africa has a total of 400 parliamentarians of which 46% (180) are women, and thus, 20% of 180 is 36. In Botswana, there are 65 parliamentarians in total of which 11% (7) are women, and therefore, 20% of seven is 1.4, but it was rounded up to two. An additional female MP was interviewed, making

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<sup>1</sup> The 20% sample size was decided randomly to allow for a sizeable number of the female MPs in both case studies.



it three, to allow for a more representative view from female parliamentarians in Botswana<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, a total of 39 female MPs were interviewed for this study. Two women working in CSOs for each case study were interviewed, and they were from organisations that work in the gender field, particularly in GBVF; the total of CSO participants were four. These criteria were necessary to enable the participants contribute to the research not just as members of the civil society but as women who work in the GBVF space<sup>3</sup>. This peculiarity enabled them to speak from personal and grounded positions that combined their lived experience as women and their status as members of the civil society.

### **1.6.9 Observation on the administration of the interviews**

The researcher conducted electronic interviews via Zoom and Skype with all 43 participants due to the unique nature of society when this research was carried out. The world was thrown into the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 and physical contact was mostly advised against because of the government lockdown regulations in the two selected case studies. Hence, interviews were done virtually to abide by the health regulations stipulated by the government and the university ethics committee. This study conducted virtual interviews that lasted between 30 minutes and 1 hour with 43 participants across the two case studies. The interviews were semi-structured, and the questions were divided into four sections, namely introduction, questions on gender quotas, numbers and impact, and lastly, recommendations. The essence of interviewing these women was that they served as key informants on the subject under study, which was to understand the relevance of gender quotas in ensuring the protection of women's interest i.e., reduction of GBVF. Specifically, the study was conducted to understand the ways in which female MPs are using the legislative process to address the menace of GBVF. The findings from these interviews were categorised

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<sup>2</sup> It is important to note that the study initially set out to interview all 7 female MPs in Botswana, however, the difficulty of accessing them made the researcher reduce the number to 3.

<sup>3</sup> The selection of 2 CSOs in each case studies followed a purposive sampling such that organisations that were earmarked work specifically within the area of gender-based violence and femicide. The focus on 4 CSOs allowed the researcher to probe deeper into the numbers and impact dilemma using them from a non-politician perspective. Additionally, the initial essence of the study was to focus on how female MPs perceive the impact of their presence in parliament on GBVF, however the researcher felt it would make for a balanced analysis to sample the opinion of CSOs on the study's research questions, hence the addition of CSO voices in the study.

under super-ordinate and sub-ordinate themes generated from the interview questions and are discussed in Chapter 6 (presentation of findings).

#### **1.6.10 Data analysis**

The methods of analysis used in this study were interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) and thematic analysis. Firstly, IPA was used to analyse the findings from the interviews to allow for an in-depth and focused understanding of the research questions from the experience and opinions of the participants. IPA is premised on phenomenology and hermeneutics. Phenomenology holds that any attempt to understand social reality has to be grounded in people's experiences of that social reality (Smith & Osborne 2003). Hence, it insists that researchers lay aside their prevailing understanding of phenomena and revisit their immediate experience of them so new meanings may emerge. Attempts must be made to avoid ways in which the prejudices of the researcher bias the data, and the key is gaining the subjective experience of the subject. Hence, phenomenology becomes an exploration via personal experience of prevailing cultural understandings. Tesch (1994) argues that there is a unique distinguishing factor between phenomenological research and ethnographic research because while both are based upon description and interpretation, ethnographic research focuses more on culture and phenomenology on human experience of the life world. Thus, the unit of analysis of phenomenology is often individuals within a given population while ethnographers use sites. Phenomenology almost exclusively uses interviews to gain further first-hand insight into the experience of the subject. Hermeneutics, which is the other aspect of IPA, focuses on the theory and practice of interpretation. Researchers try to make sense of their participants by engaging in close interpretation of what they read or hear. Willig (2001) states that IPA acknowledges that a researcher's interpretation of a participant's experiences is inevitably influenced by their own preconceptions and methods of thinking, preconceptions, and their interactive experiences of the world. However, she notes that these prejudices are a necessary precondition for understanding another's experiences, and therefore, making sense or understanding requires interpretation.

Smith and Osborne (2003:53) believe that IPA involves a "double hermeneutic; the researcher is making sense of the participant, who is making sense of a particular phenomenon". The researcher's making sense depends on the participant's interpretation of a particular phenomenon. They went further to state that the aim of IPA is to explore in detail how participants are making

sense of their personal and social world, and that the main currency for an IPA study is the meanings particular experiences and events hold for the participants. It involves detailed examination of the participant's life world, and it attempts to explore personal experience and is concerned with an individual's personal perception or account of an object or event as opposed to an attempt to produce an objective statement of the object or event itself. IPA requires a flexible data collection instrument, which is often semi-structured interviews. This form of interviewing allows the researcher and participant to engage in a dialogue where the initial questions can be modified based on the participant's responses and the investigator can probe interesting and important areas that arise.

The rationale for selecting IPA as a method of analysis was the need to delve into the lived experiences and perceptions of women who are in politics and those who are not to understand whether gender quotas impact the substantive representation of women. As this research sought to interrogate the relevance of gender quotas to ensure the substantive representation of women in African politics, it was imperative to understand in detail how the presence of women in politics protects women from the perspective of women who hold political positions and women in the civic space. Female MPs and members of the civil society in both case studies were important sources. Female MPs were well suited to give their experiences on how they have ensured the protection of women's interests since they are the subject of the relevance of gender quotas. Female members of civil society are on the receiving end of this spectrum, and they were able to use their double perspectives as women to detail their experience of whether they feel protected through the actions of female MPs and also give grounded opinions as members of the civil society. IPA was well suited for this study as there was a focused exploration of the lived experiences of both female MPs and female members of the civil society regarding the research questions. The study sought to understand the question of numbers and impact from the experience of female politicians and asked them introspective questions on how they have performed in relation to ensuring the substantive representation of women. Women in CSOs were asked to use their lived experience both as women and members of the civil society to assess the performance of the female MPs. This made it a double assessment process from the politicians' perspective and from CSOs' perspective. The process of analysis started with coding the transcribed interviews of all 43 participants, and notes were taken to ensure accurate representation of the participants' responses. Secondly, the interview schedule and the transcriptions were used to generate super-ordinate

themes, which are often broader in nature, to make it easy to categorise the emergent themes. Based on this, the researcher identified emergent themes from the responses of the participants based on the questions asked. These emergent themes formed the sub-ordinate themes. The frequency of a particular emergent themes made it suitable to be a sub-ordinate theme and the closely related sub-ordinate themes were matched to the corresponding super-ordinate themes. After categorising the themes, the researcher used the super-ordinate themes as a framework and the sub-ordinate themes as the unit of responses to present the detailed responses of the participants. The researcher used quotes from the participants' responses to provide in-depth insight into the theme under discussion.

Thematic analysis was used to organise the different legislations that have been passed on GBVF. Thematic analysis is used in qualitative research and focuses on finding themes within the data. This approach focuses on the data set's arrangement and description. Braun and Clarke (2006) state that thematic analysis is used to identify and analyse patterns (themes) within qualitative data. Further distinction was made between an inductive thematic analysis and a theoretical thematic analysis. In an inductive approach, the themes emerge from the data, and in theoretical thematic analysis, the themes emerge from the theoretical stance. For this study, the inductive thematic analysis was used to focus on the themes generated from the data set, which in this case were the legislative and policy outcomes. The goal of thematic analysis is to locate significant themes or patterns in the data and use these themes to address the research question. The steps in thematic analysis are as follows: familiarising oneself with the data; creating initial codes; generating themes; reviewing themes; defining themes; and writing up.

In generating themes from these legislations, the document review method was used to identify GBVF-targeted measures. The themes generated from the data set were used to provide an overview of the selected GBVF laws and policies in the two case studies in order to discuss the outcomes these legislations and policies on GBVF seek to achieve. This aspect of the analysis was important as it gave a holistic overview of how the presence of women in the parliaments translate to the passing of GBVF legislations and policies that protect women. Gender quotas have ensured the inclusion of women in parliament, and hence, it is necessary to measure the impact these women have made, and therefore, the GBVF-targeted legislations were used as the metric. Additionally, a brief comparison was made between the two case studies to see if the high percentage of female politicians elected through quotas translate to an increased number of

legislations and policies that address the indices under study. And lastly, the findings from these analytical methods were also used to analyse whether these legislations have any direct or indirect effect on reducing the rate of GBVF. Merely identifying the legislations does not demonstrate impact, and hence, it was necessary to discuss what they intend to achieve and evaluate whether they work to reduce the rate of GBVF in the identified case studies.

## **1.7 Conceptual Clarification**

This section provides operational definitions for certain concepts in this study to ensure the clarity of the analysis based on them. The concepts are gender quotas, descriptive women's representation, and substantive women's representation.

Quotas are often mechanisms used to correct systemic imbalances based on gender, ethnicity, sexuality, or race. However, this study focused on quotas for women and refers to it as gender quotas. Quotas are institutional measures aimed at boosting female political participation in the political system, typically in the parliament. They stipulate that women must make up a specific number or proportion of the members of any group, including candidate lists, parliamentary assemblies, committees, and governments (Dahlerup 2006a). There are different types of quotas, namely legislated/constitutional quotas, voluntary/political party quotas, and reserved seat quotas. The two case studies under study both use voluntary quotas, which informed the direction of this study in focusing on voluntary quotas. Voluntary/political party quotas are targets established by political parties to have a specified proportion of women running for office, particularly in parliament. The quota is voluntarily adopted by the political party, making it different from the reserved seat and legal quota that are often provided for in the country's constitution. Parties can choose to stipulate their internal quota in their party constitution or in other internal regulatory documents (International IDEA 2021).

Hughes *et al.* (2019) assert that the concept of descriptive representation holds that a group chooses a representative who, in their own characteristics, reflects some of the group's more common experiences and outward expressions. This form of representation focuses on the similarity between the features of the representatives and the represented. Pitkin (1967) contends that this type of representation is not holistic because it places more emphasis on a political institution's makeup than on its activities and that people can only be held accountable for "what they have

done” rather than “who they are”. Simply put, descriptive representation of women is the number of women that are participating in the political system, the numerical or quantitative representation of women in politics.

Substantive representation is the tendency of elected legislators to advocate on behalf of certain groups. Pitkin (1967:208) asserts that the one true form of representation is substantive representation, sometimes known as ‘acting for representation’. The process of articulating interests should be examined when discussing substantive representation of women since it allows for the formulation of a wide range of viewpoints and interests, however they may be characterised. Squires (2008) describes substantive representation as the “constitutive representation of gender”. Wiredu (1984) discusses the distinction between formal and substantive representation and asserts that formal representation is representing the will of a constituency in a council and substantive representation is the will of a representative in the making of a decision. Thus, substantive representation involves qualitative representation of women and the articulation of women’s interests, which includes improving women’s living conditions, freedom from all forms of gendered violence, and financial freedom for women. This resonates with Pitkin’s (1967:209) definition of substantive representation as “acting in the interest of the represented, in a manner responsive to them”.

Substantive representation of women is such a broad term to measure, and therefore, requires some form of operationalization to streamline it. For the purpose of this study, GBVF, legislation and policies that have been passed or introduced to address the increasing rate of this problem were used to measure the substantive representation of women in the cases under study. So, when the study talks about the substantive representation of women, it refers to GBVF.

## **1.8 Significance of Study**

The use of quotas in Africa has been limited to the inclusion of women in politics without investigating the impact their inclusion has on the general African women populace. It is vital the quotas are investigated beyond their primary task of ensuring numbers to see whether they are a means to engendering substantive representation. Studies on quotas mostly seek to understand how useful it is towards ensuring women’s participation in politics (numbers). However, this study took the research further by investigating how quotas can be a means towards substantive representation

(impact) and used the problem of GBVF as indices. It brings to fore an important angle to the discourse on gender quotas and representation that are often left at surface level in Africa.

Moreover, most studies on substantive representation along with studies on women's representation are not specific to Africa; for instance, previous studies do a general analysis and take one case from Africa or apply a general argument to Africa. This study is significant because it focused on Africa to understand whether the number of women in politics translate to quality life for women. The assumption that because women in Africa are present in politics, they will always cater for the interest of the general populace of African women must be validated or debunked. This was done by interrogating the relevance of quotas and how it affects the rate of GBVF in South Africa and Botswana. By bringing in GBVF into the numbers and impact debate, this study situated the argument within a specific focus and on a burning issue that is ravaging the continent. Research should aim not just to understand phenomenon but also to improve it, which is why this study is significant.

## **1.9 Scope of Study**

The study used legislations and policies that have been passed on GBVF to evaluate the relationship between gender quotas and the substantive representation of women in Africa. To ensure specificity of focus, the study only looked at GBVF-related bills that were passed between 2010 and 2022, which is a 12-year period. The year 2022 was a particularly relevant year to include in the study as the South African parliament passed three new bills on GBVF and Botswana amended some GBVF legislations in 2021.

## **1.10 Limitations of Study**

The researcher conducted the interview virtually because of the Covid-19 pandemic at the time data collection took place. However, virtually conducting the interviews did not hinder the quality of responses because the researcher ensured the participants were properly probed on the interview questions to gain a rich and in-depth understanding of the research through the experiences and opinions of the study population. The second limitation was that the researcher engaged with only a delineated sample from the study population due to the difficulty of interviewing a large number of participants. Notwithstanding, the selected analytical framework for the interviews, IPA,

focuses more on the quality and depth of the responses from the participants than the number of participants. Hence, the researcher was able to ensure balance by interviewing 20% of female MPs from the selected case studies, which is a sizeable number that allows for replication and generalisation.

### **1.11 Ethical Considerations.**

Iphofen (2016:1) asserts that “the importance of ethics in research is to give careful consideration and regular attention to core participants irrespective of the profession one practices”. Arifin (2018) claims that ethical considerations are an accumulation of norms and ideals that answer questions about what is honourable or dishonourable in human behaviour. In and of itself, ethics defines the conduct that separates right from wrong and acceptable actions from unacceptable actions, and it is classified at a discrete and shared level. Quinlan *et al.* (2015:169) note that “the integrity, reliability and validity of the study’s discoveries rely significantly on the compliance to the ethnical ideologies. The protection of individuals through the submission of suitable ethical principles is imperative in any research study”. For this study, participants’ consent was obtained before the interview, their participation was voluntary, and no incentives were used to motivate or reward them for their contribution. Part of the consent form included a confidentiality clause whereby the names and personal details of the participants would not be disclosed in the study. During the course of the study analysis, all participants were kept anonymous, and the word ‘participant’ was used to identify them. Important ethical considerations included participant anonymity and the confidentiality of the information given. The Research and Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Pretoria granted approval for the study. Documents such as the consent form, interview schedule and questions were submitted to the Research and Ethics Committee and received approval. The researcher conducted the interviews in a manner that made the participants comfortable to answer the questions and abided by the ethics of research.

### **1.12 Chapter Outline**

Chapter 1 introduces the study and entails the background of the study, gives an outline of what the study is about, states the research problem, the research aim, and the objectives, as well as the research questions, significance of study, and conceptual clarification. This chapter extensively



discusses the methodology adopted for this study in terms of the methodological approach, the research design, research instruments, such as data collection methods, the data analysis methods, sampling techniques and justification for the selection of case studies.

Chapter 2 focus mainly on the literature review. It reviews existing literature on gender quotas, women's political representation, specifically the debates on descriptive and substantive presentation, which includes critical mass versus critical acts. In keeping with the objective of the study, the chapter gives a holistic summary and thorough sense of the debates on the issue.

Chapter 3 discusses the theoretical framework that guided the analysis of this research. Theories selected for the study are the relational feminist theory, which is one of the variations of the feminist theory, and the politics of presence theory.

Chapter 4 entails a contextual background on the quota system in Africa and focuses on the numbers and the impact dilemma in Africa. By establishing how quotas have worked to enhance women's descriptive representation in Africa, this chapter sets the background for answering the first and second research questions. It provides the needed background upon which the research presents and discusses its findings.

Chapter 5 extensively discusses the subject of women and political representation in Botswana and South Africa. The second part of the chapter examines the issue of GBVF in the two selected case studies to further expand on the indices that were used to measure the substantive representation of women.

Chapter 6 presents the findings from the two methods of data collection, namely legislations that have been passed on GBVF in the two selected case studies and interviews conducted with female MPs and females working in CSOs. The presentation of findings of the legislations follows a thematic overview, and the interviews are presented using the IPA framework. Both analytical methods use themes.

Chapter 7 discusses and analyses the data collected to make needed findings on the research questions. This chapter analyses the data collected to answer the third and fourth research question on how gender quotas ensure substantive representation of women and alternative pathways to ensure substantive representation. It also includes a discussion on how the findings from the data align with the literature and theories selected for the study.

Chapter 8 summarises the main findings made in the study based on how the research questions were posed. It concludes the study with a section on recommendations and suggestions for further studies on numbers and impact in African politics.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter contains the review of literature on women's political representation, gender quotas and substantive women's representation. The review is done based on overarching themes to provide a comprehensive examination of the discussions under study. It examines the concept of representation to provide background on the role of representatives and what they are meant to achieve. It discusses women's political representation to highlight how the low participation of women in global politics created a shift that fostered increased attention on practical instruments to enhance their participation. This discussion outlines the different types of representation, and then focuses on descriptive and substantive representation to identify the relationship between the two. Importantly, the review interrogates gender quotas and their effectiveness in ensuring women's political participation, which has led to descriptive women's representation. A central discourse on how best to ensure substantive representation of women is done. Under this, the debate on critical mass and critical acts was looked into and the value of gender quotas beyond numbers is evaluated. This chapter evaluates previous studies that have been done on the major themes surrounding this study to provide a basis for the subsequent arguments made to answer the research questions. This chapter enabled the researcher to identify gaps in existing literature on the relationship between descriptive representation and substantive representation and how gender quotas fits within this duo. Journal articles, published books, and internet sources were used to gather existing literature on the aforementioned subject to enable the production of a grounded literature review.

#### **2.2 Understanding Representation**

Understanding the concept of representation is crucial to this study as it establishes what it means to represent or be represented. The concept of representation "is a rich brocade whose complex weave is not always appreciated" (Schwindt-Bayer & Mishler 2005:407). Pitkin (1967) provides a succinct conceptualisation of what representation is by defining it as "to simply represent" which is to "make present again". Dovi (2018:1) further expands this definition by asserting that "political

representation is the activity of making citizens' voices, opinions, and perspectives present in public policy-making processes. It occurs when political actors speak, advocate, symbolise, and act on the behalf of others in the political arena. In short, political representation is a sort of political assistance". Pitkin (1967) references Hobbes's understanding of the concept of representation, and she posits that for Hobbes "representation is so intimately connected with action and governing an assembly in which each member has a veto power". Brennan and Hamlin (1999) attest that the establishment of a mediating assembly between the people and political decision-making is a crucial feature of political representation because it entails indirect decision-making or agency.

Representation has several components that are "some party that is representing (the representatives), something that is being represented (the interests), a setting within which the activity of representation is taking place (political context) and something that is being excluded (interests not voiced)" (Dovi 2018:2). Democratic theorists of political representation often limit these components to only signify formal representation, such as representatives who hold elected offices. Rehfeld (2006) provided a general theory of representation and identifies representation based on reference to a relevant audience accepting a person as its representative. However, Dovi (2018:3) argues that a consequence of Rehfeld's reference is that "it allows for undemocratic cases of representation as it does not specify what representatives do or should do to be recognised as representatives". In exemplifying what representatives do, Burke (1790:115) states that "parliament is not a congress of ambassadors from different and hostile interests, which interests each must maintain, as an agent and advocate, against other agents and advocates; but parliament is a deliberative assembly of one nation, with one interest that of the whole". This can be used to argue that representatives in parliament have common interests, which is to serve the country, but it does not recognise the diversity that exist within the population and its implication on interests.

The divide between whether representatives should serve as delegates or trustees is an important contribution to the concept of representation because it establishes the extent of responsibility. Madison *et al.* (1787) see representative government as the delegation of the government to a small number of citizens elected by the rest. This view of representatives as delegates considers that the people elected them for a purpose, but Burke's argument of the composition of parliament signifies that representatives are trustees who follow their own understanding of the best action to pursue in representing the interest of their constituency. The difference in views concerning the responsibility of the representative place competing demands on the behaviour of representatives.

Seeing representatives as delegates creates a platform for them to follow the interests of their constituencies but seeing them as trustees allows the representatives to prioritise their own judgement on what the interests of their constituency are. The crux of this dilemma lies in the question of whether representatives are a mere reflection of the people's interests or are a determinant of the people's interests. Russo and Cotta (2020:3) contributes to the debate by providing a historical perspective on representation. They narrate that Roman legal tradition offered significant insights into practices of representation and note that there was often the need for people (delegates) to stand for cities or estates in different political contexts (councils, parliaments). Particular importance was given to the ability of the ambassadors to consent to decisions taken in the council or parliament to ensure that the decisions are "binding on the communities they represented" (Russo & Cotta 2020:3). They state that these ambassadors often received *instructiones* from the communities they represented, allowing them to contribute to the discussions that happen in parliament. The significance of this to the trustee versus delegate debate is that Roman legal tradition or middle age Europe regarded representatives as both trustees and delegates of the people who represent the interests of their constituents but are able to make decision that are binding for their communities.

Pitkin (1967) weighs in that it does not matter greatly who represents as long as the ideas and preferences are represented. According to her, representation is not about the representative, for example, being a woman but rather about the representative capturing relatively accurately whatever ideas and preferences the women constituent has that relate to policies. However, Mansbridge (1999) posits that it is desirable for the representative to resemble the represented population in relevant characteristics. In Pitkin's (1967) discussion of representation as acting for, she highlights ideas on what the activity of a representative should be and what they should be doing. One important element is that representatives' opinions and actions should to some extent reflect the wishes, needs or interests of the people they represent. To confirm this, Dahl (1998) asserts that representatives should be responsive to what the people want. However, Mansbridge (1999) contends that disadvantaged groups may want to be represented by individuals that share certain similarities or shared experience with them as they are a reflection of some of the more typical group experiences and behaviours. The discourse on representation reveals that the responsibilities of representatives is divided between being a trustee that can use their initiative to act for their constituents or a delegate that aptly represents what the people want while sharing

certain similarities with them. The implication of this is the context in which we view representatives or politicians, and this study notes that we see them as both trustees that can make decisions on behalf of their constituency and as delegates who represent the interests and opinions of the people.

### **2.2.1 Types of representation**

Pitkin (1967) provides the most widely used categorisation of representation that has been adopted by other scholars writing on political representation. She identifies four distinct but interconnected forms of representation. Dovi (2018) points out that while Pitkin did not provide an explanation of how these different representations relate with each other, she affirms that they are unified. The four types of representation identified by Pitkin (1967) are descriptive representation, formalistic representation, substantive representation, and symbolic representation. These forms provide different approaches for examining representation and allows for different standards when evaluating representatives. Russo and Cotta (2020) argue that disagreement concerning the responsibility of representatives happens because people adopt the wrong notion of the kind of representation these representatives engage in, and hence, clarity on the typology of representation helps resolve this confusion.

Pitkin (1967:38) refers to formalistic representation as the ‘authorization view’ because the “representative is someone who has been authorized to act or represent others”. In explaining this, Schwindt-Bayer & Mishler (2005:407) note that formalistic representation “refers to the institutional rules and procedures through which representatives are chosen” This type of representation focuses on the institutional aspect of representation and on authorisation and accountability between the representatives and represented without reference to the activities that the former is expected to carry out (Russo & Cotta 2020:7). Descriptive representation “refers to the compositional similarity between representatives and the represented” (Schwindt-Bayer & Mishler 2005:407). Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler (2005:407) note that this type of representation focuses “on the extent to which a representative resembles those being represented”. Substantive representation “refers to the compatibility between representatives’ actions and interests of the represented. This relates to the activity of representatives, the actions taken on behalf of and in the interests of the represented” (Dovi 2018:4). Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler (2005:408) note that symbolic representation “refers to the represented’s feelings of being fairly and effectively

represented. The way that a representative stands for the represented, that is, the symbolic significance that a representative has for the represented". There are important differences among the four typologies, but Pitkin (1967) argues that they should be thought of as essential components of a coherent whole and further asserts that there are direct causal relationships among the forms of representation. Powell (2000) and Schumpeter (1947) note that the fact that proponents of formal representation stress the significance of credibility in elections is not only because it is important for democracy but also because they make descriptive representation possible, promote responsive policy making, and ensure legitimacy for the representatives. This is similar to the perceived link between descriptive representation and policy responsiveness as the former is deemed crucial for the latter, and symbolic representation is thought to be largely influenced by policy responsiveness (Mishler & Rose 1997).

The four types of representation have been identified, but there is the tendency among democratic theorists to focus on formalistic representation, translating to more attention being paid to the workings of representative democracy (Barber 2001; Guinier 1994). The implication of this is that discussions on political representation are substituted to mean elections and democracy. This is because political representation is seen as a way to establish legitimacy for democratic institutions and create institutional incentives for governments to be responsive to citizens. In response to this, Plotke (1997) suggests that it is necessary to broaden the scope of what is meant by political representation to include interest representation in order to capture the debate on what the proper activity of representatives should be. Mansbridge (2003) argues that understandings of representation are not keeping up with recent empirical research on democratic practices. She identifies new forms of representation, namely promissory, anticipatory, gyroscopic and surrogacy representation. Mansbridge (2003:515) defines gyroscopic representation as when representatives use their lived experience to understand the interests of their constituency. Surrogate representation is when legislators represent constituencies beyond their immediate districts even though they share similar interests. Anticipatory representation refers to instances where legislators prioritise what they believe their constituents would support in the next election rather than what they campaigned on promising to do. By identifying new forms of representation in modern democracy, Mansbridge (2003) attests to the fact that democratic representation should not be conceived as a monolith as there are multiple forms of representation. This traditional view often limits discourse on representation to the relationship between the representatives and the represented. From the

different forms of representation presented above, the two that relate to the scope of this study are descriptive representation and substantive representation. They are further conceptualised in the next subsection.

### **2.2.2 Descriptive representation and substantive representation**

Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler (2005:408) explain that “descriptive representation, or representativeness, refers to the extent to which representatives resembles the represented”. This means that the composition of the representatives should reflect the characteristics of those they are representing. Descriptive representation is the form in which a person or thing stands for others by being sufficiently like them. In this type of representation, representatives are in some ways a microcosm of the greater class of people they are meant to represent. Few scholars note that the term ‘descriptive representation’ can refer to shared experiences as well as observable qualities like colour and gender (see Mansbridge 2005; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005; Phillips 1995). As a result, a representative from a similar background is in some ways a ‘descriptive representative’ to his constituency (Dovi 2018). Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler (2005:408) assert that “descriptive representation is arguably the most studied of Pitkin’s (1967) four typology partly because the composition of the legislature is highly visible and easily measured”. Russo and Cotta (2020:8) argue that “Pitkin’s account of descriptive representation is often misleadingly reduced to the idea of social representativeness”.

Pitkin (1967:209) defines substantive representation as “acting in the interests of the represented in a manner responsive to them”. Most studies on substantive representative interpret it to mean ‘policy responsiveness’ or the extent to which legislators can make policies that address the interests of their constituency. Pitkin advocates that substantive representation is the most crucial form and the core of the integrated model of representation though others disagree with this view.

Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler (2005:410) assert that “one of the most widely studied hypotheses regarding representation holds that variations in descriptive representation have substantial effects on policy responsiveness”. John Stuart Mill (1967:22) argues that “in the absence of its natural defenders, the interest of the omitted is always in danger of being overlooked; and when looked at, is seen with very different eyes from those of the persons whom it directly concerns”. Pitkin (1967:63) makes a similar argument, claiming that it is only rational “to expect the composition



of a legislature to determine the activities”. She highlights that strong causal connection exists between these two forms representation. Literature on women’s political representation confirms the importance of descriptive representation for policy responsiveness. This is elaborated on in the next section on women’s political representation to illustrate the relationship that exists between the two.

## **2.3 Women’s Political Representation**

### **2.3.1 Underrepresentation of women in politics**

Women’s underrepresentation in politics is still an important phenomenon as the average representation of women in parliaments globally is not up to 50%, signifying that they are still underrepresented in leadership positions. Pande and Ford (2011:2) explain that although there have been notable achievements with regards to women’s inclusion in politics, such as that of Angela Merkel of Germany, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia, Dilma Rousseff of Brazil, women are still largely underrepresented in political spaces. Female heads of state or government are still a minority, although the number has increased from 12 to 21 over the past 20 years (European Parliament 2019). The electoral system, gender stereotypes, political culture, and preference for a gladiatorial style of politics may all be examples of elements that contribute to the discrimination against women in politics. Considering the additional difficulties of cross-sex mentoring and the need for social trust, frequently based on similarity, in such interactions, it may also entail a mentor shortage. These factors continue to perpetuate discrimination against women, which impedes their participation in their political system. When women are excluded from politics, it raises questions about discrimination and may even delegitimise decisions since the preferences and circumstances of those left out are not taken into account (UN 1995). The argument that is often advanced to advocate for increased representation is that women should make up half of all decision-making structures because they make up half of the population, echoing the logical principle of justice and equality. Like many equal opportunity arguments, it simply presupposes that talent is not confined to one gender and that discrimination, whether direct or indirect, is the cause of the underrepresentation of women in political positions. The basic argument for women’s equal participation in public decision-making is that it is one of their rights that is recognised by international agreements. This argument does not rely on women making a difference to public

life but on their natural rights to participate. This motivated women's international organisations to strengthen their advocacy to facilitate increasing number of women in legislatures.

Notably, as far back as 1990s there was a surge in the interest in women to be included in political decision-making. This was due to the sudden drop in parliamentary participation of women globally following the overthrow of communism in the defunct Soviet Union and Eastern Europe (Sawer 2000:23). This interest manifested in international organisations taking up the issue, which led to swift policy diffusion worldwide and mutual reinforcement of national and international agendas, such as Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA). Both of these instruments deal with women's equal rights in politics and public life. As of March 2000, 165 countries had ratified CEDAW, and as a result, they were required to report on how its provisions, particularly Article 7 that speaks to equal rights in political and public life, were being put into practice. The 1995 BPfA identified the implementation of measures to ensure the inclusion of women in political positions and equitable access to power structures as one of its strategic goals. Specifically, the BPfA advocated for the adoption of practical measures like quotas to push for increased women's participation in the political system. The BPfA stated that it is necessary to "ensure equal representation of women at all decision-making levels in national and international institutions" (UN 1995:1). Pande and Ford (2011:8) note that this provided opportunity for the adoption of gender quotas as a necessary and effective policy to enhance women's descriptive representation. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) adopted in 2000 also prioritised the increased proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments as one of the three targets of Goal 3, which is to promote gender equality and empower women. When the MDGs were replaced in 2015 by the Sustainable Development Goals, Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals continued this emphasis "to ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life" (UN Women 2021:5). Sawer (2000:24) notes that "Article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights recognises the rights of both men and women to participate equally in public life". International organisations for women are yet another source of assistance for campaigns to increase the number of women in legislatures.

These various international instruments for women's political representation had an increasing impact on the global agenda for gender equality and women's empowerment. The rationale for enhancing women's participation in politics is built around the need to increase their numbers in

political positions to ensure their interests are represented within these bodies. Sawer (2000:23) argues that the underrepresentation of women “derives its force from the numerous layers of significance that are entwined in it, including the representation of interests, the representativeness of the legislature, and the equal right to act as a representative”. In addition to seeking greater representation for women in parliaments, there is a need to improve the responsiveness of those bodies to the needs of women in the community. These permeate into the identified forms of representation selected for this study, which are descriptive representation and substantive representation.

### **2.3.2 Increasing their numbers: Descriptive women’s representation**

The first step towards ensuring holistic women’s representation is to increase the number of women participating in politics. Kanter (1977:238) cites three predictions that arise when there is an increase in women’s participation in any system. Firstly, increased participation allows women to form alliances and influence the group; secondly, they can start to differentiate themselves because of their collective strength; and finally, women who identify as feminist or are gender conscious can form supportive alliances and influence the group’s culture. These predictions formed the basis of the critical mass movement that presupposes that an increase in the number of women participating in politics will likely yield positive impact for women’s representation. Based on Kanter’s tipping point prediction, in addition with Dahlerup’s (1988) suggestion, 30% is often the stated critical mass for women’s political representation. However, more recently, the need for a critical mass of women has been replaced by a more ambitious demand for gender balance or gender parity, which is 50/50 or 40% women and 60% men in political assemblies. The critical mass argument is still used in countries with low women’s representation, and the clamour for gender parity occurs primarily in countries that already have a strong representation of women. Most studies identify additional aspects of the political context, such as hostile environments or unrecognised interests as factors that make descriptive representation more important to ensure substantive women’s representation (Dovi 2002; Mansbridge 1999).

### **2.3.3 Protecting their interests: Substantive women’s representation**

According to Childs and Krook (2009), substantive representation transcends numbers and entails the quality of women’s actual participation in politics by focusing on the outcomes of their

participation and on the factors that impact their performance rather than on descriptive aspects of women's representation. This form of representation goes beyond debuting women in the political space to ensure numerical parity; it entails the qualitative representation of women on issues that affect their quality of life, such as financial inclusion, reproductive health, and freedom from GBVF. The distinction between descriptive and substantive women's representation is why attempts at ensuring representation of women should ensure that not only are women represented numerically but their interests are also protected. Unfortunately, the significant increase in the number of women taking up political positions is often assumed to mean equal or greater representation of women issues (Celis 2008). Studies examining legislators' behaviour often predict that women's increased presence in parliament means that the interests of women will be addressed because they are motivated to advance the common interests women have (Celis *et al.* 2008:105).

A major conceptual limitation of this form of representation is the contestation of what exactly constitutes women's interests. This contestation revolves around concepts like women's issues, feminist issues, gendered issues, and women-friendly policies (Beckwith & Cowell-Meyers 2003); accountability to women, gender-sensitive policies, women's political effectiveness (Goetz 2003); strategic gender interests (Molyneux 2001); and feminising politics (Lovenduski 2005a). Other ambiguous words, such as women-friendly legislation (Hernes 1987), the promotion of women's interests, accountable to women, gender-sensitive politics, women's political efficacy (Goetz 2003), and strategic gender interests, are used in public discourse and even research (Waylan 1994). These different concepts reveal the need for an agreed definition on substantive representation, or rather, on what constitutes women's interests. Beckwith and Cowell-Meyers (2003:3) assert that some scholars attempt to resolve this confusion by examining "the relationship that exists between the proportion of women in politics and making a difference". Tremblay (2006:506) argues that the idea of making a difference, also known as the "difference fallacy, proposes underestimating the obvious possibility that women in politics, perhaps even more so when there are many of them, will be able to influence their male colleagues and change either the overall political agenda or the agenda of their individual parties (or both), with the result that there are relatively few gender differences in attitudes and behaviours". Some researchers support this claim with studies that reveal different policy preferences among male and female legislators (see Williams 1996). However, the majority of empirical research highlight disparities among women,

including those caused by ethnicity, class, age, and party affiliation, which hinder the development of a common legislative agenda. They contend that categories like women “are inherently exclusive and serve to reify one difference while erasing and obfuscating others” (Childs & Krook 2009:131). They contend that gender is a partially manufactured and reproduced identity within the context of specific legislatures rather than a pre-political and fixed identity that women and men carry with them when they enter politics. Some scholars argue that women only have an impact when they behave differently from men. While “others reject a focus on difference on the grounds that it identifies women as the gender with ‘special’ interests and experiences” (Beckwith & Cowell-Meyers 2007:555).

The contestation on defining women’s interests led feminist political theorists to advocate for a shared perspective among women as a group to consolidate calls for increased women’s participation in politics. Going back to Saward’s (2006) argument that representation is at least in part a performance of ‘claim making’ provides a way to break out of the deadlock on defining women’s interests. These discourses are essential to understand what constitutes substantive women’s representation because acting on behalf of women entails claiming to speak for them and framing issues in terms of how important they are to them. Irrespective of these discussions, substantive representation of women can be seen as the act of articulating women’s interests leading to the formulation of a wide range of viewpoints and interests, however those interests and perspectives may be described. As a result, it can have a variety of objectives and driving forces, such as enhancing the lives of women, pursuing gender equality, or emphasising difference and complementarity. Therefore, substantive representation of women can focus solely on women, on gender, or examine men and women’s positionality in society. Squires (2008) describes this dynamic as the “constitutive representation of gender”. It is crucial to stress that feminist issues are just one potential aspect of substantive representation of women, it can also take into account ‘practical interests’ that result from the actual circumstances of women’s lives (Celis 2008; Molyneux 1985). Weldon (2002) argues that collaborative procedures of interest articulation, rather than just the perspective of one legislator, are the best ways to define ‘women’s interests’. Wangnerud (2009:53) suggests that “one way to handle such controversies is to let politically active women themselves define women’s interests or what they perceive as gender equality; this strand of research relies on what are labelled subjectively defined interests”. Other studies developed theoretically grounded classifications that take into account the diversity of women but

also highlight some areas of agreement (see Lovenduski & Norris 2003; Wangnerud 2000). It is important that whatever the agreement at what substantive women's representation is should consider the nuance of women as a homogenous group and a group with intersectional interests that cut across other aspects of society.

#### **2.3.4 Relationship between descriptive and substantive women's representation**

Reingold (2000:2) asks the following fundamental question: "Does the election of more and more women mean that women will be better represented?" This question is the basis upon which much research has been done to understand the relationship between the number of women in politics and the representation of women's interests. Additionally, the majority of feminist research on political representation focuses on descriptive and substantive representation as well as potential connections between the two types of representation (Carroll 2001; Young 2000). Research focuses on the question of whether adding more female representatives (descriptive representation) will result in greater attention being paid to women's policy issues (substantive representation) (Childs & Krook 2006; Dahlerup 2006b; Grey 2006). The core assumption is that "numbers matter, an increase in descriptive representation of women in parliaments will generally even automatically translate into an increase in substantive representation of women" (Celis *et al.* 2008:105). Beckwith (2007:1) indicates "that the relationship between women's descriptive and substantive representation has attracted attention to the sheer quantity of women and number-based theories of women's representation". Mansbridge (2005:622) asserts that "descriptive representation of women enhances substantive representation for women", noting that numbers have frequently been claimed to drive impact. By conveying to the represented that the political arena supports and represents them, descriptive representation activates substantive representation. According to Williams (1996:106), a representative must have some understanding of how the privilege of masculinity affects the lives of women in her constituency in order to effectively represent their interests. The best way to understand this impact is to draw from her own experiences of gender inequality and the stereotypes attached to her gender. This demonstrates that descriptive representation of women is a necessity for adequate representation of women because representatives can better understand the needs of women. Studies have been carried out to demonstrate that female politicians feel that they are expected to represent women issues and influence the legislative agenda in favour of women. One such study is the Inter-Parliamentary

Union [IPU] study on 200 female legislators from different countries, which found that 89% of them felt that they had an obligation to act for women and represent them (IPU 2000: 133–41). Lovenduski (2005a:5) rightly points out “that more women in descriptive roles may result in the inclusion of women’s concerns. Increased participation of women in politics is the main mechanism of the many available ways to improve the substantive representation of women”. The increased number of women entering politics leads to change in political agenda and the priorities of both male and female politicians, and these agendas now include issues like public childcare, pay inequality, and violence against women in their policies and programmes. To better understand how numbers can translate to this, a structural explanation might be that more than 30% women in politics can challenge stereotypes against them within positions of power, which leads to the development of a new parity-democracy norm. While an actor-oriented explanation might be that as there are more women in politics, they have more opportunities to hold positions of power within political parties and are more likely to recruit other women, either out of a sense of obligation to their own gender or as a temporary measure to counteract male dominance in politics. These two explanations speak to the debate on critical mass versus critical acts, which is further discussed in section 2.5.2.

Arguments about the need for increased women’s participation in parliament often turn into discussions about making a difference and raising the parliamentary behaviour standards. This is because “gender is seen as relevant to the way representatives’ roles are likely to be performed and it is expected that the presence of more women will reduce the level of aggression found in male-dominated parliaments. It is not only the people that expects women to make a difference, but the women MPs themselves have this expectation” (Sawer 2000:26). Sawer (2000) further notes that a study of some female MPs from Western Australia found that almost all of them thought that having more women would increase the focus on consensus politics. Women’s interests are anticipated to be represented differently as a result of their presence. It is important to recognise that the participation of women in the political system is based on the need to ensure equality as well ensure that their interests are protected within decision-making structures (UN 1995:181). Williams (2000) finds that women in the Australian Senate are five times more likely than their male counterparts to bring up concerns like domestic violence and paid parental/maternal leave.

Some scholars argue that there is no direct link between the number of women in politics and the representation of women's interests due to the lack of agreement of what women's interests are and the inability of female politicians to speak for women (Childs & Krook 2006; Dahlerup 2006b). Childs and Krook (2006) point out that it is easier to question men's ability to speak for women and to wonder whether those who are given the role of women in society can ever truly be represented by those who have not had these experiences than it is to argue that women will be better able to represent women's interests. They further contend that even if women's interests or perspectives could be agreed upon, a more representative legislature does not guarantee that their interests will be more effectively represented because acting for is different from standing up for something (see Pitkin 1967). The other contention is that women are not a homogenous group, which affects the idea that women share common or specific experiences that can be protected by female politicians. As a result, some argue that female legislators pose a better possibility for addressing certain issues that affect women even though this contention exists (Phillips 1995:53).

In contrast to this argument, some scholars note that women in parliament see themselves as representatives of women who should act for the collective group; this is an acknowledgement that women have specific interests that bind them together (Carroll 2002; Reingold 2000; Skjeie 1991). Mateo-Diaz (2005) adds that female politicians often share the same policy opinions with women's organisations and their constituency due to their shared experience. This gave impetus to the notion that men and women have different interests, which feeds into the kind of policy goals they advocate (Lovenduski 1997; Swers 1998; Thomas & Welch 1991). Researchers discovered that women tend to behave differently than men most of the time, especially when defining the legislative agenda and introducing new measures that deal with issues that are important to women (Bratton & Ray 2002; Childs 2004). Additionally, their presence results in transformation of the legislative agenda (Grey 2002), as well as changes to parliamentary procedures and work schedules (Skjeie 1991). Mansbridge (2005:625) explains that "in the cases of gender and race, legislators who themselves are members of a group respond to issues affecting that group with greater concern than do non-members". She notes further that issues like education and women's rights, which normally affect female constituents more than male constituents, "are given more attention by female legislators than by male legislators in practically every measured representative body, from the U.S. House of Representatives to the Indian panchayats". Descriptive representatives from groups who are most affected by certain issues tend to be more



invested in those causes, devote more time to them, and work harder to bring them to the attention of legislators. Mansbridge (2005:626) contends that “descriptive representatives have, moreover, several advantages in communicating with other legislators. They can react quickly and flexibly in response to what they hear from their constituents while also drawing on their own personal experience”. When speaking, they can use examples from their own experiences to illustrate how a piece of legislation might affect their group. They have the ability to express information and emotion vividly through their speaking. They have the ability to speak and might be trusted. They can also rely on the bonds they have made with other legislators to provide them with the understanding of the descriptive representative’s stance that they may require. Even when the descriptive legislator is passive, the other legislators are made aware of the opinions and priorities of the group that the descriptive member belongs to by virtue of the descriptive legislator’s very physical presence.

While discussions are ongoing regarding the relationship between numbers and representation of women’s interests, the popular notion is that increased number of women in politics provides grounds for women’s interests to be better represented. Women politicians understand the needs and lived experiences of women, which makes it suitable for them to advocate for these issues in positions of power. While contestations continue regarding definition of women’s interests, there are certain issues that generally affect women as a group; one of which is GBVF. The intersectionality that exists among women as a group does not shield them from being victims of violence; hence, there are numerous convergences that can be arrived at on what constitutes women’s interests or substantive representation of women. Dahlerup (2006a:18) confirms that there are “five categories of observations about the relationships between descriptive and substantive representation which are (1) expected effects of higher proportions of women; (2) enabling and constraining legislative contexts; (3) legislators’ identities and interests; (4) definitions of women’s issues; and (5) policy-making processes”.

The next section discusses gender quotas and how it features prominently as a means to ensure descriptive women’s representation and the possibility of effecting substantive women’s representation.

## 2.4 Gender Quotas and Descriptive Women's Representation

### 2.4.1 Gender quotas

Gender quotas, often known as electoral gender quotas or quotas, are institutional forms of affirmative action aimed at resolving structural imbalances that limit the political representation of women (Krook 2004b). Dahlerup (2006a:6) states that they are 'fast-track' models meant to enable political representation that emanate from growing impatience on the slow pace of change in women's political power.

Quotas were initially implemented in Nordic countries when the Socialist Left Party of Norway set a 40% minimum goal for gender representation on electoral lists in 1975, other parties in Norway, as well as those in Denmark and Sweden, quickly followed (Pande & Ford 2011:8). Ten countries implemented gender quotas between 1930 and 1980, and 12 other countries did the same in the 1980s. However, quotas were implemented in more than 50 countries in the 1990s, and since 2000, approximately 40 more countries have joined them (Krook 2006:312–313). These waves directly interact with variations in the prevalence and timing of various quota measures. The first quota type designed to ensure women's representation were reserved seats, which became the primary quota type used between 1930 and 1970. However, since 2000, they have increased in popularity. Madsen (2019) notes that voluntary party quotas first appeared in the early 1970s but that they spread more widely in the 1980s and 1990s; legislative quotas emerged in the 1990s and gained popularity during the 2000s. Along with these time variations, the kinds of quotas implemented follow specific regional patterns and have comparable rules throughout the locations where they are present. Gender quotas are now widely used, and as of 2008, more than 100 countries had implemented them in one form or the other (IIDEA 2007). More recent statistics shows that 135 countries have implemented a form of quota system (IIDEA 2022). These patterns imply that quotas are not just a global phenomenon but are also related to other quota campaigns around the world or that they have significant things in common with them. Zetterberg (2009:715) notes that "gender quotas have arguably been the most drastic and highly contentious reform in the field of gender equality in the last 50 to 60 years". By mandating that women represent a specific percentage of political candidates or officials, they impact the gender compositions of those who hold political office (Hughes 2011). Despite being different in many other aspects, most quota adoption cases have one thing in common: They frequently occur during times of change or

crisis. Baines and Rubio-Marin (2005) assert that in cases of constitutional reforms, quotas are often approved by national legislatures.

Quotas found expression when the “United Nations ECOSOC endorsed a target of 30% women in decision-making positions in the world by 1995 as well as several international declarations from the 1990s calling for a target or quota of 30%” (Pande & Ford 2011:10). Dahlerup (2006a:14) argues that “this target was far from met, since in 1995 only 10% of the world’s parliamentarians were women, in 2005, only 16% which was still far from one-third, as a result, many countries adopted fast-track procedures like quotas”. The UN BPfA and CEDAW are cited by proponents of gender quotas in politics to support their argument for quotas. The Platform for Action is described as advocating for gender quotas in politics, even though it does not use the contentious word ‘quota’, because it urges “special targets and implementing measures, if necessary, through positive action” (UN 1995: Art.190a). Similarly, the 1979 CEDAW convention refers to ‘special measures’. The percentages or figures used in electoral gender quotas vary widely, ranging from 5% in Nepal to 50% in Sweden and France. However, 30% is the most common proportion chosen for candidate quotas for both legal and voluntary party quotas (Dahlerup 2006b). There is a transition emerging from calls for minority participation of 30% to a more radical call for gender parity in politics of 50%. But while, for example, the Platform for Action represents this new line in its demand for equal representation, it nevertheless continues to argue for securing a critical mass of women in parliaments (UN 1995:Art. 181–95). The recent trend of enacting gender quotas in post-conflict states is frequently based on arguments that women must be included if democracy is to advance (Dahlerup 2006a).

#### **2.4.2 Types of gender quotas**

There are three main types of electoral gender quotas, namely legislated or constitutional, voluntary, or party quotas, and reserved seats quota. Krook *et al.* (2008:3) notes that most of the research on gender quotas identifies the following three main categories of quota measures: Reserved seats, which designate seats in political assemblies for women and that men are not permitted to run for; party quotas, which involve party pledges to nominate a certain percentage of women; and legislated quotas, which call for a certain percentage of women to be nominated by all parties as mandated by law.

### ***2.4.2.1 Legislated quotas***

Legislated or constitutional quotas, also known as legal quotas, are mandated by national legislations, and embedded in the constitution to specify that a certain percentage of candidate seats must be held by women (International IDEA 2022). They often set limits on where women can appear on the electoral list, such as mandating that every second person on the list must be a woman. Legal quotas, which control political representation of one or more groups using the power of the constitution, are the most used form of quotas, and more than 100 countries have implemented them. National gender quotas impact all political parties in a system, even those that frequently represent minority groups. These policies may increase minority women's representation more successfully than gender quotas that political parties freely adopt. An electoral gender quota legislation might, for instance, mandate that at least 40% of the candidates on the electoral lists be women. Since women are the underrepresented group in political institutions, most legislations strive to ensure that women have a minimum number of seats. This implies that there is a maximum set for the representation of men. Legal gender quotas are required either by the electoral law, as in several countries in Latin America, as well as Rwanda, Angola, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Slovenia, and France, or by the constitution, as in Nepal and the Philippines. Krook (2004b) notes that legislated quotas are typically prevalent in post-conflict societies, predominantly in Africa, the Middle East, and south-eastern Europe, and in developing countries, particularly Latin America. They are the most recent form of quotas and first appeared in the 1990s when the underrepresentation of women attracted attention on a global scale and made it onto the agenda of international organisations and transnational non-governmental organisations. Legislated quotas are similar to party quotas in that they address party selection processes, but they differ in that they are passed by national parliaments to require that all parties nominate a specific percentage of female candidates. They are frequently implemented through changes to electoral laws and occasionally constitutions. As a result, their provisions apply to all political parties and not only to those that opt to implement quotas. Legislative quotas, like party quotas, require women to make up a specific proportion of all candidates. However, they entail broader reform procedures that are more concerned with changing the language in constitutions and electoral laws than the specifics of party statutes, and therefore, some partisan support is necessary for their ratification. Depending on the electoral system, legislative quotas can be enforced in a way that affects party lists (Meier 2004). Legislative quotas are unique as they typically include penalties for violation

and are subject to some level of external scrutiny given their legal standing (Baldez 2004; Jones 1998). For legislated quotas, distinction is made between quotas implemented through changes to the electoral legislation and those implemented through constitutional revisions because of certain inherent differences in the legislative process (Dahlerup 2006a).

#### **2.4.2.2 *Voluntary quotas***

Voluntary or party quotas are often set by political parties, allowing them to nominate a specified number of female candidates for their electoral lists. The most prevalent kind of gender quotas are party quotas (Childs & Krook 2012). A small number of socialist and social democratic parties in Western Europe originally adopted them in the early 1970s. However, during the 1980s and 1990s, they arose in a wide range of political parties around the world, including green parties, social democratic parties, and even certain conservative parties. For voluntary quotas, political parties have the authority to decide the modalities that surround the quota, and often the adoption of quota by one party creates a diffusion wherein other parties adopt them too. Party quotas, at their core, are voluntary policies set by certain parties that bind the party to strive for a specific percentage of female candidates for elected office. They change party procedures in this regard by establishing new criteria for candidate selection that oblige elites to acknowledge pre-existing prejudices and take into account other domains of political recruitment (Krook 2005; Lovenduski & Norris 1993). The prerogative of how many women to be included in the party list is left to the whims of the party and depends on how dedicated they are to increasing women's participation. A number of political parties have implemented quotas for their own lists in several countries, including Germany, Norway, Sweden, and South Africa. It is interesting to note that only one or two parties often choose to use quotas in many other cases. Nonetheless, the overall rate of female representation may be significantly impacted if the country's dominant party employs a quota, such as the African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa (Dahlerup 2004). Sometimes, party quotas are adopted in conjunction with other quota systems in various countries to advance women's representation. Aspirant quotas, which limit the number of women who can be considered for nomination in the pre-selection process, and candidate quotas, which mandate that parties include a certain percentage of women in their final lists of candidates, are categories that fall under party quotas (Matland 2006).

### ***2.4.2.3 Reserved seats system***

Reserved seats are positions that are solely open to female candidates. These seats are used as a more direct means of controlling the proportion of women in elected posts and are backed by law (Pande & Ford 2011:8). Countries that use the reserve seats system fill seats in parliaments through special election lists, distinct party lists, or unique direct appointment procedures (Htun 2004). Reserved seats are mostly used in the Middle East, Asia, and Africa (Krook 2004b). In countries like Jordan, Uganda, and Rwanda, gender quotas are increasingly being implemented using reserved seat systems, and the women elected under these systems are elected rather than appointed. There are no reserved seats in Western Europe, North America, Australia, or New Zealand. The majority of scholars contend that reserved seats should be considered a type of quota because their regulations give clear guarantees as to who may enter political life rather than influencing candidate nomination processes (Dahlerup 2006a). Related to reserved seats system is the idea of ‘double quota’, which is used to characterise quota systems that not only call for a particular proportion of female candidates to be included on the electoral list but also work to keep them from being relegated to the bottom of the list with little prospect of winning. Examples of countries that have constitutional requirements for double quotas are Belgium and Argentina. Unlike legislated or party quotas that do not guarantee that women will be elected to political positions, reserved seats ensure that women occupy a certain percentage of political positions.

Discussions on the forms of quotas address the following two questions: who mandated the system, and at what stage? It also indicates that the degree to which quotas are regulated varies: Some are controlled by constitutional provisions or electoral laws, and others are controlled by party regulations. By changing the fundamental definitions of equality and representation that guide the candidate selection process, quota policies make significant strides toward legitimising positive actions and recognising gender as a political identity.

### **2.4.3 Effectiveness of gender quotas for descriptive women’s representation**

Despite significant efforts to promote women’s political engagement, women, minorities, and minority women continue to be notably underrepresented in high-level political roles globally (Paxton & Hughes 2007). As a result, there was an increased need to explicitly encourage women to participate in decision-making using practical instruments. Hence, most countries implemented

quota laws and policies requiring women be included on candidate lists or in representative bodies to address ongoing disparities (Dahlerup 2006a). The main goal of quotas is to increase the number of women in political positions, which is descriptive women's representation. Quotas help to ensure numerical similarity between political bodies and the people they represent in terms of characteristics such as gender. As more and more countries adopt quotas as corrective instruments to address the underrepresentation of women in politics, the call for descriptive representation of women gained momentum (Squires 1996). Political quotas vary greatly across the globe because of their influence to ensure the political representation of former excluded social groups. Krook and O'Brien (2010) assert that quotas promote representation by gender, colour, ethnicity, etc. Quotas seek to ensure that women make up a sizeable minority of 20%, 30%, or 40% or ensure a 50/50 split in political positions, notable of which is in parliament. Schwindt-Bayer (2009) confirms that the descriptive representation of women is significantly improved via quotas.

Some countries use quotas as a temporary measure until the obstacles hindering women's political participation are resolved, but most quota-using countries have not resolved these obstacles over time, thereby prolonging their use (Tripp 2004). Since the underrepresentation of women is typically a problem that needs to be addressed, most quotas attempt to increase the representation of women, which is especially relevant given that women typically make up 50% of the population. Pande and Ford (2011:11) argue that quotas are designed to improve the proportion of women in positions of leadership. By formally requiring that certain roles be reserved for women, prejudice is avoided. They explain that quotas enable fair representation of women in leadership roles when the political system's structure hinders women's political advancement. Quotas are implemented in countries where women make up a small minority in parliament to ensure an increase in their numbers. Dahlerup and Freidenvall (2005:27) assert that "we are currently witnessing historically significant increases in women's representation, such as the rise of Costa Rica's female representation in parliament from 19 to 35% in just one election, or South Africa's 30% female electorate in the country's first democratic parliamentary election". The effectiveness of quotas motivated scholars to claim that due to the prevalent adoption of quotas, new paths for equal political participation for women are now viable, in contrast to earlier experiences.

Women's organisations typically mobilise in favour of quotas when they learn that they are effective at promoting an increase in women's political representation. These women may be represented by women's groups inside political parties, women's movements within civil society,

women's organisations abroad, or even just one or two powerful women (Bruhn 2003). Krook and O'Brien (2010) highlight that implementing quotas that demand a certain amount of representation for women, racial and ethnic minorities, or other underrepresented groups on the ballot or in the decision-making body is one way to increase the descriptive diversity of political bodies. According to O'Brien and Rickne (2016), quotas ensure that specific number of seats in parliament are set aside for women while also encouraging political parties to delimit some constituencies for female candidates. This led to declaration that the overall objective of quotas to raise the proportion of women in office has been achieved.

Women's empowerment has been aided by the adoption of certain political measures such as quotas to guarantee a better gender balance. Out of 279 posts globally, there were 55 women in charge of national parliament chambers in 2018 (IPU 2018). In countries with special measures like quotas, the representation of women in parliaments has dramatically increased. For instance, France, which is in the EU, has had the highest increase in the proportion of women in parliament by passing legislation that promote gender parity in elected positions. At the end of 2018, there were 24.1% more women serving in parliament than there were 20 years prior, a rise of 13% (IPU 2018). Quotas have also been used to enhance women's involvement in political leadership in Africa. For instance, studies of both Tanzania (Yoon 2011) and Rwanda (Burnet 2011) suggest that quotas have transformed negative cultural and social beliefs about women's participation in politics and granted women access to leadership positions from which they had traditionally been excluded. In Niger, the quota law increased the number of women in elected office from 1.2% in 1999 to 12.4% in 2004, and there are more women in executive cabinet and other government positions (Kang 2013).

Quotas have been useful in facilitating the achievement of a 'critical mass', which is considered to be established with roughly 30% representation, which is beneficial for improving overall mobilisation along gender lines (Peschard 2003:26). Whether it be a candidate list, legislative assembly, committee, or government, quotas for women must make up a specific number or percentage of the membership. The system's main goal is to elevate women into political leadership roles and make sure that they are more than just a bystander to politics. Critical mass suggests "that women should make up 30% of all political bodies which according to international organisations, transnational networks, party politicians, women's activists, and even regular citizens, is the magic number where female legislators are supposedly able to make a difference"

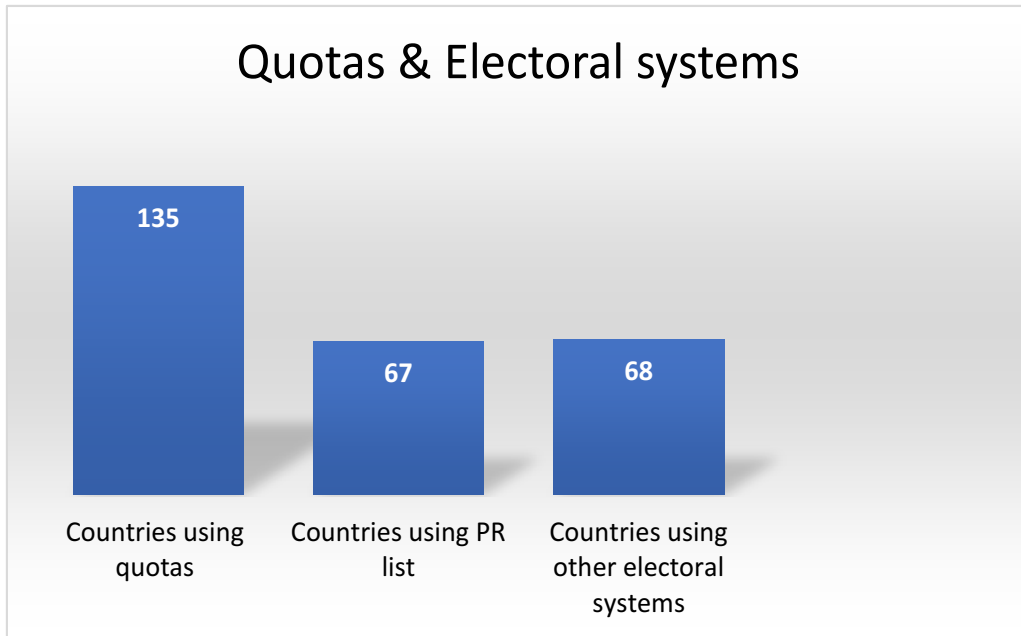


(Dahlerup 1988:280). It assumes that as their numbers rise, women will be able to work together more effectively, and in some cases, women do seem to make a difference, sometimes even more so when they represent a small minority of legislators, either because their numbers increase, and male legislators retaliate or because their numbers rise and allow individual women to pursue other policy goals. Improved representation of women's policy interests can be achieved by increasing the proportion of female leaders through quotas (Pande & Ford 2011:11). The relevance is that quotas help increase the number of women in parliament, which enables the critical mass needed to represent women issues. This is further discussed in section 2.5.

#### **2.4.4 Role of the electoral system in the success of gender quotas**

When discussing the effectiveness of quotas in facilitating women's descriptive representation, it is important to include the impact the electoral system has on such effectiveness. The type of electoral system in place affects the success of the quota system adopted. A proportional representation (PR) system is most compatible with a quota system as it enables the inclusion of women in party lists, which would be difficult to achieve in a first-past-the-post (FPTP) simple majority system. Dahlerup and Friedenvall (2005:36) attest that "even though quota provisions are being tested in majority systems like the UK, France, India, Bangladesh, and Nepal, quota provisions are unquestionably more compatible with PR electoral systems than with majority systems". PR is the electoral system where quotas are most easily implemented; for instance, 67 out of the 135 countries with quota systems have a PR electoral system, and the other 68 are divided among other electoral systems such as FPTP, Parallel, MMP etc. (International IDEA 2022).

*Figure 1: Overview of Countries using quotas and electoral system.*



Source: (International IDEA 2022)

This is not to say that quotas are impossible with majority systems, but the operationality does not lead to significant increases in women's representation. Taking into account only the 89 countries that Freedom House (2006) rates as free, parliaments established under simple majority had an average female membership of 10.8% in October 2005, mixed system assemblies had a rate of 17.7%, and PR-based parliaments had a rate of 21.1%. In other words, parliaments created by PR have two times as many women in them as legislative assemblies created through majority systems (particularly with party lists). This study supports several research findings that PR has a better ability to feminise parliaments than majority systems (Matland 1998; Norris 2004:179; Rule 1994). Therefore, PR appears to be better suited than majority systems to facilitate the formation of a critical mass of female MPs. While electoral systems, descriptive representation, and critical mass do have substantial correlations, the same cannot be said for the substantive representation of women. Ideally, PR appears to provide a more favourable environment for the substantive representation of women. However, studies of female politicians who were elected using a variety of electoral systems and who made up wildly varying percentages in their national parliaments (13% in France compared to 50% in Wales) point to the common conclusion that they understood their obligation to represent women. A critical mass of women appears to be a condition that enables substantive women's representation because PR often produces higher proportions of female parliamentarians than majority systems, and thus, the former has greater potential to

improve substantive representation of women than majority systems. The compatibility of PR system with quotas is not absolute because depending on the kind of quotas adopted in the PR systems, some political parties may find it difficult to implement quotas since they may be perceived as interfering with party politics. For instance, if a legislated quotas is provided for without consolidating it with party quotas, those parties may argue that the law is interfering with the composition of their party list.

#### **2.4.5 Limitations of quotas**

There is frequently disagreement among women as a group over the merits of gender quotas. Feminists, both inside and outside political parties, have been some of the sharpest opponents, arguing that quotas do not further the cause of women empowerment or is not based on merit and competence (Amar 1999; Huang 2002; Kishwar 1998). Contestation regarding the use of gender quotas touch on theoretical discussion of “women as a group and highlight the issue of whether it is ethically appropriate to continue referring to one specific group of women as we. One may argue that women as a group are both the Achilles’ heel of the feminist movement and its *raison d’être*” (Dahlerup & Freidenvall 2005:31). Because quotas only address one aspect of inequality at a time, they may reinforce intra-group disparities. In addition, “because women and minorities are disproportionately underrepresented in politics, a measure to increase their participation may increase the likelihood that a more diverse group of women or minorities will be elected” (Mansbridge 1999:636). Quotas have drawbacks because while certain quotas are linked to improved minority women’s parliamentary representation, other quota systems disadvantage minority women. The specific groups targeted and the level (national, party, or both) at which quotas are regulated, may help to clarify how quotas affect the descriptive representation of minority women. Mansbridge (2005:631) argues that while “quotas can disprove some essentialist theories by, for instance, allowing enough women of various types to participate in politics such that both men and women can see them as capable leaders”. They can also strengthen essentialist attitudes by claiming that “only women can represent women for essentialist reasons and therefore that women cannot represent men”. The most apparent manner that quotas might rigidify group lines is by requiring members of one group to vote exclusively for members of that group and not for members of other groups. On the other spectrum of re-enforcing disparities, critics of quotas

in countries where they are seen as a way to advance equality and equitable access have contended that they are unconstitutional or illegal because they discriminate against men (Guadagnini 2005). Institutional factors often hinder the effectiveness of quotas, which is why Dahlerup and Freidenvall (2005:37) note that while some countries have seen significant gains in the number of women parliamentarians since the implementation of gender quotas, others have seen more modest improvements or even declines. This is because decision-makers often give the implementation procedure intended to make quotas effective little thought. If the execution of quota restrictions is not regulated and there are no penalties for non-compliance, passing them can only be a symbolic gesture. Women's movements must play a significant part not just in the passage of the quota regulations but also in their implementation. When gender quotas were first implemented, they frequently resulted in the appointment of women who were predominantly from powerful political families, and some quotas were openly considered a technique for raising submissive women (Carrió 2003). Carrió (2003) further argues that in these situations, women elected under quotas speak up on women's interests less frequently than women elected in open elections against men. If quota policies advance female lawmakers who are seen as submissive or redundant by their voters and colleagues, women elected through this process may avoid pursuing "legislative agendas that are counter-cultural, such as taking a firm stance on women's rights" (Carrió 2003:170). Researchers identify instances where quota-elected women show excessive loyalty to ruling elites, frequently in authoritarian or semi-authoritarian contexts that limit their liberty to speak out on issues beyond the party chapter dominated by men (Bauer 2008; Walsh 2012). Another problem is that women may be reluctant to speak up about issues that disproportionately affect women for fear that doing so may hinder their ability to grow in their careers. Clayton (2015:340) argues that "under these circumstances, negative quota effects which highlight difference between women who enter into legislative office with and without quotas, dampen the potential for quotas to be used to increase women's descriptive representation". The degree to which a certain culture at a specific point in history may recognise quotas as legitimate also affects how effective they are (Mansbridge 2005:629); for instance, "in the United States, the name quota itself suggests that merit, individual worth, and fair competition are not important, besides the fact that the state should not interfere with people's freedoms".

## **2.5 Substantive Women's Representation: Issues and Debates**

### **2.5.1 Beyond numbers: The value of quotas for impact**

The deeper impact of quotas has been a subject of ongoing debate; notably whether they alter how institutions function (Verge & Claveria 2016) or are only intended to ensure descriptive representation (Nugent & Krook 2016). In addition, studies on substantive women's representation often concentrate on the relationship between the proportion of women in elected office and the potential representative roles they may have. These studies are based on theoretical justifications that contend that as women come from a variety of experiences and backgrounds, they are better situated and more motivated to speak for all women (Mansbridge 1999; Phillips 1995; Pitkin 1967). These claims are supported by a substantial body of empirical research that reveals that female lawmakers, compared to their male colleagues, express a greater desire to represent the interests of women and initiate and sponsor legislations related to gender equality (Bratton & Ray 2002; Childs 2004; Thomas 1994). However, many of these studies stress that while numbers are necessary, they are an insufficient condition to ensure women's issues are given more consideration during the legislative process. The concept of a critical mass and the emphasis on female legislators as the only agents of change recently gave way to a greater emphasis on other elements that may affect how well women's interests are represented, such as "legislators' personal characteristics and party affiliation as well as broader institutional contexts" (Bratton 2005:100; Celis *et al.* 2008:115). This raises the following question: "Do quotas just enhance descriptive representation, or do they produce comprehensive changes in the characteristics of those who serve in political office?" (Barnes & Holman 2020:1). Barnes and Holman (2020:1) argue that quotas make considerable changes beyond ensuring descriptive representation because they "change how parties work, how networks operate and how individuals engage with politics through complementary mechanisms". Alexander (2012) argues that by reshaping the legislature descriptively, quotas help redefine perception of what an ideal candidate is in the eyes of political leaders and political parties. Particularly, as the proportion of women holding political offices rises, so does the awareness that a more diverse set of politicians with different backgrounds can lead. This creates a direct link between the increase in women's descriptive representation and the diversity of political leaders who hold legislative offices.

Hawkesworth (2003 cited in Barnes & Holman 2020:2) attests that “quotas require parties to change their recruiting strategies and break gendered institutional patterns or the idea that institutions behave in ways that are constrained and restrictive of gender”. The diversity of elected officials increases as long as a quota is in place that has further implications for diversity in policy. The role of parliamentary diversity in sparking change in policy cannot be over-emphasised because the more representative and diverse a parliament becomes, the higher the likelihood that such diversity will reflect in policies. This argument is predicated on the idea that by increasing the representation of women, the diversity of individuals holding political power will also increase. Quotas are basically a strategy for boosting women’s descriptive representation, which over time ensures political diversity. Advocates of gender quotas often refer to data showing that quota reforms the legislative landscape by normalising women’s political participation, resulting in new political cultures, a broader political agenda, and more attention to women’s issues among both women and men (Franceschet 2011; Mackay 2008). Quotas may influence the personal legislative agenda of specific female legislators, pushing them to focus on matters that directly affect women’s welfare and to implement laws that take into account the political and economic preferences of female citizens (Childs & Krook 2012; Devlin & Elgie 2008). Other studies show how gendered power structures may actually be cemented or even be made worse by quota reforms. Beckwith (2007) notes that quota changes may provoke opposition from male lawmakers who, in response to quotas and the increased presence of women, attempt to maintain control by closing off places for substantive women’s representation and marginalising female entrants. Male legislators may delegate women’s issues to women in response to the unexpected influx of women, which would eventually result in less legislative focus on these matters. Furthermore, the stigma of needing a quota policy may delegitimise the women who benefit from it and limit their capacity to serve as legislators (Clayton 2015). There are several studies that documents occasions where quota-elected MPs have been viewed as second-class or unnecessary lawmakers, making women’s cause a less important or less significant legislative agenda (Childs & Krook 2012; Childs 2004). Mackay (2008:127) explains that the dependence on female legislators to advance change only “emphasises the link between women’s descriptive and substantive representation”. Tremblay (2006:509) found that “although attention to women’s interests may be descriptively marginal or led by only a small number of female MPs, female legislators are more likely than their male colleagues to bring up topics linked to gender equality in their legislative discourse”. Based on

data collected from Argentina, Piscopo (2011) found that discussions around sexual health changes in the National Congress of Argentina tend to view the interests of female constituents via various ideological lenses. While Phillips (1995) affirms that women advocate for quotas based on normative and practical grounds because they believe that more women in politics is necessary to advance justice, advance women's interests, and use women's resources for the benefit of society. Krook (2006) argues that given the lack of a natural trend toward change, it can only be accomplished by adopting carefully focused measures (quotas) to support female candidates. The introduction of gender quotas is seen by some scholars as being consistent with concepts around equality and fair access. Gender quotas are frequently compatible in a variety of ways with normative frameworks. Hassim (2002) notes that because policies like quotas align with the overarching objective of promoting social equality, left-wing parties are more receptive and open to them. During moments of democratic innovation, quotas frequently merge (Meier 2000), which makes them useful for establishing the legitimacy of new democratic institutions (Bauer & Britton 2006).

Evidence from numerous instances suggests that attempts to nominate more female candidates very seldom take place in the absence of gender quotas. This is why adoption of quotas is seen as part of development of current ideas relating to representation and equality. Others see gender quotas as part of a wider set of representational safeguards designed to acknowledge gender diversity and the necessity for PR (Inheteven 1999; Meier 2000; Sgier 2003). Barnes and Homan (2020:3) highlight that "by redefining candidate quality, the implementation of gender quotas may challenge these gendered practices of political recruitment. Expanding women's access to elected office may change how party leaders and prospective candidates assess who is viewed as an appropriate leader". This changing opinions about candidate quality can help break down gendered trends in candidate supply and demand. The implementation of quotas alone is probably insufficient to bring about a shift in the gender dynamic. However, if there is considerable turnover, quotas will impact the recruitment process because parties will eventually need to refill the supply of women on their lists. Therefore, quotas combined with a high rate of legislative turnover are likely to result in greater diversity over time, and "if it is true that quotas encourage changes in political recruitment patterns, it follows that the longer quotas are in place in political contexts with high turnover, the more parties will need to recruit women from a wider range of networks, and as a result, the more diversity observed among those in positions of power" (Barnes & Homan

2020:4). Hawkesworth (2003) argues that an extensive body of research on gendered institutions contradicts the notion that merely ensuring descriptive representation of women without altering other institutional mechanisms will change gendered nature of politics. This indicates that much more needs to be done beyond numbers to ensure substantive women's representation. Ndlovu and Mutale (2013:75) argue in relation to the African context that "while quotas are important in addressing the exclusion of women from the public political sphere, women have not fully benefitted from the system in most African countries".

The central submission of this section is that the conversation on quotas must shift beyond descriptive representation to the use of quotas in engendering substantive women's representation. The representation of the relevant groups in a political system via quotas can result in substantive representation whenever the speaking for, making present of the group's ideas and the acting on its behalf are done by people who understand what it means to be a part of this group. Quotas also help ensure diversity in composition of political bodies as well as expand recruitment standards for political parties. The consequential effect is that these contribute to the inclusiveness and responsiveness of policies developed. The myopic conception of the relevance of gender quotas does not bid well for the argument of how numbers create impact. If we begin to understand quotas within the broader objective of women's political representation rather than just participation, there will be progress in protecting women's interests. Summarily, the explicit inclusion of members of relevant groups in the political sphere using quotas is important for their substantive representation, and thus, it bids well to posit that gender quotas can help foster substantive representation.

### **2.5.2 Critical mass versus critical acts**

Part of the discussion about how best to ensure the substantive representation of women is the debate about critical mass versus critical acts. The former argues that a certain percentage of women is needed to make considerable change in the political system, and the latter posits that we should focus on certain acts that advance the interests of women. A brief overview of critical mass and critical acts or actors is provided in the following subsections to set the background for examining the debate.



### **2.5.2.1 Conceptualisation of critical mass**

The concept of critical mass became popular in political science following Dahlerup's (1988) article *From a Small to a Large Minority: Women in Scandinavian Politics*. Dahlerup draws inspiration from Rosabeth Moss Kanter's 1977 study that looks at the inter-relationship within groups made up of people of various cultural categories or statuses to demonstrate how the composition of a legislative assembly influences its procedures and policies. Based on Kanter's research, there are two group types: The 'skewed group' in which the minority make up a maximum of 15% of the membership and are considered 'tokens'; and 'the tilted group' in which the minority make up between 15% and 40% of the membership and is "becoming strong enough to begin to influence the group's culture" (Kanter 1977). The tilted group emerged as the most significant group interaction in critical mass debates. While Kanter's research is crucial and foundational to critical mass, her stated percentages seldom appear in critical mass studies. On the other hand, Dahlerup's 30% suggestion as the point for critical mass has gained momentum in both political science and the quota policies of many countries (Childs 2004; Grey 2002; Studlar & McAllister 2002; UN ECOSOC 2004). The critical mass argument was mostly used in the 1980s in cases where the percentage of women in parliaments or local councils was less than 30%. Dahlerup (2006b:515) makes the argument that "because a small number of women in politics tend to be tokens, it was impractical to foresee significant improvements until the percentage of women participating in politics had reached a critical mass". The discussion among feminist political scientists in the 1980s about using a critical mass theory to inform future studies of women in politics was inspired by Helen Mayer Hacker's (1951) article on women's minority position in society at large. Dahlerup (1988:283) highlights that Hacker's article "offered six other aspects of potential changes that might result from changes in the relative number of women and men, widening the research topic in response to the current, very limited, discussion of why women do not make more of a difference in politics". The critical mass argument has undoubtedly had an impact as it has been and continues to be crucial for the global advocacy of raising women's representation since the 1980s. The concept of critical mass suggests that women need to make up a sizeable proportion in legislative bodies before they are able to influence policies that benefit women. It argues that a token of women is needed for women politicians to ensure substantive women's representation.

### ***2.5.2.2 Conceptualisation of critical act{or}s***

Childs and Krook (2006:528) define “critical actors as those who initiate policy proposals on their own, even when women form a small minority, and embolden others to take steps to promote policies for women, regardless of the proportion of female representatives”. They consolidate this definition by stating that they are “those who act individually or collectively to bring about women-friendly policy change” (Childs & Krook 2009:127). In rare circumstances, they may not even be women, as specific men may play a significant role in furthering the policy needs of women (Celis 2004; Tamerius 1995). Critical actors are far more driven than others to advocate for policy reforms on behalf of women, even though they hold attitudes similar to those of other representatives (Childs & Withey 2006). They further note that although they might work alone, they could also inspire others to take action, creating momentum for policy change, or they incite opposition to fundamental transformation. As a result, their shape and impact are relative. For example, smaller groups of women in the legislature may work together to successfully advance shared objectives, but bigger groups may increase the possibility of critical acts while also having the potential to undermine their outcomes. The recruitment of additional women, the implementation of female quotas, favourable gender policies, and the protection of women’s interests are all critical acts often carried out by critical actors. Critical acts are dependent on “the willingness and capacity of the minority to mobilise the resources of the organisation or institution to improve the situation for themselves and the entire minority group” (Childs & Krook 2009:129).

### ***2.5.2.3 Debate on critical mass and critical acts***

According to Kanter (1977), the size of a group affects the way people interact with one another. When a group is still a distinct minority within a larger society, its members will want to fit in by abiding by the majority social norms. Critical mass therefore suggests that when groups get larger and the minority begins to express itself, it creates considerable change in the character of group interactions as its numbers enable it to change institutional cultures, norms, and values. This is consistent with the idea that when the proportion of women elected to parliament exceeds a certain threshold, the institutional culture and policy priorities will change (Norris & Lovenduski 2002:2–3). Based on the central idea that when a threshold number is reached it will have a substantive effect on policy making, critical mass connects descriptive women’s representation to policy

change (Beckwith 2007). In a nutshell, the critical mass model proposes a connection between numbers and impact. Beckwith and Cowell-Meyers (2003) argue that critical mass depends on the following factors:

“First, the number of elected women serves as the independent variable, operationalised by a measure of women’s participation in national or state legislatures; second, the proportion of women in a legislature relative to its total size, or the percentage of women, generates a critical mass; third, most scholars propose a critical mass that can be encompassed by a critical representation threshold, ranging between 15 and 30%.”

The critical mass argument is strongly tied to the conviction that having more women in politics will have an impact since it is presumed that when there are enough women in politics, women will benefit. Even with the conceptual disagreement of what exactly it means for female politicians to make a difference, Sawer (2000) argues that women will always be expected to pull their critical mass into making a difference for the general women populace. The critical mass is often used to push the agenda that when women are numerically represented in politics, their numbers can be used for change. Dahlerup (2006b:514) assert that parties using gender quotas should ensure the nomination of significant numbers of women to reach a critical mass because the represented demand that their voices are proportionally represented.

Whether women in legislature need to attain a critical mass to affect change in the political sphere has been the centre of discussion in the debate concerning significant changes in political decision-making. According to Grey (2006), critical mass is only beneficial if we give up the notion that a certain percentage of women participating is the answer to all women’s representation needs and if we give up the idea that numbers alone can significantly change policy processes and outcomes. The idea that women politicians will significantly influence political decision-making can be found in discussions concerning the “politics of presence” (Phillips 1995). The critical mass argument forms a significant part of the politics of presence. The idea that “both the messenger and the message are considered crucial” is a major part of discussions on critical mass (Catt 2003). Furthermore, once elected, female parliamentarians will be seen as not only ‘standing as’ but also as ‘acting for’ women as a group (Lovenduski & Norris 2003; Pitkin 1967). This notion is centred around how women experience the world and the way this influences how they would act if elected

as political representatives and not on the idea that there is a necessary connection between sex and representation. In examining the role that the critical mass of women plays in influencing policy making, four factors stand out as being particularly crucial to look into: the position of the female politicians; their tenure in office; their personal beliefs and that of their party; and finally, the responses of and to the female politicians. When the number of women in politics reaches a critical mass, Dahlerup (1988:283–287) argues that attitudes about them will change from both inside and outside legislatures.

Tremblay (2006:502) points out that the “concept of critical mass has been subjected to abusive interpretations, becoming interchangeable with a causal relationship between presence and ideas (or between representation and responsiveness), leading one to believe in the existence of a sisterhood among female politicians and a discussion on their representational activities”. The critical mass theory is one of the many manifestations of how the critical mass argument has been abused. Dahlerup (1988) agrees that there is a tipping point where women can begin to form alliances to influence the system, and theorists used this to develop a theory of critical mass. The problem with the theory is that it predicts that the increase in number of women will automatically transform legislative agenda for women. This creates a false assumption that to ensure substantive representation, all that needs to be done is to increase the number of women in positions of power. Further legitimising instances where measures to protect the interests of women are collapsed into single solution of increasing the number of women in politics. However, this misconception was corrected by Dahlerup (2006b:520) when she argues that while the number of women in politics is an important factor, it is not an absolute means to protect the interests of women.

#### ***2.5.2.4 Problem with critical mass theory***

The critical mass theory that assumes that increased percentage of women participation in politics will lead to better representation of women issues has been duly critiqued by scholars because of its shortcomings. Childs and Krook (2009:126) states that the problem with the critical mass theory lies in “its assumption that there is a linear relationship between numbers and outcomes as well as a precise tipping point at which feminised change occurs”. Dahlerup (1988:279) argues that women politicians are confronted with two contrasting expectations because of this theory: they must demonstrate that, firstly, they are equal to male politicians, and secondly, that if elected, they will have an impact. Even without this dilemma, there will be devastating consequences if people

believe that female politicians just stand up for women's interests or even feminist interests. It is important to note that women are by no means a cohesive group, and female politicians have cross-cutting identity features that affect their perspectives, making it more difficult to enable substantive representation based on critical mass. In an effort to improve the substantive representation of women, there have been too much focus on the percentage of women in national parliaments, and as a result, the complexity of power relations in politics and how it affects female politicians' capacity to speak and act as and for women have been neglected. Even though numbers are vital for establishing any legislative majority, the proportion of women in parliaments is definitely not the most important aspect because numbers interact with other factors (Childs & Krook 2009; Dahlerup 2006b). Mateo-Diaz (2005:160) presents another justification for the convergence assumption and implicitly challenging the critical mass hypothesis by arguing that "as the proportion of women legislators rises, the likelihood of achieving greater socio-demographic and ideological diversity in parliament rises as well". The diversity in ideology affects the understanding of what women's interests are among female legislators. Similar arguments have been made by others who claim that when the number of female politicians increases, the group may become more diverse, which might not produce a cohesive agenda on women's interests (Childs & Krook 2009:129).

The critique of the critical mass theory does not suggest that increasing the number of women in politics is irrelevant in terms of concerns of representation, equality, and inclusion because women need to be represented in the political system for their interests to find expression in decision-making structures. Gender and Media (2006) attests that "the mere representation of women in politics is not equivalent to gender transformation, however, there is a firm belief that transformation cannot begin to take place when over half the population is effectively excluded from decision-making". Therefore, the observation regarding critical mass is that while a certain proportion of women is needed to ensure representation of women within the political system, the assumption that this proportion will automatically lead to the substantive representation is subject to criticism as it poses a theory of critical mass for women's representation. Secondly, this observation feeds into the argument that researchers should consider both the limitations that exist as well as the beneficial effects that arise as the proportion of women in a legislature increases.

### 2.5.2.5 *Critical acts*

Scholars such as Lovenduski (2001) and Childs and Krook (2006) contend that there is little evidence that a 30% critical mass is the absolute solution for ensuring the representation of women in national politics. However, others argue that critical acts are the most important element when fostering substantive representation of women (Childs & Krook 2009; Dahlerup 1988; Lovenduski 2001). Childs and Krook (2009) note that it might be possible for female politicians to influence the political agenda by winning 15% of the seats in a legislative body; however, they would need to constitute 40% of the legislature to introduce women-friendly policies. This is unlikely because there are few women in the most democratic legislatures. Additionally, this school of thought notes that it is difficult to fully investigate whether critical mass is required to secure the substantive representation of women, and hence, it is safer to look towards critical acts.

Dahlerup (1988) tests the tipping point hypothesis using insights from Kanter in a bid to apply it to the field of women and politics but ultimately rejects the idea of critical mass in favour of critical acts on the grounds that increased percentage of women appear to be less significant than individual policy initiative in expressing women-friendly policy. In arguing for critical acts, Dahlerup (2006b:520) asserts that numbers and percentages are only of minor importance for policy outcomes. Under the correct circumstance, even a token of women in politics can have a significant impact, whereas a sizeable number of female lawmakers might not want to or be able to influence the political agenda in a particular political system at a particular time. Consequently, it is unlikely that having more women in parliaments is the most important factor. Childs and Krook (2009:143) assert that the goal therefore should be “to move beyond an exclusive focus on the numbers of female legislators to identify the critical actors or critical acts espoused by individuals who may seek, successfully or unsuccessfully, to represent women substantively”.

Studlar and McAllister (2002:248) posits that “the substantive representation by female politicians requires an increase in feminist attitudes in the legislature not just a rise in the number of female politicians”. This suggests that a critical mass of women in politics does not always translate to substantive representation for women because it depends on a number of factors such as gender identification, party allegiance, and the legislative positions held by women. Dahlerup (2006b) collapsed Kanter’s (1977) three hypotheses into one, believing that greater numbers will encourage women to form coalitions but does not argue that it will lead to policy responsiveness. While

Dahlerup really makes an argument for focusing on critical acts, almost all critical mass theorists present her work as though she had produced a compelling case for critical mass. She argues that regardless of whether it is set at 25%, 30%, or 33%, it is time to discard the notion of a specific turning point. Lovenduski (2012:90) adds that political transformation involves acts and actors in general, demonstrating that there is no automatic effect arising from a particular proportion. Working with numbers and looking for effects before and after a specific numerical level or change in proportion of women's representation appears problematic. The involvement of more women in political assemblies as well as critical actors who execute critical acts are what should be focused on (Childs & Krook 2009; Dahlerup 2006b). Pitkin's (1967) contribution on the typologies of representation lends credence to the critical acts argument, and she states that emphasis should be on what representatives do rather than on what they are.

To consolidate the debate on critical acts, some scholars are investigating Phillips' (1995) thesis that the gender of a representative influences their behaviour, even when it is not the only or most important factor. While most people concur that women are likely to be the key political players who advance women's substantive representation, this does not imply that they will or must be biologically female (Young 2000). Even though Dahlerup (2006b) disagrees with the central thesis of the critical mass argument, she agrees with Kanter's (1977) submission that feminist women can act critically if they come together to act as one despite their small proportion. Therefore, to change the legislative agenda in favour of women, critical acts must be taken by these women, which stresses actions rather than numbers (Dahlerup 2006b). The body of research on critical acts also observe that "given various restrictions related to party affiliation, institutional norms, legislative inexperience, and the overall political environment, a simple increase in the number of women elected does not always translate into policy gains for women" (Beckwith & Cowell-Meyers 2007; Celis 2008; Childs 2004; Kathlene 1995). This means that the existence of critical actors is what is important for women's representation.

#### ***2.5.2.6 Who can constitute critical actors?***

Understanding who can be a critical actor requires paying careful attention to a broad spectrum of players, which includes male politicians, government officials, bureaucrats, and members of CSOs. Broadening the range of critical actors for the substantive representation of women also raises significant questions about the circumstances in which they could emerge and adequately

represent women as a group. Beckwith (2002:10) opines that “acting for women is not universally or eternally available to political actors, as many scholars have increasingly come to understand, nor is it exclusively reliant on political will”. It is therefore worth considering what and who might constitute conditions that are more conducive to the substantive representation of women. One theory is that critical actors are more likely to bring about feminised change when they hold influential positions in politics, collaborate with players in other fields through various ‘strategic alliances’, and support policies that share the same ideologies as the governing party (Beckwith & Cowell-Meyers 2007). Recognising that men have political incentives to support gender-related policies that appeals to female voters in order to win over their female constituents and represent women is also vital. Furthermore, because of their majority numbers, men are frequently more active in policy discussions “that affect the well-being of their female constituents and hold influential legislative positions, making them potentially effective advocates for women’s issues if they so choose” (Celis 2014:160). Additionally, men are encouraged to actively participate in these policy discussions because women’s issues occasionally or frequently have direct ramifications for them, such as inheritance rules.

Researchers in the gender and representation field frequently focus on either the conduct of women in government or the work of women’s policy organisations as constitutive of critical actors. Weldon (2002:1160) argues that “women’s movement and government need to work together to achieve substantive representation, and that the former must not be congruent with the state in order to be able to criticise government policy, because women’s policy agencies must have resources, authority, and a degree of independence”. The interplay of these two agents can create critical acts that are effective in fostering women’s substantive representation. The argument further notes that in the most effective cases of substantive representation of women “there is an independent women’s movement that enhances the institutional capacity of government in addressing women’s issues, as well as a strong women’s policy agencies that provide extra resources to women’s groups” (Weldon 2002:1162).

The understanding of critical actors highlights the several potential domains of substantive representation that could be used to advance women’s policy concerns. These sites could cooperate, compete, or even replace one another. They also open up new possibilities for examining a wider range of activities linked to the substantive representation of women as a group in terms of form, content, and place when combined with the idea of critical actors. Studies that



sought to understand substantive women's representation often focus on the attitudes of female parliamentarians in national legislatures. While some men do, it is commonly known that not all female parliamentarians work to advance women's issues. The work of women's movements also indicates that non-parliamentary actors can work to advance women as a whole, at least as much as female politicians, if not more. Childs and Krook (2006) submit that it is better to look for critical actors who we describe as people or organisations that propose policy changes than relying on specific individuals. This reveals that critical actors may not necessarily be women in government as long as they get the job done. The context of substantive representation of women in question is also important because it gives actors a platform to act for or make representative claims on behalf of women as a whole.

### **2.5.3 Achieving balance between critical mass and critical acts**

In balancing both arguments, Childs and Krook (2009) acknowledge that the concept of critical mass may still have a place in studies of women's legislative behaviour despite their plea for better conceptual precision by changing the focus from critical mass to critical actors. This is because critical actors, as they describe them, are individuals who either initiate policy changes on their own or play a crucial role in inspiring others to support such policies. Additionally, as argued before, it is important to note that an increased percentage of women in politics should not be abandoned in the quest for critical actors as the transformation of the political system cannot happen without the debut of women in the sphere (Gender and Media 2006). Thus, a critical mass of women is still needed to effect change for the general populace of women, which establishes the necessity for quotas as a means to an end; alternatively, numbers are needed to make impact. The relationship between descriptive and substantive representation has drawn criticism from theorists, who contend that female lawmakers are not always better suited to represent the interests and policy preferences of women (Swain 1993; Young 1994). In light of this, discussions on how critical mass and critical acts can be combined to yield significant result for women's substantive representation need to start. The acknowledgement that a certain number of women is needed in legislatures to ensure gender-sensitive policies positions critical mass as an important component in protecting women's interests. While critical acts enable the actualisation of such interests by bringing up policy debates on women issues and introducing gender-related policies. The alignment of these two strategies will produce more results than the tendency to critique the

ineffectiveness of one. Hence, the debate on critical mass and critical acts need to look beyond what is most suitable and move to how they can be combined to work together for the greater good.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

This chapter embarked on an in-depth review of existing literature on gender quotas, women's political representation, and descriptive and substantive representation. It provided a discussion on what representation is and the lens through which we can evaluate the role of representatives by delving into the trustee/delegate dichotomy. This chapter looked at the different types of representation and how they are different yet interconnected, and it focused on the relevant forms that relate to the study, which are descriptive and substantive representation. By reflecting on the underrepresentation of women in politics, this chapter established grounds to motivate for their increased participation in politics and the protection of their interests. It noted that when women are underrepresented in politics, their interests are often not attended to, further creating a link between women's political participation and the representation of women's issues. The relationship between descriptive women's representation and substantive representation was examined to understand whether the increase in the number of women participating in politics translates into the representation of women issues. This covered the contestation concerning the definition of women's interest considering the nuance that exists among women. The review focused on gender quotas and its effectiveness in ensuring descriptive women's representation. The chapter confirmed that quotas have been useful in facilitating women's political participation, though certain factors, such as electoral system and extent of implementation, can consolidate or impede its effectiveness. It noted that quotas enable the constituting of a critical mass of women needed to ensure substantive representation. This provided new ground for investigating how best to ensure substantive representation of women. It interrogated the value for quotas beyond numbers into ensuring impact for women's political representation. Quotas have been successful in ensuring increased number of women in politics; however, the question is whether they can work towards protecting women's interests. The chapter found that by debuting women into political positions, quotas create diversity, which is further reflected in the kinds of policies passed. They also change the composition of legislative bodies by ensuring that women have fair access to positions of power, further enabling equality. A major aspect of the discussion on substantive representation is the debate around critical mass and critical acts. Critical mass supposes that a

sizeable number of women is needed in politics for women's interests to be protected, and while critical acts contend that numbers are not important as critical acts by specific individuals are what is important. The division between critical mass and critical acts does not allow for proper identification of the specific measures needed to ensure the substantive representative of women as this debate often invalidate each other's effort. This chapter therefore argued that rather than choosing sides between critical mass and critical acts, it is necessary to look at converging both of them towards protecting women's interests as there is need for women to be descriptively represented in political positions to create a critical mass. By constituting this critical mass, we can begin to identify specific female politicians that will advance women's interests to ensure the introduction of women-friendly policies. Without the numbers, women will continue to remain a minority in political bodies; hence, a merger between numbers and acts is the best way to ensure the substantive representation of women.

## CHAPTER 3

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 3.1 Introduction

The discourse surrounding women's political representation focuses on the need to foster their increased participation and understanding how that participation benefits them. More specifically, it looks at whether the participation of women in politics is a necessity for the protection of women's interest; and why it has to be female politicians that foster this protection within the broader political system. These questions have informed debates on the relationship between the participation of women and the substantive representation of women. To better organise the discourse on this subject, this study used two theories, namely the theory of the politics of presence and the relational feminist theory, to guide the analytical framework of the study. The theories of politics of presence and relational feminism seek to explain the need for women's participation in the political system and the best way to foster the substantive representation of women. The theory of politics of presence is an important democratic lens through which to understand the symbolism of women representing women in democracy, and relational feminism justifies the notion that only women can adequately represent women. Adom *et al.* (2018:438) assert that theoretical frameworks provide a grounding for the literature review and the analysis of the research. It serves as the structure and support for the rationale of study, the research problem, and the research questions and is the foundation from which all knowledge for a research study is constructed. Using two distinct yet interrelated theories helped this study argue how the descriptive representation of women can effect their substantive representation. This study is about understanding the kind of relationship that exist between numbers and impact, which is why these theories were used to actualise the research objective. The first section of this chapter discusses the theory of the politics of presence in the form of a review of Anne Phillips's (1995) book *The Politics of Presence*. The second section discusses relational feminism and how it can be applied to the study.

### 3.2 Theory of the Politics of Presence

The theory of politics of presence was introduced in the 1995 book titled *The Politics of Presence* by Anne Phillips, which focuses on democratic theory and women's political representation. Erzreel (2015) notes that Phillips's seminal work on the politics of presence still inspires many scholars of democratic theory, political representation, citizenship, and multiculturalism. She explains further that "its basic tenet that the politics of ideas is incapable of dealing with political exclusion challenged common assumptions that democracy functions well without the presence of historically disadvantaged groups in elected assemblies" (Erzreel 2015:1). Nonetheless, it should not be expected that the presence of more women in politics will translate to sudden change. The theory suggests that the presence of women in politics is important as it legitimises democracy and enables it to function well. Wangnerud (2009:52) states that the theory establishes that "female politicians are best equipped to represent the interests of women thereby predicting a link between descriptive and substantive representation". Lovenduski (1997) highlights that the presence of women in the legislatures offers possibilities that women are not just 'standing as' women but also 'acting for' women as a group. Wangnerud (2009:52) further notes the following:

"Phillips's argument is built upon differences between women and men in their everyday lives, such as differences relating to childcare, education and occupations, divisions of paid and unpaid labour, exposure to violence and sexual harassment, and the fact that female politicians, at least to some extent, share the experiences of other women."

This argument is frequently made when it is assumed that women politicians prioritise and express different types of values, attitudes, and policy priorities because of their unique lived experiences in the home, workplace, and public sphere, such as a greater concern for childcare, health, or education, or a less combative and more collaborative political style. Norris and Lovenduski (2003:87) highlight that "the understanding that women as a group are far from being homogeneous and that men and women have complicated sets of interests that both coincide and diverge, spurred Phillips to argue that the variety of women's interests does not disprove the idea that gender influences interests". Phillips (1995:68) asserts that the argument from interest hinges on proving there is a difference between the interests of men and women rather than proving all women have a single, undivided interests. However, if women are split along major cross-cutting

cleavages like those of socio-economic class, region, ethnicity, or religion, as well as along ideological lines between the left and right, these variables may take precedence over any shared or common interests related to gender.

### **3.2.1 Justification for politics of presence**

Phillips (1995:1) starts by explaining how traditional views of liberal democracy see a problem with representation in terms of how well voters' beliefs and preferences are reflected and see differences among groups as a matter of ideas. Phillips criticised how the politics of ideas views difference in democracy. She notes that based on traditional interpretations of liberal democracy, difference has been seen in terms of ideas that was more or less sufficient, depending on how well it captures the opinions, preferences, or beliefs of voters. However, this has been questioned by an alternate view of political representation that prioritises proportionate representation based on characteristics such as gender or ethnicity. Held (1997:530) expands that for politics of ideas it does not matter who the representatives of the constituents are as long as they are able to represent them appropriately. Phillips (1995:6) notes that when considered in isolation from presence, politics of ideas fails to fully address the experiences of certain groups that have been marginalised and feel excluded from the democratic process due to their race, ethnicity, or gender. She argues that while politics of ideas is insufficient to address political exclusion, it should not be outrightly rejected for political presence. She states that "the biggest mistake is to set up ideas as the opposite of political presence: to treat ideas as totally separate from the people who carry them; or worry exclusively about the people without giving a thought to their policies and ideas" (Phillips 1995:25). Phillips points out that the discussion has long moved beyond an either/or axis, thereby suggesting complementarity between ideas and presence. She states that "it is in the relationship between ideas and presence that we can best hope to fairer system of representation" (Phillips 1995:25). This means that while we can acknowledge the inadequacy of politics of ideas to solve the political marginalisation of certain groups, it should not be abandoned in its entirety because the presence of marginalised groups and the competing ideas of how they can be represented are what will ensure adequate representation of their interests.

Having critiqued the inadequacy of ideas, Phillips (1995) establishes the importance of presence for solving political exclusion. She states that due to the need for a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between ideas and experience, political exclusion becomes a problem that can

only be addressed by political presence. The notion that people's interests and opinions are generally unproblematic underlies the division between who (subject) and what (object of representation) is to be represented and the subordination of one to the other. She explains that most modern theorists avoid the significance of "an essential female subject or black subject that can be represented by any one of their own" when confronted, for instance, with the 1789 assertion claim "that between the representatives and the represented, there must be an absolute identity of interests" (Phillips 1995:53). This means that politics of ideas has given way to politics of presence in which members of the politically excluded and marginalised demand that they not only be the object of representation but also that the people who represent them be from their social group. For instance, it means that women want more of their kind in legislative bodies as it not acceptable that they are excluded from positions of power.

This premise on presence provides background for the theory of politics of presence. Philips (1995) notes that presence can be fostered by ensuring an increased number of more women and other members of underrepresented groups in political structures because their descriptive representation, the extent to which representatives can be relied on in political negotiations concerning their interests, the necessity for better advocacy of the interests of minority groups, and the potential for changing political agendas are what consolidates the politics of presence. Although Phillips (1995:63) expresses doubts for justifying presence solely based on the need for role models, she considers the arguments for symbolic representation to be particularly persuasive for politics of presence. Guinier (1994) makes the strongest argument for politics of presence by stating that "Blacks cannot enjoy equal dignity and political status until black representatives join the council of government". Phillips attests that notions such as dignity and equality should be used to undo the marginalisation and enable increased recognition for all even if their increased participation in politics "has no discernible consequences for the politics adopted". Furthermore, she notes that it is important to understand that the effects of having more women in politics are not automatic but that they can exist and manifest in specific situations.

Phillips (1995) uses Kanter's (1977) study on gender relations within industrial corporations to illustrate how presence can lead to transformation. She draws from the group categorisation done by Kanter concerning skewed and tilted groups to exemplify how the increased number of a minority group can begin to influence institutional culture. According to Kanter, skewed groups have a significant gender imbalance between men and women, with women often making up to

15% of the group, in the tilted group the numbers are between 15% and 40%, and finally, balanced groups include 40% to 50% of each gender. Kanter further recommends that when a group reaches a particular size, for instance in a tilted group, the minority begins to assert itself, and as a result, the institutional culture gradually changes. Kanter's submission means that instead of a gradual transformation, "there is a critical tipping point that depends on numbers. This is because when a group constitutes a tiny minority within a larger society, its members are tokens who will try to fit in by abiding by the established rules of the game". They will not take any action to increase the size of their group. The quantity of tokens will likely be maintained by their several potential techniques in what is termed 'the queen bee or assimilation'. However, once the group reaches a particular size, the minority begins to express itself and changes the institutional culture, norms and values, resulting in changes in available options and thereby causing a qualitative shift in the nature of the group interactions. Phillips points out that Kanter falls short in articulating why a shift in the proportion of men to women will result in institutional, societal and policy change. Phillips (1995) explains that rather than exclusively attributing this shift to their rising numbers, it is better to acknowledge that it was made possible by processes of mobilisation arising from the presence of women in a traditionally male institution. Based on feminist studies, it is often referred to as the effect of gender, which is seen as the distinctly assigned social traits between men and women.

### **3.2.2 Political control and political equality as foundations for politics of presence**

Phillips (1995) argues that the ideas of political equality and political control offer a solid foundational basis for the politics of presence because without the presence of people, control is impossible to achieve, and equality is hard to attain when some groups are excluded or when certain groups have much more power than others. It is important to point out that inability of control without people and lack of equality without balance is constrained by two significant initial issues. The first has to do with representative democracy's current state and how that has altered the parameters for popular control. Phillips (1995:30) notes that "control, within the context of direct democracy is a function of presence since the ability to affect political decisions is purely dependent on attendance at the appropriate meetings, and those who are not there forfeit their chance to exercise control". However, in order to deal with the larger citizenry of the modern state, the emergence of representative institutions radically altered this equation and changes it rather



deliberately. The question then becomes; does the emergence of representative democracy wherein presence is not a prerequisite for control undermine the significance of political presence. The idea that “everyone should count for one and none more than the other is a notable trait of political equality, rather than some people counting more than others. As always, count for one sounds like a largely procedural principle to be attained by making sure that each person has the same voting right as the next person” (Phillips 1995:30). In contrast to this, Phillips (1995:30) raises the following fundamental questions:

“What of those individuals who form a permanent minority, whether in their constituency or in the society as a whole? What if their preferences are always discounted because they happen to vote in the wrong place? Does counting equally refer only to our starting positions, or does it extend to our influence on outcomes? Does the emphasis on individual equalities also extend to equalities between social groups?”

This means that while political equality prides itself on everyone having the same voting right, this right does not extend beyond the vote as there is an inequality of outcomes. This is because the lack of equality among groups affects the extent to which interests of the marginalised can be reflected in decision-making.

Political equality can be interpreted in a variety of ways, and some emphasises balancing the size of various voting constituencies, while others emphasise balancing the likelihood that each voter will cast the deciding vote, and still others emphasise giving each voter an equal say in the makeup of the government that is elected. Phillips (1995:31) highlights that because political equality is not well-defined, it is difficult for it to serve as the foundation for politics of presence. However, she agrees that principles of control and equality undoubtedly serve as the foundation for any politics of presence, but the crux of the contention is found in a more in-depth examination of historical exclusionary institutions and representational arrangements.

### **3.2.3 Distinction between participation and representation**

A further justification for presence is that the absence of certain groups poses challenges for the operation of democracy. Phillips (1995:31) notes that studies on democracy and participation often begin with the premise that equality in participation is needed to ensure some degree of political

equality because the systematic exclusion of some social groups is regarded as an obvious flaw of democracy. The definition of social group is unclear; however, feminists have taken advantage of this to mean the low participation of women. The discussion on equality of participation leads Phillips to engage in the difference between participation and representation. Phillips explains that the idea of participation already carries an implicit description of how groups in society can engage with the system, such as voting, signing petitions, joining political parties. On the other hand, it is difficult to judge representation based on these same criteria because a social group can be engaging with the system, but their voices are not represented. Phillips attests that the two are connected, and in a society where everyone had actual access to joining political parties, pressure groups, and meetings, there would very likely be an equitable distribution of power among those who are elected. However, in theory, they are different “since representative democracy has removed itself from physical presence as the standard of political equality in favour of participatory democracy” (Phillips 1995:34).

She adds that the politics of presence may well appear as an odd repetition of the discussion on participation and representation given the following difference between direct and representative democracy: All citizens are given the same value, and therefore, the equal right to participate is a logical extension of that value. Therefore, any departure from the general proportionality seem to be grounds for legitimate worry (Phillips 1995:35). However, representation has fundamentally changed the political landscape, and a proportionality that would have seemed fairly suitable in earlier situations does not seem to be a key concern anymore. Pitkin (1967) makes a convincing case for the correlation between fair representation and proportionate representation, but this is just one interpretation of what representation entails. Additionally, even while that particular interpretation may be entirely legitimate, it cannot be said that it inherently results from the equal right to engage in politics (Phillips 1995:35). Phillips (1995:36) notes that “an equal right to participate in politics as well as an equal right to be politically present accompanies political equality. To translate this into an equal right to represent is to assume what has not yet been shown”. In a certain sense, the underrepresentation of certain groups of individuals is just a matter of empirical fact: They do not make up elected assemblies in the same numbers as they do in the voters (Phillips 1995:39). She argues that the changing patterns of representation make it imperative for marginalised groups to have advocates who understand their needs and come from within their group. She adds that it is not that members of other groups cannot act for the

marginalised groups but in cases where adequate representation is sought, it is beneficial for members belonging to the affected group to represent their needs. Expanding on if members of other groups can represent marginalised groups, she notes that parties have clear commitments on how they will address minority exclusion and gender or racial inequality, which forms the basis upon which politicians are elected. The question is whether it matters who the politicians are if there are clear party mandates for such policies. This question is likely to argue that efforts should be directed at accomplishing such mandates rather than worrying about who they are, or if they look like the people they are representing. However, Phillips (1995:43) responds that the first answer lies in the significance of symbolic representation because it is very unusual for a democracy to claim responsibility towards addressing political exclusion and disadvantage but never considers the affected group as the best candidates to do it. The second part of the answer speaks to a founded scepticism about the limitations of party commitments and mandates. She argues that there are constantly new concerns and problems along with unforeseen limitations, and it might be quite important who the representatives are in the subsequent balancing of interpretations and priorities (Phillips 1995:44). It is important to note that when disadvantaged groups are disproportionately underrepresented at the point of decision-making, this can and often does have negative effects. This is closely related to the need for a more equitable distribution of representative roles. Any politics of presence must be based on these ideas. She explains the following:

“The first part relates to the symbolic significance of who is present, and the independent importance that has to be attached to including groups that have been previously denied or suppressed. The second and third refer more directly to the policy consequences we can anticipate from changing the composition of elected assemblies. Political preferences do not fit neatly into the categories of party politics, so it is essential to achieve that additional element of representation that results from the presence of previously excluded groups in order to achieve more adequate and fair representation of those interests that were previously excluded or not explicitly discussed during election campaigns as well better advocacy when decisions are being made.” (Phillips 1995:45)

To better illustrate her argument, she states that “consider the following very stark assertion, which was the basis on which a group of Frenchwomen laid claim to a place in the Estates General in

1789: Just as a nobleman cannot represent a plebeian and the latter cannot represent a nobleman, so a man, no matter how honest he may be, cannot represent a woman” (Phillips 1995:52). This means that there must be complete interest identity between the representatives and the represented. The importance of shared experience over shared ideas is evident in this situation and no amount of consideration or empathy, no matter how cautious or sincere, could overcome the effects of prior experience. Conversely, it appears that experience was sufficient as a guarantee: The degree to which that experience was shared determined the sufficiency of the representation (Phillips 1995:52). It goes without saying that those who currently monopolise positions of power cannot stand in for those they have excluded. Additionally, even if the challenges are structural, such as the distinct roles that men and women play in the sexual division of labour, it still seems improper to rely solely on one group to fill in for the other. Goodin (2004:465) argues that “these locations will generate significantly different experiences, and, unless the range is reflected in the decision-making assemblies, decisions will express the preoccupations of those already there”. Even with the greatest of intentions, people struggle to put themselves in another person’s shoes (and all too frequently, we cannot rely on this). When our preconceptions are more strongly exposed, we may get better at such acts of mental transcendence, but this only occurs when the other is adequately represented.

### **3.2.4 Application to research**

The thesis of politics of presence embodies the aim of this research, which is to understand the significance of the participation of women in parliament on legislative and policy outcomes on GBVF. The acknowledgement of the historical underrepresentation of women in politics shed lights on their marginalisation as a group. This exclusion from the political system is a function of the gender stereotypes that restricts the inclusion of women in the political system. A consequence of their exclusion is the domination of politics by men who mostly occupy political positions as representatives of the whole people. As argued by Phillips (1995), such a system shows signs of a failing democracy because no matter how honest at governance they are, male politicians cannot represent women issues the way female politicians would. This is due to the difference that exists between both genders and the positionality of lived experiences that influence the approach to policy making. Therefore, to ensure political equality in the system, it is necessary for women as a group to be represented in politics for two reasons. Firstly, their participation enables symbolic

representation of women in the system, which, as confirmed by Pitkin (1967), is an important typology of representation. Secondly, by virtue of being included in the system, their presence in considerable number allows them to strongly advocate for their interests. The push for symbolic representation is premised on the importance of women as a group enjoying equality and dignity as contributing members of the society. Furthermore, their inclusion in the polity helps undo years of exclusion and underrepresentation in the system.

The very importance of this theory to the study lies in its premise of presence for substantive representation of women. It argues that the participation of women in politics produces 'presence', which offers the opportunity for these representatives to act for women. It argues that their presence will lead to action on behalf of women due to their experiences as women. The prioritisation of women issues stemming from their lived experiences when they get into positions of power is a notable justification for the presence of women. Women in Africa have historically been excluded from public decision-making because of gender stereotypes stemming from post-colonial African patriarchies. Which is why different corrective instruments were adopted, notable of which is gender quotas to ensure there is increasing numbers of women participating in politics. This is in recognition that women are equal members of society who should also be involved in determining issues that affect them. This theory thereby provides an epistemic foundation on which to argue that the presence of women is important for protecting women's interests because their participation produces a sort of symbolic representation for women as a group and that they are mirrored in the political system. Furthermore, it argues that the presence of women is significant for women's issues as the representatives are likely to act in the interest of their group. This is consolidated by the need for critical mass of women to advocate strongly for women in the system. It is safe to assume that female MPs in the selected case studies because of their lived experiences as women offer opportunity for the protection of women's interests. The politics of difference, which is predicated on the difference between how women perceive GBVF and how men perceive it, creates this possibility. Secondly, the fact that the unique difference between men and women creates space for women representatives to act for women as men are incapable of understanding such. By using gender quotas to ensure equitable gender distribution in national parliaments, there are policy consequences that will be derived from this distribution that is likely to benefit women. The policies produced from this redistribution allow for the enabling of the substantive representation of women. We can argue on the context specificities that might arise

from this but applying the politics of presence to the study provided reasonable ground that women are more likely to act as representative of other women when they are elected to positions of power.

### **3.3 Relational Feminism**

Relational feminism, also known as ‘maternal feminism’, is a term that is frequently used to refer to the prevailing ideas of the old women’s movement in Europe before World War II and the emergence of the new women’s movement with its individual feminism since the 1960s (Trott 2019:1). Having studied the Eurocentric history of feminism, Offen (1988:135) highlights that this variant of feminism appears to have been the main school of thought in the West prior to the 20th century as it dominated the middle- and upper-class women’s movement in Europe until the 1950s. Relational feminism was a component of the first wave of feminism, which saw women call for political engagement. It placed strong emphasis on the rights of women based on their status as mothers and their natural propensity to care for others compared to men. It also emphasised the unique contributions made by women in these roles to society as a whole and made claims of the commonwealth based on these accomplishments (Trott 2019). Mary Wollstonecraft, a British author on women’s rights who lived in the late eighteenth century, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, an American suffragist who lived in the nineteenth century, were two prominent proponents of relational feminism. In her 1792 book *Vindication of the Rights of Women*, Wollstonecraft consolidates her stance on the roles and responsibilities of women as mothers while in 1869 Stanton advocated for the inclusion of women in national affairs because men and women are the complement of one another, and women’s contributions are needed to create a secure and reliable government (Offen 1988:136).

The central tenet of the relational feminist theory has a direct link to politics of presence, which according to Offen (1988:136), is the assumption that “while men and women are fundamentally different, the distinctive contribution that women make to society, specifically as women, entitle them to equal rights”. Relational feminists such as Mary Wollstonecraft and Helene Lange believed that because of their ‘maternal’, ‘nurturing’ and ‘gender character’, which they had independent of real motherhood, women needed to have much more influence in the economy, society, culture, and politics, and are best suited to work in spheres like education, health, and welfare. Additionally, their concept of ‘spiritual motherhood’ allowed them to campaign for rights based on the ‘natural’ differences between women and men. They advocated for protective labour

legislation, demanding a reduction of the working hours of mothers. They also advocated for state-sponsored childcare facilities for working mothers and family allowances for all mothers in need (Offen 1988). This same thesis as what some modern-day feminists such as Dahlerup (2006b), Childs and Krook (2009) and Celis (2008) argue for when it comes to issues of representation. They advance the claim that women in government impact women's issues and that women are a homogenous group who need to be represented in discussions that result in policy making and implementation as their experiences are unique and different from men. However, this notion homogenizes women without considering the inherent diversity that exists amongst them. Women have other intersecting social identities such as race, class, sexuality which leads to diversity and complexity of their experiences. Hence, it is problematic to ignore these intersecting identities for the sake of homogenizing women. Celis *et al.* (2008) explain that in conceptualising their research on the political representation of women, scholars have delved into discussions surrounding the relationship between women's presence in politics and their ability to transform legislative agenda to favour women.

Offen (1988) asserts that the essential tenet of relational feminism is the notion that despite the fact that men and women are fundamentally different, they are entitled to equal rights because of the unique contribution that women make to society as women. Its central assumption is predicated on the difference that exists between men and women, and these difference started to be understood in terms of biology in the late eighteenth century. Natural scientists and philosophers alike argued that men and women had distinct but complementary character traits that in turn led to gender specific roles in the 'separate spheres' of men and women in society and culture. These arguments were based on the discovered 'biological' differences between men and women. This manifested in the notion that men belonged in the public domains of commerce, trade and paid job, politics, and war, while women belonged in the private sector of the home and the family as mothers and caregivers (Trott 2019). The argument that women's voices needed to be represented in politics because only they could bring the maternal viewpoint and spirit that men lacked dates back to the middle of the nineteenth century in Europe, where women and women's groups also started making the case for political equality. For instance, Jeanne Schmahl and Helene Lange both believed that women's influence in national issues was necessary to create a safe and stable government. At the end of the nineteenth century, relational feminism-based moderate suffrage groups and their campaigns were founded throughout Europe (Trott 2019). The way that women

viewed their relationships with their spouses was also impacted by relational feminism. Women claimed that their status as mothers and wives should be honoured, and they contested the idea that men were the masters of women and worked to promote the idea that men and women were equal partners in society, each in charge of a distinct area of influence. Due to the movement's broad appeal to both men and women, middle-class and upper-class women's movement, relational feminists were able to raise awareness of problems like domestic violence and abuse (Trott 2019). The early feminists established control and power inside the domestic realm using this gender order ideology.

### **3.3.1 Justification of thesis**

Relational feminism is built on the importance of relationships in people's lives and politics of difference. It argues for societal and legal involvement in relationships that are harmful to people as well as for the nurturing of relationships that are beneficial to people. However, insisting on one or the other frequently results in distinct views of relational feminism as it begins with a careful examination of human nature and the various ways that women and men experience personhood. The foundational claims of relational feminism reached its historical apex with the idea of 'equality in difference', or equity as opposed to equality, which at first glance appears to be incompatible (Offen 1988:139). The fundamental tenets included the notion that there were both biological and cultural distinctions between the sexes, based on a concept of womanly or manly nature, of a sharply defined sexual division of labour, or roles, in the family and throughout society. Relational feminism included demands "for women's right to vote, to participate in all professions, and to work outside the home, as these concepts were developed in conjunction with the discourse surrounding the democratic and industrial revolutions of the last two centuries" (Trott 2019:1). It also incorporated demands for equality in civil law pertaining to property and people. This was done in alignment with earlier calls for unrestricted moral and ethical development as well as equitable access to formal education. Offen (1988:139) asserts that "relational feminism paired a case for moral equality of women and men with an explicit awareness of distinctions in women's and men's sexual functions in society or to borrow Catharine MacKinnon's excellent term, the difference that difference makes".

Offen (1988) argues that proponents of relational feminism possessed a feminist consciousness based on previous evidence. She believed that protest and political action could transform the



collective condition of women in the culture, which they perceived as unfair and blamed on institutions of social and political power created by men. However, she insisted that women played a unique role that was separate from men (Offen 1988:141). She adds that the tenet of the relational feminist theory is “rooted in sexual dimorphism and based on a vision of specific, complementary responsibilities within an organised society that could even supersede claims for personal liberty that went beyond moral equivalence in European history, particularly in the nineteenth century” (Offen 1988:141). These were not only embraced by progressive men and women in that culture, but also served as the basis for making the most expansive claims for women’s empowerment and radical shifts in the power dynamics between men and women (Offen 1988:141–142). It fosters the need to pay more attention to gender in order to comprehend politics and power. The ideas and actions of relational feminists to influence state-sponsored maternity benefits and government-enacted protective legislation for women workers must now be understood within this new history of politics and power. Offen (1988:1) notes that efforts to recognise the impact of relational feminism must include the following:

“Their advocacy for equal pay for equal work, demands for compensation for housework, formation of housewives’ union, must recognise all political efforts to expand the welfare state to better serve women’s needs as wives and mothers (e.g., payment of family allowances to mothers, establishment of childcare facilities, movements for improved housing, and the like); as well as efforts to end state control of women’s bodies e.g., contesting anti-abortion laws and regulated prostitution.”

### **3.3.2 Criticism of relational feminism**

Judges (1995:1330) states that “relational feminism is sometimes premised on the view of female identity, based on Carol Gilligan’s work” that women frequently perceive themselves as connected to, and even accountable for, many other people. Their moral thinking therefore refers to an ethics of care. Because of this, it has been criticised by feminist writers who are concerned that its support of traditionally feminine traits will hinder women’s progress toward equality and limit their ability to assert their sexual reproductive rights. This is because of its appraisal of a uniquely feminine approach to advocating for the inclusion of women in politics, which embodies an ethics of care. More generally, Gilligan discovered that men typically associate morality “with a negative view of the rights of others to non-interference with life and self-fulfilment while women typically see

it as characterised by a responsibility to recognise and provide the need for care” (Judges 1995:1339). Arguments based on sexual difference, women’s parenting responsibilities, nurturing thinking, and particularly, the assumption that physiological or hormonal differences between the sexes or female sexuality itself have social ramifications are often condemned by contemporary feminist research. Ultimately, relational feminist arguments have been a problem for late 20th-century feminist theorists because they seem to cut both ways: Even though they support a case for women’s uniqueness and complementarity of the sexes, they can be used by political opponents to support male privilege. In the past, those opposed to women’s emancipation have appropriated certain aspects of arguments based on “women’s special nature, physiological and psychological distinctiveness, the importance of motherhood, and a clear sexual division of labour within the family and society” to support arguments for their continued subordination (Offen 1988:154).

Another fundamental flaw with the relational feminist theory is the justification of representation of women based on maternal instincts and biological difference. Its premise on maternal instincts excludes women who are not mothers, further entrenching the marginalization of certain groups from the political system. The maternal and biological premise has been rejected by modern liberal feminists who argue for women’s representation based on equality and justice rather than difference. Trott (2019:1) submits that irrespective of its flaws “relational feminism should not be regarded as a philosophy confined to the eighteenth and nineteenth century because women today often still advocate for rights and legislation based on their role as mothers”. Maternity leave, for example, rests on the understanding that women need time off to care for their new-born children.

In the face of the criticisms raised, it is important to note that the complexity and variety of women’s experiences cannot be adequately addressed by a single definition or philosophy due to their intersecting identities based on class, race or sexuality etc. Considering that feminist discourses on intersectionality has to do with how different systems of oppression intersect to construct multiple identities and social locations amongst women. All attempts at understanding feminism must consider this intersectionality and strive to eliminate all types of oppression that women face. As a result, we must be critical of these philosophies while taking the historical setting into consideration when looking at the history of feminism. Irrespective of its fundamental flaws, relational feminism is incredibly useful for understanding the historical struggles of women. To better understand the status of women now, we need to be aware of the hardships women have encountered throughout history (Trott 2019). In any given society, feminism advocates for

rebalancing the social, economic, and political power between men and women in favour of both sexes, not just for their similarities but also for their differences. The difficulty is basically a humanistic one that raises questions about personal freedom and accountability, a person's collective accountability to others in society, and interpersonal communication styles (Offen 1988:151–152). By respecting women's own interpretations of 'different' in all of its multifaceted complexity, the relational way of approaching women's emancipation may offer some answer to overcoming current feminism resistance (Offen 1988:153).

### **3.3.3 Application to research**

Similar to the thesis of politics of presence, relational feminism rides on the difference in lived experience inherent between men and women to advocate for the inclusion of women in the political process. It uses the exclusivity of women's lived experience as a justification to argue that women are likely to act for women. Also, it employs the ethics of care narrative that women are likely to represent women issues, which enables them to advocate for better policies on childcare, sexual and reproductive rights, and so forth. As a result, they should be included in the political system to enable the development of gender-sensitive laws and policies. What can be drawn from this for the study is that female politicians, because of their lived experience as women understand the problems that bedevil women, which allows them to cater for issues that affect women as a group. Their participation in the system fosters great attention that can translate to policies to address women issues, as they are likely to advocate for rights and legislations based on their role as women. While this should not be used to further the inequality that exists between men and women, it allows for a new approach to ensuring substantive representation of women. The assumption that women are better at handling women issues because of the commonality of their lived experience particularly in relation to gendered violence creates possibility for this study. GBVF was selected as the index to measure substantive representation because it affects all women irrespective of the identity they embody. Women's experience of violence allows them to better advocate for more legislations and policies that address this prevailing menace. To ensure the substantive representation of women, women need to be included in the political process because they bring with them a different approach to dealing with issues that uniquely affect women as a group. This confirms the politics of presence thesis, which is that, the inclusion of women as a group leads to policy consequences in the interest of women because women can apply their lived

experience as women to the policy process. This also establishes women as critical actors that can advance women's interest in the system based on existing gender differences. It contends the possibility of men acting for women as they are unlikely to relate with the struggles women go through. The argument that only women can represent women finds expression within the relational feminist theory as a precursor to argue for the participation of women in politics. While the debate on critical mass and critical acts continue on how best to ensure substantive representation of women, relational feminism tilts towards combining the debate, claiming that there is need to push for the inclusion of women in politics because it is only then that gender-sensitive legislations can happen. It does not agree with the assumption that men can act for women, which is a notion that can be drawn from the critical acts movement. It primarily places the responsibility of protecting women's interests on women as they understand their struggles better than anyone and can better represent themselves.

This theory also sets the ground for arguing that female MPs are in a good position to advocate for the protection of women's interests when looking at the problem of GBVF. It explains that their experience as women in relation to GBVF will push them to advocate for better legislations and policies to address the increasing rate of GBVF in Botswana and South Africa. It can be assumed that the constant push for harsher punishment for GBVF perpetrators in Africa often comes from women as they are the most affected. The endemic hegemonic masculinity that perpetuates violence against women affects female MPs too as their gender makes them susceptible to such. There have been reports from female politicians that they have been harassed and abused in Africa, testifying that GBVF is a problem to which they can relate. Based on the thesis set by relational feminism, it can be argued that female politicians will be predisposed to act for women in parliament because they can relate to the scourge of GBVF that women go through, which may manifest in them pushing for better policies. This assumption creates a new lens for the discourse on how best to ensure substantive representation of women. While the theory of the politics of presence pushes for the presence of women to enable policy consequences for women, relational feminism argues that because of women's lived experience as women, they are in a better position to represent women issues. The area of convergence between politics of presence and relational feminism is in the appropriateness for women to represent women and that the quality of representation can only be assured if women participate in politics.

### 3.4 Conclusion

To enable a rich theoretical explanation for the study, this researcher selected two distinct yet interrelated theories to understand the relationship between numbers and impact. The concept of representation was important for this study as it sought to understand how one type can lead to the other. It employed the theory of the politics of presence by Anne Phillips (1995) and the relational feminist theory to argue for enabling substantive representation of women. The theory of politics of presence is premised on the politics of difference that interests of groups within the political system are often different. This motivates the need for such groups to be equally present in the system. It situated its thesis within national legislatures to argue that women, as a previously marginalised group, must participate in the system because their presence provides both symbolic representation as well as substantive representation. The theory uses political equality and political control to argue that to ensure the legitimacy of any democracy, all groups within it must be equally represented in national council. The theory further asserts that the presence of women in politics not only creates a form of mirror representation where women can identify with the representatives but also that this presence allows the representatives to act for women, and not just to stand for them in terms of descriptive or symbolic representation but to advocate and act on behalf of women. This indicates that the mainstreaming of women into politics through gender quotas allows for the presence of women in politics, which has further implications for their substantive representation.

The relational feminist theory was engaged to justify the assertion that only women can represent women. Relational feminism, which is premised on the difference in lived experience that exists between men and women, advocates for the participation of women in politics for them to influence legislations and policies that affect them. While the differences that exist between men and women are often used to perpetuate essentialist notions, which translate to gender inequality, the difference analogy makes it clear why it is necessary for women to represent women. It also helps clarify the critical acts debate to say that only women can act for women because of their lived experiences as women. So, any definition of critical actors in relation to women's substantive representation must recognise that only women can accurately represent women.

This chapter created a convergence between the two theories that there is need for women to participate to protect their interests, and because of the politics of difference, only women can

represent women. It created grounds for addressing the research objectives posed in this study concerning the relationship between numbers and impact and whether the participation of women fosters the protection of women's interest. In the course of chapter 6 and 7, data gathered from participants will be used to either confirm or refute the theses. The next chapter focuses on contextualizing the discourse on gender quotas and descriptive women's representation within the African context.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **QUOTAS AND DESCRIPTIVE WOMEN REPRESENTATION IN AFRICA**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter delves into the quota system in Africa as a context for women's political representation in African politics. Having provided review of literature on gender quotas within a global frame, this chapter situates the discussion within a more specific context to highlight the intricate issues that enhance or affect quotas. The chapter starts by providing a historical overview of the implementation of quotas on the continent by zooming in on notable countries in the different sub-regions. It examines the different kinds of quotas adopted on the continent and provides country examples to illustrate it. It goes on to discuss how quotas have contributed to the significant increase in women's political participation in Africa. This discussion is relevant as it acknowledges the effect gender quotas has to ensure the increased number of women in African politics as a precursor for answering the study's research questions. Drivers that facilitate the success of gender quotas are discussed to highlight that quotas are not a one-size-fits-all mechanism because certain factors determine its impact. It also identifies certain challenges based on country examples that impede the effectiveness of quotas. Lastly, this chapter sets the background for answering the first research question on the relationship between numbers and impact in Africa. The discussion engaged in this chapter relates to the gender quotas and the descriptive representation of women in African politics.

#### **4.2 Historical Overview of Adoption of Gender Quotas in Africa**

Tripp (2004:70) notes that "the introduction of quotas in Africa largely began in 1996, with most countries implementing them from 2000". This adoption is attributed to regional parliamentary conventions and the 1995 BPfA, which aimed for 30% female representation by 2005. By recognising the exclusion that African women face in politics while acknowledging the many barriers preventing them from entering politics, we can begin to understand that quotas are not discriminatory toward men, but rather a restitution for all the challenges that women face (Ballington 2004). It is maintained that quotas are necessary until all these barriers are addressed, and therefore, they are a temporary measure to ensure women's political participation. However,

removing all social, cultural, and political obstacles to equitable female representation might take decades because the obstacles that limit women's political participation in Africa are deeply entrenched in cultural and religious norms, making them difficult to totally eradicate. Hence, quotas provide face value solution to this problem. Moreso, because the issue to be addressed is the underrepresentation of women in African politics, quotas strive to increase their representation. Given that women typically make up 50% or even more of the population on the continent, this measure is very important (Dahlerup 2004:19). Ballington (2004) notes that most African countries that have adopted gender quotas did so after 1995. This coincided with the UN conference for women and the insertion of Article 7 in the CEDAW. These two monumental instruments that established principles for enhancing the political representation of women were widely mentioned by the countries and parties that enacted quotas. They provided unequivocal evidence of the influence of the global movement for women on the implementation of quotas in Africa. Prior to 1995, just three African countries had quotas, with notable mention of Uganda. This does not include the Convention People's Party's endorsement of a quota of 10 women in Ghana in 1960 or the implementation of 8% quotas in Egypt from 1979 to 1986. African regional organisations were pressured by female activists to urge their member states to increase female representation. Equal gender representation was demanded under the 2003 African Union Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa, the 1997 Southern African Development Community (SADC) Declaration on Gender and Development, and the 2001 Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance. Additionally, there have been initiatives to increase the proportion of women in these regional bodies to one-third. Furthermore, the Female Parliamentary Association in the ECOWAS region advocated for more women in national legislatures, and the East African Legislative Assembly demanded one-third female representation (Ballington 2004).

A quota system generally signifies a departure from the common gradual equality efforts to a more fast-track model (Dahlerup 2006a). This is based on the backdrop of recommendations from international organisations and changes in various national contexts, which have increasing impact on the choice of whether or not to implement a quota. In terms of examining the triumphs and failures connected with quota implementation, Africa is an interesting region. Women's organisations at local and regional levels actively advocated for quotas in a number of the countries where discussions regarding the implementation of quotas are now taking place. Governments in



Africa, for their part, have frequently sought quotas for two reasons: Firstly, mostly for symbolic reasons in an effort to win over female voters and convey a concern for women's rights and voices; and secondly, in reaction to shifting worldwide standards for female representation. The former relates to government officials trying to establish new channels of patronage by appointing women who will remain loyal to them, such as in Uganda (Tamale 2004). Irrespective of the initial intent for the adoption of quotas, it is crucial that they are implemented in a way that prioritises the needs of women and that the conditions are acceptable to them (Tripp 2004). Dahlerup (2004:17) highlights that the continental adoption of quota systems signals a change in strategy from 'equal opportunity' to 'equality of results'. She notes further that it is preferable to consider electoral gender quotas as an example of 'equal opportunity' since most quota systems only stipulate the amount of women and men to be presented to voters on electoral lists and not the gender distribution after the election. Both men and women have an equal opportunity to introduce themselves to voters, and in majority and open lists PR systems, voters may choose to support a female or male candidate. In a closed list system, quotas really determine which candidates will be chosen, but the electorate still decides how many seats should be given to each party. But for equality of results, quotas ensure that women are represented in political offices after the elections.

### **4.3 Adoption of Quotas in Africa**

Important examples of quotas that exist in institutions other than national legislatures include the SADC Policy Forum and the African Union (AU). Although it may be too soon to discuss a continent-wide tradition of quota implementation, there are several instances where quotas have helped ensure women have access to decision-making structures.

For the AU, Maboreke (2002 cited in Ballington 2004) emphasises that during the Inaugural Session of the Heads of State and Government in 2002, the AU paved the way for gender parity quotas by adopting a 50% gender equality quota. This 50% gender quota for women was to be applied to all major decision-making levels, from commissions to senior appointments. She explains that the 1990s-adopted African and Global Platforms for Action provided impetus for the AU to adopt a quota system and that the recommendation of 30% women in decision-making structures was increased to 50%. She states that "instead of resulting from the organised lobbying efforts of women, it was dialogue with civil society, teamwork, and the political will of the

leadership that were the factors responsible for the equality rule entering into force” (Maboreke 2002 cited in Ballington 2004:29).

#### **4.3.1 Southern Africa**

The SADC region serves as an important example for the adoption of gender quotas to facilitate women’s political participation in Africa. The region’s Declaration on Gender (SADC 1997) provides an essential element for the advancement of women’s political participation in the region, which was drawn from the BPfA. The declaration enjoined SADC member states to meet a target of 30% of women in decision-making bodies by 2005. To ensure the goal is reached, a number of action programmes were created, of which gender quotas were an important part. This declaration came about in the wake of women’s constant mobilisation for practical instruments to ensure increased political participation of women. The SADC heads of state and governments committed to using “all techniques available to raise the participation of women at all levels of decision-making to 30% by 2005” when they signed the Declaration on Gender and Development in 1997 (Kethusegile-Juru2004:20). The heads of state and government pledged in Article 8 that they and their respective countries would, among other things, “ensure the equal representation of women and men in the decision-making of member states and SADC structures at all levels and the achievement of at least 30% women’s representation by the year 2005” (SADC 1997: Art. 8)

Kethusegile-Juru (2004:21) highlights that the declaration was a response to the call to action by the BPfA, which aimed to ensure 30% women’s participation in decision-making structures and also addressed the growing inequalities between men and women. After the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development was signed, there were more calls for particular steps to be taken to help fulfil this pledge of which gender quotas were suggested as a viable option for women (Kethusegile-Juru 2004). As a result of the adoption of quotas, the minimum target of 30% female representation in parliament in SADC was achieved. The regional mobilisation of women in support of the 30% aim outlined in the SADC Declaration on Gender aided the achievement of 30% women’s political participation (Gender Links 2005). SADC countries that passed quotas into law or implemented constitutional amendments to include women at the party or national level have seen considerable increase in the number of women in parliament. For instance, SWAPO in Namibia, ANC in South Africa, and the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) made it a requirement that women hold 30% of all positions with decision-making

structures. The opposition parties in Botswana, such as Botswana National Front (BNF) and the Botswana Congress Party (BCP), also implemented minimum quotas of 30% of women inside their party structures in Botswana. However, compared to their counterparts, neither party in Botswana established any measures to guarantee that these clauses are effectively carried out (Ntseane & Sentsho 2005).

It is interesting to note that most African countries' adoption of quota systems has been directly correlated with women's movements, and most documented instances of the efforts of women's groups come from Southern Africa. The ANC Women's League in South Africa led the effort to raise the proportion of women in parliament and achieved a quota of 30% (Hendricks 2005). Prior to the 1999 Namibian elections, the Namibian Women's Manifesto Network, a group of women's movements and other NGOs, lobbied several parties to adopt resolutions requiring party lists with 50% female candidates, which increased female representation in parliament from 12.5% in 1994 to 26.4% in 1999 (Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa 2009). However, parties in Namibia did not adhere to the resolutions, which affected the number of women that were elected. For example, only 20 of the ruling party's 72 candidates were women. Following this, the Namibian Women's Manifesto Network launched the 50/50 campaign to fight for 50% female representation in the legislature in 2000. The BCP Women's Congress discussed several implementation tactics and recommended reserved seats as the best method for making the quota easier to execute, but the party leadership rejected this. There is a general tendency in Southern Africa to use quotas or other proactive measures that were mostly advocated for by women's movements across the region. These efforts have yielded positive result for the region and most of SADC members states increased women's political participation, except for Botswana, which has the lowest (Kethusegile-Juru 2004).

#### **4.3.2 West Africa**

Ballington (2004:54) argues that Senegal is performing relatively better than many of its West African neighbours. As of 2021, the country boasts 41.82% female MPs in its national parliament because of its adoption of a legislated candidate quota with parity rule that was adopted in 2010 (UN Women 2021:14). Prior to this, Kassé (2004) examined the slow improvement in women's access to the legislature as well as Senegal's limited attempt at political party quotas. For instance, in 2003, women represented 19% of MPs, which was up from a 12% participation in 1993. To

address this, some parties decided to enact female candidate quotas, ranging from 25% to 40%, in advance of the 1998 elections. However, this quota was only applicable to the PR portion of the poll due to Senegal's mixed electoral system that combines PR lists with constituency elections (Kassé 2004). As with any PR system, the selection panel and members of the party's decision-making bodies plays a key role in determining the quantity and placement of women on lists. Furthermore, even if the national party leadership may in theory support quotas, their execution is frequently opposed by the party's local structures or grassroots as well as by women who view quotas as discriminatory. Similar to Southern Africa, women's movements advocated for political parties to include women in their party lists, banking on the support of the international and regional community (Diop 2001). Kassé (2004) notes that the Senegalese Council for Women devised ways to cooperate with diverse political players with the capacity to expand women's representation because there were no legislative provisions to ensure the promotion of women to elected office. These included the media, civil society in general, women's groups, political parties, and women's political movements. A coalition of women's organisations launched a citizen campaign during the Senegalese parliamentary elections in 2001 to draw attention to the underrepresentation of women in the legislature. They aimed to change the situation when only 19 of 140 legislators (13.5%) were female. During the run-up to the 2001 legislative elections, the majority of Senegal's 25 political parties fielded over 20% female candidates on national lists, and the Parti Démocratique Sénégalais list reached over 33%. This was an unprecedented development. As a result of this effort taken by women, Senegal was able to increase women's presence in parliament to 19.2% of the seats, an increase of nearly 6%. (Kassé 2004:67). The case of Senegal lends credence to the diffusion factor discussed in the literature review wherein parties are likely to adopt quotas when one party implements quotas. In African countries, it is particularly clear that if one party implements quotas, other parties can feel pressured to follow suit in order to retain the support of women voters.

### **4.3.3 East Africa**

Tamale (2004) explains that electoral quotas in Uganda are strongly backed by the law. Article 32(1) of the Ugandan Constitution explicitly provides for the implementation of affirmative action; it states that "the State shall take affirmative action in favour of groups that are disadvantaged on the basis of gender, age, disability, or any other basis resulting from history, tradition, or custom,

with a view to redressing imbalances that are in their favour” (cited in Tamale 2004:38). By allowing for a certain number of reserved seats in the national parliament equal to the number of districts in the country, the 1995 constitution codified the quota system. It ensured women would hold one-third of the seats in municipal councils. In addition, women benefit from the restricted number of quota seats set up for workers, youth, and people with disabilities. Reserved seats for women were introduced in 1986 in Uganda as a pioneering step to increase women’s presence. These combined efforts put women’s representation in Uganda in the top 12 countries in Africa at 33.8% (IPU 2022). Rwanda is another notable East African example of the adoption of gender quotas. In 2003, Rwanda amended its constitution to include the provision of quotas by pledging to increase women’s participation in decision-making structures. This constitutional provision mandated that women make up at least 30% of all political positions at different levels of governance. It ensured that a certain number of seats were reserved for women without any competition to those seats as in the case of Uganda (Powley 2008). To this end, Rwanda combined the power of the constitution and a reservation system to increase women’s participation. This feat yielded the desired result when in 2003 it successfully surpassed the Nordic countries in women’s political representation. Women’s participation in political positions in Rwanda is currently at 61%, which is the highest in the world (IPU 2022)

#### **4.3.4 North Africa**

Abou-Zeid (2004) asserts that Egypt was one of the first countries in Africa and one of the first Arab countries to implement reservations for women; although they are no longer in effect. In 1979, there was a presidential decree that reserved 30 of the 360 seats in parliament for women. This was against the backdrop of the momentum generated by the first World Conference on Women held in Mexico in 1975 and the CEDAW of 1977. She notes that the law on reserves for women was repealed in 1986 but that it was still in effect when the electoral system was examined in the 1980s. Due to the reserves getting repealed, the percentage of women in parliament decreased from 10% to 2.2%, and locally similar losses were noted. Akin to Uganda, the idea behind the adoption of reserves was to give women descriptive representation in addition to the seats that had previously been set aside for workers and farmers (Abou-Zeid 2004:46).

## **4.4 Types of Quotas Adopted in Africa**

Several types of quota system have been adopted in Africa, ranging from legislated, voluntary to reserve seats system. All these systems aim to increase women's political participation.

### **4.4.1 Legislative quotas**

Out of the 45 countries in Africa that have adopted quotas, more than 30 use legislated quotas to ensure the inclusion of women in national parliaments. These countries include Algeria, Djibouti, Kenya, Senegal, Uganda, and Rwanda (International IDEA 2022). Legislative quotas were implemented in Africa for a variety of reasons by different actors. They are a result of shifting international standards for female representation, which are reflected in numerous conventions and resolutions as well as in the legislative goals set by regional organisations like the AU, the SADC, and the Economic Community of West African States. Legislated quotas were used to pave new ways for female voters as well as to develop new grounds for patronage networks due to the emergence of multi-partyism and the loss of large-scale women's organisations linked to a single party (Tripp 2004:72). This type of quota is embedded in the constitution, and enjoys the legitimacy of the constitution, they cannot be overridden by any statute and are required and enforceable across all parties and the current administration. Looking at the proliferation of legislated quotas on the continent, it can be argued that African countries understand that legitimising the use of quotas via the constitution ensures better result for women's representation than leaving it to the mercy of political parties. Tanzania serves as an illustration of this: Its constitution requires that 33% of local representatives and 20% of MPs be female (Meena 2004). Another feature of the adoption of this form of quota is that they are often combined with other kinds of quota; for instance, Rwanda and Uganda adopted both legislated and reserved seats quotas, and Angola, Benin Republic, and Zimbabwe adopted voluntary quotas in addition to legislated quotas (International IDEA 2022).

### **4.4.2 Voluntary quotas**

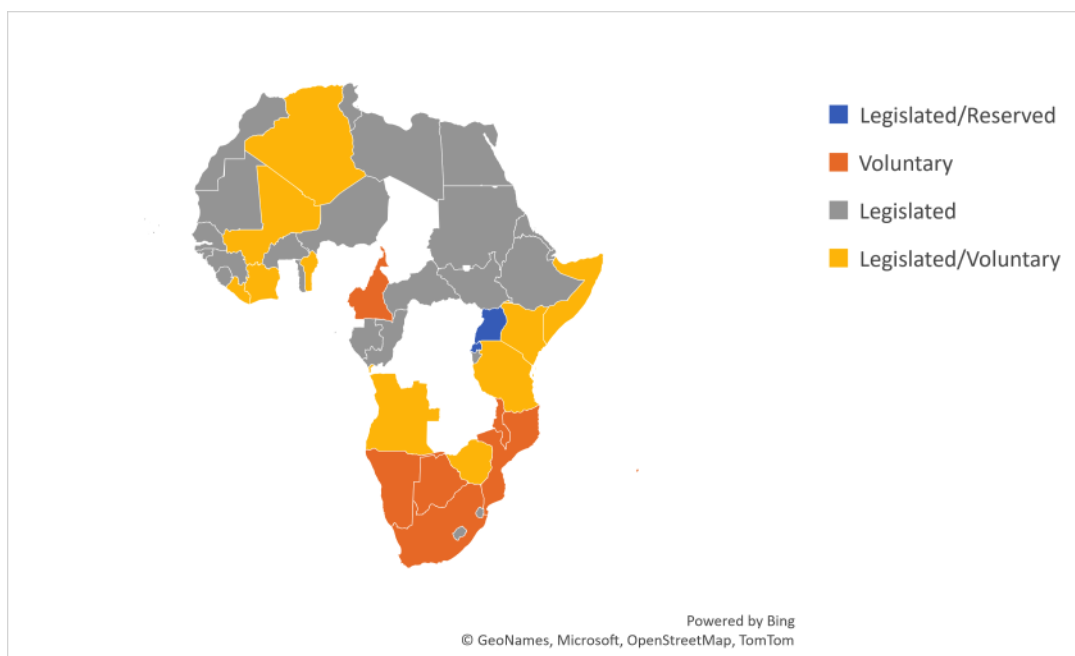
Sixteen African countries have voluntary party quotas, e.g., South Africa, Namibia, Malawi, and Botswana (International IDEA 2022). The benefit of a voluntary party quotas is that it significantly increases the possibility of women's entry and participation in parliament, especially when

implemented by the ruling party, such as in the case of the ANC in South Africa (Dahlerup 2006a; Hendricks 2005). Political parties typically implement voluntary quotas on their own either as a result of provisions in the party's policy documents and practices or as a result of the 'goodwill' of the party leadership. The party is not required to carry out the provision by any law, as in the case of BCP and BNF in Botswana. These two parties included a provision for 30% quota without putting in place practical mechanisms to actualise it (Ntseane & Senetsho 2005). Party quotas are often included in party constitutions or election mandates. The ANC in South Africa and the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique in Mozambique are two successful examples from the SADC region. Kethusegile-Juru (2004) argues that the drawback of party quotas is that it depends on the party maintaining its commitment to upholding it and winning a majority of seats in upcoming elections. Sometimes parties only enact quotas because of pressure from rival parties to remain competitive.

#### **4.4.3 Reserved quotas**

This is a form of legislated quotas as it provides that women occupy a specified number of seats in parliament. Uganda and Rwanda are notable examples of countries using reserved seats. The intrinsic uniqueness of this type of system is that it can be used by both democratic and undemocratic or semi-democratic governments to foster women's political participation. Tamale (2004:39) explains that the National Resistance Movement in Uganda introduced affirmative action for women in 1986 but launched the reserved seat system in 1989. The system provides that "each district is required to elect a female parliamentary representative as well as permit women to run against men in open seats as a result of the government's affirmative action policy". This system guarantees that women hold 27% of the seats in parliament. In addition to the reserved seats for women, they are allowed to contest in the open election that is available for everyone. The percentage of women in Uganda's parliament has increased to 33.8% as a result of these allocations (International IDEA 2022). Apart from women, reserved seats are allocated to other groups such as farmers, trade unions, and women's organisations. Voters may or may not have a choice between candidates who belong to a particular group when there are reserved seat quotas.

Figure 2: Overview of Quota types used in Africa.



Source: (International IDEA 2022).

#### 4.5 Quotas and Increased Women’s Political Participation in Africa

Tripp and Kang (2008) argue that to enable women’s greater access to parliaments, some form of electoral gender quota has been adopted in most African countries. Over the past 40 years, Africa has experienced the highest growth in women’s representation in national legislatures. Women made up 1% of African lawmakers in 1960, by 2003, this proportion had increased to 14.3%, and as of 2021, the continental average is 24% (Africa Barometer 2021). In terms of the percentage of women in parliament, four of the top 15 countries in the world are in Africa, with Rwanda leading the pack with 61.3%.

Table 1: Top 15 Countries for women's representation in parliament

Country	Quota Type	% Of Women in Parliament
Rwanda	Legislated Reserved	61.3%



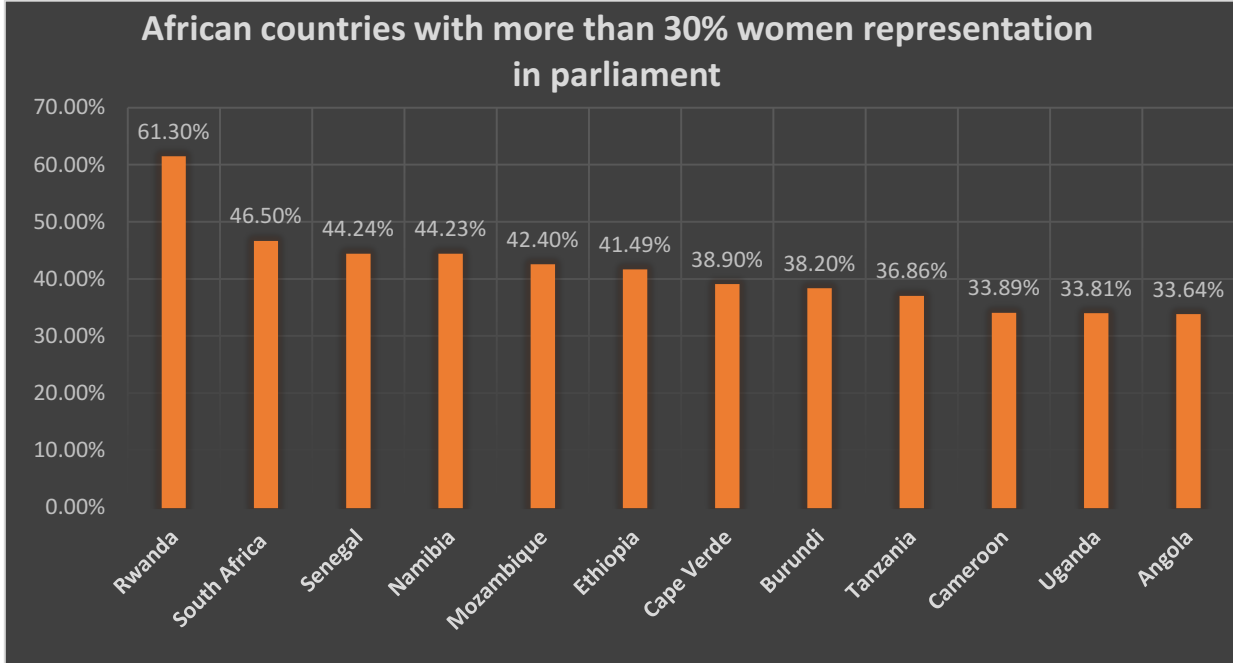
Cuba	-	53.41%
Nicaragua	Legislated	51.6%
Mexico	Legislated	50%
UAE	None	50%
New Zealand	Voluntary	49.2%
Costa Rica	Legislated Voluntary	47.4%
Grenada	-	47%
South Africa	Voluntary	46.5%
Bolivia	Legislated	46.2%
Sweden	Voluntary	46.1%
Finland	None	45.5%
Norway	Voluntary	45%
Senegal	Legislated	44.24%
Namibia	Voluntary	44.23%

Source: (IPU 2022; International IDEA 2022).

This achievement can be credited to the increased adoption of quotas, which is partly a result of the influence of the global women’s movement. The establishment of international norms on the necessity of including women in politics, which have found expression in conventions and resolutions on a worldwide scale, has considerably aided lobbying efforts. Also, the rise in multiparty elections has increased pressure on political parties to attract women voters and appeal to a wider base. The impacts of quotas are evident: The average rate of female representation in quota-enforced countries is over 20%, compared to 10% in countries without quotas (IPU 2022). The average increases to 30% when only countries with quotas of over 20% are included. The percentage of women in parliament has increased significantly in countries with 30% reserved

seats and over 30% quotas for the ruling party or top two parties. This affirms that quotas have been instrumental in increasing women’s political participation in most African countries.

Figure 3: Top African Countries for Women's representation in parliament.



Source: (IPU 2022).

Tripp (2004) traces the impact of gender quotas on the descriptive representation of women in Africa. From 1% in 1960 to 14.3% in 2003, there were 10 times more women legislators than there were in 1960. The biggest growth occurred between 1990 and 2003 when the proportion of female seats increased from 8% to 14.3%. In 2003, Rwanda overtook the Nordic countries to become the country with the highest percentage of female legislators when women held 48.8% of parliamentary seats. The growing use of various quotas is one of the key elements responsible for this increase. These quotas are partly the consequence of pressure from both domestic and international women’s movements, particularly in African countries. An excellent example of reaching over the established quota is Rwanda, where Article 9 of the Constitution commits the government of Rwanda to set aside 30% of posts in decision-making bodies to women candidates and Article 82 reserves 30% of seats to women in the Senate. (Quota Project 2009). After the 2003 elections, women made up 48.8% of the Lower House and 30% of the Senate, and after the 2008 election, women made up 56.3% of the Lower House and 34.6% of the Senate, making Rwanda the country with the highest percentage of women parliamentarians in the world (IPU 2008).

Burnet (2011:318) asserts that due to its commitment to the established gender quotas, Rwanda was able to equalise gender representation in political positions.

## **4.6 Quotas in Africa: Drivers and Challenges**

### **4.6.1 Post-conflict transition**

Several countries in Africa with quotas had just come out of civil conflicts, such as Eritrea, Mozambique, Rwanda, Somalia, and Uganda, or wars of liberation, such as Namibia and South Africa, and as a result, they had to rewrite their constitutions and start new legislatures, which made it easy to include quota provisions for women (Tripp 2004:70). Tripp (2004:71) argues that “in Africa, the end of major turmoil and conflict meant that there was greater openness in relation to creating new rules that included female leadership. The drawing up of new constitutions and the redrafting of legislation have created important opportunities for women”, and this opportunity allowed women to demand better measures to ensure the increase in women’s political representation. More so, the introduction of quotas in this context allows women to run for open and uncontested seats in the case of reserved seats rather than directly challenging a male incumbent. It has historically been challenging to implement female quotas in places where a high percentage of incumbents are male and need to be re-elected. As a result, constitutions adopted during post-conflict transition makes it easier for gender quotas to be implemented to allow for the inclusion of women in legislative bodies. The role of an active women’s movements is also important in weaponizing the transitory process for gender quotas.

### **4.6.2 Pressure from women’s movements**

Another factor that often aids the success of gender quotas is the extent to which women’s movement push for it. Some scholars argue that women’s increased access to political offices is a result of their increased influence in political parties (Morna *et al.* 2009; Tripp 2004). They note that women’s movements have been closely associated with the adoption of gender quotas in most African countries (Tripp 2004:75). Women want to exercise a well-earned right not because they feel they are due something in return, which is why they strive for leadership and influential positions inside political parties. The reason women, especially in Southern Africa, argue they want to transcend beyond the hospitality right is that they are the ones who support and form the

foundation of political parties. An interesting observation is that most countries with gender quotas have very active women's movements because they are able to lobby and push for measures to increase women's representation; examples are South Africa, Senegal, and Namibia.

#### **4.6.3 Electoral system**

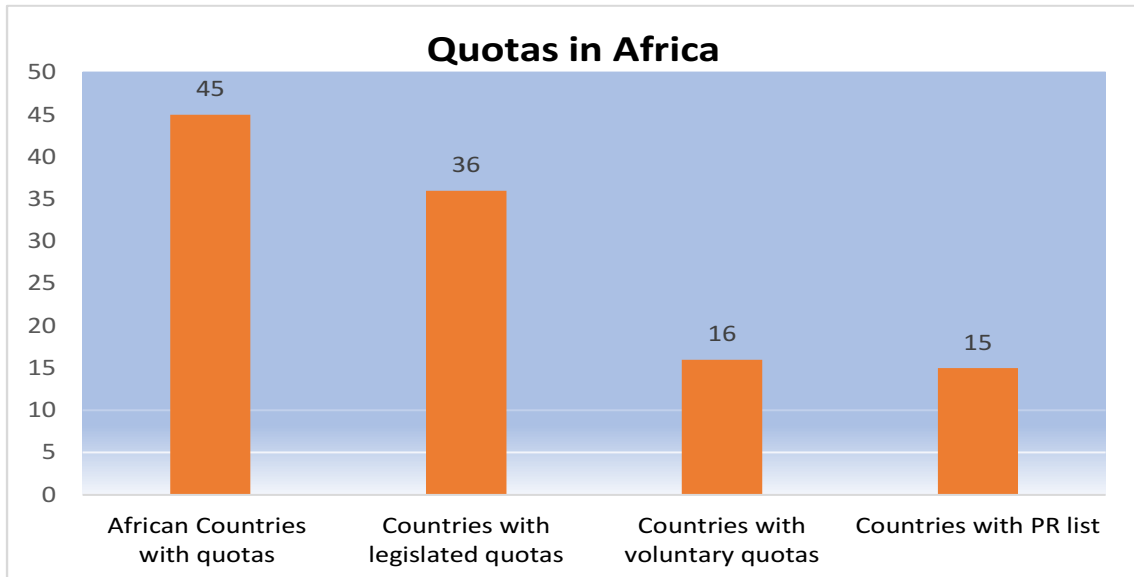
The electoral system is said to influence women's ability to gain legislative representation, thereby identifying it as an important variable for the success of quotas. A little over 33% of African countries use PR, compared to 31% who use FPTP plurality systems, 18% who use two-round majority voting, and 10% who use FPTP semi-proportional voting (International IDEA 2022). Notable African countries like Liberia, Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, Botswana, Uganda, and Ethiopia use FPTP voting systems. Ghana and Nigeria have been struggling to adopt any form of quotas that will ensure increased women's participation (Madsen 2019). Apart from Ethiopia (41.5%) and Uganda (33.8%), countries with FPTP system and without quotas all have below 20% women's political representation. The ones with quotas have relatively low representation compared to countries using the PR system. In general, countries with PR systems have had the most success with quotas, provided that the party leadership exhibits the required political will. Impressive outcomes have come from the voluntary quotas accepted by the ANC in South Africa and the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique in Mozambique. Party quotas in constituency electoral systems, on the other hand, have had less success; in Botswana and Zimbabwe, women face off against men in the districts. Another way that women have entered parliament is through the presidential appointment system, which is used in Zimbabwe, Botswana, and Swaziland. Two countries that have paired a voluntary party quota with a PR electoral system are Mozambique and South Africa. Because of the combination of a PR and a list system, every third person on their respective list is a woman (Kethusegile-Juru 2004). This combined strategy of PR system with voluntary quotas has ensured increased levels of female representation with South Africa at 46.5% and Mozambique at 42.4%, the two highest in the region (International IDEA 2022). Most countries with more than 30% women's political representation use a PR system, notable of which are Rwanda, Mozambique, South Africa, and Namibia.

Table 2: Top 12 African countries with quota type, electoral system and % of women's representation.

Country	Quota Type	Electoral System	% Of Women in Parliament
Rwanda	Legislated Reserved	PR	61.3%
South Africa	Voluntary	PR	46.5%
Senegal	Legislated	Parallel	44.24%
Namibia	Voluntary	PR	44.23%
Mozambique	Voluntary	PR	42.4%
Ethiopia	Legislated	FPTP	41.49%
Cape Verde	Legislated	PR	38.9%
Burundi	Legislated	PR	38.3%
Tanzania	Legislated Voluntary	FPTP PR	36.86%
Cameroon	Voluntary	FPTP	33.89%
Uganda	Legislated Reserved	FPTP	33.81%
Angola	Legislated Voluntary	PR	33.64%

Source: (IPU 2022; International IDEA 2022).

Figure 4: Overview of Quota types and electoral systems in Africa.



Source: (International IDEA 2022).

#### 4.6.4 Challenges

Kethusegile-Juru (2004) notes that while voluntary quotas by the ruling party is important for increased women's representation, it is not absolute because often the high percentage seen at national level are not reflected at local levels. For instance, in Mozambique, success at the legislative level has not been mirrored at other levels because even in a PR electoral system, a voluntary quota's success depends on the 'goodwill' of the leadership, the makeup of the party, and the political environment at the time. Kethusegile-Juru (2004:23) notes that "Zimbabwe, like the ANC in South Africa and Liberation of Mozambique in Mozambique, has a voluntary quota for women and youth. However, because of the constituency-based electoral system, the 'zebra stripe' system for the selection of candidates" (alternating male and female candidates) has not translated into increased women's participation due to lack of proper implementation. As a result, despite the fact that ZANU-PF is the majority party, women have not been as well represented. Similar to this, the two opposition parties (the BCP and the BNF) in Botswana both set a target of 30% women in political positions (Bauer 2011). However, they did not aggressively ensure that the quota was fulfilled by examining their practices to improve access for women, actively seeking

out women candidates, encouraging them to run, and creating a supportive environment for them in the primary elections. These parties continue to nominate very few women candidates in the national elections. On the other hand, the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP), which is the governing party, does not have a quota system for women; however, it bowed to pressure from female party members and women's organisations to field more female candidates in the 1999 elections. Many of these candidates were elected and are currently serving in the cabinet and parliament (Kethusegile-Juru 2004:24). The BDP's success depends entirely on the leadership's 'mercy', party whims, and sensitivities. It may also depend on the regional quota pledge in the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development, which the government of Botswana had ratified. This demonstrates that, while quotas are useful, political parties must also take action, either voluntarily or in response to outside pressure, to ensure their cultures and organisational structures support and encourage women to run for office. Due to the shortcomings of a voluntary quota, a legislated quota is preferable to a voluntary quota that is adopted by one or more parties in a PR system. This suggests that legislated quotas and a PR system are a better combination for achieving gender parity in politics, which is the ultimate objective (Kethusegile-Juru 2004:24).

#### **4.7 Numbers and Impact in Africa**

Situating the numbers and impact dilemma within the African context enabled the study to answer the first research question. Scholars identify a number of substantive and symbolic representation consequences of more women in African parliaments. Bauer (2012) asserts that proponents of women's increasing representation in parliaments claim that they will represent women's interests and serve as significant role models. Bauer and Britton (2006:20) argue that there are several instances where female MPs in Africa have advocated for gender issues and influenced legislative agendas. Devlin and Elgie (2008) attest that the increased number of women in parliaments allows for the political agenda to change in favour of issues that are applicable to women, such as ending GBVF, promoting sexual freedom, and reducing poverty. They argue that female MPs in Africa have effected changes in ways that have not been witnessed in circumstances in the West, and state that "in general, concerns such as land rights, eradicating poverty, HIV/AIDS, sexual freedom, and violence against women are different and more urgent for women in Africa than in the West" (Devlin and Elgie 2008:240). Creevey (2006) notes that critics argue that because African national legislatures are weak, the greater representation of women may not mean much. Others argue that

women's increased presence has often been cynically embraced by dominant parties in single party dominated regimes to boost their own popularity (Goetz & Hassim 2003) or has aided in executive control in many of those countries with more women in parliament. Muriaas and Wang (2012) note that gender quotas provide women an opportunity to join the legislature; however, they do not remove gender discrimination and diminished legitimacy, which are two significant obstacles for women.

Longwe (2000:27) discusses the different kinds of discrimination female politicians are exposed to by virtue of their participation in politics that impede the extent to which they can make an impact. He argues that gender prejudice still exist for even the smaller percentage of women who are elected to municipal or national office. It is likely to take the shape of verbal sexual harassment in many different forms, such as persistent innuendos about the morality of women in politics and assertions that the women have advanced through sexual relations with influential men in politics. Furthermore, Murray (2010) points out that because women begin their professions later and have considerably shorter careers in politics, they are seen as perennial outsiders in the political process. For instance, reduced perceptions of the legitimacy of female representatives are linked to reserved seat quotas, and because women exclusively compete with other women for seats under the reserved seat quota system, the system has less legitimacy. Clayton (2015) provides a corresponding argument for Lesotho where the government approved a law stipulating that 30% of all single-member districts be designated entirely for female councillors. She highlights that affirmative action policies that are seen as discriminatory undercut the authority of elected authorities and may have unforeseen negative effects. According to Matemba (2005), even though there are not many women in elected office in Botswana, the ones who do serve as role models, encourage other women to get more involved in politics and promote the potential of women in politics. This is evident, for instance, in the rise of female chiefs during the past 10 years in the country where historically women have never held the position of chief in their own right, except as regents. She notes that "the appointment of women as chiefs recently should be viewed within the wider framework of the remarkable and significant progress the country is making in boosting the status of women in social, economic, and political life". Interviews done across Botswana in 2009 and 2011 corroborated this, and Seboko, the country's first female paramount chief, states that when she was elected chief in the early 2000s, her people and other tribal leaders did not object because women were already serving as MPs and one of them was even the minister of local



government, to whom chiefs answer (Bauer 2016). Seboko further attests that female MPs and women ministers have paved the way for more women to enter politics. As in the case of former MP and Minister Gladys Kokorwe, who sponsored the Domestic Violence Bill in 2007, the only time in Botswana that a private member has sponsored a piece of legislation, they have also been in charge of guiding particular pieces of legislation through parliament.

Abou-Zeid (2004) argues that the presence of women in Egypt's reserved seats during the two legislative cycles was hardly noticeable and had no bearing on the position of women or on the councils in general. However, this has not dissuaded advocates of quotas from pushing for their implementation in Egypt because they understand the effect it has on women's political representation. Tamale (1999) argues that in Uganda, the National Resistance Movement's introduction of quotas for women in the National Assembly only aimed to produce "descriptive representatives who stood for" women. This was in order to maintain the uneven gender relations that existed in Uganda because the patriarchal state was not ready to have female MPs who politically 'acted for' women. This is evident from the restrained language of Article 78 of the Constitution, which identifies a woman representative for every district as a parliamentarian who represents women through affirmative action. By highlighting the descriptive nature of female representatives, the constitution creates 'status-quo' representatives rather than 'emancipationists'. The National Resistance Movement 'allows' women to take part in decision-making but forbids them from advocating on their behalf or taking on additional responsibilities.

Burnet (2011) notes that after the 2003 parliamentary elections in Rwanda, which saw considerable increase in the number of women in political leadership, women and girls have more access to school than they did before the introduction of gender quotas. Rwanda has gender parity at primary school level, and the gender gap is narrowing at secondary and higher levels (Burnet 2011:318–9). Due to their increased political participation, "women in Rwanda discovered increased autonomy as economic subjects and enjoy greater involvement in decision-making over domestic resources" (Burnet 2011: 319). Burnet (2011:320–1) further explains that "there has been a general change in the status of women in Rwandan society thanks to the increased representation of women in Rwanda. In short, women have found respect in their families and in their communities". In addition, Rwanda is said to promote quotas as a success symbol, which actively contributes to the dissemination effect of quotas. However, apart from the symbolic effects, female MPs, whether they sat in reserved seats or not, were more obedient to the Rwandan Patriotic Front political party

than to the people who elected them, and hence, they tended to follow legislative proposals coming from the government and stay away from sensitive topics (Burnet 2011:330). Furthermore, the women who were elected as part of the party lists had no connection to rural Rwanda because they lived in cities and had interests different from rural women, particularly farmers in the countryside. For instance, in 2003 and 2004, a new land policy and law were being discussed, and the Forum of Rwandan Women Parliamentarians failed to recognise the substantial gender implications of the law. Despite the fact that most women in Rwanda are subsistence farmers whose traditional land rights were mediated by men, female parliamentarians saw land to be a problem “for all Rwandans” rather than a problem exclusive to women (Rwanda Initiative for Sustainable Development 2003). Many women outside the government were dissatisfied by their lack of support for women on a potentially divisive issue of critical importance to rural women, and this served as more evidence to rural women farmers that the parliament had little impact on their lives (Burnet 2011; Pottier 2006).

Meena (2004) argues that female MPs in Tanzania have been successful in pushing for laws that address women’s issues in a number of areas, despite the low representation of women in the legislature. First, a bill on maternity leave for both married and unmarried mothers was introduced and supported by female MPs. They were also successful in changing a law that required high school graduates to stay at home for two years before enrolling in college. The decision had a significant impact on the enrolment of women at institutions of higher learning. This bill was amended by the parliament to let female candidates enrol in universities straight out of high school. Female MPs who had ties to women’s non-governmental organisations pushed a sexual offence bill through parliament that increased the harshness of sentences for sexual offenders. Similar to this, a provision in the land law reform ruled invalid gender-discriminatory customary practices.

To examine the usefulness of critical mass in converting women’s political representation into effectiveness in the policy and reform arenas, particularly on those that directly affect women, Goetz and Hassim (2003) use the cases of South Africa (36%) and Uganda (30%) to make a comparative analysis. For instance, they contend that while the state and party structures can promote women’s political participation and representation, the sustainability of progress obtained ultimately depends on how strongly society as a whole supports gender equality (Goetz & Hassim, 2003). In a similar spirit, post-conflict societies like Rwanda and Mozambique, with 49% and 31% of their national parliaments made up of women, respectively, have been used as examples to

highlight the shortcomings in the critical mass argument (Powley, 2005). For instance, Powley (2005:161) notes that “majority of Rwandan women are disadvantaged vis-à-vis men with regard to education, legal rights, health, and access to resources” despite the achievements made by women in parliament since 1996. Rwanda also continues to be significantly underdeveloped in spite of it increased women’s representation.

The implication of the above arguments shows the negative and positive relationship between numbers and impact in Africa. While countries such as Tanzania have to an extent felt the impact of female MPs on gender-sensitive policies, other countries such as Botswana and Rwanda only ensure symbolic representation of women. The preliminary submission from this section is that the relationship between numbers and impact in Africa is not an absolute positive as certain factors often impede the effectiveness of female MPs to influence the policy process on behalf of women. This is further interrogated in the subsequent chapters on presentation and the analysis of findings.

#### **4.8 Conclusion**

This chapter provided a continental discussion on gender quotas and its effect on increasing women’s political participation, while also identifying the relationship between increased women’s presence in politics and the protection of women interests. It started by providing an overview of the historical adoption of gender quotas on the continent following the UN BPfA and the signing of CEDAW. Both of these instruments advocated for women’s increased political participation as a necessity for achieving gender equality. It noted that quotas allow for equality of opportunity as well as equality of results as the latter ensures that women are represented in political positions after election while the former does not. The chapter moved on to provide a sub-regional discussion on quota adoption with notable country examples. It highlights that the SADC region has been the most successful with quota adoption as most of its member states have increased presence of women in their parliaments. The discussion identified different kinds of quotas adopted, varying from legislated quotas to voluntary party quotas and the reserved seats system, which is a variation of legislated quotas. It argued that PR is the most suitable electoral system for the implementation of quotas because countries with the highest rate of women’s political participation use it. It further noted that the combination of a PR system with a voluntary quota adopted by the governing party enables the significant participation of women in politics. However, this system is not without faults as the mechanism of the quota is left to the goodwill of

the party, and therefore, it is necessary for such systems to include quota provisions in the constitution. The chapter delved into the number versus impact debate by examining how quotas have translated to symbolic, and in some cases substantive, benefits for women. It noted that there is need for more investigation on the relationship between the two, which is what this study focused on. Hence, Chapters 6 and 7 provide better insight into the relationship between numbers and impact within the selected case studies.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **COUNTRY CONTEXT: BOTSWANA AND SOUTH AFRICA**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides a country-specific discussion on women's political participation, gender quotas and GBVF in the selected case studies. The essence of this chapter is to provide a contextual background for the selected case studies that guided the presentation as well as discussion of findings. The discussion revolves around a brief overview of the two countries, efforts by government and women's movements to increase women's political participation, type of quota system in place, the effect of the quota system, and the prevalent rate of GBVF. The chapter is divided into two parts: The first part focuses on the political representation of women, in terms of efforts that have been taken to engender increase women's participation and the type of quota system used in the selected cases. The second part discusses GBVF as the indices for measuring the substantive women's representation in this study. The investigation on gender quotas and GBVF was done to provide the needed framework to inform the analysis of the research objectives.

#### **5.2 Botswana**

##### **5.2.1 General overview**

Botswana has maintained one of the highest rates of economic growth in the world since 1966. It is categorised as a middle-income country with a per capita income of US\$ 15,471 (at purchasing power parity) in 2020 (World Bank 2020). Samatar (1999) calls Botswana an 'African miracle' as it is one of Africa's unquestioned top performers in many governance indicators, faring highly in terms of political and economic development, and one of the oldest democracies. Examples include the country being recognised as the least corrupt in Africa, upholding the rule of law, becoming a middle-income nation, ensuring regular elections and the protection of fundamental human rights and freedoms, and upholding a system of checks and balances among its three branches of government. The Constitution of Botswana establishes a unicameral legislature in the Westminster style and members are elected every five years using either a constituency based FPTP or simple majority electoral system (Molomo 2005). As a parliamentary republic, it has a unicameral national assembly made up of 57 directly elected representatives, six specially elected

representatives, and two ex officio representatives. The number of constituencies expanded from 31 to 57, and this increase occurs with each subsequent population census (Parliament of Botswana 2022). A House of Chiefs (renamed *Ntlo ya Dikgosi* and expanded in 2005) with 35 members acts only in “advisory capacity to the National Assembly, on any matters related to provisions of the constitution and powers of chiefs, sub-chiefs or headmen, customary courts, customary law, or tribal organisation or property” (Parliament of Botswana 2022:1). Since independence, the number and composition of political parties have mostly remained the same, and the largest political parties over the past 10 years have been the BDP, which is the governing party, the BNF, which separated from the BDP in 1998, and the BCP (Somolekae 2005).

### **5.2.2 Women’s Underrepresentation in Botswana’s Politics.**

Despite making up the majority of the population in the country, women are underrepresented in decision-making bodies. Following the most recent elections in 2019, only 11% of MPs and 18% of councillors in Botswana are female, which is considerably below the target for gender parity and among the lowest percentages in Southern Africa (Gender Links 2019). This means that in the SADC region, Botswana has the lowest rate of female political participation. Women’s representation in parliament has been steadily declining over time, falling from 18% in 1999 to 7% in 2009. In 2009, only four of the 61 (7%) MPs were female; two of these were elected in an open election and the other two were introduced as special nominees. In 2014, women occupied 10% of parliamentary seats in the National Assembly. Although the proportion of women in parliament reached an all-time high of 18% in 1999, women have consistently made up between 9% and 13% of parliamentarians in every other election since 1974.

One of the major contributing factors to the low rates of women in politics is the absence of gender equality provisions in Botswana’s constitution, which restricts the extent to which political actors can successfully pursue policies that advance women’s equality (Scribner & Lambert 2010:39). Neither the law nor the Constitution of Botswana include provisions for quotas or affirmative action programmes to increase or guarantee the representation of women in national parliament. The lack of practical measures to actualise the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development by Botswana’s government has been regarded as a sign of the country’s lack of support for women’s rights and political involvement.

The representation of women in parliament is also badly affected by the current electoral system. Since the inception of its electoral democracy, Botswana has used the FPTP electoral system. This system, which grants the seat to the candidate who receives a simple majority in a ward or constituency, has been criticised for favouring men over women. Scholars argue that Botswana’s FPTP electoral system ‘does not work’ because it seriously affects the country’s effort to increase women’s presence in parliament and disadvantages the country’s political opposition (Maudeni *et al.* 2007; Molomo 2008; Molutsi 2005). For instance, the BDP only received 53% of the popular vote but won 79% of the seats in parliament in 2009; this has been the trend for at least two decades (Independent Electoral Commission 2009; Maudeni *et al.* 2007:23). The government’s inability to increase the representation of women in parliament, women’s lack of resources, culture, societal attitudes, and the lack of legal requirements for political parties to field female candidates make the FPTP for Botswana particularly ineffective. Opposition party leaders and the independent media consistently advocate for electoral system reform in Botswana because of the detrimental effect the FPTP has on opposition parties as well as on women’s representation. In addition to these factors, there is a growing lack of trust in the ability of women to lead as well as disagreement about the adoption of a national quota system. A survey carried out in Botswana showed that more than 75% of both men and women said they would support a female candidate in their district, and the percentage among women was greater (88%) than among men (76%). Likewise, in response to the question of whether political parties ought to establish a quota system to increase the representation of women in Parliament, more women (65.7%) agreed compared to men (52.5%). Ntseane and Sentsho (2005:201) explain that “this survey implies a widespread underestimation of women’s ability to contest for political office and, in particular, men’s lack of trust in women as candidates for public office”. This is despite initiatives by CSOs like Emang Basadi and the Botswana Caucus for Women in Politics to inform and sensitise the general public about the importance of women in politics.

*Table 3: Trend of women’s representation in parliament from 1994-2019.*

	1994	1999	2004	2009	2014	2019
<b>Botswana</b>	10%	18%	13%	11%	10%	11%

Source: (Gender Links 2019).

### **5.2.3 Efforts taken to increase Women’s Political Participation in Botswana.**

To encourage and guarantee women’s participation in decision-making processes, the government of Botswana signed a number of international and regional treaties and has ratified the updated SADC agreement on gender and development, which demands for countries to adopt specific measures to ensure women are equally and effectively represented in positions of power (Global Database of Quotas for Women 2006; Sebudubudu & Osei-Hwedie 2005:22). Some of these instruments are CEDAW, the BPfA, the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development, the Commonwealth Plan of Action on Gender and Development, the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategy, and the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights of Women in Africa, which is known as the Maputo Protocol. Ntseane and Sentsho (2005:193) explain that these instruments mandate member states to mainstream gender into their legislations, policies, projects, and programmes by ensuring the equal participation of women and men in positions of power and decision-making structures. Particularly, the SADC Declaration advanced further by expressly urging SADC heads of state to commit to having at least 30% of women in political and decision-making organisations by the year 2005.

To complement these international conventions, a number of national policies were implemented by the government to facilitate increased participation of women in politics. These policies, which sought to ensure equal rights for men and women at all socio-economic and political levels, often serve as framework for elections in Botswana. Some of these policies are the National Policy on Women and Development, the National Gender Programme, and Vision 2016. Ntseane and Sentsho (2005:194) explain that these policies sought to recognise the crucial role played by men and women and prioritise power-sharing between men and women as one of the six critical areas of concern. They note further that “Vision 2016 calls on the government and other stakeholders to take proactive steps to ensure that women are fully represented in positions of power, leadership, and decision-making at all levels of society by the year 2016”. Other practical steps taken include the appointment of women to executive cabinet and senior positions in civil service and the creation of a dedicated department for women issues, the Department of Women’s Affairs, within the ministry of labour and home affairs. The Department of Women’s Affairs is in charge of coordinating the implementation of government policy on gender. Despite all these efforts towards



ensuring increased women's political participation, there have been no significant changes in Botswana as the percentage of women in parliament is still below 20%.

#### **5.2.4 Lack of a vibrant women's movements**

Prior to the late 1980s, there was an absence of a vibrant women's wing in the two major political parties in Botswana. A quasi-non-governmental women's group called the Botswana Council of Women, which was largely influenced by the BDP, initially took on this role. However, it was not effective in pushing for women's issues as it was heavily influenced by the governing party (Madisa 1990:22). The late formation of the women's wing in these parties affected the ability to advocate for the increased participation of women in politics. Ntseane (2005:224) notes that the women's wings of the BDP was formed in 1977 and that of the BNF was formed in 1987. Selolwane (2000:84–85) claims that when women's wings were first established, neither they nor their members expressed the concerns of female voters or urged women to vote; instead, they were “social clubs for the wives of male politicians, with their political engagement limited mostly to fundraising and canvassing for the men as well as providing entertainment during political rallies”. It is important not to conflate the presence of women's wings with the fact that women hold leadership positions in these parties. Mosojane (1993:44) attests that most political parties had women's wing that were “led by a male prefect who is their political mentor”. Bauer (2011) argues that while most of these women caucus peddle the notion that women make up the majority of Botswana's political parties, they have been unable to point to any specific actions that the women's wings or parties are taking to encourage more women to hold leadership positions or run for office other than to note that they are making a lot of effort to inform women about their rights and roles in politics. The most evident and noticeable impact of a diminishing women's movement has been seen in the rapidly decreasing representation of women in parliament since 1999. In the 1990s, when Emang Basadi (‘rise up, women’) was active with its political education initiative and in the wake of the SADC Gender Declaration, there was a strong mobilisation around electoral quotas; however, the establishment of a gender quota in elections has received fewer demands in recent times, especially within the governing party.

### **5.2.5 Quota system in Botswana.**

There is no legislated quota system dedicated to increasing the representation of women in the national parliament of Botswana. However, there are voluntary party quotas adopted by the BNF and the BCP. These parties voluntarily included a 30% quota in both their party constitutions and election manifestos. The BDP, which is the governing party, does not have a quota, but to enhance the representation of women, it encourages women to run for office in the party's structures, in the legislature, and in local government. Botswana makes provision for specially elected MPs, which women benefit from, but it was not exclusively created for women, and hence, it cannot be regarded as a gender quota. This makes Botswana a voluntary party quota country (30%) with provision for quasi-reserved seats for women using the specially elected MPs system.

#### ***5.2.5.1 Specially elected MPs System in Botswana***

There are 57 directly elected parliamentary seats in the National Assembly of Botswana. In addition to the 57 MPs that are directly elected, there are six specially elected seats in Botswana's National Assembly. Although they are typically referred to as being 'appointed' by the president, the constitution (1966 section 58(2)(b)) specifies that candidates for these seats are nominated by the president and chosen by the National Assembly. According to Maundeni (1998:128), the seats were initially established to provide representation for groups who were "otherwise unrepresented". Over the years, they have been employed to elect one to three women to the National Assembly against the backdrop of low rate of women elected at the polls. There was a motion to change the Botswana constitution to raise the number of specially elected members from four to eight by a female MP (Botlhogile Tshireletso) in 2009. Tshireletso's motion, however, did not specify how many of the eight specially elected seats would be reserved for women. The motion received harsh criticism for two main reasons: It adopted a piecemeal strategy to address the issue of women's underrepresentation in parliament in Botswana rather than a comprehensive one, and it was perceived as an effort by the BDP to increase its majority in parliament (Bauer 2011).

### 5.2.5.2 *Voluntary quotas*

In the absence of constitutional measures to ensure better representation of women in elective bodies, voluntary quotas imposed by parties on their candidates provide the best prospect for gains to be made. The BNF and the BCP, the two opposition parties, agreed on 30% quotas for election candidates in 1999 (Global Database of Quotas for Women 2006; Kethusegile-Juru 2002:8). Somolekae (2005:31) explains that the necessity to increase the representation of women in the BNF and the BCP prompted the development of mechanisms to do so at all levels of the party leadership structures.

The BNF is the main opposition party in the country. Its constitution mandates that 30% of the Central Committee members must be women, which is a strong indicator of the party's dedication to attaining gender equality. There are six women (33.3%) out of the 18 members on the BNF Central Committee. This satisfies the constitutional requirement of 30%. However, the party has not always translated this commitment into fielding women candidates for election. As discussed in the previous chapter, the lack of conscious efforts to nominate women for political positions using this quota is a major shortcoming. While the BNF's 2009 General Elections Manifesto page 7 declares support for the "emancipation of women", its central committee is not required to have a set percentage of women. In the parties' regulations governing primary elections, the BNF promises to implement affirmative action through a 30% quota in favour of women where possible in order to meet the 30% party quota for women's representation in parliament and councils.

The BCP is the second most popular opposition party and the fastest growing party after the BNF. It was formed as a faction of the BNF. On issues of gender equality, the BCP is committed to the following;

"The renaissance of women's roles in social, economic, cultural and political arenas through strengthening legal instruments to protect women by the abolition of customary and modern laws that discriminate against women; facilitating economic participation of women and devising mechanisms that would record and reorganise the work that women do; strengthening health services for women; making education and training more accessible to women and promoting the political participation of women." (BCP Manifesto 2004 cited in Somolekae 2005).

It is the only of the three major political parties that explicitly mentions quotas in either its election manifesto or constitution. The BCP promises to strive “towards an anti-sexist society” in its Manifesto: 2009–2014 (p. 29). The party’s current constitution mandates that 30% of the central committee members must be female, and its 2004 manifesto went as far as to promise the implementation of “a quota system to ensure a fair representation of women at both local and national level, i.e., through transformation of the electoral system”. The BCP, for example, changed its structures to ensure women are represented at party congresses and that they are allowed to be nominated for leadership positions from the floor in 2005, but it is unclear whether these actions were sufficient to improve the situation in the party (Somolekae 2005:31).

The BDP has no provisions for candidate quotas because of strong resistance to the idea of electoral quotas or any kind of affirmative action for women in politics within the party. Except among female activists and candidates, there is little recognition that the ‘playing field’ for female candidates is not level, which should be the primary justification for the adoption of affirmative action policies like quotas. As in the case of the BDP, there is a growing distrust towards the adoption of gender quotas in Botswana. For instance, Molutsi (1989:125) notes that over 80% of cabinet ministers and MPs said that nothing needed to be done to increase women’s political participation. In one way or another, they claimed that the prerequisites for women to have an equal opportunity with men in politics already exist. In 2009, Mmegi newspaper reported that many male MPs did not like the comment about the unfavourable political environment for women in an article about debate in parliament. They claimed that if women want their voices to be heard, they must compete with males for all positions. In fact, it is often claimed that gender quotas would unjustly favour women and give them seats in parliament “on a silver platter” (Mmegi 2009 cited in Bauer 2016). It is also frequently asserted that gender quotas for parliament would merely result in many seats being occupied by unqualified, elite women. This distrust for quotas among male MPs citing reasons such as discrimination against men and the need to ensure merit is one of the major reasons why women’s political representation is low in the country. Coupled with this is the inability of the governing party to adopt quotas for its party platform, which will significantly increase the number of women in parliament.

### **5.2.6 Effect of quotas on women’s political participation in Botswana**

The fact that two of the three major political parties set quotas calling for 30% female leadership has not translated into significant effect for increased women’s political participation. This is despite the fact that parties acknowledge that women are the foundation of their respective parties, carrying out the majority of the necessary duties to keep them running (organising and preparing food for party rallies, providing entertainment for party events, canvassing, and raising money for local campaigns and party offices, etc.) In 2009, there were no female members in the BDP executive committee; just three female members among the 18 members of the BNF Central Committee; six female members among the 20 members of the BCP central committee; and only two female members among the seven members of the BCP executive committee. This low presence of women within party structures and political positions are a consequence of lack of conscious efforts and instruments to increase women’s representation. It is interesting to note that the BDP, which did not commit itself to any quotas, performed better in 2004 in terms of nomination of women candidates and ensuring their election than the two opposition parties that had committed themselves in this way (Sebudubudu & Osei-Hwedie 2005:31; Somolekae 2005:31). Despite the fact that its 2008 constitution does not include a provision for a certain number of women on the central committee, the BDP’s 2009–2014 manifesto declares that the party “continues to promote the entry of women into prominent positions in the public and private sector”.

## **5.3 South Africa**

### **5.3.1 Overview of women’s representation in South African politics.**

South Africa is a model country for understanding women’s political participation due to its significant percentage of women in politics. Following the end of apartheid in 1994, the South African government initiated a number of reforms aimed at fostering increased women’s participation in politics and in the new democratic state. This effort included signing and ratifying several international and regional conventions that were created to remove barriers, abuse and discrimination faced by women. South Africa is a parliamentary PR, with a bicameral legislature (the national parliament and the national council of provinces; the latter is less notable for legislative duties) (Parliament of South Africa 2022). Prior to 1994 when the ANC adopted gender

quotas for the first democratic elections, women’s representation in parliament was extremely low because the then apartheid government employed a racist and sexist franchise to choose the members of South Africa’s parliament. Following South Africa’s first democratic election in 1994, women made up 27.75% of the National Assembly members; this number increased to 30% in 1999; 32.75% in 2004; and 43% in 2009. Similar trends were seen in provincial legislatures where women were represented by 24% in 1994, 27% in 1999, 32.3% in 2004, and 41% in 2009 (Hendricks 2005:81; Morna *et al.* 2009:17). These increases can be attributed to agitations from women’s movements to ensure gender parity in political parties, and the voluntary adoption of quotas by parties like the ANC, Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), and Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP).

Table 4: Trend of women’s representation in parliament from 1994-2019.

	1994	1999	2004	2009	2014	2019
<b>South Africa</b>	27.8%	30%	32.8%	43%	44.1%	46.5%

Source: (Gender Links 2019).

**5.3.2 Efforts taken to increase women’s political participation in South Africa.**

The 1996 Constitution’s Bill of Rights, which requires the government to ensure women’s involvement and representation in decision-making, enshrines South Africa’s commitment to gender equality. This was the first time that the rights of women were enshrined in the constitution, regardless of race. Section 19(3) of the 1996 Constitution provides that “every adult citizen has the right to stand for public office, and if elected, to hold office”. The 1996 Constitution, in particular, enshrines the right to equality and prohibits discrimination on any basis, including race, gender, sex, age, disability, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, culture, language, and place of birth. This Constitution aided in the adoption of a number of national legislations promoting gender equality as well as the creation of comprehensive national institutions for its advancement, such as the Commission for Gender Equality and the National Gender Machinery. Their mission is to safeguard and advance gender equality in South Africa. A number of specific pieces of legislation were also important for ensuring women’s participation and representation in

decision-making processes and for promoting quotas, such as the Electoral Act (No. 73 of 1998), which enjoins every registered party to uphold the rights of women. This mandates political parties to follow the Act's requirement to guarantee that female candidates can interact freely with parties and other candidates and engage fully and equally with their male counterparts. Additionally, it calls on political parties to ensure women have unrestricted access to all public gatherings, marches, protests, rallies, and other public events and to take all reasonable measures to protect their right to participate freely in political activities.

From the 1990s, ANC Women's League mobilisation was central in ensuring women's participation in party and broader negotiation processes. This aided in the increased percentage of women in senior leadership roles inside party organisations, which further aided in securing women's political participation (Hendricks 2005). Their mobilisation led to the establishment of a framework for gender equality in party policy papers, including the constitution. In essence, the ANC was able to adopt a number of strategies for developing into a more responsive and inclusive political party. For example, the Preamble of the ANC Constitution states that "the fundamental goal of the ANC is to build a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous society in South Africa" (ANC 2017:2). Within the party's internal institutions, the ANC Women's League has always been at the forefront of persistently bringing up the topic of gender equality. Their campaigning efforts were always focused on the question of a gender quota. Although the purpose of using a quota system was to enhance the presence of women in the executive committees and political party structures, they were able to extend it to the larger political system. There was initial opposition to the use of quotas within the ANC, and criticism revolved around the fact that quotas had not been sufficiently addressed by the women in their organisations and that it would somehow call into doubt the qualifications of female candidates. However, women in the ANC Women's League advocated for and obtained a quota system to ensure that at least 30% of candidates on their lists were female before the first general elections in 1994. The 30% quota was applied during the elections from 1994 to 2004 and increased to a 50% quota at the Polokwane Conference in 2007, which took effect during the 2009 elections (Morna *et al.* 2009). The ANC was able to pioneer quota policies and corresponding gender equality policies to ensure women's participation and representation in South African politics as a result of efforts by women activists to advance women inside the party structures.

### 5.3.2.1 *Quota system in South Africa's politics: Voluntary quota*

To increase the representation of women at all levels of governance, the ANC, EFF, and IFP adopted voluntary quota systems for their party lists. The ANC, which is the governing party, has a gender parity quota system for women, the EFF uses the zebra stripe approach wherein men and women are alternated on the party lists, and the IFP has a 40% gender quota. So far, the ANC has reached gender parity using the voluntary quota system, and the EFF is one percent short of meeting the 50% mark. On the other hand, the official opposition party, the Democratic Alliance (DA), opposes all forms of quotas.

In order to promote women's inclusion at all levels of the party, the ANC set internal quotas for each organisational structure. In 1994, the ANC committed itself to a 30% quota for women's representation in elective bodies. It was common practice to ensure that at least every third candidate on party lists for the National Assembly and provincial legislatures was a woman, achieving at least a 33.3% representation of women (Kethusegile-Juru 2004). According to Rule 14.1 of the ANC Constitution 1997, a quota of at least one-third (1/3) in all its structures to enable such effective participation was necessary to increase women's representation. As a result, the National Assembly met the 30% UN target, with a record of women's representation of 35.7% in 1994, 1999, and 37.3% in 2004 (Hendricks 2005:82). By 2007, the ANC modified its quota provision by adopting the principle of parity in gender representation at its conference in Polokwane. At the congress, the 30% provision was revised to enhance the quota to parity (Zuma 2007). Consequently, it pledged in its 2009 election manifesto to "increase women representation in parliament and government to 50%"; a goal that has been met in the National Assembly, where 49.2% of ANC members were female (ANC 2009; Morna *et al.* 2009: 11). Consequently, 50% of the individuals elected to the National Executive Committee and 50% of the National Working Committee at the congress were women. Women have been well represented in the national parliament due to the ANC's overwhelming dominance in the National Assembly and its dedication to women's representation. On a provincial level in 2009, 48.3% of the ANC seats in the provincial legislatures were occupied by women (Morna *et al.* 2009:16). The diffusion factor also applies here, and because of the ANC adopting a gender quota, other parties were forced to consider gender representation in their party lists. The percentage of female candidate nominated



by opposition parties increased and in 1994, it was 14.2%; in 1999, 18.7%; in 2004, 22.3%; and in 2009, it reached 30.9%.

While the ANC, EFF and IFP use gender quotas for their electoral list, other opposition parties such as the DA, African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP), and Freedom Front Plus do not commit themselves to quotas for women's representation. The DA asserts that no special mechanism is required to include women because they presume that socio-economic disadvantages and not the electoral system or political institutions are to blame for women's underrepresentation, and that these conditions will only improve once women are adequately empowered (Albertyn *et al.* 2002:36). During the 2019 general elections, the DA received a lot of criticism for its lack of woman representation. Mmusi Maimane, the former leader of the DA, justified the party's lack of gender equality on its list of prospective province premiers. Despite only two women making the cut, Maimane argued as follows: "Ideally I would want more women, but I'm not going to set a quota for women because I don't believe in quotas" (Ndenze 2019:1). This implies that DA candidates were mostly selected without the use of gender quotas. This assertion may indicate that Maimane has deeply ingrained patriarchal attitudes toward women, which continue to downplay the substantial role that women may play in society and their ability to hold positions of authority on equal level with men. It is important to remember that the DA did have a female leader for eight years. One woman was among the DA's top 5 candidates, and eight women were among the top 25. However, irrespective of its use of quotas, the DA has seen a steady increase in the proportion of its women's representatives from 14.3% in 1994 to 29.9% in 2009 (Hendricks 2005:81; Morna *et al.* 2009:11).

### **5.3.3 Effect of quotas on women's political participation in South Africa.**

At 46.4%, South Africa is among the top three African countries with increased women's political representation (International IDEA 2022). Overall, South Africa has advanced significantly, and its parliament, which ranks third in Africa and tenth globally, is undoubtedly one of the most gender diverse in the world (IDEA 2022). South Africa's 2015 report to the African Commission on the achievement of Article 9 of the Maputo Protocol notes that the country has made significant progress in ensuring women's participation in political and decision-making processes. The ANC quota system substantially and single-handedly improved the representation of women in the National Assembly because the ANC gender parity quota has been consistent in supporting the

need for affirmative action to advance gender equality (Sonke Gender Justice 2019). Due to this, women's participation in terms of seats held by women in the National Assembly has significantly been on the rise following the 1994 general elections. The Dullah Omar Institute (2019) notes that the ANC appears to have achieved their 25-year goal to boost women's seniority and leadership. Political parties such as the EFF implemented progressive strategies to increase women's political participation because they have been influenced by the strategy of the governing party (the diffusion effect) in advancing women's representation.

William (2006:36) argues that the ANC, which is in power, committed itself to a quota system to ensure increased participation of women at different levels of governance. Letsholo (2006:12) adds that this commitment included their pledge to achieve gender parity in the run-up to the local government elections in 2006. Mottiar (2006:43) argues that this commitment turned out to be idealistic in terms of practical implementation as it sparked opposition within the party as several members of the party, particularly the men, expressed concern that the parity target would disenfranchise them. Despite this opposition to the policy, a quota system was adopted, and some provinces exceeded expectations with an average rate of 46%, while other provinces fell short of expectations (Mbeki 2006). Collaborative efforts between the governing party's adoption of a quota system, the directive by the Local Government Municipal Structures Act (No. 117 of 1998) and a national advocacy to increase women's political participation motivated other parties to be gender conscious when compiling their list. In light of this, Chikulo and Mbao (2006:54) affirm that political parties appear to have complied with the 2005 national campaign on 50/50-Get the Balance Right organised by the local government association to ensure increased participation of women at the local government level. This effort has yielded the desired result with South Africa experiencing increased women's presence in politics.

Overall changes and improvements are noted at the national and provincial level, but disparities continue within parties. For instance, parties like the DA, ACDP, Freedom Front Plus remain gender-blind and do not see the need for gender quotas. This means all these parties still have a substantial share of men in positions of power. Therefore, it is important to give women's leadership in senior positions within parties more attention. However, there has been progress toward achieving the 50% representation of women in political leadership that has been envisioned by the ANC, as well as the transformation of previously male-dominated, patriarchal structures. Sonke Gender Justice (2019:2) notes that despite what one might anticipate, "gender currency did

not run along the ANC manifesto as strongly as one might expect from a party with such a long history”. This demonstrates how decisions in these parties are still largely made by men. Important questions remain regarding the impact of women’s representation in these structures due to ongoing obstacles to their full and equal participation.

## **5.4 Gender-based Violence in South Africa and Botswana**

GBVF remains one of the prevalent problems that women in Africa face. The prevalence and severity of GBVF cases across Africa makes it an important issue that affect women all over the continent, and thus, it is necessary to understand if numbers translate to impact in the broader discussion on women’s political representation. This is in acknowledgement of the contestation of what constitute women’s interests that was raised in Chapter 2. This section establishes that GBVF affects women irrespective of racial, social or economic class. Hence, this section provides an overview of GBVF in Botswana and South Africa to provide context to the indices that will be used to understand substantive women’s representation in this study.

### **5.4.1 Conceptualising gender-based violence**

GBVF is a multiplex concept that covers various forms of violence meted out on the basis of gender. It is the general term used to capture violence that takes place within the framework of a particular society as a result of the uneven power relationships between the two genders and the normative role expectations connected with each of them (Bloom 2008:14). It can be physical, emotional, sexual, verbal, psychological, economic, or cultural. Though GBVF is largely perceived as violence against women, it can affect all people, including men, and gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex persons. Simply put, it is violence against another person because of their gender. Because women are often the most affected when issues of GBVF arises (Saferspaces 2020), there is a substitution of GBVF with violence against women and girls.

To understand violence against women, the most widely adopted definition is found in the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women of 1993. It defines GBVF as “any act of violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life” (UN 1993:2). Drawing from this definition, violence

against women is spotlighted to symbolise GBV due to the prevalence of the former all over the world. The definition further asserts the following:

“Violence against women shall be understood to encompass, but not be limited to the following: physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family and in the community, including battery, sexual abuse of female children, dowry related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution and violence perpetrated or condoned by the state.” (UN 1993:2)

It is interesting to note that the above definitions are relevant and also apply to the selected case studies. Therefore, for the purpose of the study, GBVF is defined as “any act of violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life” (UN 1993:2). This definition focuses on violence against women and girls because of the high rate of such cases in South Africa and Botswana over the years.

#### **5.4.2 Drivers of gender-based violence and femicide**

Saferspaces (2020) opines that GBVF is structural and deeply ingrained in institutions, cultures, and traditions, making it a serious and pervasive issue that affects practically every facet of daily life. Jewkes (2002:1425) argues that patriarchy in most societies provide justification for situations that perpetuate harmful societal norms that leads to continuing violence against women and girls. Mtshweshwe (2020:1) highlights that it starts by prescribing numerous patriarchal attributes “that are tied directly to masculine social identities which are often enforced by men, the result being violence against women and girls”. This type of violence takes many forms and is rooted in women’s political, economic, and social subordination. It is crucial to understand that women’s experiences with this violence vary widely since they are influenced not only by patriarchal institutions and practices but also by other types of inequality and discrimination (UN 1993). Violence against women is a derivative of the unequal power relations between genders in our society. Bloom (2008:13) argues that gender norms that govern expectations of the roles that

women and men are expected to play in the family, community, and society at large propagate violence as a means of restricting and limiting women's autonomy and sexual activity. She further argues that these gender norms delineate the boundaries of acceptable behaviour for men and women in the family, community and society within a given culture.

The vast majority of violence suffered by women and girls is often perpetrated by men and boys, whether as individuals or as a part of male-dominated institutions, despite the fact that not all men are violent (Gender Links 2012). However, the biological composition of being a man is not an adequate explanation for male violence against women because there are differences in prevalence, patterns, and individuality between men in any setting. Moolman (2017) opines that this is the reason the social construction of masculinity is identified as the culprit when it comes to men's perpetration of GBVF. Though there are differences based on race and tribe, the dominant messages about what a 'real man' is emphasise the superiority of masculinity over femininity and the authority of men over women (Jewkes *et al.* 2015:98). Ideas about feminine weakness/vulnerability and masculine strength/protection expose girls and women to more violence and reinforce the belief in masculine superiority, which is central to patriarchy. Violence is often used to coerce women into obedience and uphold the hegemony of the men over the women, and it is also used by men to keep women in their position of having less economic, political, and social power (Gender Matters 2017). When women try to assert their claims to such power, for example, when they are involved in protests over economic and political rights, they are often verbally and physically attacked. Thus, Jewkes and Morell (2018) note that GBVF is maintained by ideas about and practices of hegemonic masculinity. By investigating the links between men's use of violence and social construct of masculinity, we discover that men are accorded more privilege than women, symbolising that masculinity is given priority over femininity (McVittie *et al.* 2017). Violence against women is thus born out of the privilege that manifest from this unequal relation. Drawing from this, men feel entitled to use violence against those who are less than them because they fear the loss of such privilege or feel unable to live up to the expectations associated with being the dominant gender (Bassey & Bubu 2019). Stromquist (2014) argues that in most African societies, men are raised to be men, they are socialised into learning that violence is a way to demonstrate their masculinity and control women, often at great cost not only to the women and girls in their lives but also to themselves. Violence against women and girls constitutes a key manner of such control that prevents women from asserting their roles

as individuals with rights (Gender Matters 2017). Kapur (2013) asserts that GBVF is an important tool that consolidates the functionality of patriarchy as it ensures that women are only seen in relation with men, which means their status as wives, mothers, or daughters deprives them of their individual agency.

### **5.4.3 Prevalence of gender-based violence in selected case studies**

South Africa was ranked fourth (the highest in Africa) in the 2012 Social Institutions and Gender Index of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development for progress made in promoting gender equality and women's rights, and Botswana is often regarded as a developmental state because of its increasing economic growth. However, despite this progress made by these two countries, GBVF remains unacceptably high because cultural, religious, social, and economic factors play a role in driving GBVF. The prevalence and severity of GBVF is demonstrated in the fact that at least one in three women worldwide have experienced one form of abuse (UN 1993). According to Abrahams and Gevers (2017:1), the South African Police Service reported that a total of 62 649 sexual offence complaints were recorded between 2013 and 2014. They further note that 34.6% of rape were committed by victims' relatives or close friends, 26.1% by random acquaintances, and 24.4% of victims had no relationship with their abusers. Statistics South Africa (2016) reports that one in five (21%) partnered women has experienced physical violence by a partner. The report goes further to state that one in five women in South Africa have been sexually abused and will experience sexual abuse in their lifetime. It notes that two in five have experienced physical abuse by their intimate partner, making their homes or surroundings unsafe for them. South Africa as a patriarchal society exposes women to violence perpetrated by men and the assumption that women are sub-ordinate to men. In such communities, women are rendered defenceless, helpless, and disadvantaged, which inevitably increases their vulnerability to violence meted out on them. Rape is characterised by Gqola (2015) as a manifestation of male power and female vulnerability, which is consistent with the idea that GBVF results from an ongoing systemic power dynamic that maintains the objectification and stereotyping of women. Given the significance of rape kits in gathering evidence when a rape crime occurs, it is concerning that 76% of police stations in South Africa did not have rape kits in 2019 (Whitfield 2019). Enaifoghe *et al.* (2021) report that 75% of men in the Gauteng province of South Africa reported having committed GBVF at least once in their lifetime, compared to 51% of all the women in the sample who had

experienced any type of violence. During the first week of the lockdown in 2020, gender-based violence (GBV) figures rose to 2 320 complaints. According to South African Minister of Police Bheki Cele, this statistic is 37% higher than the weekly average of domestic violence cases reported to the police in 2019 (Commission for Gender Equality 2022)

Nduna and Nene (2014) argue that while there is a lack of up-to-date statistics that tracks GBVF cases, women in South Africa are subjected to a prevalent rate of this violence. The National Institute for Crime Prevention and Rehabilitation claims that only one in 20 rape cases are reported to the South African Police Services, and human rights organisations estimate that only one in nine cases of sexual violence are. The Medical Research Council and Gender Links assert that only one in 20 women reported rape to the police, and 0.3% report domestic violence. Between 2018 and 2019, the South African Police Services documented almost 330 000 assault cases involving women (cited in Enaifoghe *et al.* 2021). High rates of sexual assault, rape, and femicide continue to occur in South Africa despite numerous campaigns and interventions conducted by the government groups and CSOs surrounding GBVF (South African Human Rights Commission 2018). Statistics South Africa (2016) indicate that 6% of women over the age of 18 have suffered sexual abuse in a relationship, and 21% of women over the age of 18 have experienced physical violence by a boyfriend. The inability of the criminal justice system to hold offenders accountable show that patriarchy and gender imbalance continue to operate and sustain gender hierarchies through essentialised ideas of gender and physical and/or sexual violence in South Africa (Rape Crisis Cape Town Trust Prevalence, 2017). As a result, this led to further perpetration of violence as the lack of punishment echoes the notion that it is not a grievous offence. The low rate of prosecution and conviction of GBVF offenders convey that perpetrators of such acts are not held accountable, thereby endangering the lives of women (Commission for Gender Equality 2022).

Botswana has a higher gender development index than some other African countries, but it is disturbing that the effects of GBVF continue to hamper the country's efforts to advance gender equality. Recent national data puts the GBVF rate in Botswana at 67%, with most women saying they have suffered at least one form of violence (Gender Links 2012). GBVF happens because men and women hold different levels of authority, and like the other SADC countries, Botswana has a long history of patriarchy because men continue to dominate major structures in the society. The killing of women by intimate partners, often known as intimate partner violence or passion killing, in which the perpetrator typically kills his spouse and then dies by suicide is one of the

major GBVF-related issues that is now on the social and political agenda in Botswana. In many Botswana households, GBVF is widespread, and it is frequently used interchangeably with the term ‘domestic violence’ because it typically happens in a household setting. This type of violence affects all women, transcending social class, educational qualification, and religion.

Two surveys were conducted in 1999 by the Botswana Police Service and the Women Affairs Department to gauge the rate of GBVF. The Botswana Police Service survey found that there was an 18% increase in cases of rape reported in the country, rape of girls below age 16 increased by 65%, 58% of rape victims were aged 16 and 30 years; and 27% of rape victims were aged below 16 years. The report found that men between the ages of 18 and 32 make up most of the perpetrators of this act, and they are often known to their victims. The Women Affairs Department survey on the other hand sought to understand the types, degree, and consequences of GBVF in the country. It found that 60% (three in five women) of women have been victims of one form of violence. It sub-divided violence against women into different categories, namely sexual harassment, emotional abuse, physical abuse, sexual assault, verbal abuse, severe beatings, murder, etc. Intimate partner violence is the most prevalent type of violence, signifying that GBVF happens mostly in the domestic space.

The UN office in Botswana conducted a GBVF situation analysis in 2007 and discovered that the number of femicide cases doubled between in the period 2004–2007, and that physical violence against women by their partners is a recurring problem that usually ends with the murder of the woman. As a result of this, the report noted that 101 women were victims of intimate partner violence and femicide. Due to increased awareness on GBVF, the police service reported that there was a significant increase in the reporting of GBVF cases between 2003 and 2007. Of the GBVF cases reported between this period, rape occupies over 70%, 67% of women interviewed indicated that they had suffered from some form of violence, and 44% of men interviewed indicated that they had perpetrated some form of violence against women. The report notes that intimate partner violence is the most prevalent, often manifesting in emotional abuse followed by sexual and physical violence. Of the women interviewed, 11% indicated that they had experienced rape, 11% of men said they had engaged in it; 16% of the women said they had been a victim of attempted rape, and 2.2% of the men admitted to attempted rape; 24% of pregnant women said they had been exposed to abuse during the course of their pregnancy; and 23% of the women indicated that they had been victims of sexual harassment in different spaces. Women often do not seek medical



attention for physical abuse suffered during intimate partner violence, and only 4.75% agreed that they sought medical attention and only 7.1% admitted that they reported it to the police. One out of every nine women who were raped did not call the police, and one in seven women told a doctor about being raped.

In 2012, Gender Links in conjunction with the department of women affairs commissioned another survey to investigate GBVF rate in Botswana. This study provides the most cited statistics as it is the most national and comprehensive survey on GBVF. It notes that 62% of women in a relationship had experienced some form of intimate partner violence, and 48% of men indicated that they had abused their partners. After intimate partner violence, sexual harassment is the most prevalent with 23% women indicating that they had been victims (Gender Links 2012). The study found that women often do not report cases of GBVF, consolidating the findings from 1999 and 2007. Kang'ethe (2014) notes that in spite of the prevalence of GBVF in the country, only 1.2% of women reported to the police, which shows that reporting was 24% less than the percentage of GBVF cases in the country. The lack of reporting on GBVF by women is due to societal attitudes towards such cases where it is assumed that violence such as marital rape and domestic violence are a non-matter because the man is the head of the household and can therefore treat his partner as he wishes. Kang'ethe (2014) argues that this manifests in traditional courts or traditional chiefs/ courts not recognising GBV cases stemming from their demeanour of not encouraging women to report. Lekoko (2009) adds that patriarchy legitimises such violence meted out under the guise of acceptable cultural norms. Gender Links (2012) notes that a woman reporting GBVF case to the traditional court or the police is seen as an embarrassment to the community, especially in cases of intimate partner violence. In 2018, a National Relationship Study was done to update the 2012 national statistics on violence against women. The study found that one in three women have experienced violence, and it notes that 37% women have experienced GBVF as well intimate partner violence (Chiramba *et al.* 2018). This puts the figure for Botswana in the same rank as the GBVF numbers reported for South Africa.

In 2020, the Botswana Police Service reported that 2 789 GBVF cases were reported during the period of the lockdown, compared to 2 265 cases for the whole of 2019 (Kuhlmann 2022). This demonstrates a significant spike in the rate of GBVF in the country during the Covid-19 lockdown, which is similar to South Africa. The tracing of GBVF cases across different time periods in the

two case studies shows the consistent prevalence of GBVF, the types, and the degree to which women are exposed to it.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

This chapter provided in-depth contextual background on women's political presentation, gender quotas and GBVF in South Africa and Botswana. It started by discussing women's political representation in the case studies and the need for a quota system. In Botswana, the underrepresentation of women persists in the face of several international and regional treaties that have been signed by the government. However, the lack of a dedicated gender equality provision in the constitution has hampered these efforts. It further noted that save for the 30% voluntary quota by the BNF and BCP the governing party does not make provision for any gender quotas. The effect of this is the relatively low presence of women in parliament, even though women are often appointed as part of the specially elected MPs. The lack of an active women's group that can mobilise for the adoption of gender quota either in the constitution or by the governing party is also responsible for the low participation of women. The chapter moved on to discuss women's political representation in South Africa, which provides for a starkly different scenario from Botswana. It noted that following the end of apartheid, the ANC put in place an initial 30% gender quota, which it modified to 50% in 2007. This singular effort has been credited for South Africa's increased women's political participation. Although other parties such as the EFF and the IFP employ the zebra approach and 40% gender quotas respectively, the significance of the ANC's effort cannot be overstated. Opposition parties, such as the DA and other smaller parties, however, do not see the need for a gender quota as they argue that the empowerment of women is what is needed rather than gender quotas. A further investigation showed the central role that the ANC Women's League played in advocating for quotas to advance women's participation within the party structures and in the larger political system. Finally, the chapter examined GBVF as the selected indices to measure substantive women's representation. It noted that GBVF is a prevalent issue in both case studies as women are mostly affected by this violence. The high rate of GBVF in both case studies made it a suitable problem to represent women's interests in this study given the contestation regarding the latter that was identified in Chapter 2. The next chapter presents the interview findings as well as legislative/policy outcomes on GBVF in Botswana and South Africa.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **PRESENTATION OF DATA AND FINDINGS ON INTERVIEW AND LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY OUTCOMES**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents findings on data gathered from the interviews and the review of legislative and policy outcomes on GBVF from 2010 to 2022. The first part of the chapter presents the findings from interviews conducted on the impact of gender quotas on the substantive representation of women in South Africa and Botswana. The second part presents the different legislations and policies that have been passed on GBVF in Botswana and South Africa. The first part is a presentation of the findings on gender quotas, the benefit of women's political participation, the impact that female MPs have made, and recommendations. The debates on the relevance of gender quotas were examined to provide context for the discussion on how gender quotas go beyond enabling descriptive women's representation. In this chapter, the findings presented provide grounds for answering the study's research questions:

- What is the relationship between numbers and impact in terms of women's political representation in Africa?
- Do gender quotas have relevance beyond being a pathway for mainstreaming women into politics?
- How do gender quotas impact policy and legislative outcomes on GBVF in Botswana and South Africa?
- What alternative pathways are there to ensure the substantive political representation of women in Botswana, South Africa, and Africa in general?

The researcher conducted a total of 43 interviews of 30 minutes to one hour using a semi-structured schedule via virtual platforms such as Skype and Zoom. The selection of 43 participants across the board allowed for a representative sample that provided reasonable grounds for answering the research questions. The sample size allowed for a balanced interpretation of the perception and phenomenology of the participants concerning the impact of gender quotas. Due to the large number of participants and for the sake of anonymity, pseudo-names could not be used, and so, they were named numerically (Participants 1 to 43). Female MPs in South Africa are numbered 1–

36, women working in civil society in South Africa are numbered 37 and 38; female MPs in Botswana are numbered 39–41, and women working in civil society in Botswana are numbered 42 and 43. The study strictly adhered to principles of confidentiality and anonymity as stated in the ethical considerations by not disclosing any personal information, such as first names or surnames. Information such as age were only gathered to gauge the demography of women mostly participating in politics. These principles were observed in a way that does not negatively affect the participants, especially the MPs. Additionally, quotations from interview were referenced as numerical representation of each participant; for example, P1 and the date the interview was conducted: P1 16 February 2022.

The process of extracting and codifying data from interviews followed a thematic framework whereby themes were used to categorise the participants' experience and perception regarding the impact of gender quotas on the substantive representation of women. Specifically, participants were asked questions about the necessity of quotas and how they impact policies on reducing GBVF. The latter was the indices for measuring substantive women's representation. In answering the research questions, all participants were asked to extensively provide their opinions and perceptions of how the participation of women in politics positively benefits the general women populace. The presentation of findings follows the first part of the analytical method, which is the phenomenological presentation of the participants' perceptions, experiences, and opinions. Secondly, the super-ordinate themes that guided the interview and coding process were informed by the four objectives of the study. In the course of the coding, emergent and sub-ordinate themes were extracted under 10 super-ordinate themes. While most of the super-ordinate themes are shared by all categories of participants, the presentation of findings and analysis is done based on the following three categories: female MPs in South Africa, female MPs in Botswana, and women in CSOs.

The phenomenological presentation of interview findings is done in three sections: The first section deals with female MPs in South Africa; the second section is for female MPs in Botswana; and the last section is for women working in CSOs in Botswana and South Africa. The following section focuses on South Africa as a case study and presents the findings from 36 female MPs that were interviewed. In presenting the findings, the super-ordinate themes form the overarching theme, and quotations from the interviews are used to present responses under each super-theme and to illustrate the point.

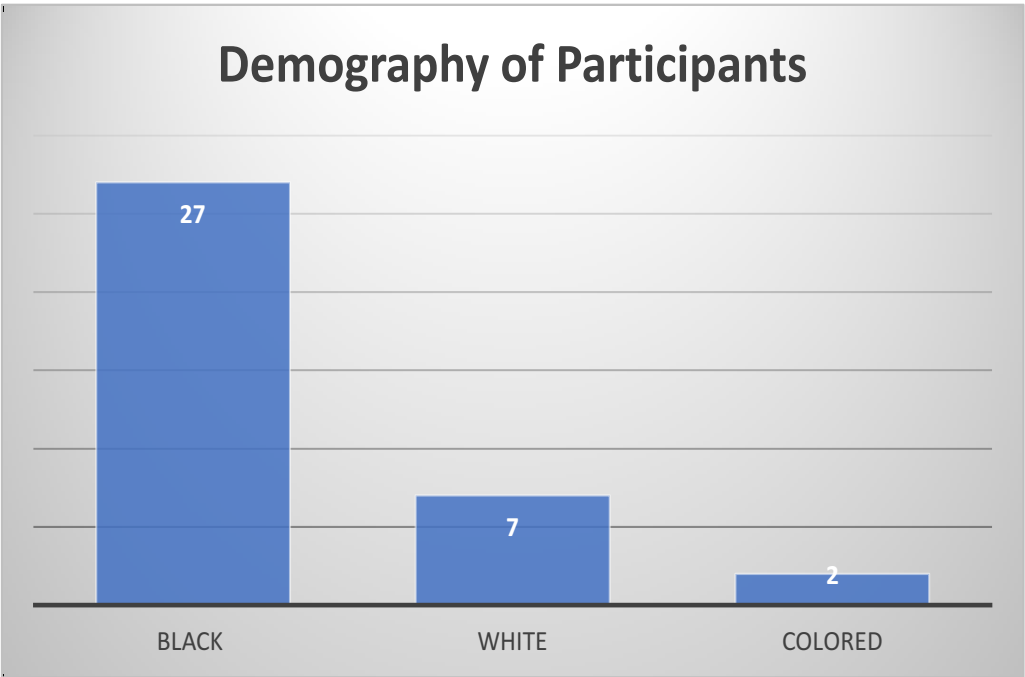
## 6.2 Findings from Female Members of Parliament in South Africa

The presentation of findings from the 36 participants are categorised under the following 12 super-ordinate themes: demography of participants, political party and gender quotas, motivation for political participation, relevance of gender quotas, descriptive women’s representation benefits women, necessity of critical mass to ensure substantive representation of women, GBVF, effectiveness of legislations in reducing GBVF, impact of descriptive women’s representation on reducing GBVF, evaluation of the impact female MPs have made in reducing GBVF, alternative pathways to reducing GBVF, and increasing women’s political representation.

### 6.2.1 Demography of participants

Thirty-six participants who are female MPs in the South African national parliament were selected to be interviewed. Of these participants, 27 (75%) are black, seven (19.4%) are white and two (5.6%) are Coloured. This shows diversity in the racial demography of participants interviewed, which allowed for a balanced analysis of the research objectives. The racial background of the participants was not a presupposed criterion for selection as focus was placed on their uniformed status as female MPs.

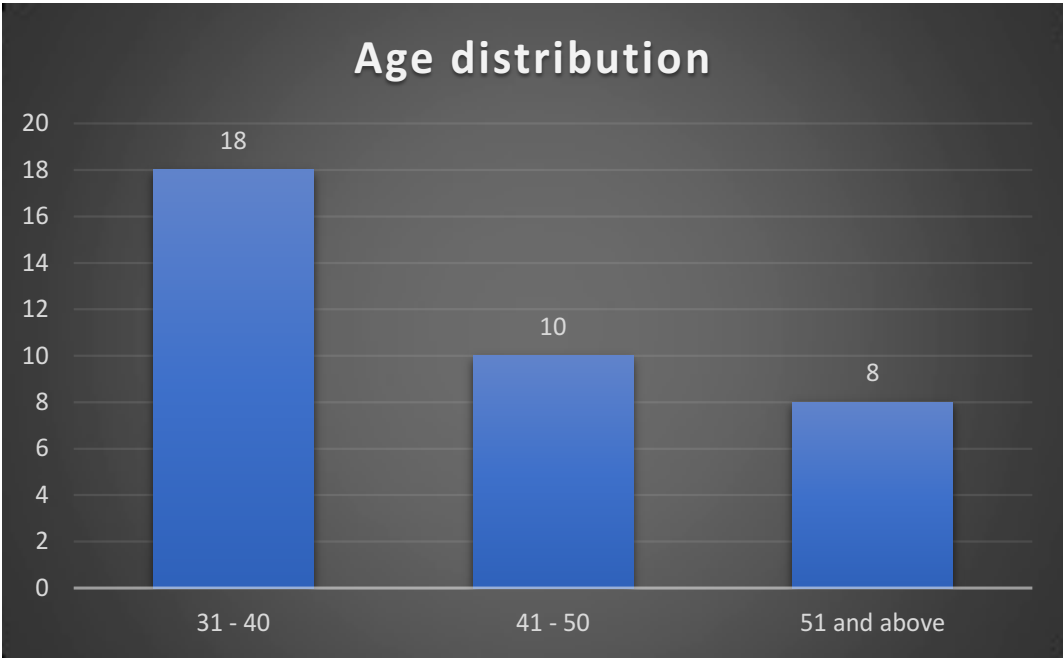
Figure 5: Demography of participants.



Source: (Author’s interview findings 2022).

For age distribution, 18 participants (50%) are between 30 and 40 years old, 10 (27.8%) are between 41 and 50, and the remaining eight (22.2%) are aged 50 years and older.

Figure 6: Age distribution of participants.



Source: (Author’s interview findings 2022).

Most of the MPs are from Gauteng, which is understandable due to its centrality as an economic hub and a major province in terms of population. This is closely followed by the Western Cape, which is the seat of the National Parliament of South Africa, and the other provinces were adequately represented. In terms of political party, 17 (47.2%) of the participants are members of the governing party, the ANC; 10 (27.8%) are from the official opposition party, the DA; four (11%) are from the EFF; two (5.6%) from the IFP; two (5.6%) from the Freedom Front Plus; and one belonged to the ACDP. Most of the participants became MPs in 2019 following the general elections held that year.

Table 5: Political party distribution of participants.

Political Party	Participants distribution	% Out of 36
African National Congress	17	47.2%
Democratic Alliance	10	27.8%
Economic Freedom Fighters	4	11%
Inkatha Freedom Party	2	5.6%
Freedom Front Plus	2	5.6%
African Christian Democratic Party	1	2.8%

Source: (Author’s interview findings 2022).

**6.2.2 Motivation for political participation**

To evaluate the assumption that female MPs or women political leaders enter into politics to represent women issues, give politics a feminist outlook or ensure the substantive representation of women, the researcher asked the participants what motivated them to join politics and take up political positions. The findings highlight that female MPs do not specifically take up political positions for gender issues. The participants responded that they joined politics for the following reasons: changing the system, advocate for the people, family influence, development of the country, interest in politics and activism, and represent women’s interest. All participants expressed a strong desire to change the system, advocate for the people and contribute to the development of the country. Most commented that they want to bring about change, make a difference, bring a new approach to politics, be a voice for the voiceless, and contribute to country. Other categories are those that joined due to their family’s influence or developed deep interest in politics and activism arising from their experience with the apartheid liberation movement. Out of the participants, only four explicitly expressed the desire to represent women issues, which is interesting. Participant 7 expressed a strong feminist perspective as follows:

“I am a vocal feminist who is passionate about advancement of women’s rights. There has been a 6.2% decline with regards to the social and economic rights of women, which is concerning. My biggest issue is the way patriarchy replicates itself through legislation regarding reproduction; example is how maternity leave for women is for months while for men is only a handful of days, leaving the responsibility of domestic work on women. I do not think sufficient work is being done in driving solution to crisis suffered by women” (P7 25 February 2022).

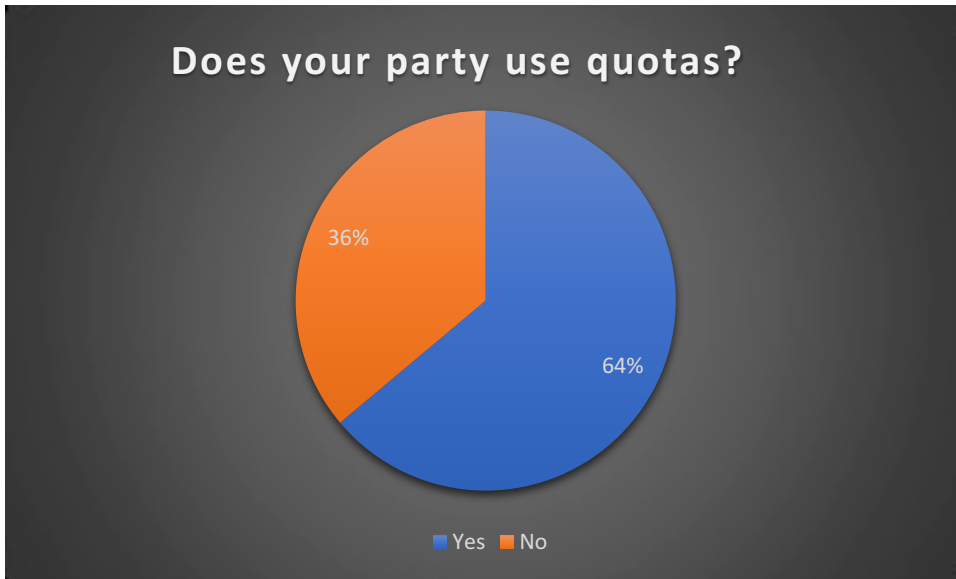
Participant 2 explained that her lived experience as a woman is a major motivator for being in parliament to ensure women empowerment: “I want to make a difference in the society especially when it comes to women empowerment and safety of women. As a young woman myself, I face a lot of these challenges” (P2 18 February 2022). The findings show that most participants did not join politics to specifically to represent women issues or give parliament a feminist outlook. This is further discussed in the next chapter.

### **6.2.3 Political parties and gender quotas in South Africa.**

Participants were asked if their parties select female candidates for election based on a quota system to ascertain the existence of voluntary gender quotas in South Africa and the awareness of female members on quotas being a mechanism for ensuring descriptive women’s representation. The findings show that 23 (63.9%) of the 36 female MPs interviewed confirmed that their parties use quotas to select female candidates into the party list for election. All 17 participants belonging to the ANC pointed out that their party selects female candidates using a 50% quota to ensure the party list is gender equal. The four participants from the EFF highlighted that their party uses the ‘zebra approach’, which means for every male candidate on the list, there is a corresponding female candidate, cumulating to a 50% gender quota. The two participants from the IFP confirmed their party uses 40% gender quota. While the 13 (36.1%) participants belonging to the DA, Freedom Front Plus and ACDP highlighted that their party does not use quotas when selecting candidates for elections.

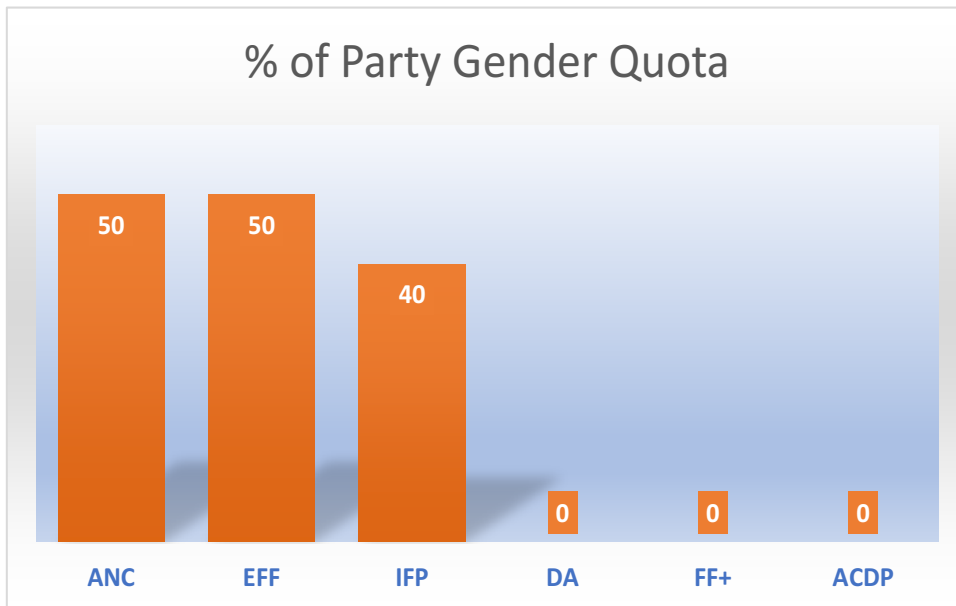


Figure 7: Illustration of participants' responses on quotas.



Source: (Author's interview findings 2022).

Figure 8: Illustration of responses on percentage of party quotas



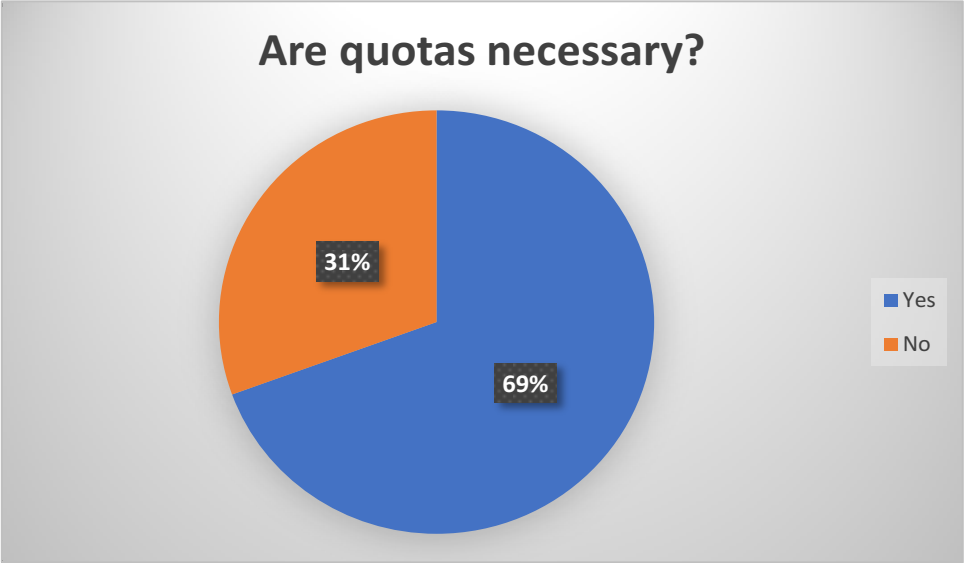
Source: (Author's interview findings 2022).

As part of their responses, participants voiced their consent or dissent with their party position on gender quotas. Participants from the ANC, EFF, and IFP strongly agreed with their party position of selecting female candidates for election using quotas. Twelve of the 13 participants from the DA, Freedom Front Plus and ACDP agreed with their party’s position of not selecting female candidates based on quotas. Interestingly, one participant from this group expressed their assent for quotas by highlighting that because privilege reproduce itself, quotas are necessary to advance minority rights. This demonstrates that individual MPs hold views on gender quotas different from their party position, which slightly contradicts the popular opinion that MPs prioritise party mandates over women issues.

**6.2.4 Relevance of gender quotas in South Africa’s politics.**

To examine the relevance of gender quotas in ensuring descriptive women’s representation, participants were asked if they think gender quotas are necessary to ensure women’s political participation. Twenty-five (69.4%) participants agreed that gender quotas are necessary to ensure the participation of women in politics and 11 (30.6%) disagreed, thereby depicting a negative perception about quotas.

*Figure 9: Illustration of participants’ responses on relevance of quotas.*



Source: (Author’s interview findings 2022).

This reflects a dilemma concerning the acceptance of gender quotas by female MPs as it is often automatically assumed that women perceive quotas in positive light. The study found that participants whose party uses gender quotas confirmed that gender quotas are relevant to ensuring descriptive women's representation as well as substantive representation. Participant 29 explained the importance of quotas as a holistic intervention as follows:

“I think it is necessary in the space of politics. Women need to take up space. We need to represent ourselves. We have issues we as women need to take decision on in making sure they are being implemented and suit our needs. This is because most policies that we have are formed by men, and they are not speaking to issues that affect women” (P29, 29 April 2022).

Participant 7 expressed stronger support for quotas as a mechanism for advancing minority rights. She stated the following:

“I believe quotas are necessary to advance the interest of minority groups because what tends to happen with patriarchy is that privilege reproduces itself. The white men group together. The boys club is very prevalent in politics, so if you were to leave it up to men to make sure that women are represented, they would not do that, they would not care, not take active steps. Which is why we need progressive instruments like quotas to allow women put foot in the arena to represent their interest” (P7 25 February 2022).

More broadly, the participants identified the relevance of quotas in different forms, and these responses were categorised into the following closely related sub-ordinate themes: inclusion, representation of women, equality, and negative perception about quotas. This reflects that most participants relate quotas with different beneficial functions separate from ensuring that women participate in politics. The remaining participants did not think quotas work for women at all.

### **6.2.5 Women's political participation benefits women in South Africa.**

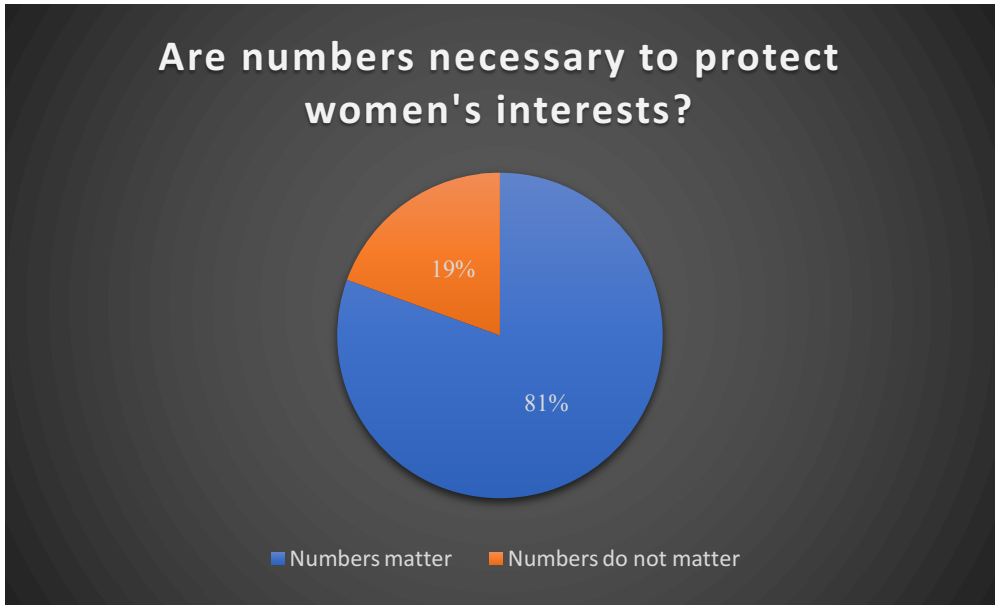
To understand whether there is a relationship between the participation of women in politics and the protection of women's interest, participants were asked whether women's political participation benefits the general women populace. All participants agreed that women being in politics benefits women as a group, demonstrating a strong belief that there is a relationship between numbers and impact. Their responses were categorised under the following six sub-

ordinate themes: represent women issues, influence legislation and policy, challenge gender stereotypes, inspiration and role model to young girls, gender-conscious policy. Most participants strongly affirmed this relationship, but five participants expressed conditional affirmation citing factors such as party politics and lack of support as obstacles that limit hinder such relationship. Participant 17 commented that “Yes, issues of women get to be escalated to the high echelons of powers women participate in politics. In real terms, the quota system is quite beneficial, but we need to work on the type of women we want in those echelons of powers” (P17 22 March 2022). Participant 14 explained that “ I absolutely think so, I believe that me being in parliament inspires other young women or other women in general to realize that women can do this” (P14 14 March 2022). Participant 1 added that “I think the diversity of people generally is good for democracies around the world, I think we need to have gender representation because the more diverse politics is, the more responsive it can be and the better you can come up with solutions for the country. This is good because your strategy is informed by different people from different walks of life” (P1 16 February 2022).

#### **6.2.6 Percentage needed to protect women’s interests.**

To examine the debate on whether critical mass is needed to ensure the substantive representation of women, participants were asked what percentage they would go for to ensure the protection of women’s interests. Twenty-nine (80.6%) participants said that the number of women in politics is important, and seven (19.4%) participants stated that numbers do not matter at all.

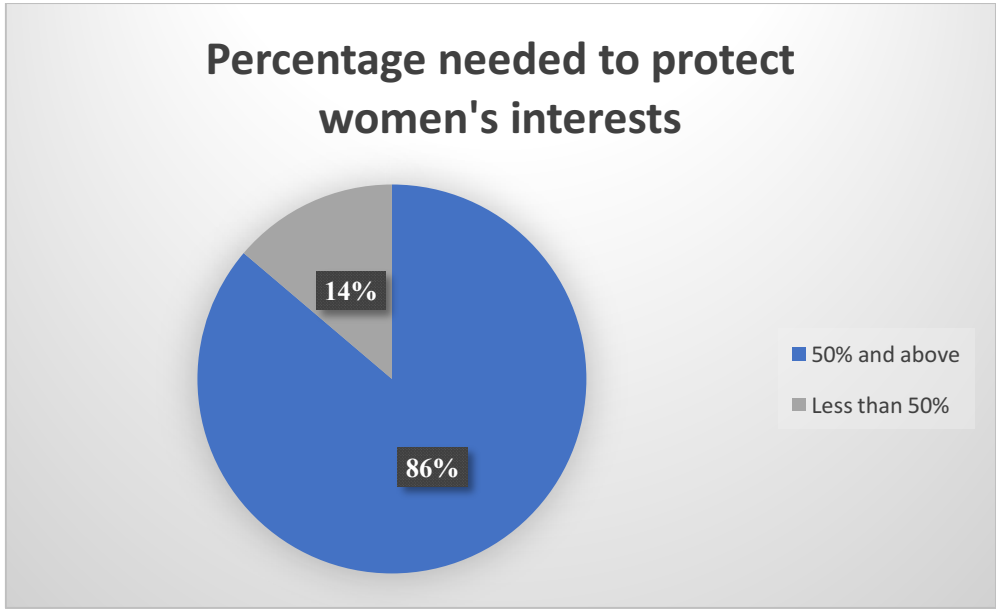
*Figure 10: Participants' responses on necessity of numbers for impact.*



Source: (Author’s interview findings 2022).

Of the 29 participants who agreed that numbers are important, 25 (69.4%) registered 50% and above as the ideal critical mass needed to protect women’s interest.

Figure 11: Participants' responses on percentage needed to protect women's interests.



Participant 29 commented that “to undo the past injustice women have suffered, women should occupy 60–70% of space in politics so that they are in a position to implement policies that speaks directly to women’s issues” (P29 29 April 2022).

### **6.2.7 Gender-based violence and femicide in South Africa.**

To ascertain the appropriateness of GBVF as the index used to measure substantive women’s representation, participants were asked what they thought about the rate of GBVF in South Africa. All participants expressed deep disappointment about its prevalence, and most called it a pandemic. Some of the participants pointed out some drivers that contribute to the prevalence of GBVF, and most responses identified patriarchal attitudes and failing socialisation processes as major factors. Participant 23 lamented that “this is pandemic is a serious challenge in our country, each and everyday women are killed, they are raped this is really bad” (P23 13 April 2022). This shows that the problem of GBVF is one that affects women as a group, irrespective of racial, economic, or social class.

### **6.2.8 Effectiveness of legislations and policies in reducing gender-based violence and femicide in South Africa.**

To establish the use of legislative outcomes as an important instrument for ensuring women’s substantive representation, participants were asked whether the law can be used by female MPs to address the prevalence of GBVF. Twenty-eight (77.8%) participants agreed that the law can be used in the reduction of the rate of GBVF, and eight (22.2%) believed that legislation is limited in its effectiveness. The participants that agreed responded that legislation is a powerful tool and is an instrumental preventive measure against GBVF. Participant 4 said, “Absolutely, the legislations that we approve in parliament are a very powerful tool as an MP and in the case of GBVF it can be used to address the problem” (P4 20 February 2022). For the eight participants who expressed the limitation of legislation, factors such as lack of implementation featured prominently. Participant 12 commented that “the law is only as effective as implementation” (P12, 7 April 2022), which is a general sentiment voiced by other participants. A few participants pointed out that using legislations to address GBVF should not be the sole responsibility of female MPs as every MP, irrespective of gender, should be concerned about the prevalence of GBVF. However,

all the participants felt that it was their responsibility as female MPs to champion the cause of GBVF.

### **6.2.9 Impact of presence of women on legislative and policy outcomes for gender-based violence and femicide in South Africa.**

To answer the research question on how gender quotas impact policy and legislative outcomes for GBVF, participants were asked how their participation in the South African parliament impact GBVF legislations and policies. The responses were categorised into the following five subordinate themes: representation and awareness, support and advocacy, policymaking, party faction come before women issues, challenges limit their impact. Six participants highlighted that by them being in parliament, they are able to represent women issues, and most importantly, champion the GBVF cause. Fifteen participants responded that the considerable number of women in parliament enabled them to form a multiparty women's caucus that deals with women issues, support legislations on GBVF, and advocate for more effective policies on GBVF. Fifteen participants agreed that because of their presence, three new bills on GBVF were passed into law by the president in 2022. In explaining some of the limitations that hinder their impact, three participants explicitly stated that some female MPs prioritise the party mandate over women issues, which often manifest in lack of support. Participant 2 responded as follows:

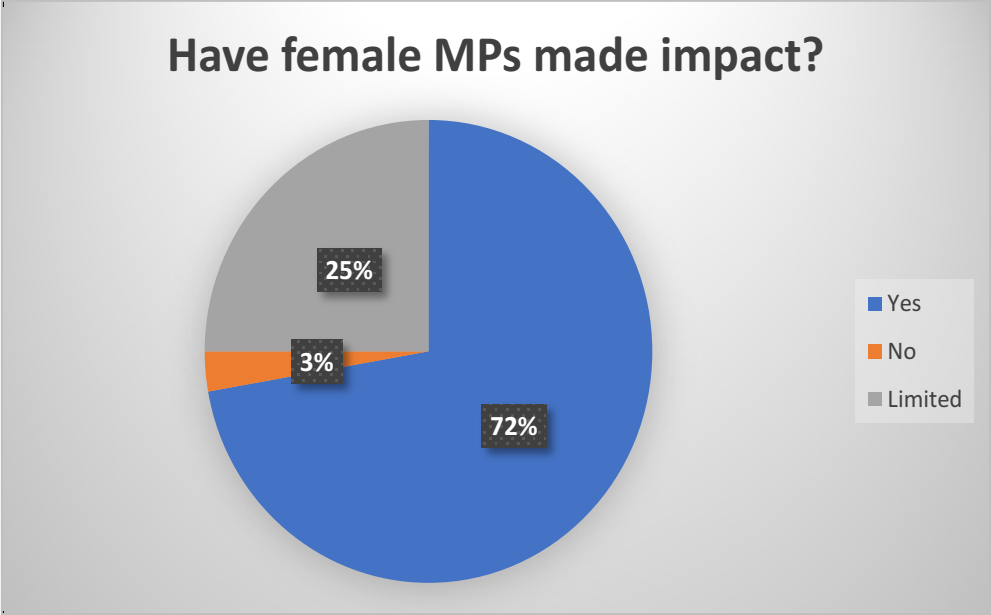
“I feel when I am having discussions on GBVF, politics plays a bigger role. I would be doing a speech in parliament speaking about failures of government and those same women in other political parties will take issues with what I have said because it affects their political party. We are all working to change the system, but party politics plays a big role in the parliament of South Africa” (P2 18 February 2022).

### **6.2.10 Self-evaluation of the impact South African female members of parliament have made in reducing gender-based violence and femicide.**

In order to draw a direct relationship between the presence of women in parliament and the reduction in rate of GBVF, participants were asked to assess whether they have made an impact on legislative outcomes on GBVF. Twenty-six participants (72.2%) confirmed that female MPs have made impact on addressing the prevalence of GBVF, nine participants (25%) responded that

an impact has been made to an extent, thereby signifying limited impact, and one participant (2.8%) did not think any impact has been made.

Figure 12: SA female MPs responses on if they have made impact.



This shows that most female MPs believed that their presence in parliament, their influence on policy and legislative outcomes, and most importantly, awareness and advocacy on GBVF pose effective solutions for the reduction of GBVF. Participant 21 said, “Yes, I think we have made an impact because currently we have three new pieces of legislation on GBV that we passed due to the actions of the women’s caucus in parliament” (P21 5 April 2022). The participants highlighted the positive effect of the number of women in parliament on this impact, Participant 2 stated, “I absolutely think impact has been made. These three new bills that passed has little to no opposition because we all voted for the same reason and that is to ensure that we have legislation that protect women” (P2 18 February 2022). Participants also expressed how they have made impact outside of just sponsoring bills or legislative outcomes. Participant 9 stated the following:

“Female MPs definitely try to keep the conversation alive. We fiercely demand accountability from the minister and department of women in the presidency. I know one of my colleague went as far as confirming if the GBVF hotline works, which she reported to parliament. The platform we have is to speak out because parliament is derived from speaking. It is our job to speak out on these issues” (P9 4 March 2022).



This demonstrates that female MPs not only use their numbers to drive or influence legislative outcomes on GBVF but also lead conversations and create awareness on it. The participants who did not express strong affirmation commented that legislation and parliament as an institution are limited in terms of their effectiveness in addressing GBVF. They responded that issues such as lack of implementation of policies, patriarchal attitudes in society, and certain institutional factors impede such impact.

#### **6.2.11 Measures to address the rate of gender-based violence and femicide in South Africa.**

In order to reduce the dependence on women's political participation to protect the interest of women and ensure the substantive representation of women, participants were asked to recommend measures that will help reduce GBVF. The responses from the participants were categorised into the following five sub-ordinate themes: education and sensitisation on GBVF, support and collaboration, reform of policing and justice system, empowerment of women, collective effort and societal transformation, and political institutions. All the participants felt that there is not enough awareness of GBVF and recommended that there should be education and sensitisation on GBVF starting from the basic education level and outside of the formal school system. They suggested that efforts should start from family and grassroots as socialisation processes perpetuate toxic masculinity that result in GBVF. All participants asserted that policies must be properly implemented, and the security and justice system must be strengthened. Ten participants advocated for women to support one another, and some of the participants commented that men should be collaborators to end GBVF as they are the main perpetrators. Eight participants interestingly argued for the empowerment of women as a marginalised group to address GBVF.

#### **6.2.12 Improving the quality of women's political representation in South Africa.**

Lastly, participants were asked to suggest other mechanisms to improve the quality of women's political representation. The responses were categorised into support and empowerment of women, education, transforming patriarchal and gender stereotypes, role model, and mentorship. All the participants commented that it is necessary to dismantle the patriarchal system in society as it limits the participation of women. Most participants suggested that it is necessary to educate society on the equality of both genders, which should start from raising the girl-child and boy-child as equal members of society. The participants also recommended that society needs strong

women examples to serve as role models and mentors for young girls. This entails engaging young girls in parliamentary work and the need to participate in politics. A major recommendation that was echoed by participants is the need to ensure socio-economic empowerment of women so women can own their agency, and that women should support each other.

### **6.3 Findings from Interviews with Female Members of Parliament in Botswana**

The presentation of the findings from the three participants are categorised under the following 12 super-ordinate themes: demography of participants, political party and gender quotas, motivation for political participation, relevance of gender quotas, descriptive women's representation benefits women, necessity of critical mass to ensure substantive representation of women, GBVF, effectiveness of legislations in reducing GBVF, impact of descriptive women's representation on reducing GBVF, evaluation of impact female MPs have made in reducing GBVF, alternative pathways to reducing GBVF, and increasing women's political representation.

#### **6.3.1 Demography of participants**

Three female MPs were selected to be interviewed to evaluate the impact of gender quotas on the substantive representation of women in Botswana. All participants are black and middle aged. Apart from Participant 39, the participants (Participants 40 and 41) were reluctant to disclose any identifying information regarding party affiliation. Participant 39 is a member of the governing party, the BDP, and she became an MP in 2019 following the general election in the same year.

#### **6.3.2 Political party and gender quotas in Botswana.**

Participants were asked whether their political parties selected female candidates for election based on a quota system. Participant 39 responded that her party does not use quotas to select female candidates for election, and she said, "No, every man for himself. You compete for positions like everybody else, meaning that my party does not select female candidate for election based on a quota" (P39 9 February 2022). Participant 39 firmly agreed with her party's position on quotas by highlighting that, "I am not one for quotas" (P39 9 February 2022). However, she confirmed that Botswana has provision for specially elected MPs who are often appointed by the president, which women benefit from. The president appointed women to occupy four of the six seats for specially

elected members. Participant 39 disclosed that there are only three women that got into parliament through elections, and that she is one of them.

### **6.3.3 Motivation for political participation**

Participants were asked what motivated them to join politics and take up political positions. All three participants contributed to this super-ordinate theme and said that they joined to contribute to the development of the country, change the system and be the voice of the people. Participant 39 said the following:

“I always consider myself to be somebody who can help can others, and it started a long time ago seeing Winnie Mandela fight for the rights of black people. I was a social worker and spent a lot of time working for the Tswana women resources space. There were a lot of things that I thought could be done better” (P39 9 April 2022).

In term of gender consciousness, Participant 40 explicitly highlighted that she joined politics to represent women issues. She responded that “I became active in politics because I thought as a woman, I need to raise my voice and be there for other women who cannot speak for themselves” (P40 16 April 2022).

### **6.3.4 Relevance of gender quotas**

With the awareness that Botswana uses specially elected MPs, which is a form of legislated quotas, to ensure women’s representation in parliament, participants were asked whether they think quotas are necessary to increase women’s political participation. The responses were grouped in the following three sub-ordinate themes: inclusion, representation, and equality. Participants 40 and 41 agreed that quotas are necessary for women’s political participation and commented the following:

“Yes, it is necessary. With everything in life, we need someone who is in the shoes of what is happening, so if we have only men in politics, women are not going to be accommodated as they should be. Their voices will not heard. So, I think it is important to have fair ratio of women, so women have a voice” (P41 14 April 2022).

This shows that quotas are seen as corrective instruments that help mend the gender imbalance that exists in the political system. While Participant 39 does not personally agree with quotas, she

affirmed its usefulness in fostering the inclusion of women in politics. She commented the following:

“To tell you the truth, I am not one for quotas because I’m one for motivating women to compete at the same level with. But unfortunately, our world is not like that because we belong to a very chauvinistic, patriarchal society. We are then forced to consider things like quotas as they make way for women in politics” (P39 9 February 2022).

### **6.3.5 Women’s political participation benefits women**

Participants were asked whether they think the participation of women in the political system of Botswana benefits women in Botswana as a group. The responses were grouped in the following three sub-themes: advocacy for women issues, inspiration to young women, and represent women issues. The participants affirmed that the participation of women in politics benefit women. Participant 41 explained that “having women in political positions is a motivation to younger women. We are used to seeing men all over, so seeing women in power empowers young females that they can get there too” (P41 14 April 2022).

On the other hand, Participant 39 argued that much benefit might not arrive from it, but there is a symbolism to seeing women in positions of power. She stated, “I would not say benefit as such, but there is a voice just that the few women that is now advocating for women. For the first time we have the finance and development planning minister who is a woman. So, it was history in our country ... so there was lots of celebration” (P39 9 February 2022).

### **6.3.6 Percentage needed to protect women’s interests.**

To examine the debate on whether critical mass is needed to ensure substantive representation of women within the context of Botswana, the participants were asked what percentage they would go for to ensure the protection of women’s interests. Two participants (66.7%) agreed that numbers matter and that women need to occupy a considerable percentage in parliament to foster the interest of women. Participant 41 commented that “considering it is man’s world, I would say at least 40%” (P41 14 April 2022). Participant 40 responded that “I would say 50% because everything is gendered. This percentage enables us to have a man and women for every pair of seat and that enhances the needed representation” (P40 16 April 2022). Participant 39 motivated for critical

actors rather than critical mass. She said, “I think given our environment, it depends not so much the number but the quality of the women that you put in positions. You can have one woman with great impact equals that of 10 women. So, it’s not a question of number but that of representation” (P39 9 February 2022). This confirms the ongoing debate in literature concerning whether critical acts are a better mechanism to ensure the substantive representation of women than critical mass.

### **6.3.7 Gender-based violence and femicide in Botswana.**

To ascertain the appropriateness of GBVF as the index used to measure substantive women’s representation, participants were asked what they thought about the rate of GBVF in Botswana. All participants decried the high rate of GBVF in Botswana, and most commented that it is very present and happens every day. Two of the participants shared their lived experience with GBVF. Participant 39 shared that “this one is a painful one. Last night daughter of a friend of mine was killed by the husband in cold blood. GBV in Botswana is high, which is sad” (P39 9 February 2022).

Participants also highlighted some factors that contribute to the prevalence of GBVF. Participant 40 said the following:

“We need to ask ourselves what leads people to inflict violence against women. What is in them, their history and conditioning that makes them treat women in this way? A lot of people have had messy childhood. They end up being violent individuals. The way they are socialised about gender, they are taught the man owns the wife. The men can have sex whenever he wants” (P40 16 April 2022).

### **6.3.8 Effectiveness of legislation in reducing gender-based violence and femicide in Botswana.**

To establish the use of legislative and policy outcomes as important instruments for ensuring women’s substantive representation, participants were asked whether the law can be used by female MPs to address the prevalence of GBVF. All participants agreed that ideally legislative outcomes can be used to protect women, and more specifically, to reduce the prevalence of GBVF. Participant 40 was concerned that due to the limited number of women in parliament, women do not have enough power to use legislations. She said, “The reason I am hesitant is because I feel we

do not have enough power to do that because the ratio that we have in parliament is very few, which affects our capacity to influence the law” (P40 16 April 2022). Participant 39 stressed the importance of implementation, resources, and cooperation in consolidating the effectiveness of legislations and policies to reduce GBVF.

### **6.3.9 Impact of presence of women on legislative and policy outcomes on gender-based violence and femicide in Botswana.**

To answer the research question on how gender quotas impact policy and legislative outcomes on GBVF in Botswana, participants were asked how their participation in the parliament of Botswana creates an impact. The participants responded that their presence in parliament has allowed them to create awareness on GBVF, advocate for better policies on GBVF, and demand more resources and funding for GBVF policies. Participant 41 attested that “our presence helps because we are there to speak and raise awareness on GBVF. We are saying something about it and bring awareness to the matter” (P41 14 April 2022). Participant 39 commented the following:

“What we have done is try and put a task team together, a parliamentary team, look at the issues. We have introduced legislations with tougher penalties. Right now, we are asking in parliament with the Minister of Finance to tell us what is in the box for us, because of that the amount of funding that has gone into GBV issues has doubled since COVID-19” (P39 9 February 2022).

Additionally, just like in South Africa, participants confirmed that there is a parliamentary caucus for women that champions women issues and particularly focuses on dealing with GBVF.

### **6.3.10 Self-evaluation of the impact female members of parliament have had on addressing gender-based violence and femicide.**

In order to draw a direct relationship between the presence of women in parliament and the reduction in rate of GBVF, participants were asked to assess whether female MPs in Botswana have made impact with regards to legislative outcomes on GBVF. All participants agreed that they have made impact with regards to reducing GBVF when it comes to sponsoring bills; however, Participants 40 and 41 added that the impact is limited.

### **6.3.11 Recommendations to address gender-based violence and femicide.**

In recommending measures to reduce GBVF, participants' responses were grouped in the following sub-themes: women empowerment, proper socialisation, and protective measures and strengthening institutions. All participants contributed to these three recommendations as they commented that GBVF needs a holistic and grassroots approach to address it. Participant 39 explained it as follows:

“What I would like to see ... first we have to empower women economically because as long as women are not economically empowered, they cannot be socially empowered. Because if you are dependent on your concubine, husband, or brother for survival, you will be their subject and endure any form of violence that they inflict on you. We must empower women to stand up for themselves” (P39 9 February 2022).

### **6.3.12 Improving the quality of women's political representation in Botswana.**

In fostering women's political representation in Botswana, participants were asked besides quotas what suggestions can they offer to improve the quality of women's political representation. The participants' responses were categorised in the following three sub-themes: changing attitudes, education, and advocacy for inclusion. Participant 41 commented that “women need to start studying towards political leadership, starting from the education section. Government affects everyone, therefore teaching young women about the effect the government has on institutions, their safety, will help” (P41 14 April 2022).

## **6.4 Findings from Women Working in Civil Society Organisations in Botswana and South Africa**

The presentation of interview findings for women working in CSOs in Botswana and South Africa is done together because 10 of the super-ordinate themes are shared by these two categories of participants. The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews lasting between 30 minutes and one hour with four women (two each from the selected case studies) working in the civil society space. These women work in organisations that deal with GBVF, rape, and women issues. The researcher interviewed the participants using a semi-structured schedule, and the responses from the participants were grouped into the following 10 super-ordinate themes: demography of

participants, awareness of gender quotas, relevance of gender quotas, women's political participation benefit women, percentage needed to protect women, GBVF, effectiveness of legislations in reducing GBVF, impact of the inclusion of women on GBVF, alternative pathways to reducing GBVF, and improving women's political representations. The essence of interviewing women who work in CSOs related to addressing GBVF was to get key informant perspectives on whether the number of women in politics has translated to a reduction in the prevalence of GBVF. More importantly, the participants served as representatives of women as a collective group to assess whether female MPs have been able to make an impact in the reduction of GBVF. Merely sampling the perspective of female MPs would have produced a skewed analysis as they are likely to agree that they have made an impact during the self-evaluation process, and hence, it was necessary to get a different perspective. The findings from this participant group were used to confirm whether an impact has been made by female MPs in South Africa and Botswana in addressing GBVF. The participants in this section are numbered as follows: The two women from CSOs in South Africa are P37 and P38, and the two women from CSOs in Botswana are numbered P42 and P43.

#### **6.4.1 Demography of participants.**

The researcher selected the following key figures from distinct CSOs working to reduce GBVF: the Centre for Human Rights, Women Against Rape and Molau Matters. The criteria for this participant group was that they must be involved in GBVF work, they must hold key positions in the organisations, and they must be conversant with political efforts geared towards addressing GBVF. Three of the four participants (75%) occupy senior management positions in their organisation with more than three years' experience working in the field. The participants were asked how their organisations' work relate to GBVF, and the responses were coded into advocacy, programmes, legal, and lobbying. Participant 37 and 42 stated that their work follows a more legal approach to dealing with GBVF. Participant 42 highlighted that they provide legal redress for GBVF survivors, and Participant 37 explained that "we are part of the GBV coalition in South Africa and SOAR network. We are doing a rapid assessment of legislative review of violence against women looking at how laws perpetuate violence against women" (P37 8 February 2022). On programmes, Participant 43 explained that her organisation supports survivors of GBVF, especially intimate partner violence in the house: "We offer counselling, psycho-social support,



shelter and carry out prevention campaigns” (P43 11 February 2022). This demonstrates that participants are well-versed on the subject of GBVF either from a social perspective or more legal-political angle.

#### **6.4.2 Awareness of gender quotas.**

To confirm whether gender quotas exist in the two selected case studies, the participants were asked whether their country or any political party selects female candidates for election based on a quota system. Participants from South Africa confirmed that certain parties use gender quotas when submitting lists for election, and participants from Botswana gave divided responses. Participant 42 responded that she is not aware of any party that selects female candidates based on a quota system. Participant 43 attested to the system of specially elected MPs mentioned by Participant 39. She explained it as follows:

“Botswana works on first-past the post, simple majority. So, if you don’t make it at the ballot, you will not get into power. Once those ones have been counted, the president has power to select specially elected members to parliament, and that is when we find a number of women will be selected. Not that all available positions will be filled by women, but some of the positions will be occupied by women.” (P43 11 February 2022).

This shows that Participants 37 and 38 are aware that South Africa uses voluntary quotas by virtue of some political parties adopting gender quotas, and Participant 43 confirmed the use of specially elected MPs from which women partially benefit.

#### **6.4.3 Relevance of gender quotas.**

Participants were asked whether they think quotas are necessary to ensure women’s political participation, and the responses were categorised under the following themes: inclusion, protection of women’s interest, participation of women, and transformation of the system. All participants agreed that quotas are necessary to ensure the participation of women in politics. In asserting how quotas ensure the inclusion of women, Participant 43 stated the following:

“I think it a very important mechanism and right way to go because if you do not have a quota system, it means women will be left out of the power tables for a long time

because they do not have the same playing field for going out and campaigning to be elected to political positions. They do not have the money, time or resources because they are looking after their children, and their families at home. So, it important to have quota system just to accommodate that side because they are already disadvantaged in terms of possession of resources” (P43 11 February 2022).

Participant 38 supported this point by highlighting that “society is still patriarchal and in order to effect change we need to use quotas; we must instil element that women must be in leadership positions and decision-making” (P38 13 April 2022). Participants 37 stated, “Yes, quotas are necessary for the participation of women because sometimes the more vocal people are on the ground. The likelihood of them getting into politics and most of the times these are men. So, we need to ensure representation of women’s voices in politics by using gender quotas” (P37 8 February 2022). All the participants agreed that quotas have been effective in ensuring women’s political participation across the two case studies. The findings from this participant group aligned with the responses of the female MPs on the necessity of quotas to ensure the participation of women in politics and more broadly as a relevant instrument to ensure the inclusion and representation of women.

#### **6.4.4 Women’s political participation benefit women.**

The participants were asked whether the participation of women in parliament is necessary to advance the protection of women’s interests. Participant 42 agreed that the participation of women is necessary, and she explained that “it is important that women for any sort of representation we need to have the people who are most directly affected. So, when it comes to women, we have to be able to represent our issues and the best people to do that is ourselves as women” (P42 11 February 2022). She noted that women should not just be expected to represent women’s issues as every facet of society affects them. She highlighted there is a disconnect between the expectation that women should just represent issues related to them and the fact that women are affected by all issues, whether it is infrastructure, justice, or the environment, and so, in essence, women are representative of every factor. It is important that women are visible in every role of leadership, and it is necessary that women advance women’s interest. Participant 43 expressed doubt about the possibility of female MPs being able to protect women’s interest. She stated the following:

“It is what I always wonder: What happens when women get into positions of power? The experiences that we have had in Botswana is that when women get into power, they tend to join the men or converted into behaving like men. My own thinking is that they are probably so few in this space that their voice gets swallowed by the men, and they feel that for them to belong, they have to behave like men. They forget that they are there to represent the minority of women. Them being the minority in the majority they spend a lot of time wanting to fit in” (P43 11 April 2022).

Participant 38 expressed a mixed reaction and tilted more towards negative:

“Yes and no. We are adhering to the quota system, and we have women represented in parliament. When looking at issues the question is are female MPs addressing issues as women or are as parliamentarians” (P38 13 April 2022).

She further states that MPs often advance their party’s mandate and not all of them talk about advancing women issues.

The findings show that most of the participants are sceptical about the participation of female parliamentarians translating into positive benefits for women. This differs from the findings that all female MPs agreed that their participation benefits women.

#### **6.4.5 Percentage needed to protect women’s interests.**

Participants were asked what percentage of women needed to be in parliament to protect the interests of women. All participants agreed that women must form a critical mass in politics to be able to influence the system. Participant 37 indicated 50% and said, “I would go with equity and equality as we are talking about two different sexes, two main members of the society. Women are more than men in Africa. We have more women than men in most countries, so they should represent that part of the population” (P37 8 February 2022). Participant 38 responded that “it would be naïve to say anything less than 50% women’s representation because it does not capture our current society. I don’t think they will see women as a force to be reckoned with when they are in the majority” (P38 13 April 2022). Participant 42 initially suggested 50% but said, “I will change it to a large majority, say 51%, because in as much as we will have women who represent women’s interests, we still have to deal with the effects of patriarchy” (P42 11 February 2022). Participant 43 stated that the “SADC talks about 30%, but there is a push for 50% because women

have half the population. So why we should be represented by 30%? We need to really see 50% of women in the political space. Then we know we are adequately represented” (P43 11 February 2022). Participant 43 argued for a critical mass as follows:

“In Botswana, because women MPs are a tiny minority, they feel they owe it to the men who have elected them to such positions to belong to the boy’s club. Maybe in countries where there is substantial representation such as 30% or 50% of women, then they will be able to do something because then there will be more voice. There is power in numbers. So, if the numbers are there, they will be able to hold each other accountable. The women saying, we are representing the women, not the men. Let the women’s voice be heard, but when they are few, it does not make a difference, we really need that critical mass to be able to make a difference” (P43 11 February 2022).

Participant 42 on the other hand argued for both critical mass and critical actors, and said, “Even with numbers, we will still have women who do not represent women’s interests. It’s not just a numbers game. It is about having the right women representative. So just having 50% does not necessarily guarantee a fairer or feminist outlook” (P42 11 February 2022). The findings show that critical mass is an important mechanism in ensuring the substantive representation of women, and it can be paired with critical actors for better results.

#### **6.4.6 Gender-based violence and femicide.**

The participants were asked what they thought about the rate of GBVF in their country. All the participants commented on the high rate of GBVF. Participant 37 stated, “I feel that there is a high rate of GBVF in South Africa, but I have also noticed that you can be a victim anywhere. It’s the truth for any country. But I feel like violence is condoned here, and women are often the most victim of this violence” (P38 8 February 2022). Participant 38 pointed out that “because of the patriarchal system in our society, women have been regarded as minors and we are not equal before the law. Women are not free because society does not understand a women’s right to not consent to sexual act when married in the traditional sense. A woman is not allowed to reject her husband’s sexual advances” (P38 13 April 2022). Participant 43 highlighted that “Botswana has now reached the world numbers. In 2018 there was a study that was called the relationship study. It had a bigger number. The sampling was more representative. It covered the whole and it put Botswana at 37%

of women that have experienced violence in the past year. So we are that high” (P43 11 February 2022). Participant 42 expressed disappointment: “It is appalling, we have been classified as one of the highest in Africa at the moment, and we are also dismally high globally. Unfortunately, in Botswana femicide is not recorded as specifically crime against women. It is just usually noted as murder, but from my work in the legal system, it is very clear that femicide is very high too” (P42 11 February 2022). The findings demonstrate the prevalence of GBVF in both South Africa and Botswana.

#### **6.4.7 Effectiveness of legislations in addressing gender-based violence and femicide.**

The participant were asked how effective policy making and legislations are in addressing GBVF. All the participants expressed reservations concerning the use of legislations to address GBVF. Participant 37 argued that “I always say legislation is the first step. It just guarantees you have this right, but it doesn’t necessarily translate to anything on the ground if there is not proper implementation” (P37 8 February 2022). Participant 38 stated that “it has its limitations. The law cannot get into your household to monitor what is happening. We write legislations, but if there is not education or training, it will not yield the needed result” (P38 13 April 2022). Participant 42 responded, “We are very good at drafting documents in Botswana; for example, we have a Domestic Violence Act, which will protect everyone regardless of gender, sexual orientation. It makes provision for victims to be removed from abusive environment and all, but implementing it is very difficult” (P42 11 February 2022). Participant 43 echoed what Participant 42 said and noted that “the policies are there. The laws are there. We have the Domestic Violence Act. We have the Penal Code, which has recently been revamped in term of sexual violence penalties. We have the maintenance law, the children’s acts. The policies are there, but the problem is implementation” (P43 11<sup>th</sup> February 2022). She stated further that “when it comes to implementation the culture takes over, patriarchy takes over what the law says” (P43 11 February 2022).

These findings show that the extent of the effectiveness of legislations addressing GBVF depends on the adequacy of its implementation. This notion that the law is only as effective as its implementation was shared by all the participants.

#### **6.4.8 Impact of inclusion of women on addressing gender-based violence and femicide.**

Participants were asked whether there has been considerable change in the fight against GBVF with the inclusion of women in parliament. Participant 37 responded as follows:

“Speaking from the South African perspective, you would see the president has been talking a lot against GBVF, but this is pressure coming from civil society organisations. I am trying to think of a female member of parliament, apart from the concerned Minister of Women. You do not have anyone else speaking on the issue. You have personalities, you have CSOs, president and Minister of Women, Youths and Person with Disabilities speaking on it. So, I would say it’s more of the civil society that is pushing the agenda against GBV. CSOs have been creating awareness, raising sensitisation, organising marches” (P37 8 February 2022).

Participant 38 stated the following:

“It is a question of mutual inclusivity. I do think female MPs have played a big role within their own spaces to make people unlearn horrible traditional views about subjugation of women and make certain change in the fight against GBV. But the question is: Is that big enough to sort out the issue of GBV? I think the stats will say no. So, it’s like even when they get into positions of power, the power is limited that they cannot eradicate the issue of GBV” (P38 13 April 2022).

Participant 42 responded as follows:

“This is a hard one, it’s hard because we have seen changes. The government during COVID-19 opened a hotline with police services which was toll-free for GBV survivors. There has been a GBV enquiry that has been conducted though the office of the president, but these efforts have not come from our female MPs. They have come from male alliance and CSOs, so I will say no” (P42 11 February 2022).

Participant 43 firmly asserted that there has not been considerable change in the fight against gender-based violence with the inclusion of women in parliament. She stated that “there isn’t, they just talk but there is no action on the ground” (P43 11 February 2022).

The findings from this group shows that women working in CSOs that deal with GBVF do not think female MPs have made any considerable impact in the fight against GBVF. They believed

most of the efforts towards reducing GBVF have come from individual personalities, and importantly, CSOs.

#### **6.4.9 Recommendations on gender-based violence.**

The participants were asked to recommend other measures that can contribute to the reduction of GBVF. The responses were grouped under the following six sub-themes: education, awareness, reform policing and judiciary, collaboration, transformation of society, and resources needed for implementation of policies. Participant 37 recommended that “educating people about the law and that what they are doing is gender-based violence, because in many instances people don’t know that their actions constitute GBV” (P37 8 February 2022). She further explained that awareness raising goes hand in hand with education. Participant 43 suggested the following:

“There needs to be a database where GBV is captured at every point. Whether you go to the police, hospital, social workers, there should be a link because we all have a national identity numbers. That number can be used to track one’s movement so we can have true figures of what is happening in our country. Until we are able to improve reporting system, we really cannot start talking about how to reduce GBV” (P43 11 February 2022).

The findings show that there is a consensus among all participant groups that education, awareness, transformation of society, police and justice system reform, and collaboration are alternative pathways to ensure the reduction of the rate of GBVF across the two selected case studies.

#### **6.4.10 Improving women’s political representation.**

To improve women’s political participation, participants were asked whether removing obstacles that hinder women’s participation in politics is a better solution than quotas. All argued that both quotas and removing obstacles should work together. Participant 37 argued as follows:

“I think quota system and addressing obstacles to women’s political participation should be complementary. You might be raising awareness on why women’s political participation is important, but if the laws or political leaders do not want to appoint you in their political party, you will not go anywhere. I always believe in the holistic approach to problems” (P37 8 February 2022).

Participant 42 stated that “they have to work hand in hand. There are clear impediments. Even if you remove those impediments, it does not mean that you will suddenly have a rise in female politicians. You also have to use a quotas system” (P42 11 February 2022). In addition, they suggested that there should be political education and understanding of human rights. Participant 43 explained it as follows:

“That should go with a lot of education because you find that politics and human rights do not necessarily go hand in hand. We have politicians who have no idea about human rights or who feel human rights is just a waste. So, we needs to be a lot of education before we elect them to offices so that they are up to speed and have the interest of the community at heart” (P43 11 February 2022).

The findings show that gender quotas are an important mechanism towards ensuring women’s political participation and that alternatives to increasing women’s descriptive representation must include gender quotas to yield positive results.

## **6.5 Presentation of Findings on Legislative and Policy Outcomes on Gender-based Violence and Femicide.**

This section identifies and provides overview of legislations and policies on GBVF or seemingly corresponding legislations and policies that protect the rights of women. This was done to ascertain the findings presented in the previous sections that MPs use their presence in parliament to influence and develop legislations that aim to reduce GBVF. This section presents legislative outcomes and policy efforts that have been passed on GBVF in South Africa and Botswana from 2010 to 2022.

### **6.5.1 Overview of previous legislations and policies on gender-based violence and femicide or on protecting the rights of women.**

Prior to 2010, various legislative and policy outcomes have been formulated to address the prevalence of GBVF in South Africa. They include the following: Magistrates’ Courts Act (No. 32 of 1944); Criminal Procedure Act (1977); Criminal Law Amendment Act (No. 107 of 1997); Domestic Violence Act (No. 116 of 1998); Maintenance Act (No. 99 of 1998); and Criminal Law



(Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act (No. 32 of 2007). However, the focus was limited to 2010–2022 to adhere to the scope delimited in the study.

### **6.5.2 Legislative and policy outcomes on gender-based violence and femicide in South Africa from 2010 to 2022**

1. The Protection from Harassment Act (No. 17 of 2011).
2. The Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act (No. 6 of 2012) (Sonke Gender Justice 2018).
3. In 2013, the president assented to the Commission on Gender Equality Amendment Act (No 17 of 2013). The act was amended to align with the constitution of the country. The preamble for the act was amended to represent women as important target group, and it states that “the object of the commission on gender equality shall be to promote gender equality, to advice and to make recommendations to Parliament or any other legislature with regard to any laws or proposed legislation which affects gender equality and the status of women”.
4. Formation of the National Council on Gender-Based Violence in 2014, which was created for the purpose of drafting and implementing the National Strategic Plan for Gender Based Violence and Femicide (2020).
5. Development of the National Strategic Plan for Gender Based Violence and Femicide (2020), which was adopted by the president in 2020.
6. The president expressed the government’s commitment to addressing the pandemic of GBVF by announcing the Emergency Response Plan, which included the applicable legislative framework in September 2019 (ERAP 2019).
7. In 2022, the government announced that three bills were signed into law to strengthen efforts to end GBV with a victims-centred focus (South African Government 2022). These approved legislations are a product of the National Strategic Plan for Gender Based Violence and Femicide (2020). The National Assembly undertook the task of developing three bills as part of legislative measures to strengthen South Africa’s response to GBVF. The bills are listed next:
  - The Criminal and Related Matters Amendment Act (No. 12 of 2021);

- The Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act (No. 13 of 2021); and
  - The Domestic Violence Amendment Act (No. 14 of 2021).
8. The Criminal and Related Matters Amendment Act is an act that amends the Magistrates' Courts Act (No. 32 of 1944). It seeks to do the following:
- To amend the Superior Courts Act (No. 10 of 2013) to provide for the appointment of intermediaries and the giving of evidence through intermediaries in proceedings other than criminal proceedings; the oath and competency of intermediaries; and the giving of evidence through audio-visual link in proceedings other than criminal proceedings;
  - To amend the Criminal Procedure Act (No. 51 of 1977) to further regulate the granting and cancellation of bail; the giving of evidence by means of closed-circuit television or similar electronic media; and the giving of evidence by a witness with physical, psychological or mental disability;
  - To amend the appointment, oath, and competency of intermediaries; and the right of a complainant in a domestic related offence to participate in parole proceedings; and
  - To amend the Criminal Law Amendment Act (No. 107 of 1997) to regulate sentences in respect of offences that have been committed against vulnerable persons; and
  - To address gendered violence and offences committed against vulnerable persons; and provide for additional procedures to reduce secondary victimisation of vulnerable persons in court proceedings. The Act expands the circumstances in which a complainant can give evidence through an intermediary and provides for evidence to be given through audio-visual links in proceedings other than criminal proceedings. This legislation tightens bail and minimum sentencing provisions in the context of GBVF.
9. The Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act (No. 13 of 2021) amends the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act (No. 32 of 2007) to do the following:

- Extend the ambit of the offence of incest; introduce a new offence of sexual intimidation; substitute the phrase ‘a person who is mentally disabled’ or ‘persons who are mentally disabled’ wherever the phrase appears with the phrase ‘a person with a mental disability’ or ‘persons with mental disabilities’;
  - Regulate the inclusion of particulars of persons in the National Register for Sex Offenders;
  - Extend the list of persons who are to be protected in terms of Chapter 6 of the Act;
  - Extend the list of persons who are entitled to submit applications to the Registrar of the National Register for Sex Offenders; regulate the removal of particulars of persons from the National Register for Sex Offenders; and regulate the reporting duty of persons who are aware that sexual offences have been committed against persons who are vulnerable; and
  - The legislation expands the scope of the National Register for Sex Offenders to include the particulars of all sex offenders and not only offences against children but also persons with mental disabilities. It aims to improve the country’s prevention of sex crimes, particularly of paedophilia, by expanding on the crime of incest and introducing a new offence of sexual intimidation.
10. Finally, the Domestic Violence Amendment Act (No. 14 of 2021) amends the Domestic Violence Act (No. 116 of 1998) to amend and insert certain definitions:
- To further provide for the manner in which acts of domestic violence and matters related thereto must be dealt with;  
To further regulate protection orders in response to acts of domestic violence; amend provisions of certain laws; and provide for matters connected therewith. It sought to address practical challenges, gaps and anomalies that have manifested since it came into operation in December 1999; and
  - In particular, the amended legislation includes new definitions of violence such as controlling behaviour and coercive behaviour and expands existing definitions of domestic violence to include spiritual abuse, elder abuse, coercive behaviour, controlling behaviour, and/or exposing subjecting children to certain listed behaviours. It introduces online applications for protection order against acts of domestic violence and imposes obligations on functionaries in the appropriate

departments to provide certain services to victims of domestic violence (South African Government 2022).

### **6.5.3 Overview of previous legislations and policy on gender-based violence and/or protecting the rights of women in Botswana**

There are broad legislative outcomes that protect the rights of women in Botswana. The following laws were passed prior to the stated scope of this study: the Deeds Registry (Amendment) Act (No. 10 of 1996), the Criminal Procedure and Evidence (Amendment) Act (No. 7 of 1997), the Penal Code (Amendment) Act (No. 5 of 1998), the Affiliation Proceedings (Amendment) Act (No. 8 of 1999), and the Public Service (Amendment) Act (No. 5 of 2000).

Notably, Domestic Violence Act (No. 10 of 2008) is an important legislation with regards to GBVF in Botswana. This Act was sponsored by a female MP in 2007, which is the only time a bill has been sponsored by a private member in parliament. The government passed this law to protect women who are in a domestic relationship and provide protection to survivors of domestic violence. The Act deals with the jurisdiction of the courts and describes how a person who alleges to have been subjected to an act of domestic violence can submit an application for an order by the court. It explains how documents are served to the alleged perpetrators, and also identify the nature of proceedings in a domestic violence case. Specifically, it empowers the courts, including customary courts to pass an order. Section 7 of the Act prescribes orders available to applicants, such as restraining orders and interim orders. Section 9(2)(b)(i) proscribes that the order shall direct a member of the police to prohibit the perpetrator from committing an act of domestic violence.

### **6.5.4 Legislative outcomes and policies on gender-based violence and femicide in Botswana from 2010 to 2022**

1. National Gender-Based Violence Strategy 2015–2020: This is a multi-prolonged and multi-sectorial approach to the prevent and eliminate GBVF. The strategy recognises men as critical partners in the fight against GBVF and lead to the establishment of a men's sector under the ministry responsible for gender.
2. In December 2020, the Sexual Offenders Registry Act (No. 7 of 2021) was passed by the national parliament to make provision for the establishment of a sexual offenders register

and a sexual offenders inter-sectorial council. It includes provisions for the supervision of sexual offenders, their monitoring and psychological counselling. It further provides for the court to declare a person a dangerous sexual offender and create a report on sexual offenders by an authorised officer. It makes provision for those who have been declared dangerous offenders who do not comply with supervision or do not disclose their status as sexual offenders to be found guilty of an offence or liable to pay a fine and/or prison term (The Botswana Gazette 2020). Sections 4 and 5 of the Act provides for the definition sexual offence and sexual offender, respectively. Section 3(1)(a–c) outlines the guiding principles, which are that the best interest of the survivor of the sexual offence is paramount, the privacy of survivor is protected, and the need to raise awareness of sexual abuse, sexual offenders, and emerging forms of sexual offences.

3. In November 2021, the parliament of Botswana enacted an amendment to the Penal Code to provide a new definition for rape and to enhance penalties for sexual offences. Section 141 of the Penal Code (Amendment) Act (No. 42 of 2021) was amended by substituting it for a new section that provides a new definition of rape. The new section states the following:

“any person who has unlawful carnal knowledge of another person or who causes the penetration of a sexual organ or instrument of whatever nature into the person of another, or who causes the penetration of another person’s sexual organ, into his or her person without the consent of such other person or with such person’s consent if the consent is obtained by force or means of threats or intimidation of any kind, by fear of bodily harm, or by means of false pretense as to the nature of the act, or in the case of married person by personating that person’s spouse is guilty of the offence termed rape.”

Section 142 introduced stricter, tougher penalties for the crime of rape, and provides the following:

“any person charge with the offence of rape upon conviction will be sentenced to minimum of 20 years in imprisonment, where the act of rape is tended to harm the victim it will be minimum of 25 years, where the perpetrator is unaware of their HIV status 25 years, where they are aware

minimum of 30 years to life imprisonment, where the perpetrator is a parent, guardian, repeat offender, or where the victim is below age of 14 years or persons with disability, the person will be sentenced to minimum of 30 years to life imprisonment.”

In addition to this, Section 143 of the Act increases the punishment for attempted rape from five years to 15 years.

This list shows that between the period 2010–2022, South Africa and Botswana enacted new legislation and policies that address the prevalence of GBVF and rape. These efforts include amendments to previous legislations to provide new definitions, tougher penalties for sexual and gender crimes, developing and consolidating sexual offenders registers, improving court proceedings on sexual offences, and protecting women. The findings confirm the claim made by female MPs in both case studies that new pieces of legislations have been passed on GBVF. The passing of multiple legislations relating to GBVF within the selected period also attests to their claim that the presence of women in parliament influences the kind of legislations that are passed, which often end up being gender sensitive. This is further analysed in the next chapter.

## **6.6 Conclusion**

This chapter presented the findings from interviews administered to female MPs in South Africa Botswana and women working in CSOs in GBVF-related fields in both countries. The interview findings were presented based on themes addressed by all 43 participants on gender quotas, impact of women’s political participation and recommendation for reducing GBVF and improving women’s political representation. Female MPs in South Africa and Botswana (39), who fit the inclusive criteria, were selected and interviewed during data collection. Most of these female MPs believed that gender quotas are a necessary instrument to ensure the participation of women in politics as well as to ensure the inclusion, equality, and representation of women’s interest in society. The participants believed that the participation of women in politics benefit women generally, and they affirmed that their participation and presence in parliament has had considerable impact on addressing GBVF. Four participants who are women working in CSOs that deal with GBVF issues were interviewed to provide an assessment on the impact female MPs have made towards addressing GBVF. The participants from South Africa agreed that the inclusion of

women in the South African parliament has created considerable change in the fight against GBVF, but the participants in Botswana disagreed, depicting a disconnect between the perception of impact by female MPs and CSOs in Botswana. The interview findings were presented thematically with quotations based on participant groups, which are female MPs in South Africa, female MPs in Botswana, and women in CSOs in Botswana and South Africa. The section interpreted the demography of participants to provide guidelines in analysing the findings of the study. Super-ordinate and sub-ordinate themes generated from the interview findings were codified in line with the format of the research objective and questions.

Secondly, the chapter presented findings on legislative and policy outcomes on GBVF or closely related instruments in period 2010–2022. These findings supported the claims made by female MPs that due to presence of women in their respective parliaments, new pieces of legislations have been passed in the stipulated period. These legislations were passed to amend previous laws on domestic violence, sexual offences and other related acts that constitute GBVF as operationalised in Chapters 1 and 5. The legislations identified mostly provide new definitions for sexual offences, introduced sexual offenders registers, and ensure stricter penalties for GBVF-related offences. The findings on legislative and policy outcomes were presented to identify and briefly discuss what each selected outcome aims to achieve and how it addresses GBVF.

## **CHAPTER 7**

### **DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS**

#### **7.1 Introduction**

The assumption that women's participation in politics enables the substantive representation of women is one that has been peddled for a long time, and the notion is titling towards affirming that women's presence can ensure the protection of women as a collective group. Hence, the aim of the study was to interrogate whether there is indeed such a relationship, and more importantly, how the participation of women in politics impacts the reduction of the rate of GBVF in South Africa and Botswana. The study further aimed to recommend alternative pathways to ensure the substantive representation of women to reduce the dependence on female political leaders as advocates for women issues as the over-reliance on them may not yield positive results for reducing GBVF in both case studies. To achieve this aim, this chapter is central to the study as it uses the presented data findings to answer the research questions and address the research objectives. This chapter is divided into two parts: The first part analyses the phenomenological presentation of super-ordinate themes in line with the research objectives based on the three participant groups used in the previous chapter (female MPs in South Africa, female MPs in Botswana, and women working in CSOs). This allowed the study to align the themes that emerged in the presentation of findings with the research objectives while identifying areas of commonality and difference across the participant groups. The section presents the research findings to address the objectives of the study; the objectives were to investigate whether there is a relationship between numbers and impact; to re-examine the relevance of quotas beyond being a pathway for mainstreaming women into politics; to measure the effectiveness of gender quotas in enabling women's substantive representation using GBVF; and to recommend alternative pathways to ensure substantive women's representation. In aligning the themes with the research objectives, sub-ordinate themes is used to provide the perspectives of the participants in relation to the questions asked.

The second part is the discussion of the interpretative analysis of findings, which explains the data gathered to answer the research questions. It examines how the research process has addressed the research questions with reference points to literature, the theoretical framework, and most



importantly, the data gathered. This section is done on a country basis for female MPs as they were key informants to the study, and women in CSOs is done as a group. This highlights the responses of participants to allow for country-specific answering of the research questions. This section also uses the findings from the legislative and policy outcomes to confirm the impact female MPs have made on GBVF. While interpreting the findings, a brief comparison between the two case studies is made to identify the differences and similarities in how gender quotas impact on policy and legislative outcomes on GBVF in the case studies.

As previously mentioned in the methodology and presentation of findings, 43 interviews, lasting 30 minutes to one hour, were conducted with female MPs in South Africa, female MPs in Botswana, and women working in CSOs in Botswana and South Africa. The first group of participants were numbered Participants 1–36, the second group; Participants 39–41, and the last group were numbered Participants 37 and 38 for South Africa and Participants 42 and 43 for Botswana. The study collected data from 43 participants for this research, which allowed for a phenomenological presentation of the interview findings. An overview of legislative and policy outcomes that have been passed on GBVF from 2010 to 2022 is also provided in the previous chapter to balance the responses from female MPs on how their presence has impacted policies on GBVF. This overview is used in this section to consolidate the answering of the research questions.

## **7.2 Interpretative Analysis of Interview Findings to Address the Research Objectives.**

### **7.2.1 Relevance of gender quotas.**

In this super-ordinate theme, the second research objective was addressed which was to examine the relevance of quotas as a mechanism beyond increasing the number of women in politics into fostering substantive women's representation. Quotas have been adjudged to be a 'fast-track' mechanism to ensure women's political participation (Dahlerup 2006a). However, it is necessary to explore how the numbers quotas created can ensure the representation of women's interests. The corresponding research question to this theme is 'do gender quotas have relevance beyond being a pathway to mainstreaming women in politics?' All participant groups were asked the question of whether quotas are necessary to ensure women's political participation.

### ***7.2.1.1 Perspectives of female members of parliament in South Africa on relevance of gender quotas.***

Thirty-six female MPs were asked whether they think gender quotas are necessary to ensure women are represented in the political system. The findings presented for this participant group showed that 25 participants believed that quotas are necessary to ensure women's political representation, while 11 did not agree that quotas are necessary. This shows that gender quotas are not unanimously seen as a necessary instrument for women's political participation. However, 69% of the participants believed in the necessity of quotas for women to participate in politics.

The 25 participants who agreed raised themes such as inclusion, representation of women, and equality. The significance of these sub-themes is that the participants did not only see quotas as ensuring women can participate in politics, but they also saw it as an instrument that works for women as a collective group. The participants explained that quotas ensure women are included in politics because of long-standing exclusion, which is often the result of the patriarchal system, which limits their participation. They noted that it can help correct the gender imbalance that exists in society and also make space for women in the decision-making sphere. This depicts that quotas can be used to ensure the inclusion of women in the political system and in other spheres of society at large. Most of the participants saw quotas as levelling tool that allows women to be on equal footing with men in society. Importantly, the participants noted that while quotas ensure women's participation in politics, the participation of these women can lead to better representation of women issues. Participant 29 argued that "quotas ensure that women take space, we need to represent ourselves, we have issues that we as women need to take decision on in making sure they are being implemented and they suit our needs" (P29 29 April 2022). This means that female MPs do not just see quotas as an end in itself, they also see it as a mechanism that ensure women's issues can be represented in decision-making spheres. This posits that quotas have relevance beyond ensuring numbers via women's political participation. It is a means to ensure women can be included in society, are put on equal footing with men, and are able to represent issues that are specific to them.

### ***7.2.1.2 Perspectives of female members of parliament in Botswana on relevance of gender quotas.***

Unlike South Africa where the governing party uses quotas to mainstream women into political positions, the governing party in Botswana does not use quotas. However, there is a provision for specially elected MPs who are appointed by the president. It is through this appointment that a certain number of women are selected. To understand the position of female MPs in Botswana as a separate group from their counterparts in South Africa, the researcher asked them whether quotas are necessary. All participants agreed that gender quotas are necessary to ensure women's political representation in Botswana, even though Participant 39 did not personally believe in it. The three interviewed participants noted that quotas are necessary to mainstream women into politics. Similar to their South African counterparts, they explained that quotas help ensure the equality of women, inclusion of women, and representation of women issues. Participant 39 noted that quotas ensure that women are included. She stated the following:

“To tell you the truth, I am not one for quotas because I'm one for motivating women to compete at the same level with men. But unfortunately, our world is not like that because we belong to a very chauvinistic, patriarchal society. We are then forced to consider things like quotas as they make way for women in politics” (P39 9 February 2022).

Participant 40 stated that “to ensure proper representation of the issues that women face, it is important that women participate in politics, which quotas help ensure” (P40 16 April 2022). The general notion from this is that quotas are an important instrument for ensuring that women who understand the problems of women and the interests of women are able to participate in politics to make sure that those interests and issues receive attention. The prevalence of gender stereotypes due to patriarchal culture and norms has limited the extent to which women's voices can be heard in society. This affects how women's issues are addressed or how their interests are protected. The adoption of gender quotas thus helps ensure women participate in politics, which invariably means that the selected women will champion and represent women's issues in parliament and decision-making spheres. This is made possible by ensuring women's voices are heard through the women that were selected and elected to political positions. The above perceptions indicate that female

MPs in Botswana agreed that quotas have a relevance beyond mainstreaming women into politics as they are able to ensure the substantive representation of women.

### ***7.2.1.3 Perspectives of women in civil society organisations on relevance of gender quotas.***

The third participant group were women working in CSOs that deal with GBVF. Their contribution was important as it ensured balance and differing perspectives from that of female MPs. This was critical as it represented the other side of the coin, that is, what the average woman who is not a parliamentarian thinks about the relevance of gender quotas. All participants agreed that quotas are necessary to ensure women's participation in politics. They believe that quotas can ensure the protection of women's interest, inclusion of women, and transformation of the system. This is somewhat similar to what female MPs in Botswana and South Africa stated about the relevance of quotas beyond ensuring numbers of women in politics.

All perspectives on this theme in relation to the research objective on re-examining the relevance of gender quotas beyond mainstreaming women into politics indicate that there was consensus among female MPs in South Africa, female MPs in Botswana, and women working in CSOs in South Africa and Botswana that the relevance of gender quotas goes beyond the participation of women in politics. By virtue of quotas mainstreaming women into politics, their political participation ensures inclusion of women in society, representation of women issues in decision-making spheres, and the equality of women and men in society. This creates a new lens with which to understand the relevance of gender quotas within the discourse of women's political representation.

### **7.2.2 Women's political participation benefits women**

Having established that gender quotas are useful mechanisms to ensure women's political participation in politics, it was important to establish whether and how the participation of women in politics benefits women. This section consolidates the first research objective that sought to understand the relationship between numbers and impact in Africa. Participants were asked the following question: Do you think the participation of women in politics benefits the general women populace? All participant groups were asked whether they agreed that women's political participation can ensure substantive representation of women. Their answers lent credence to the link between descriptive women's representation and substantive representation of women within

the African context. While studies have been done on the link between the two in other regions of the world, an extensive study on Africa has not been done, which was a major objective of this study.

### ***7.2.2.1 Perspectives of female members of parliament in South Africa on if women's political participation benefits women.***

All participants in this group agreed that women's political participation benefits women as a collective group, thereby confirming that there is a relationship between the number of women in politics and the impact on women as a whole. Further consolidating the relationship, participants discussed how numbers create benefits, which are discussed under corresponding sub-themes in the following subsections.

#### *Represent women issues;*

Participants believed that their participation in parliament enables them to represent women issues, protect women's interests, and cater for women's needs. Participant 17 confirmed that "the participation of women in politics allows for issues of women to be escalated to the high echelon of power" (P17 22 March 2022). To support this notion, Participant 27 argued that "because women are represented within decision-making structures, it is easier for female voices to speak on behalf of women than a male voice would" (P27 24 April 2022). Participant 2 noted that "their participation benefits women because they get different ideas and ways of thinking to deal with issues that affect women while working to provide solutions to them" (P2 18 February 2022). The numbers that women build with their participation allow them to echo and represent the issues that affect women as a collective in parliament. They are able to serve as the medium through which the problems that affect women are dealt with in parliament.

#### *Influence legislations and policy;*

Participants noted that their participation in politics enables them to influence policy and legislations on women issues. Participant 17 explained that "when women get to decision-making sphere, they influence policies that deal with women issues" (P17 22 March 2022). Participant 11 confirmed that "as women we are able to influence legislations pertaining to women and women's rights, we are the voice of women on the ground" (P11 7 March 2022). Participants saw themselves

as lobby groups for women because they believed their participation in politics allows them to contribute to the kinds of legislations that are passed to ensure a gender-conscious parliament. Participant 35 better encapsulated the link between their participation and representation of women's interest that translates to legislations as follows:

“Because women are able to advance issues that affect women, they speak to issues and translate them to legislation into a bill that protects women. And that only women participating in politics can adequately speak for women ... if women do not voice out, we would have no one that speaks for women that are being violated” (P35 12 May 2022).

This aligns with literature that argues that women MPs see themselves as representatives of women in parliament and are likely to table women's issues to ensure the protection of their interests (Mansbridge 2005; Williams 2000).

*Challenge gender stereotypes and serve as role models to young girls;*

Participants believed that their participation is symbolic as it challenges gender stereotypes that seek to limit the extent of women's capability. They explained that being able to participate in politics sends a message to other women that women are not inferior beings and deserve to be included in positions of power. Participant 18 stated that “the participation of women in politics allows for women to take over careers that are dominated by men. We are getting the same respect as men because society is starting to recognise that women are not inferior to men” (P18 25 March 2022). Furthermore, they believed their participation inspires young girls and ensures they have role models to look up to. To support the role model point, Participant 6 said the following:

“I was chosen by my party to give a speech at SONA. I posted it for my community to watch it because they were the one that sent me to parliament. My pastor's wife said she watched it with her daughters because she wanted them to see a woman using her voice for change. Yes, my participation allows for those girls to have a female MPs they can emulate” (P6 24 February 2022).

### ***7.2.2.2 Perspectives of female members of parliament in Botswana if women's political participation benefits women.***

To establish the relationship between women's political participation and its benefit for women in Botswana, the MPs in Botswana were also asked the corresponding question. Unlike South Africa that had a collective agreement to the question, Participant 39 in Botswana gave a slightly different answer to the question by stating that "I would not describe the relationship as 'benefit' but as a sort of responsibility" (P39 9 February 2022). Participants 40 and 41 did not disagree with the semantics of the relationship between numbers and impact. Apart from the semantics divergence, female MPs in Botswana had similar views to their South African counterparts. They believed that the participation of women in politics enables them to advocate for women issues, represent women issues, and be role models to younger women. Participant 41 explained that "having women in political positions is a motivation to younger women. We are used to seeing men all over so seeing women in power empowers young females that they can get there too" (P41 14 April 2022). Participant 39 echoed that women in politics are the voice of other women, and she noted that "women in politics are there to be the voice of the other as they are able to advocate for issues that affect women as a whole" (P39 9 February 2022). About representing women's issues, Participant 40 explained that "women in political positions are able to cater for the needs of women. If it is just men at the table, there will be no one to bring up the struggle that women have because men will overlook or side-line it. So, the participation of women allows for such issues to be brought it up because they know what it feels like" (P40 16 April 2022).

The above perspectives from female MPs in both case studies confirmed that the participation of women in politics benefits women. Hence, there is a link between the descriptive representation of women and the substantive representation of women because their participation means women's issues can be better represented, they can influence legislations and policies for the benefit of women, serve as role models for other women, and their presence challenges gender stereotypes that limit women in society.

### ***7.2.2.3 Perspectives of women in civil society organisations if women's political participation benefits women.***

To provide a different perspective to the relationship between numbers and impact, women in civil society were asked whether they believed the participation of women in politics is necessary to advance women's interests, that is, whether numbers are necessary to ensure impact. While all participants agreed that ideally women's participation in politics should be able to advance women's interests, there was lack of a consensus about the existence of this relationship within their given context. They noted that the mere participation of women in politics does not automatically translate to benefits for women as other factors determine these result. For instance, Participant 43 from Botswana expressed doubt about the possibility of the participation of female MPs yielding benefits for women in Botswana by arguing that the lack of a critical mass of women makes it difficult for them to be able to protect women's interest. She noted that "because women are few in the parliament of Botswana, they are unable to work as collective lobby group that advocates and advances women's issues. Also because of the minute number that they occupy they tend to get swallowed up by the voices of men, who are significantly more than them" (P43 11 February 2022). This supports the critical mass argument for enabling substantive representation of women: Women must occupy a considerable percentage before they can influence the system. This is a relevant argument considering that the representation of women in the Botswana parliament stands at 11%, which is 19% lower than the prescribed 30% critical mass needed to protect women's interests.

Participant 38 from South Africa raised a fundamental point as follows:

"It is not about their participation of women in parliament, but how these women see themselves. Do they see themselves as women who are representing the interests of women or as parliamentarians who are there to advance their party mandate? ... MPs often advance their party's mandate and not all of them talk about advancing women issues" (P38 13 April 2022).

The assumption that female MPs automatically champion and prioritise women issues when they get to parliament was challenged by women in civil society in both case studies. While the first opposition was due to lack of critical mass, the other was due to the fact that female MPs advance party mandates over women issues.



The perspectives from this participant group showed a divergence from that of the female MPs on the relationship between numbers and impact in Africa. While they all agreed that ideally the participation of women is necessary to protect women's interests, they differed on the reality of the participation of women in their respective national parliament. They noted that female MPs face different obstacles which goes on to affect such relationship. This highlights that beyond establishing the linear relationship between numbers and impact in Africa, there are factors to consider when trying to understand why such a linear relationship might not exist.

### **7.2.3 Critical mass necessary for impact.**

To consolidate the relationship between numbers and impact, participants were asked whether a considerable number is needed to ensure the substantive representation of women. Participants were asked the following question: To protect the interest of women, do you think it is necessary to have a certain percentage of women participating in politics? This question also draws from the sub-theme where one of the participants argued that critical mass is needed before impact can be made.

#### ***7.2.3.1 Perspectives of female members of parliament in South Africa if critical mass is necessary to create impact.***

Out of 36 participants, twenty-nine participants (81%) indicated a percentage and agreed that there is a need for a critical mass to ensure the protection of women's interests. On the other hand, seven participants (19.4%) stated that numbers do not matter at all and did not suggest any percentage, depicting that they did not agree that a critical mass is needed to create an impact. Of the 29 that agreed with numbers, 25 registered 50% and above as the ideal critical mass needed to protect women's interest. Participant 29 commented that "to undo the past injustice women have suffered, women should occupy 60–70% of space in politics so that they are in a position to implement policies that speak directly to women's issues" (P29 19 April 2022). Among the participants that disagreed with critical mass, the argument for critical actors emerged. For instance, Participant 3 stated that "it does not matter the percentage of women, as long as they get the job done" (P3 19 February 2022). This signifies that a certain number of women in politics is not needed to protect women's interests. Participant 9 explained that "we don't need any numbers, what is needed are competent women who can lead by example. I do not think we need a set percentage to do that,

even one woman can make a difference” (P9 4 March 2022). This further consolidated the critical actors’ analysis that a critical mass of women is not needed to ensure the substantive representation of women as long as there are women who can be critical actors (Childs & Krook 2009).

### ***7.2.3.2 Perspectives of female members of parliament in Botswana if critical mass is necessary to create impact.***

Participants 40 and 41 suggested a set percentage needed to ensure the protection of women’s interests, agreeing with the need for a critical mass. They indicated 40% and 50% respectively as the preferred critical mass needed to ensure the protection of women’s interests. However, Participant 39 argued that it is not so much about numbers. She stated, “I think given our environment to me, it depends not so much the number but the quality of women that put in positions. You can have one woman with great impact equals that of 10 women. So, it’s not a question of number but that of representation” (P39 11 February 2022). This perfectly embodies the critical actors’ argument that numbers do not matter as long as the quality of women ensures the adequate representation of women’s interests. You only need certain individuals to act for women rather than having a set percentage to act for women. It further indicates that there is no conclusion concerning the best way to ensure substantive representation of women; however, given that two-thirds of MPs in Botswana believed that a critical mass is needed, it shows majority alignment with the critical mass argument.

### ***7.2.3.3 Perspectives of women in civil society organisations if critical mass is necessary to create impact.***

All participants belonging to this group agreed that a critical mass of women is needed to protect the interest of women, and they all suggested a set percentage. They all suggested 50% and above as the minimum percentage of women needed to form a critical mass to protect women’s interests. The percentages suggested were similar across all participant groups, and most suggested 50%. This shows an increase from the universal 30% suggested by the BPfA in 1995. Literature focus on critical mass needed to ensure substantive representation of women starts at 30%; however, participants in this study noted that 30% is not enough considering that women are half of the population in their respective countries and the critical mass should reflect that. To support the critical actors’ argument echoed by a few participants in the previous group, Participant 42 voted

for both critical mass and critical actors, and she stated that “even with numbers, we will still have women who do not represent women’s interests. It’s not just a numbers game. It is about having the right women representative so just having 50% does not necessarily guarantee a fairer or feminist outlook” (P42 11 February 2022).

Perspectives on this theme indicated that most participants recognised the importance of numbers (critical mass) for there to be impact. This supports the critical mass argument on how best to ensure women’s interests are better protected. A minority recognised the necessity for critical actors as critical mass does not translate to automatic impact. This aligns with the submission made in Chapter 2 that suggested a combination of critical mass and critical actors. This complementarity was also suggested by Participant 42, who noted that while numbers are important, women parliamentarians need to work as critical actors to consolidate efforts on how protecting the interest that directly affect women. Merely reaching critical mass might not create the needed impact if these women do not work conscientiously to advocate and represent women issues.

#### **7.2.4 Gender-based violence and femicide.**

This section looks at GBVF as a very important problem that women across the two-case studies face. This was done to legitimise its selection as an index to measure what this study means by substantive representation of women. All participants across the three group decried the prevalent rate of GBVF, specifically pointing out that it is a menace and pandemic that affects women as group. Hence, the selection of GBVF as an index to represent the substantive representation of women is well-within acceptable based on the perspectives from the participants. Secondly, this theme was used to resolve the contestation concerning what constitutes women’s interests, because of the disagreement prevalent in literature. GBVF poses a central interest that affects women in both case studies, permeating the nuances that exists within the group.

#### **7.2.5 Effectiveness of legislative outcomes on gender-based violence and femicide.**

To delimit a specific medium by which the effectiveness and impact of female MPs on GBVF could be understood, the study chose legislative and policy outcomes. Hence, it established that the impact referred to will be legislative and policy outcomes that have been passed on GBVF. As a precursor, participants were asked whether legislations and policies can be used by female MPs

to address the rate of GBV in the given context. Most participants agreed that legislations and policies can be used if they are effectively implemented.

#### ***7.2.5.1 Perspectives of female members of parliament in South Africa on the effectiveness of legislative/policy outcomes on GBVF.***

Out of 36 female MPs, 28 participants (78%) agreed that legislation and policies can be used by female MPs to reduce the rate of GBVF, and eight participants (22%) agreed with certain reservations. This supports the notion that legislations and policies are powerful tools towards reducing the rate of GBVF, allowing for the impact of female MPs to be measured by this instrument. Participant 18 explained that “the law can be used to protect women because women in South Africa are mostly disadvantaged. Most of the women are poor, heading households alone and some of them are not active, so the policies/legislations we pass are measures that can be used to protect such women” (P18 25 March 2022). The eight participants that expressed reservations cited issues such as lack of support, lack of proper implementation, and laws are too top-down as factors that might hinder the effectiveness of legislations towards the stated goal.

#### ***7.2.5.2 Perspectives of female members of parliament in Botswana on the effectiveness of legislative/policy outcomes on GBVF.***

Unlike South Africa where most participants agreed that legislations and policies can be used to protect the interest of women and in extension reduce GBVF, participants in Botswana expressed divided affirmation. They all agreed that the law can be used to address the rate of GBVF; however, they noted that factors such as inadequate resources, lack of support, and the small number of women in parliament hinder this possibility in the current terrain in which they find themselves.

Perspectives from female MPs in South Africa suggested that the law can be used to protect the interests of women while that of Botswana indicated that the legislations and policies are only as effective as the implementation and resources dedicated to it, which is a sentiment to which a minority of participants in South Africa agreed.

### ***7.2.5.3 Perspectives of women in civil society organisations on the effectiveness of legislative/policy outcomes on GBVF.***

All participants in this group agreed that legislations are an important mechanism in addressing GBVF; however, just like the reservations noted in the previous participant group, they believed legislations are not enough. Participant 37 noted that “legislation is just a first step. It does not translate to anything on the ground if there is no proper implementation” (8 February 2022). Participant 42 supported this notion by stating that “Botswana has laws that addresses violence against women but implementing it is very difficult” (P42 11 February 2022). Participant 38 gave a different reason the laws might not work and explained that the “law has its limitations. We write legislations, but if there is no education or training, it will not yield the needed result” (P38 13 April 2022). This submission adds awareness and training as important factors for any law to work along with the proper implementation echoed by all participant groups.

Perspectives across all group indicated that they all agreed that legislations can be used to address GBVF; however, certain factors can hinder it. Given the majority affirmation on the possibility of legislative and policy outcomes being used to reduce the rate of GBVF, this supports the selection of legislations as the instrument with which to measure the impact of female MPs on GBVF.

### **7.2.6 Impact of the presence of female MPs on legislative outcomes on gender-based violence and femicide.**

This section addresses the third research objective, which was understanding how gender quotas impact policy and legislative outcomes on GBVF. Having established that gender quotas ensure the presence of women in politics, the following question was asked: How does the presence of women in parliament impact on legislative and policy outcomes on GBVF? As indicated in the previous theme, legislative and policy outcomes are effective instruments that can be used to protect women’s interests and reduce the rate of GBVF. The convergence between gender quotas and legislative and policy outcomes enabled the researcher to understand whether the relationship between numbers and impact is positive. Secondly, it allowed the study to examine how the participation of women in parliament of the selected case studies has led to more legislations and policies to address GBVF. This is important for the study as it situates the numbers and impact dilemma within the two case studies to provide a better illustration of the relationship that exists

between having women in the South African and Botswana parliament and legislation and policies that will be used to address the prevalence of GBVF.

#### ***7.2.6.1 Perspectives of female members of parliament in South Africa on impact of presence on legislative/policy outcomes on GBVF.***

As the key informants for the study, all 36 female MPs in South Africa that were interviewed were asked how their presence in parliament impacts legislative and policy outcomes for GBVF. All participants agreed that their presence in the South African parliament has yielded increased and better legislations and policies to fight GBVF. Participants cited many ways through which they have been able to effect policy and legislations on GBVF, which are discussed in the following subsections.

##### *Multiparty women's caucus;*

A major sub-theme that was echoed by all participants was that female MPs in the South African parliament have an umbrella body called the multiparty women's caucus. This platform is for all female MPs across party lines to discuss, deliberate, and advocate for women issues in parliament. They noted that the main task of this caucus is to advocate and speak for women's issues in parliament, and that GBVF occupies a major position in it. They explained that this caucus is where they all come together to deliberate on women's issues and the position to take as collective of women before presenting it to the larger floor. Participant 23 explained it as follows:

“There is a multiparty women's caucus where as women we go there and deal with women issues. If there are any challenges that women face, we all come together to speak to those issues. It does not matter whether you are ANC, EFF or DA member, these issues affect us all as women so us women come together in one room and deliberate on the issues and come up with solutions or responses to say, for instance, how do we fight this issue of GBVF” (P23 13 April 2022).

Participant 22 stated that “in our multiparty women's caucus, the president of the committee said in 2019 that there must be a document called the national strategic plan to fight against the pandemic of GBVF” (P22 5 April 2022). Participant 4 noted that “the women's parliament has representation across the board, and they meet regularly. All parties are represented even in the

senior positions in the committee. It is good because it cuts across all parties” (P4 20 February 2022).

*Awareness on gender-based violence issues;*

Participants explained that by virtue of the fact that women constitute a sizeable number in parliament, they are able to collectively raise the issue of GBVF as a priority to the rest of the house through the multiparty women’s caucus. They all agreed that their presence in parliament means that the issue of GBVF gets escalated as a national crisis that needs the collaborative efforts of all MPs. Participant 10 explained that “female MPs often lead motions and debate on GBVF. They raise issues on behalf of women, thereby bringing much needed attention to GBVF” (P10 4 March 2022). Participant 34 noted that the following;

“The fact that is out there, that we are talking about it, is a good first step. If you can go back some of the thing happening now were happening before, but because of the patriarchal system, they were hidden and not talked about. Let us appreciate the fact that we have female MPs speaking out and bringing it out in the open, and that is because we have women participating in the politics and in parliament. When politics was dominated by men, that was not discussed. There was no topic that touched on GBV, but because we have women in parliament now who are discussing it, everyone wants to participate” (P34 12 May 2022).

This is a succinct way to demonstrate how the participation of women in the parliament has enabled issues such as GBVF to be discussed in society and in decision-making spheres.

*Advocacy on gender-based violence;*

Another major sub-theme is that female MPs act as advocates for women issues. They are vocal about GBVF, they demand better accountability from responsible ministries, and they champion GBVF issues. Participant 18 noted that “women MPs are vocal about the issue of GBV. There was a time when they called the president and forced him to do something about it” (P18 25 March 2022). Participant 5 attested to this notion by stating the following:

“Because female MPs have various experiences of GBVF issues, they are able to speak for women and in terms of keeping the heat on departments, on our colleagues within

the caucuses to get our bills through, I think we have been successful ... We have made our plight on GBVF known. We have created that awareness, sensitised our colleagues in terms of the way we talk about GBV to rid of stigma. We have managed to keep those discussions going. We often discuss ways of protesting, a sit-in, to force the president to deal with it” (P5 24 February 2022).

Participant 4 stated the following:

“I find that a lot of MPs from other parties are coming out strong, and I have seen that when issue of GBV are raised or discussed, women in parliament in all parties come out very strong and that is an advantage. We need to strengthen that. It can be very powerful, assist and contribute to doing more and showing more progress” (P4 20 February 2022).

*Legislations on gender-based violence and femicide;*

A major result of the presence of female MPs is the passing of three new legislations on GBVF in South Africa. All participants confirmed that because of their collective effort as female MPs, through the multiparty women’s caucus serving as a unified platform, they were able to speedily call for and garner support for better legislations, which translated into new laws on GBVF. The new laws on GBVF are the Criminal and Related Sexual Matters Amendment Act (No. 12 of 2021), Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act (No. 13 of 2021), as well as the Domestic Violence Amendment Act (No. 14 of 2021). All these laws were passed in 2021 as confirmed by the female MPs. Participant 22 explained it as follows:

“We female MPs are the lawmakers. We develop legislations, recently there were three bills on GBV which are the domestic act, sexual offence act. I can’t remember the third one. We as women in parliament have a structure called the multiparty women’s caucus where all women parliamentarians sit and discuss issues of legislations that impact on women. These legislations are presented, and we give input as female MPs. After all members of the caucus agree with the legislation and the amendment of the bills, we take it to the large floor it to be debated on” (P22 5 April 2022).

Participant 3 also noted the following:



“The large presence of women and the consensus among women MPs was a major catalyst for the three new bills to be passed into law ... We work, as our job is to make legislations. It takes 6–7 years to get a bill passed. There is a process, and it is an extremely long one. However, because of the constant push by female MPs and with the help of the president, we managed to pass the bills quickly” (P3 19 February 2022).

In support of this notion, Participant 24 noted the following:

“If we were not so many women in parliament, I don’t think we will be able to have these new laws. To change the policy in parliament takes up to 5–10 years, but I think we as female MPs were very serious and close with the president on GBVF. If not, it would have taken 10–12 years to change those legislations on GBV, but we were able to change it within this term. It didn’t exceed the 6<sup>th</sup> parliament” (P24 19 April 2022).

Consolidating on the consensus of female MPs, Participant 2 noted that “these three bills that were passed had little to no opposition because everybody voted for the same reason, and that is to ensure that we have legislation that protects women” (P2 18 February 2022). To better encapsulate how the participation of women in the parliament enabled the development of these legislations, Participant 36 explained that “we as South African female MPs enter the political arena with a strong activist and mobilisation background and have worked at the grassroot level. The activism and mobilisation experience informs our drive for new legislations” (P36 12 May 2022). The use of gender quotas enables these women with vast activist experience to participate in politics, thereby allowing them to influence legislations for women. Participant 36 further noted that “having more women with the requisite skills and experience entering the parliament through quotas allows for the development of a conducive environment where legislative and policy outcomes with regards to GBVF can thrive, like we have seen with the recent passing of the three bills on GBVF” (P36 12 May 2022).

#### *Programmes and support initiatives for women;*

Another emergent theme is that apart from speaking out on GBVF issues or influencing legislations on GBVF, female MPs go the extra mile to ensure that the implementation of policies on GBVF are appropriately done. They support survivors of GBVF and advocate for better resources to be directed to Thuthuzela Centres across the country. Participant 35 noted that “if you

are found to have a case of GBV, MPs who are responsible for those areas, they go out and support other NGOs to make sure that they support victims of GBV. Now it's not just a legislation issue, it becomes an action-oriented work for us" (P35 12 May 2022). Participant 26 stated the following:

"I can tell you that when GBV was prevalent, we went through parliamentary offices. We have a programme going on every Friday that deals with GBV. We go to communities, talk to them; go to courts, magistrate courts, we check how far the cases of GBV, where the perpetrators are held and how they are assisting in protecting women. We are able to assist those women who are victims through counselling, social services and have social workers provide psycho-social therapy. MPs who are women do have several programmes on GBV, and I speak for my party as I am one of those women MPs who are on the ground" (P26 20 April 2022).

Perspectives from this theme indicates that the presence of women in the South African parliament has produced positive results for legislative and policy outcomes on GBVF. Their presence has not only ensured that new laws and policies are formulated to address the prevalence of GBVF but also that female MPs acts as advocates and lobby groups that constantly place GBVF issues at the top of parliamentary business. It is important to recognise the role of the multiparty women's caucus in this: Due to their sizeable number in parliament, they were able to form a collective caucus that deals with women issues, which is then able to influence policies further translating to three new bills on GBVF.

#### ***7.2.6.2 Perspectives of female members of parliament in Botswana on impact of presence on legislative/policy outcomes on GBVF.***

As key informants for the study, all three female MPs in Botswana that were interviewed were asked how their presence in parliament has impacted on legislative and policy outcomes for GBVF. All participants agreed that their presence in the parliament of Botswana has yielded increased and better legislations and policies to fight GBVF. The participants cited many ways in which they have been able to effect policy and legislations on GBVF, which are discussed in the following subsections:

*Awareness of gender-based violence and femicide issues;*

Similar to what female MPs in South Africa claimed, female MPs in Botswana noted that their presence in parliament allows for GBVF issues to be vocalised and spoken about. Participant 41 explained that “the presence of female MPs helps because we are there to speak and raise awareness on these issues. We are saying something about it bringing awareness to the matter. We are playing a huge role in keeping the conversation alive” (P41 14 April 2022). Participant 40 stated that “because we female MPs see things differently, we are able to bring about a new shift in discussions that happen on GBV in parliament” (P40 16 April 2022).

*Advocate for better legislations and policies;*

Participant 39 explained that through the women’s caucus in parliament they are able to influence policies, which enabled the introduction of policies with tougher penalties for perpetrators. She noted that “what we have done is try and put a task team together, a parliamentary team, look at the issues. We have introduced legislations with tougher penalties” (P39 9 February 2022). New legislations such as the Penal Code (Amendment) Act (No. 42 of 2021) and the Sexual Offenders Registry Act (No. 7 of 2021) were passed to address the prevalent rate of GBVF cases in Botswana.

*Demand for more resources;*

Participants also indicated that their presence in parliament enables them to demand better funding for the implementation of GBVF policies. Participant 39 stated that “right now we are asking in parliament with the Minister of Finance to tell us what is in the box for us. Because of that the amount of funding that has gone into GBV issues has doubled since COVID-19” (P39 9 February 2022). This indicates that beyond influencing the development of new legislations on GBVF, they were able to act as a lobby group to demand better resources towards the reduction of the rate of GBVF.

Perspectives from female MPs in Botswana regarding the impact of presence on women on policy and legislative outcomes is similar to that of female MPs in South Africa. They indicated that the participation of women in parliament ensures more awareness is raised on GBVF; enables them to advocate for better policies, thereby leading to the introduction of new legislations on GBVF;

enables them to demand better funding to be directed to the implementation of policies on GBVF, which were granted.

### **7.2.7 Self-evaluation of impact made on legislative and policy outcomes on gender-based violence and femicide.**

To consolidate how the presence in parliament has impacted addressing the rate of GBVF in their respective countries, female MPs were asked the following: Can you say female MPs in the South Africa or Botswana parliament have made an impact with regards to addressing GBVF?

#### ***7.2.7.1 Perspectives of female members of parliament in South Africa***

Out of 36 participants, 26 participants (72.2%) agreed that female MPs have made an impact with regards to addressing the prevalence of GBVF. Nine participants (25%) responded that an impact has been made to an extent, signifying limited impact, and one participant (2.8%) did not think any impact has been made.

#### ***7.2.7.2 Perspectives of female members of parliament in Botswana***

All participants agreed that they have made impact with regards to addressing the prevalence of GBVF. However, Participants 40 and 41 further highlighted that the impact is limited and depends on the adequacy of implementation of the approved legislative and policy outcomes.

The perspectives from the female MPs group indicated that most female MPs in South Africa and Botswana believed that their presence in parliament impacted their ability to influence policy and legislative outcomes on GBVF, advocate for GBVF issues, raise awareness, demand more resources to be directed at GBVF issues, and pose effective solutions for the reduction of GBVF. All participants stressed the importance of implementation to consolidate this impact, stating that legislations and policies must be effectively executed to ensure GBVF is properly tackled.

### **7.2.8 Impact of female members of parliament on addressing the rate of gender-based violence and femicide**

To provide an alternative perspective on how the presence of women in parliament in Botswana and South Africa impacted GBVF, women in civil society were asked a different question to

provide an outsider evaluation of the effectiveness of the impact that female MPs have had on GBVF. They were asked the following question: Has there been considerable change in the fight against GBVF with the inclusion of women in parliament in South Africa/Botswana?

#### *7.2.8.1 Perspectives of women in civil society organisations in South Africa.*

Participant 37 explained it as follows:

“Speaking from the South African perspective, you would see the president has been talking a lot against GBVF, but this is pressure coming from civil society organisations. I am trying to think of a female member of parliament, apart from the concerned Minister of Women. You do not have anyone else speaking on the issue. You have personalities, you have CSOs, president and Minister of Women, Youths and Persons with Disabilities speaking on it. So, I would say it’s more of the civil society that is pushing the agenda against GBV. CSOs have been creating awareness, raising sensitisation, organising marches” (P37 8 February 2022).

Participant 38 stated the following:

“It is a question of mutual inclusivity. I do think female MPs have played a big role within their own spaces to make people unlearn horrible traditional views about subjugation of women and make certain change in the fight against GBV. But the question is, is that big enough to sort out the issue of GBV? I think the stats will say no. So, it’s like even when they get into positions of power, the power is limited that they cannot eradicate the issue of GBV ... Their impact is limited looking at the composition of our parliament. How many females do we have that are deployed to different corners of the country? Having just one female MP in a community does not assist in terms of ensuring that they have in their power to make change” (P38 13 April 2022).

Explaining why female MPs only have limited impact in addressing GBVF, Participant 38 argued the following:

“The people that should be working on addressing GBV are the male MPs. When they are seeking vote from us, they do not segregate voters. They don’t say I want only male voters. Everybody votes for them. When you are serving and protecting your

constituency, you must ensure that everyone has the right to be protected. This is important because female MPs cannot do it alone” (P38 13 April 2022).

#### **7.2.8.2 *Perspectives of women in civil society organisations in Botswana.***

Participant 42 responded as follows to the question:

“This is a hard one. It’s hard because we have changes. The government during COVID-19 opened a hotline with police services, which was toll-free for GBV survivors. There has been a GBV enquiry that has been conducted through the office of the president. But these efforts have not come from our female MPs, they have come from male alliance and CSOs, so I will say no” (P42 11 February 2022).

Participant 43 firmly assert the following:

“There has not been considerable change in the fight against gender-based violence with the inclusion of women in parliament. There isn’t. They just talk, but there is no action on the ground ... the day action is taken is the day men will fear raping a woman, hitting a woman, committing marital rape, saying I have paid for the sex, I have paid lobola and married you, therefore I must have sex with you whenever I want. When those laws are repealed and people understand that a women’s body is hers and it’s not for anybody, regardless of whether they are married or whatever relationship they are in, a woman’s body is hers” (P43 11 February 2022).

The perspectives from women in civil society on the theme indicated two things: Firstly, the impact female MPs have had in addressing GBVF is not significant enough to make considerable change in the fight against GBVF; and secondly, most of the efforts to reduce the rate of GBVF come from CSOs. The first point was strongly supported by Participant 38, and the second point was echoed by Participants 37 and 38. What this means for individual country is that women in CSOs in South Africa believed that female MPs are not able to make considerable impact because there is a need for holistic interventions and there is a need for male MPs to collaborate with them. Secondly, most efforts on GBVF have been the products of individual efforts rather than from female MPs as a collective. The women working in CSOs in Botswana believed that the inclusion of female MPs in the parliament had not yielded any considerable change in the fight against GBVF, and similar to South Africa, they believed most efforts have come from CSOs and male

alliances. The latter which poses a different angle to the women as critical actors for women issues. This section created a major contradiction with regards to how female MPs believed they have made impact with regards to addressing GBVF. While women in CSOs do not believe that considerable change has been made with the inclusion of women in parliament with regards to addressing GBVF.

### **7.2.9 Improving the quality of women's political representation**

This section addresses the fourth research objective, which was to suggest alternative pathways for the substantive representation of women in Botswana and South Africa. The assumption that the presence of women in politics ensures women's interests are protected creates a sort of segregation with regards to how policy makers address issues and how citizens demand accountability from the government. The burden to address women issues and protect women's interest is often wholly placed on women politicians, or more specifically female MPs. The implication of this is that women issues are not considered as part of the larger policy needs of the people. Like Participant 38 argued in the previous theme, when contesting for election, male MPs do not discriminate among voters because both men and women vote for them. So why does the burden of protecting women's interest only fall on female MPs when they get into office? This section provides recommendations of alternative pathways to ensure the substantive representation of women, and hence, participants were asked the following question: Besides quotas, which measures can you recommend to improve the quality of women's political representation?

#### ***7.2.9.1 Perspectives of female members of parliament in South Africa on how to improve quality of women's political representation.***

Each participant provided multiple suggestions on the stated themes as they argued that improving the quality of women's political representation is a necessary step to protecting women's interests as a whole. Participants gave different opinions on how to improve women's political representation, and these are discussed in the following subsections.

### *Education;*

Participants believed in the importance of educating the society on equality between men and women, which, according to them, is a foundational step to other measures. Participant 3 stated the following:

“We need to get women to be in politics. We need to do upliftment and education for them like a political school where women can enrol, but we know schools are expensive. Politics require a bottom-up approach. If we start on top, we miss a lot of things. We find interested women who have the abilities, they should get involved with parties. It increases their knowledge of politics” (P3 19 February 2022).

Participant 25 suggested that “we need to develop women coming after us. Push them to go to school. We need women with advanced educational qualifications because there are some departmental positions for women, and you find that there is no one that is qualified to be in that department” (P25 20 April 2022). Participant 29 noted the following:

“It starts with our education system. If our children get to be exposed in politics at a very young age so that we create skills in terms of economic development so that as they grow, they understand their space, they are able to come out. Many of our female counterparts are scared to be in the same space as men, scared to speak out because of patriarchy. So, if this gets instilled at a young age, our families would be comfortable in talking about issues of abuse, inequality, economic challenges and social ills that we are faced with. Number one is education. We need to fix our education system so that our people can open up their minds and do not have to learn politics at an old age, which is hard because you do not have much insight on what is happening around you” (P29 29 April 2022).

Participants believed that education plays a fundamental role in building a better society.

### *Transform the system;*

Under this sub-theme, most participants argued for dismantling patriarchal and societal norms that limit women’s self-actualisation in society. Participant 17 stated that “issues of tradition and culture that has become a problem in our society. These two things need to adjust to the material



conditions of society today. We ought to speak to it. We cannot have young women in cases of arranged marriage. We need to say such practice does not assist in building a better society” (P17 22 March 2022). Participant 7 explained it as follows:

“If we try and transform cultural attitudes. These attitudes exist across all spectrums of society. Attitudes towards women are prejudicial and very little progress has been made to change people’s ingrained mindset. I think we need to start with changing the cultural perspective. Women have to start demanding equal respect for being women without having to pretend to be men. We have to start raising our boys’ same way we raise our girl. We have to start actively demanding that our specific needs are catered for. For instance, there is no maternity leave for the Western Cape provincial legislature at the time, until one of the MPLs pushed for it because she had a baby. These are subtleties that we as women understand. We are not going to encourage women’s participation in political spaces until we can create environment where they are able to thrive and given the assistance that they need as the primary caregivers. Women are socialised to be nurturers, gentle. There are few young white English-speaking women. The African culture is deeply patriarchal, so it is important to confront these prejudices” (P7 25 February 2022).

Participant 36 noted that “there is need to undertake comprehensive reforms to eliminate laws, policies, and regulations that discriminate against women” (P36 12 May 2022).

#### *Supporting other women and women empowerment;*

All participants noted that it is important for women to come together and support one another and ensure the empowerment of women as a collective group. Participant 9 suggested that “we should look at the empowerment programme. We should look at the socio-economic status of girl-children. Many girls miss out in school if they have their periods because they cannot afford sanitary pads. We should look at empowering our girls” (P9 4 March 2022). Participant 14 recommended that “we need to empower women. At the crux we need to create spaces of empowering women to know that they too can occupy these spaces. I do not think women can’t be in these spaces. It is about creating these spaces that women are empowered to be in and building that confidence” (P14 14 March 2022). Participant 22 stated that “we need to support

women so that women are more in structures where decisions are taken for the betterment of our people” (P22 5 April 2022).

*Mentorship of young women and girls into political positions;*

The participants suggested that it is necessary to mentor and engage young girls and women to be politically active. Participant 5 stated the following:

“It starts with strong female examples. Start with current female MPs setting an example, leading by example. I believe we should pay it forwards. We need to play a more active role in our communities as female political leaders to make sure that girls are taught and have positive examples. We need to encourage girls to be more, to encourage them to do what they want, be it debate, sports, traditionally male sports, to push the boundaries” (P5 24 February 2022).

Participant 10 supported this suggestion by asserting that “training is always important, as well as providing on the job support. We need female leaders who have been part of the political establishment for many years to commit to training and mentoring young women” (P10 4 March 2022). Participant 4 stressed that “we need young people to be involved. We as MPs need to engage more with young women on what we in parliament. We need to invite them to spend time with us physically in committees, plenaries in whichever form so they get inspired enough to want to get involved in the political landscape of the country” (P4 20 February 2022).

***7.2.9.2 Perspectives of female members of parliament in Botswana on how to improve quality of women’s political representation.***

*Change patriarchal attitudes;*

Similar to what MPs in South Africa suggested, MPs in Botswana believed that it is necessary to change the patriarchal attitudes that is prevalent in society.

*Education;*

They also agreed that education is important. Participant 41 suggested that “people need to start studying towards political leadership. Starting from the education sector, government affect

everyone. Teaching young people about the effect government has on everyone and the institutions of government will help” (P41 14 April 2022).

*Advocate for inclusion;*

Participant 39 explained the need for women political leaders to champion for the better inclusion of women. She stated the following:

“We are mobilising women for training on political matters. There are so many brilliant women who are afraid to join politics. That is not a challenge. Even though we want large representation, they can’t afford firstly because they are poor and can’t afford the expense. However, with mobilisation, training and empowerment we believe we can have more of them, which is what we as female MPs are doing” (P39 9 February 2022).

**7.2.9.3 *Perspectives of women in civil society organisations on how to improve quality of women’s political representation.***

In relation to the theme, participants in this group were asked whether removing obstacles to women’s political participation is a better alternative to quotas when it comes to increasing women’s political participation. All participants argued for a collaborative effort between using quotas and addressing the obstacles that hinder women’s political participation.

*Complementarity between quotas and resolving obstacles;*

Participants 37 noted the following:

“Quota system and addressing obstacles to women’s political participation should work hand in hand. You might be raising awareness on why women’s political participation is important, but the laws or political leaders do not want to appoint you in their political party. You will not go anywhere. I always believe in the holistic approach to problems. You cannot be like this is what we are going to do and then we are done, you can’t just do one intervention. I have been working in the area of women’s rights since 2014, and I feel like I haven’t done much because everything you do is a small legal block, and you are building something big. So, I feel like you

are just contributing your legal block, and it will years to get where we want to be” (P37 8 February 2022).

Participant 42 stated that” they have to work hand in hand. There are clear impediments. Even if you remove those impediments, it does not mean that you will suddenly have a rise in female politicians. You also still have to have a quota system” (P42 11 February 2022).

*Political education and understanding the importance of human rights;*

Participant 43 recommended political education and understanding of human rights. She explained it as follows:

“That should go with a lot of education because you find that politics and human rights do not necessarily go hand in hand. We can politicians who have no idea about human rights or who feel human rights is just a waste of time. So, we must elect these women and give them direct entry into politics, but they will have no idea on what is happening to the other parts of the community. What is happening to women, children because they are not in touch with the realities of women and girls. So, there will be a lot of education needed before we elect them to offices so that they really up to speed and have the interest of the community at heart because not all politicians have the interest of the community at heart. Some go there to enrich themselves or look for opportunities to enrich themselves and not what is necessary for the community. So, there is a lot to be done before we directly elect women to positions of power. Education for the community because they are responsible for choosing these leaders. So, they must know what qualities to look out for that can truly move our interest forwards” (P43 11 February 2022).

**7.2.10 Recommendations to reduce the rate of gender-based violence and femicide.**

To further consolidate on recommendations for alternative pathways to ensure the substantive representation of women, participants were asked to suggest measures that can help reduce the rate of GBVF. They were asked the following question: Which measures can you recommend to address the rate of GBVF?

### ***7.2.10.1 Perspectives of female members of parliament in South Africa on how to reduce the rate of GBVF.***

#### *Political and institutional measures;*

In suggesting measures to address GBVF in South Africa, all participants stressed the need for political will to ensure the proper implementation of policies that have been passed on GBVF. Participant 36 stated that “within the parliamentary arena, political will for change and commitment towards ending GBVF is imperative” (P36 12 May 2022). Participants suggested the need for better awareness on legislations that have been passed on GBVF. Participant 15 suggested that “we need to educate the society on every legislation passed on GBV to say how does it help them and how they can work with together to help society at large. If we can deal with GBVF as we dealt with COVID-19, we can win as institutions, government, and society at large” (P15 19 March 2022). Participant 7 suggested the following:

“We need treasury to direct the necessary resources to the security apparatus, for example SAPS [South African Police Services], forensics so that Domestic Violence unit, special offences court, children’s court. This comes from budget. We need resources to be allocated to agencies that are responsible for investigating/prosecuting gender-based related matters. From a social development perspective, we need more resources dedicated to shelters for women, and we need Chapter 9 institutions like the Commission for Gender Equality to be adequately resourced so that they are able to oversight functions effectively. Then the Commission for Gender Equality report that comes to parliament needs to be very strong binding resolutions taken by the committee that process those report in parliament, so that parliament can adopt binding resolution that adhere and respond to the research and agenda outlined by Commission for Gender Equality in terms of addressing the rights and concerns of women specifically in SA [South Africa] with regards to GBV, which has been a big focus of the Commission for Gender Equality. Essentially, it requires political will. So, we need the right people to sit on those finance portfolios in the ministry etc. We need the right legislation. Twenty-six years into democracy we have the right legislation in place, but the resources don’t follow the right legislation, and if we cannot change the culture of the police service, which is by and large quite it is an inherently patriarchal

organisation. You know how women are treated when they try to report their case. So, we need more women in law enforcement and GBV unit that when women are victimised, they receive the help that they need whether resources exist” (P7 25 February 2022).

*Cultural and societal efforts;*

Participants advocated for a holistic approach to solving GBVF, which can be reached through cultural changes as well as society-wide collaboration. Participant 18 suggested the following:

“We must start with the family structures. They need to be empowered. We need to have more awareness on the equality of family. We must encourage the old ones to make sure that they let go of old system of thinking. Also, the education curriculum must have empowerment of mindset that there is a not job for a specific gender” (P18 25 March 2022).

Participant 26 recommended a change in societal norms and stated the following:

“We need to get society involved. I am not happy about it. As society we need one that is really involved in the social compact. You are part of a society such that you do not tolerate any form of violence perpetuated around women and children. GBV goes deeper to children, and they get so affected in schools. We have cases of younger women who are raped but still go to school. We need the communities to speak out loud. We need them to have the community policing forum. What we have in the security cluster and safety that ensure that is not happening. GBV needs community. The more we need to have awareness, volunteers within the communities. We need have mothers and father to get involved who will pledge themselves to be part of the society to make it better. A collective responsibility to protect young women. The environment we are in, we need to change the culture and tradition. Important to educate ourselves, inform our communities and ensure that everybody understands their rights. We all have right to equal justice, right to choose for ourselves, right to sexuality” (P26 20 April 2022).

Participant 31 suggested a society-wide effort as follows:

“I believe in us fighting GBV. We need to come together as society. GBV should not just be a matter of government, should be a matter of our churches, society, chiefs, amakhosi. In some parts amakhosi are still practicing forced marriages, which for them it’s something they think is right, which for us is wrong. So, we need to come up with some policies that are going to fight all these things. Young girls should be in schools not in forced marriages because that’s when these things lead to GBV. These young girls end up growing and understanding that they are independent people from there. The man will not allow that. We need to fight GBV together as society and be one. In that way, we will come to end of it, as it stands now. It’s happening every time. If we go to the Vuvuzela centres, the kids that are there, the women are women that were raped by families. Hence, I am saying GBV is an issue we need to deal with as a society” (P31 8 May 2022).

*Reform policing and justice system;*

Most participants advocated for strengthening the justice system as well as reforming the police apparatus. Participant 23 noted the following:

“There is no other way than courts because you cannot take law into your hands. So, it is only the judiciary we need make sure that we strengthen our judiciary when it comes to court so that people that are perpetuating violence against women are put in jail and behind bars for their wrongdoing. We need to make sure as women in these caucuses or whatever forum that we have to make sure that legislations are implemented in our courts. Each and every place where we are to follow up to ensure strict compliance to what the law says. If we do that, our courts will be very strong so that cases of GBV will be handled better and taken seriously, but right now we have got backlog of cases in our courts” (P23 13 April 2022).

Participant 27 suggested that “we should have specialised courts that deal with GBV. Specialised courts should be established so that the law takes action so that perpetrators understand the consequences of their actions that the law will deal with them harshly” (P27 24 April 2022).

*Better resources and programmes;*

Participant 16 stated that “our Thuthuzela Centres are not well resources. I do not think we have in every town. We need to have more of those. Partner with non-governmental organisations [NGOs] that are dealing with GBV, resources them and encourage them to stay operational. If they do not have resources, they cannot operate. We need to make sure we have the right resources to address GBV” (P16 19 March 2022).

Participant 3 recommended the following:

“There should be proper shelters for women. Programmes to help the women and their children and for them not to go back to the abusive home. The police do something where they bring couples together to solve the problem. The government should ensure there are less expensive counselling centres for victims. It is a society thing. We need to raise awareness on it” (P3 19 February 2022).

*Support among women and collaboration with men*

Participant 5 explained that it is necessary for women to work together with men to address GBVF. She suggests the following:

“We as females need to start talking, supporting females. Even though we have different parties, female MPs need to support each other. We should break stereotypes. We should not be the ones that negatively re-enforce negative stereotypes. We can’t want equal rights. We can’t say we want to end GBV but go ahead to say all men are trash. We need to work with men” (P5 24 February 2022).

Participant 3 suggested that,

“When we speak of GBV, there is an attack on men, so we need to communicate our message better without attacking men. We need programmes for men where we can assist them. Let’s not forget GBV is a problem of poverty and unemployment. We need to go to schools. The socialisation of our boys/girls, we need a programme for them too. How to deal with attitudes and bodily changes. How to treat women. Workshops for the policewomen should work with them. A man can work with a woman if he can treat her with respect. A woman does not ask for it. She does not play a role in her own abuse” (P3 19 February 2022).



*Women empowerment and creating safe spaces;*

Participant 14 recommended empowering women by stating the following:

“We have spoken about policy changes, talk to the challenge that women face. I think our organisations structures and procedure need to change. There are cases of women being victimised, but they are not comfortable of speaking out in the workplace. If you do speak out, you are stigmatised or criticised. We need to change thing structurally, not just policy because policy needs a conducive environment to be implemented in. We can influence policies and can get them right, but if we do not have the conducive environment for policies that allows us to speak out, allows us to report incidences where GBV rears its head, then we are working backwards. We need more than just policies. We need support structures in workplace or political space. We need to create safe spaces for women to speak up against men when they are violated. We need to talk about it more. I feel like incidents happen, but people do not talk about it. We do not realise the power of sharing our experiences. Also, that speaks to safe spaces, how safe we feel in supporting one another. In some instances, women perpetuate GBV. With questions like why was she wearing that suit to work? We need to get beyond that even us as women. Creating safe spaces for people to speak out, creating safe spaces for GBV to be dealt with without victimisation” (P14 14 March 2022).

***7.2.10.2 Perspectives of female members of parliament in Botswana on how to reduce the rate of GBVF.***

*Women empowerment;*

Participant 39 advocated for the economic empowerment of women so they can be independent beings by stating the following:

“We have to empower women economically because as long as women are not economically empowered, they cannot be politically and socially empowered. Because if you are dependent on your concubine or husband, your brother for survival, you will be their subject. So, you have to be independent. And the other thing is you find that we have female headed household. Females whether married or single are basically

head of households. They've got kids without father, and they have this heavy burden that they carry but they don't have the means, they are less paid in their jobs compared to men. So, until such time that we empower women to stand for themselves and be independent, it's going to take a long time. It is then we can say the quota system will assist them" (P39 9 February 2022).

*Socialisation;*

Participant 40 stressed the need for better socialisation processes for children. She explained the following:

"We need to look at the raising of human beings. We could consider number of factor that contribute to GBV, like childhood trauma, which speaks to raising of young children which might relate to perpetration of violence later on. That should be worked on by government. What could government do because when we consider these issues, they are so personal, and they are not something government can have a direct authority or make a direct decision about. It is in our homes. Most rape cases happen in our homes and often perpetrated by family members. We need to heal. Government can advocate, make a case for, and raise awareness. The responsible government person needs to be cognizance of such issue and aware of the root causes in order to propose sustainable solutions. Interrogating how we raise humans influence of parenthood on child upbringing, which speaks to holistic well-being of a person that will be impacted by a lot of things" (P40 16 April 2022).

*Strengthen institutions;*

Participant 41 advocated for the following:

"There needs to be programmes that protect women in danger, for instance, when a woman goes to report a case of GBV, they have to go back to the same house where their abuser lives, or they have to be in the same neighbourhood, meaning the perpetrator still has access to them. The country does not do restraining order. They need to be efficient with this. I am aware of a case where a lady reported her husband and had to go back home, but they made the man leave the house. But that is not enough

because he can come back when the woman is alone and vulnerable. She put in a request for restraining order. She had to wait for 3 months to get it, which is a long time. A day is enough for a perpetrator to kill their victims. There needs to be more effectiveness with protective measures when someone reports GBV” (P41 14 April 2022).

### ***7.2.10.3 Perspectives of women in civil society organisations on how to reduce the rate of GBVF.***

#### *Education and awareness;*

Participant 37 suggested that “educating people about the law and that what are you doing is gender-based violence. In many instances people don’t know that their actions constitute GBV, like a husband hitting his wife at home, for him its entitlement. Awareness raising which goes hand in hand with education” (P37 8 February 2022). Participant 42 stated the following:

“The other thing that has to happen is education on the grassroots’ level because we vote for politicians, we keep them in power. Unless us as community and nation understand what, we need to put on the table demand what we will like politicians will have their way. We will not have the right representative to represent us. We are also not going to know how to keep our parliament in check and how to monitor” (P42 11 February 2022).

Participants also noted the importance of legislative education. They argued that society should be trained on the legislations that have been passed on GBVF and to advocate for their right to make these legislations and policies work for them. Participant 38 noted that “we need to review our curriculum to teach about GBV for children to understand that looking after each other is human right. If my rights are violated, I must speak out. There needs to be education so that we all understand what we mean on GBV” (P38 13 April 2022).

#### *Collaborative efforts;*

Participant 37 recommended that “working with traditional and religious leaders, non-locals championing the cause of GBV is a must. People listen to church leaders, community leaders, chiefs, so involving them in the fight is very important. You will go nowhere without them because

you can be talking at high level, but it doesn't trickle down" (P37 8 February 2022). Participant 38 supported this notion by stating that "the president speaking about GBV is a good thing because it brings it into focus, and everyone listens to him. Working together with experts on culture is very important. We can come from one perspective and say this particular culture is affecting women and its perpetrates GBV" (P42 11 February 2022).

*Transformation of society;*

Participant 42 noted the following:

"There has to be sensitisation and education, and also the removal of these bad apples. We need to remove perpetrators from leadership positions before we can do anything, otherwise it's going to be a brick wall. You are going to move for change, and perpetrators will stop that move. No perpetrators will advance women's rights in parliament where there are perpetrators" (P42 11 February 2022).

Participant 38 explained that "our society needs to be transformed to ensure that both men/women are partners in household, community and there is not contestation that women are the one doing the most work on GBV" (P38 13 April 2022).

*National database and reporting system;*

Participant 43 provided the following detailed recommendation on a national database:

"If we look at the GBV report as a country, we don't have a national database that monitors the type and when violence is happening in the country; for instance, you check where does physical violence happen, who does it happen to, is there sexual violence, which part of the country does it happen, and we will be tracking the numbers and demography of who is affected, the areas its happening. But now we only rely on police cases. The police numbers are the only statistics that are used to give an indication of where we are as a country and we all know to go and report a case of domestic violence in Botswana, it must have happened to you numerous times, 10, 20 times before one can report. This is because of the silence of the community. The expectations that you have to silent about what is happening in your marriage, relationship. You are tarnishing someone's image. You must have done something to

provoke that. The victim is blamed. So only a tiny number goes to report to police. A study in 2020 shows that only one in nine rape cases are reported. That tells us that 90% of cases go unreported. The police numbers does not represent what happen in Botswana. So, until we have a database where GBV is captured at every point, whether you go to the police, hospital, social worker, chief, there should be a link because we all have a national identity number. That number can be used to track one's movement so we can have true figures of what is happening in the country. My organisation and myself feel we are underreporting what is happening in Botswana with regards to GBV, so we cannot really measure impact because we do not know what is out there” (P43 11 February 2022).

Perspectives on this theme indicated that all participant groups agreed that it is necessary to ensure education, awareness, and sensitisation of GBVF. There is a need for a more societal and collaborative effort, to empower women and to strengthen institutions such as the police and the judiciary.

### **7.3 Discussion of Interpretative Analysis of Interview Findings and Legislative Outcomes.**

The section links the interpretative analysis of the super-themes done in the previous section with the research questions in the study. In answering the research questions, the researcher mostly refers to data gathered from participants and use findings from legislations to consolidate it. It combines the analysis from literature and applies the theories. This allows for synergy between the data gathered, literature and theories to answer the research questions posed in the study. The overview of the data gathered from interview and legislative outcomes in South Africa emphasises that gender quotas has been effective in mainstreaming women into political positions because women occupy 46% of the seats in the South African national parliament. Due to the number of women in parliament, they were able to advocate and influence policy making, which led to the passing of new legislations on GBVF. It is noted that addressing the prevalent rate of GBVF in South Africa needs more than just legislations as government, society and other relevant stakeholders need to be involved. For Botswana, the lack of a specific gender quota by the governing party, which is different from the specially elected MPs system, has not allowed women to occupy a considerable number of seats in the national parliament, and there are only seven

women out of 63 MPs, amounting to 11%. Though they were able to influence the legislative process, the lack of a critical mass has impacted the capacity of MPs to use their presence to enable notable impact on addressing GBVF. The summary of recommendations note that the education and transformation of society are very important measures to address GBVF in South Africa and Botswana.

### **7.3.1 What is the relationship between the numbers and impact in terms of women's political representation in Africa?**

The literature on critical mass postulates that a sizeable number of women is needed in parliament to ensure the substantive representation of women (Dahlerup 2006b). Female MPs in Botswana and South Africa confirmed that the participation of women in the political system yields benefit for the general women populace. This affirmation provides ground to argue that there is a positive relationship between numbers and impact in the selected case studies. Furthermore, these MPs argued that only women can represent women issues accurately because of difference in lived experiences. This notion is a major postulation of the relational feminist theory, which states that the fundamental difference between men and women enables women to better represent the intrinsic issues that affect them (Offen 1988). Additionally, while confirming that there is a relationship between the participation of women in politics (numbers) and benefits for women (impact), female MPs cited themes such as represent women issues, influence legislations, advocate for women, and role models for younger women as output of the relationship between numbers and impact. The existence of this relationship was further supported by women in civil society, although this affirmation came with reservation concerning the possibility of current female politicians enabling such a relationship. While the women in civil society doubted the reality, they noted that the participation of women in politics benefits women. This points to the fact that there is a relationship between numbers and impact in Africa but that certain factors must be in place to ensure the positive connotation of that relationship. One of the factors cited is that the current socio-cultural system does not favour women who participate in politics as patriarchy still limits their efforts. This calls for a critical mass of women participating in politics as their numbers can help normalise their participation, which solidifies the thesis that numbers are necessary to make an impact. Another factor affecting this relationship is that some female politicians often advance their party mandate over women issues. This notion was observed across

most female MPs while sampling their motivation for taking up political positions. Most of the female MPs did not explicitly identify gender and women issues as their motivation for taking up political positions, and instead gave blanket responses about wanting to create change. The lack of majority feminist thinking in female MPs creates a problem for the numbers and impact dilemma. The fact that they did not accrue their participation in politics to championing women issues shows that it might not be a major concern for them. On the other hand, their lived experience and identity as women can contend with this narrative as they see themselves as women first before parliamentarians, which can influence how they address issues. Moreover, Phillips (1995) argued that women often agree on certain interests that affect them, and these interests can override political mandates. GBVF in this case is a central interest that female MPs in both case studies agreed affects women.

### **7.3.2 Do gender quotas have relevance beyond being a pathway for mainstreaming women into politics?**

Gender quotas are only seen as effective to the extent that they are able to ensure the descriptive representation of women in the political system. All participant groups agreed that quotas are necessary to ensure the participation of women in politics. However, in re-examining the relevance of quotas beyond numbers, all participant groups cited that quotas ensure the representation of women and the inclusion of women and equality in society. In agreeing that quotas help mainstream women into politics, they noted further that by virtue of women participating in politics, they are able to speak for other women, represent women issues in echelons of power, ensure women are included in decision-making spheres, and ensure equality between men and women in society. This highlights that the participation of women in politics is a requirement to challenge the gender stereotypes that limit women from being visible in society. Quotas foster the inclusion of women across decision-making spheres as their participation in politics creates a domino effect that allows the ability of women as important members of society to be acknowledged. By being able to debut into politics via quotas, women are seen in a new light i.e., equal beings to men in society. A major theme is that it allows for women issues to be spoken for, again highlighting the notion that only women can represent women, this was well-supported by all participant groups. The findings from participants create a new lens through which to view the relevance of quotas as a mechanism for ensuring the representation of women. It contends with

major studies that limit quotas to an instrument that only engenders an increase in political participation of women. The implication of this narrative manifests in seeing quotas as a means to an end, which is the participation of women. However, the reconfiguration of what the end is allows for the re-examination of the relevance of quotas, and in this case, the end is the substantive representation of women, which is ensured with the participation of women in politics. This analogy lends credence to the first research question on numbers and impact, i.e., quotas are not an end in themselves but are a means to protect the interests of women as a group (impact). Therefore, to directly answer the research question, quotas are relevant beyond mainstreaming women in politics by ensuring the inclusion of women in the political system. They create the critical mass of women needed to challenge gender stereotypes, represent women issues, and ensure gender equality in the society. These benefits are almost impossible without quotas fostering the increased participation of women in politics.

### **7.3.3 How do gender quotas impact policy and legislative outcomes on gender-based violence and femicide in Botswana and South Africa?**

To measure the impact of gender quotas on the substantive representation of women in Botswana and South Africa, GBVF was used as the index to measure the substantive representation of women and legislative and policy outcomes were used to measure their impact. GBVF is an endemic and systemic problem that affects primarily women. Participants across all groups condemned the high rate of GBVF while expressing concern for women. Related reactions capturing this are pandemic, abysmally high, shocking, alarming, serious challenge, worrying phenomenon, evokes anger, very sad, horrific, and feel pain. These expressions point to the fact that GBVF is an important issue that affects women across the selected case studies. Saferspaces (2020) argued that GBVF is a systemic problem that women face in South Africa. The appropriateness of using legislative and policy outcomes to measure impact was supported by participants who noted the importance of laws and policies to address GBVF. Lack of implementation or adequate resources are some of the limitations that hinder the effectiveness of these outcomes. However, when properly implemented, legislation and policies are very powerful instruments in addressing the high rate of GBVF.

Female MPs in South Africa argued that due to their presence and considerable number in parliament, they are able to form a platform for women's issues (the multiparty women's caucus), create awareness on GBVF issues, advocate for women issues and GBVF, influence policy-



making processes, and carry out programmes on GBVF. All these efforts are possible because of their umbrella platform, which is the multiparty women's caucus. This caucus deals with women issues in parliament. The participation of women in parliament is a function of gender quotas, the numbers they have built up in parliament enable them to come together to act as a lobby group for women issues. Their task, which mostly focuses on women issues, allows them to prioritise GBVF, which is a major problem that affects women. They are able to communicate the severity of what women go through due to GBVF while putting pressure on relevant departments to take more practical steps. The most significant impact their presence has had is the introduction of legislations to address GBVF.

The assertion made by female MPs in South Africa is supported by findings from the legislative outcomes from 2010–2022 that demonstrate that there have been numerous legislations and policies developed to address GBVF. In 2022, the South African government announced that three new pieces of legislations were passed to fight against the prevailing rate of GBVF. These legislations are the Criminal and Related Matters Amendment Act (No. 12 of 2021), the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act (No. 13 of 2021), and the Domestic Violence Amendment Act (No. 14 of 2021). Some prior legislations are the Protection from Harassment Act (No. 17 of 2011); the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act (No. 6 of 2012), which was further amended as part of the newly introduced legislations; and the Commission on Gender Equality Amendment Act (No. 17 of 2013), which was amended to align with the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (No. 108 of 1996). A national council on GBVF was formed in 2014 to oversee the development of the National Strategic Plan for Gender Based Violence and Femicide (2020) that was adopted in 2020. The adoption and passing of numerous legislative and policy outcomes is a testament to the notion made by female MPs in South Africa that their presence in parliament has impacted legislative and policy outcomes on GBVF. Participants highlighted that this impact would not have been possible if women did not have the needed critical mass to make it happen.

On the other hand, women working in CSOs that deal with GBVF in South Africa argued that the impact female MPs have made is limited. This divergence in perception of impact can be a function of lack of awareness of the relevant legislations and policies on GBVF. Secondly, it points to the need for more societal and collaborative effort in addressing GBVF. To assign the burden of significantly reducing the rate of GBVF to what female MPs do creates an impossible task, this

was voiced by all participants. It was noted by all participants that reducing GBVF goes beyond laws and policies: There must be a major transformation in patriarchal attitudes as well as collaboration with male MPs. However, to the extent that female MPs in South Africa have fulfilled their responsibility to develop legislations and policies that addresses GBVF, this study argues that they have been able to make impact. This is in acknowledgement that their efforts transcend developing legislations as they have also created awareness, advocated for women issues, supported NGOs that work on GBVF, and are overseeing the implementation of policies on GBVF to ensure a holistic approach to addressing GBVF. Moreover, there is only so much they can do, as indicated by all participant groups. It is necessary to dismantle the patriarchal system that perpetuate hegemonic masculinity that manifests in violence against women. Female MPs are also victims of this system, and hence, their numbers in parliament does not mean much, which is why men, faith-based organisations, and traditional leaders must work together to make considerable impact towards reducing the rate of GBVF.

For Botswana, female MPs argued that they have been able to create better awareness on GBVF, advocate for better policies, and demand more resources. These actions have manifested in the introduction of new legislations that provide tougher penalties for perpetrators of GBVF. Participants explained that most of the funding that go to NGOs that work on GBVF are from female MPs who support different initiatives on GBVF. The claim made by participants on new legislations was confirmed by the findings presented on legislative and policy outcomes on GBVF from 2010–2022. These are the National Gender-Based Violence Strategy 2015–2020, which is a multi-prolonged and multi-sectorial approach to the prevention and elimination of GBV; the Sexual Offenders Registry Act (No. 7 of 2021), which was passed by the national parliament to make provision for the establishment of a sexual offenders register and a sexual offenders inter-sectorial council; and an amendment to the Penal Code in November 2021 to provide a new definition of rape and to enhance penalties for sexual offences in Sections 141 and 142. Furthermore, the amount of funding that went into GBVF doubled during the Covid-19 pandemic period. There were also initiatives such as the GBVF hotline introduced during the Covid-19 pandemic to ease reporting system, to which women in CSOs attested.

On the other hand, members of CSOs argued that there has not been any considerable change in the fight against GBVF with the inclusion of women in parliament. Just as in South Africa, they did not think female MPs have done enough to address GBVF. The perception of impact between

female MPs in Botswana and women in CSOs differ significantly. The first group feels that they have made an impact, but the latter disagrees. The same dilemma found in the case of South Africa applies here where efforts made by female MPs are not known to the public as citizens only see them as a unit of the collective, namely parliament. Secondly, women in CSOs explained that the lack of a critical mass of women in the parliament of Botswana is another reason for their lack of impact on GBVF issues as they are too few to make a considerable difference. Compared to South Africa that has 46% of women in its parliament, Botswana has just 11%, which confirms this challenge. However, similar to South Africa, in the period 2010–2022, there have been new legislations and policies passed to address GBVF, and therefore, it can be argued that female MPs in Botswana have made impact on addressing GBVF.

As echoed by one of the participants, it is a matter of mutual inclusivity. It can be agreed that female MPs in both case studies have made impact on legislative and policy outcomes while also acknowledging that their efforts may not translate to a significant drop in the rate of GBVF. The lacuna between their efforts and a significant drop in the rate of GBVF is a function of collaborative and much more holistic interventions on GBVF. While legislations and policies are very important mechanisms through which GBVF can be addressed, their existence does not translate to an automatic reduction in the rate of GBVF. Therefore, by virtue of gender quotas ensuring women participate in parliament, it has enabled the building of the needed critical mass of female MPs to be critical actors that go on to create awareness, support, advocate, influence, and lobby, thereby translating to several legislative and policy outcomes on GBVF in Botswana and South Africa. This aligns the critical mass and critical acts theses, showing that quotas allowed for sizeable number of women to participate in parliament. These women came together to be critical actors that represent women issues and specifically do something about GBVF. Due to their numbers and actions, they were able to influence the legislative process to ensure the substantive representation of women.

#### **7.3.4 What alternative pathways are there to ensure the substantive political representation of women in Botswana, South Africa, and Africa in general?**

The expectation that women issues should only be addressed by female politicians places a burden on the latter to be the only representatives for women issues. Women issues must be seen as part of the broader needs of the people. Certain issues affect women uniquely as a group, such as

childcare, sexual and reproductive health rights, and pregnancy, thus creating a vacuum that only female politicians can fill. The critical recommendations echoed by participants is the need for education either to improve the quality of women's political representation or to reduce the rate of GBVF. Participants suggested that women must be empowered so they can own their agency as equal members of the society. Transformation of society must happen by changing patriarchal attitudes that limit the participation of women in politics while also engendering the oppression of women. Obstacles that hinder women's political representation must be addressed while embracing quotas to complement such efforts. Government as an institution must foster political education among young girls and women to engage them in politics at an early age.

To reduce the rate of GBVF, participants stressed the need to reform the policing and justice system to enable women to easily report abuse cases and ensure that perpetrators of such violence are adequately dealt with. Participants suggested that there must be awareness raising on GBVF, which can start by fixing the education curriculum to educate society on the ills of GBVF. It is believed that if women are socio-economically empowered, they would not be dependent on their abusers, which is often the case. A community-based approach to GBVF is necessary where both men and women collaborate to better address the prevailing rate of GBVF. Patriarchal stereotypes regarding masculinity must be discarded to avert the perpetuation of violence on women. Government should introduce more programmes and resources to better consolidate existing efforts geared towards addressing GBVF.

#### **7.4 Conclusion**

This chapter did an IPA of the interview findings in line with the research objectives. The chapter was divided into two sections, and the first section was a presentation of the super-ordinate themes according to the research objective to align the perspectives of the three participant groups on each theme. This enabled the study to synergise the sub-themes that emerged in each section while providing clarification on the difference and similarities in views. The themes used to present the findings allowed the reader to systematically understand the data findings on how each theme relates to the corresponding research objective. This section embodied the chosen analytical framework for the interview as it provided an interpretative analysis of the perceptions, experiences, and opinions of the participants on each research objectives.

The second section was a discussion and analysis that answered the research questions with the data gathered from both the interview findings and the legislative outcomes. It employed the interpretative analysis of participants' perspectives on each theme to answer the research questions drawing from the objectives of study. The section showed there is a relationship between numbers and impact in Africa, although certain factors affect the nature of the relationship. It further noted that gender quotas are relevant beyond ensuring descriptive women's representation as they foster inclusion, representation, and equality of women in the selected case studies. The findings from Botswana and South Africa revealed that the increased number of women in parliament enabled them to influence the legislative process translating to policies and legislations on GBVF. An interesting observation made from this section is that the efforts of female MPs on legislation and policies on GBVF are often not known to the women they represent, which creates a disconnect between the impact they have made and how women perceive their impact. Several recommendations were made on how to improve the quality of women's political representation as well as reduce GBVF to provide alternative pathways to ensure the substantive representation of women. The discussion and analysis provided the needed clarity on how the data gathered responded to the research questions.

## **CHAPTER 8**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **8.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the summary of the study, the conclusion of the research findings, recommendations, and suggestions for further studies. It provides a brief discussion on how each chapter addressed the objectives of the study and an overview of recommendations suggested by the participants on addressing the prevalent rate of GBVF in Botswana and South Africa. The research employed the theory of politics of presence and relational feminism as theoretical frameworks to understand how the increased participation of women in politics translates to impact i.e., protecting the interests of women in Botswana and South Africa. The scope of the study revolves around gender quotas, descriptive women's representation, and substantive women's representation in African politics while zooming in on two similar yet distinct countries. The study looked at quota systems in Africa, the types of quotas and factors that determine its success and failures. It evaluated the relevance of gender quotas beyond descriptive representation and the benefit of women's political participation for women, and it explored the possibility of legislation addressing GBVF and how the presence of women in parliament impacts legislative and policy outcomes on GBVF in the selected case studies. The research aim focused on interrogating the relevance of gender quotas beyond mainstreaming women into politics into ensuring the substantive representation of women in Botswana and South Africa using GBVF to measure the relationship.

#### **8.2 Overview of Chapters Relating to Research Objectives**

The first research objective was addressed in Chapters 2, 4, and 5 with further consolidation in Chapter 6 and 7. It examined the relationship between numbers and impact in Africa by establishing the effectiveness of gender quotas for increased participation of women and how this builds the critical mass needed to create impact. As mentioned in the theoretical framework, the theory of politics of presence explains that women need to participate in politics because their presence has both descriptive and substantive impacts on women's representation.

Objective 2 was addressed in Chapters 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7. The relevance of gender quotas beyond numbers must be embraced as it enables women to be included and allows their issues to be represented in society. Most importantly, it provides the base for substantive representation of women by ensuring that a critical mass of women are included in politics. As extensively discussed in the literature review, gender quotas are an important instrument when discussing women's political representation, and they have been effective as a fast-track mechanism to correct the underrepresentation of women in politics (Dahlerup & Freidenvall 2005). Krook (2006) notes that the adoption of gender quotas yields much benefit for women's increased participation in politics. While there are still divisions on its role in effecting the protection of women's interests or enabling a gender-sensitive parliament, quotas continue to be employed by governments and regional bodies to increase the presence of women in decision-making bodies.

The third and fourth objectives were extensively addressed in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. These objectives discussed the quota systems in the Botswana and South Africa; the necessity of quota systems for women's representation; and the critical mass needed to create impact. They also provided an overview of the severity of GBVF; the effectiveness of legislative and policy outcomes on the reduction of GBVF; the impact of the presence of female MPs on legislations and policies on GBVF, and measures to improve the quality of women's political representation and reduce the rate of GBVF. The chapters highlighted the limited role female MPs can play in significantly reducing the rate of GBVF considering the nature of GBVF as a systemic problem, which calls for collaborative and holistic interventions.

### **8.3 Summary**

The study interrogated the relevance of gender quotas on the substantive representation of women in African politics. It was an interpretative phenomenological analytical study that used Botswana and South Africa as case studies to contextualise its argument. The study adopted a qualitative method as its approach of inquiry used multiple case study as its research design, the theory of politics of presence and relational feminist theory were used as the analytical frameworks, and IPA and thematic analysis was used for the analysis of data.

Chapter 1 provided an overview and background on the need to understand the relationship between numbers and impact in Africa. The chapter included an introduction and background of

study, the research aim, research objectives, research problem and research questions. The chapter included an explanation of the research methodology, encompassing the research instruments (data collection methods, data analysis), and the justification of study. It included a conceptual clarification of the major concepts that guided the analytical framework of the study.

Chapter 2 embarked on a review of the existing literature on the following themes: representation, women's political representation, descriptive women's representation, substantive women's representation, gender quotas, and the link between descriptive representation and substantive representation. This chapter is important as it provided the foundation for understanding gender quotas, women's political representation, and how the link between numbers and impact can be facilitated by gender quotas. The first part of the literature review looked at the discourse on representation, particularly the dichotomy between representatives as trustees or delegates, because this dilemma had to be unravelled to clarify the role representatives play. It further examined the historic underrepresentation of women in politics and how the need to ensure women are represented necessitates the adoption of practical instruments. The discussion on descriptive and substantive representation was done to establish the relationship between them, particularly looking at what exactly constitutes the latter. The second part of the literature review looked at gender quotas and the descriptive representation of women, and it explained that the adoption of gender quotas has led to the increased participation of women in politics. It noted that the success of quotas depends on the type of electoral system coupled with the type of quota used within that system. It established that the use of gender quotas help produce the critical mass of women needed to protect women's interests. The last part of the chapter looked at how best to ensure the substantive representation of women and started by examining the value of quotas beyond numbers to create an impact. This examination led to a further discussion on the debate between critical mass and critical acts. The conclusion on the debate between critical mass and critical acts was that both are important to ensure the substantive representation of women as critical mass enables women to have the needed presence to debut certain critical actors that foster women's issues in the polity. Hence, rather than deepening the dichotomy that exists between the two, efforts should be directed at making the two work for women's representation.

Chapter 3 looked at two theories, the theory of politics of presence by Phillips (1995) and the relational feminist theory, to provide a theoretical underpinning for how to understand the numbers and impact dilemma. While the theories are different, they converge on the basis that the



participation of women in politics is important for the protection of women interests. Basing their argument on the politics of difference and equality, they explain that due to the gender differences between men and women, women are in the best position to represent women's interests. Politics of presence further establishes that the presence of women as a marginalised group is needed to further their qualitative representation as well as legitimise the democratic system. While relational feminism argues that the nurturing and maternal traits of women make them embrace an ethics of care for issues that uniquely affects them. Furthermore, due to their lived experiences as women, female MPs are likely to represent and act for women when they get into parliament. The deduction from the two theories for the study is that the participation of women is important as their presence in politics has an impact. Secondly, it is important that women represent women because only they understand their unique experiences as a group, and in order for them to influence legislations, they must be included in decision-making processes.

Chapter 4 provided a continental context to the discourse on gender quotas and substantive representation of women. The chapter looked at the trend of quota adoption in Africa since the 1995 BPfA women's conference and the signing of CEDAW; both of which tied increased participation of women to gender equality. It was noted that the implementation of quota system has been more widespread in Africa than in other regions of the world, which has created significant increases in women's political participation. While different types of quotas have been adopted by different countries, the commitment to ensure women are included in political structures informed these decisions. The findings was that the SADC region has been the most successful with the quota system, with countries like South Africa, Mozambique, and Namibia enjoying increased participation of women. However, Rwanda records the highest level of women's participation in politics, leading the world with 61% of women in politics. This speaks to the importance of electoral system and post-conflict transition to ease the implementation of quotas for women. This chapter also situated the numbers and impact debate within the African context to lay a foundation for answering the first research question. The need to understand the relationship between numbers and impact provided impetus for this effort. Studies note that while countries like Rwanda, Uganda, and South Africa are enjoying the high presence of women in politics, there is not much information on how the presence of women affect gender-focused legislations (see Isike 2009; Devlin and Elgie 2008). On the other hand, some argue that the inclusion of women in the political terrain has provided a new environment for viewing the

capabilities of women while also providing role models for other women (see Burnett 2011; Meena 2004).

Chapter 5 provided contextual background on gender quotas and the descriptive representation of women in Botswana and South Africa. This chapter was also used to explain GBVF and the severity of the problem, which makes it an important topic that affects women in both case studies. The findings showed that while Botswana is a developmental state, it has not ensured commensurate gains for the participation of women in politics, and the absence of relevant instruments to advance their participation further deepens this problem. Apart from the specially elected MPs that women are likely to benefit from, the ruling party does not have a voluntary quota in place. However, opposition parties such as the BCP and BNF are committed to ensuring 30% women's representation in party list and structures, but lack of political will has hindered the full actualisation of this commitment. Due to lack of active efforts on the part of the government and parties, women's political participation in Botswana is at 11%, which is the lowest in Southern Africa. On the other hand, since its liberation from the apartheid government and transition into democracy, South Africa has recorded a high presence of women in politics. This achievement is attributed to the provision of gender equality in its constitution, and most importantly, the efforts of the ANC. In 1994, the ANC adopted a quota system that was pushed for by the ANC Women's League, and because of this voluntary quota, South Africa has seen increased participation of women. Currently, 113 of the 180 women in parliament are from the ANC because of the 50% gender quotas used by the party. Other parties like the EFF have also employed the zebra approach, where one male and female are alternated on the party list to allow for balanced gender representation. All this puts women's representation in parliament at 46%, which is one of the highest on the continent and the world.

Chapter 6 presented the findings from interviews and legislative outcomes on GBVF. It started by presenting the findings on 10 super-ordinate themes addressed by 39 female MPs and four women in civil society across the case studies. These themes are focused on the necessity of gender quotas, women's political participation benefits women, critical mass needed to create impact, prevalence of GBVF, effectiveness of legislations for reducing GBVF, impact of presence of female MPs on legislations and policies on GBVF, and recommendations. A phenomenological presentation of findings was used to properly represent the participants' perceptions, experiences, and opinions on the themes. The findings presented helped find points of divergence and convergence based on

countries and participant groups. The findings on legislative and policy outcomes were presented by providing an overview of the laws and policies that were passed between 2010 and 2022 to address GBVF. The chapter provided an interpretation of the demographic information of participants, such as party affiliation and motivation for taking up political position, to better understand the perspectives of the female MPs.

Chapter 7 used the findings presented in Chapter 6 to answer the research questions and address the research objectives. This chapter started by aligning the interview themes with the relevant research objectives by doing an interpretative analysis of the findings according to the three participant groups (female MPs in South Africa, female MPs in Botswana, and women in CSOs in Botswana and South Africa). This was done to enable the reader to understand how the super-themes relate to the objectives of the study. After this, a discussion and analysis was done to answer the research questions posed in the study. The research questions were answered by drawing on findings from participants, findings from legislative and policy outcomes, the review of literature, as well as the theoretical framework. The three important findings from this analysis are, firstly, that the relevance of gender quotas goes beyond the increased participation of women in politics. Quotas enable inclusion, by using quotas women are included in political positions and quotas help challenge the stereotypical attitudes that restrict women from participating in public spaces. Secondly, quotas enable equality, the underrepresentation of women in politics further perpetuates the notion that men and women are not equal in society, but the use of quotas allows women to be seen as equal beings with men who should also have access to political structures. Most importantly, quotas enable the representation of women, the lack of women in politics allows for the back-benching of women issues in positions of power. However, quotas allow women to participate in politics, which fosters the vocalisation of women issues with women representatives as medium. Thirdly, the participation of women in politics benefits women, thereby consolidating the theory and literature that there is a relationship between numbers and impact in Africa. The findings in the chapter showed that while the nature of the relationship is often positive, factors such as party politics and lack of support among female MPs can impede on the relationship. The most important finding was that gender quotas impact legislative and policy outcomes by enabling the participation of women in parliament, which forms the critical mass needed for them to influence policies. Specifically, on the question of how gender quotas impact legislative and policy outcomes on GBVF, the study found that the presence of women in parliament enables them to

come together to form a women's caucus that is unified on women issues. Due to this critical mass, they begin to act as critical actors who create awareness on GBVF issues, advocate for better policies on and resources for GBVF, initiate support programmes for GBVF survivors, and importantly, influence policy making, which has translated into the introduction of new legislations on GBVF in both selected countries.

The chapter further noted the while female MPs in Botswana and South Africa claim that they have made an impact on GBVF, women in CSOs contended that there have not been significant changes with the inclusion of women in the fight against GBVF. The study used the findings from the legislative and policy outcomes on GBVF to ascertain the impact of female MPs on GBVF, and confirmed that within the period 2010–2022, there have been new legislations and policies to address GBVF. An interesting observation was that there was a recent surge in passing legislations and policies on GBVF in South Africa, which coincided with the increase in the number of women in parliament. While female MPs in Botswana have also used their presence to influence legislations on GBVF, however, the lack of a critical mass continues to affect the degree of that influence. Female MPs in South Africa, constituting 46%, have more force and influence on GBVF issues than the 11% of female MPs in Botswana. As noted by one of the participants, because of the small number of women in the Botswana parliament, their voices tend to be swallowed up or they spend time trying to fit in. The researcher concluded that it is necessary to recognise the relevance of gender quotas not as a means to the end of ensuring women's political participation but as a means to the end of ensuring their substantive representation. Alternative pathways for ensuring the substantive representation of women were suggested in this chapter. This recommendation was done in two parts: Firstly, recommendations on how to improve the quality of women's political representation based on suggestions from the participants, which included political education, mentorship of young girls, empowerment of women, and transformation of society; and secondly recommendations to address the prevalence of GBVF, which included education on GBVF, strengthening the policing and justice system, proper implementation of policies, and changing patriarchal attitudes.

Chapter 8 concludes the study. The chapter summarises the study based on the chapter structure, provides a conclusion of the research findings, and gives recommendations for improving the quality of women's political representation and reducing GBVF.

## **8.4 Recommendations**

The recommendation for the study aligns with the last research question that focused on alternative pathways for women's substantive representation. The responsibility of how best to protect and represent women issues is often placed on female politicians without recourse for the role the larger society plays in those problems. The underrepresentation of women in politics or the perpetuation of violence against women are both manifestations of harmful cultural and societal practices that can be traced to patriarchy. The notions that women are inferior to men, that women should be seen and not be heard, and that women are not meant to participate in politics all stem from the inferiority status attached to the female gender. Societal stereotypes that perpetuate the superiority of men create hegemonic or toxic masculinity, which views women as lesser and as objects that can be oppressed. Based on the recommendations discussed in Chapter 7, this section provides overview of what needs to be done to reduce the prevalent rate of GBVF in Africa.

### **8.4.1 Gender-based violence and femicide education.**

The findings indicate that many perpetrators of GBVF do not understand that their actions constitute such. This lack of awareness is due to the normalisation of abuse against women in the form of normal marital relations. For instance, it is difficult to prove marital rape because of the entitlement of husbands to their wives' body even if consent is not given. The idea that 'I have paid her bride price, and therefore, I have the right to do whatever I want with her' is used to violate women's bodies. This male ego and entitlement often lead to men abusing their wives or inflicting violence on women. Education and awareness on what GBVF is, is paramount to addressing the problem. This endeavour should start in schools, and the curriculum system must be reviewed to include education on GBVF and signs of GBVF. This education can also be done in men's forums in different communities, and NGOs programmes can sensitise both men and women on it.

### **8.4.2 Resocialisation.**

At the root of GBVF lies patriarchy, gender stereotypes and harmful societal practices, and therefore, the resocialisation of society is necessary, and it should particularly focus on the male gender. Sociologist Erving Goffman (1961) defined resocialisation as a process of tearing down

and rebuilding an individual's role and socially constructed sense of self. It is often a deliberate and intense social process because it revolves around the notion that if something can be learned, it can be unlearned. The resocialisation process of men and boys should focus on unlearning the negative traits of masculinity they have been taught while embracing positive masculinity, which will introduce them to their new role as participants for positive change. This entails explaining the negatives of the present socialisation process that contributes to violence against women while re-orienting them on the new traits of masculinity that help them become participants for change.

### **8.4.3 Collaboration.**

Significantly reducing GBVF requires collaborative efforts among relevant stakeholders in the society. Female MPs should not be solely tasked with it as male MPs, men, and society at large all have a role to play. For instance, men have a critical role to play as active bystanders in taking action to respond to incidents of GBVF when they witness them. This active bystander approach is especially important in terms of engaging men on efforts to challenge the normalisation of violence against women in public spaces. Organisations such as Men Imbizo and Sonke Gender Justice work with men, and they must tailor their training and orientation to focus on how men can be collaborators towards addressing GBVF. It is necessary to engage with traditional institutions, family, and the community on the need to change the narrative on masculinity. Local chiefs, family units and community organisations should be partnered with on their role as participants in ending violence against women and girls.

### **8.4.4 Strengthening institutions.**

On the corrective side, the security and justice system must be well resourced and trained to deal with GBVF issues. Firstly, there should be a database of GBVF cases across the country wherein all reports of cases are fed. This will allow the country to keep track of GBVF and to have up-to-date statistics of the GBVF rate in the country. Police officers should be sensitised and trained how to treat GBVF survivors when they come to report, and rather than referring the victim back to the scene of the abuse, they should investigate the problem while contacting social workers and shelter homes to protect the victims. The courts must ensure perpetrators of GBVF are prosecuted and punished based on provision of what the law says, and they should not let culture and patriarchy determine rulings on cases. It is important for the law to protect the victims.

#### **8.4.5 Women empowerment.**

The dependence of women, their inability to own their agency, and the oppression of women are some of the factors that contribute to the continuity of GBVF. Women who are abused are scared of reporting their perpetrators because they are also the source of their economic survival. This necessitates organising economic empowerment programmes to engage women and enable them to be financially included. This can be in the form of support grants for those who have businesses, employment for those in need of jobs, or vocational training for those with skills in crafts and other areas. The ability to make a living without depending on a man will give women the ability to leave when they spot signs of GBVF, which is why education and awareness are important. They need to be sensitised to their status as equal beings in the society rather than objects or helpers in relation to men, which can further enable them to assert their rights.

#### **8.5 Conclusion**

The need to understand whether the participation of women in politics benefits women informed this study. This was done because this understanding would allow us to consolidate efforts to ensure women are protected. The study established that gender quotas have been effective in ensuring the increased participation of women in politics, thereby fostering descriptive women's representation, particularly in South Africa. In Botswana, the use of specially elected MPs system has also created space for women to be included in parliament, but this is not significant enough. The study argued that the use of voluntary quotas by the governing party in South Africa, the ANC, largely accounts for the increased presence of women in parliament. This increased presence was further solidified by other parties such as the EFF and the IFP, and although the official opposition party does not use quotas, it factors in gender representation in its party list. The study noted that the presence of women in Botswana and South Africa created ground for women to form a critical mass and impetus to act as critical actors that advocated for women's issues. Women's presence, which is a function of gender quotas, impacted legislative and policy outcomes on GBVF in both case studies as female MPs were able to use their influence to advocate for the policies and legislation.

This aligned the debate on critical mass and critical acts: The former argues that when women form a considerable number in parliament, they are able to better represent women issues; and the

latter argues that numbers are not what is needed but rather the specific actions of certain women to speak and act for women. The findings of this study showed that not only did the women use their numbers to form a force, but they also used their position to initiate legislations and policies on GBVF. The study confirmed the thesis of the two theories employed in the study that the presence of women in politics creates impact for women and that because of their lived experiences as women, female politicians are able to represent women issues. As established, women in the two case studies were able to use their presence to create awareness for GBVF, advocate for GBVF issues in parliament, demand better resources towards GBVF, and most importantly, influence policy making and pass new GBVF legislations. The existence of GBVF legislations and policies between 2010–2022 confirms this statement, demonstrating that there is indeed a relationship between numbers and impact, that women’s political participation benefits women, and that gender quotas can ensure the substantive representation of women.

The study makes new contributions on two levels: firstly, on the in-depth, country-specific analysis of the relationship between numbers and impact in Africa; and secondly on expanding the relevance of gender quotas beyond ensuring descriptive women’s representation. However, the findings made in the study did not conclude that GBVF has been significantly reduced because there are several contributing factors that fuel its prevalence. The study was able to show that having women participate in parliament can lead to more policies and laws to address GBVF and that these women often supervise the implementations of these laws to ensure their effectiveness. Unfortunately, the problem of GBVF goes beyond laws and policies, as systemic, cultural and societal factors are also responsible. Therefore, the impact of female MPs on the rate of GBVF is limited as their effort is not significant enough to uproot the system that perpetuates GBVF because they are also victims of this system. The study recommends that to ensure the effectiveness of the efforts of these female MPs, there must be a more holistic intervention to addressing GBVF. This raises calls for collaboration among all sectors of the society because socialisation starts in the family, and hence, GBVF must first be addressed there. Harmful patriarchal attitudes that perpetuates violence must be changed to allow for new attitudes that foster equality between men and women. Institutions such as the police and the courts must play their part to ensure victims are comfortable enough to report cases and get the justice they deserve. Political will on the part of the government to ensure the proper implementation of policies on GBVF is paramount to all these recommendations because laws are only as effective as their implementation, and laws need



adequate resources to be effectively implemented. Lastly, this study poses an important contribution to the discourse on gender quotas and women's political representation as it established that rather than seeing gender quotas as a means to numbers, it should be seen as a means to impact. The study also devised a new way to ensure substantive representation of women by arguing that rather than an 'either-or' situation between critical mass and critical acts, it should be a case of 'and'. The merging of critical mass and critical acts enables better result for protecting women's interests and quality of representation because it allows for the strength of numbers to be combined with the intentionality of actions to protect women as a collective group.

## **8.6 Suggestion for Further Studies**

An interpretative analysis into the impact of gender quotas on substantive women's representation in Botswana and South Africa showed a positive relationship between numbers and impact. Additionally, the prioritisation of data from female MPs and women in CSOs enabled the study to explore new grounds on how to understand the numbers and impact dilemma. However, this cannot be generalised for all 54 countries in Africa as certain regional and country-specific factors might produce different results. Hence, the researcher proposes that to ensure a more continent-wide understanding of this relationship, research should be done on other countries on the continent. More research on how gender quotas and the descriptive representation of women are important for substantive representation on a country basis should be done. The research should employ field data from these contexts to provide a deeper understanding of how factors that are unique to these contexts can impede the relationship between numbers and impact. There is also a need for more research that re-examine the relevance of quotas beyond numbers and impact to expand the scope of quotas. Secondly, an in-depth analysis is needed to understand the gap between efforts of female MPs on gender issues and awareness on the part of women in the society. This can explore how the uniformity of parliament as an institution affects such awareness since female MPs are just part of a whole and are therefore judged as such. The lack of awareness was a major observation of this study, and it was revealed that it impacted the perception of impact by women working in CSOs. This gap often creates contention concerning the effect of descriptive women's representation on substantive women's representation. A deeper study will provide new insight into why women in the society are often unaware of what female parliamentarians do to protect their interests.

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**Appendix 1: IPA Analysis Table for Female MPs in South Africa.**

<b>Super-Ordinate Theme</b>	<b>Emergent Themes</b>	<b>Sub-Ordinate Themes</b>	<b>Participants contributing to this themes</b>
Motivation for being in parliament	Want to make a difference	Changing the system	All participants
	Want to change the system		
	Want to make change		
	Bring new approach to politics		
	Family influence	Family influence	3, 25
	Empowerment of people	Development of the country	All participants
	Cater for the needy		
	Contribute to country		
	Youth development		
	Represent the people	Advocate for the people	All participants
	Engage issues		
	Voice of the voiceless		
	Youth development		
	Interest in politics	Interest and experience	6, 15,15,23,24,30,34
	Apartheid experience		
	Women empowerment	Represent women issues	2, 7, 21, 33
Represent women issues			

	Voice of other women		
	Change narrative about girls		
Relevance of gender quotas	Addresses gender imbalance	Inclusion	{20, 19, 25, 21, 28, 14, 29, 34, 2, 35, 26, 15, 17}
	Correct past injustice		
	equity		
	Quotas mend the hole		
	Make space for women		
	Women are not left behind		
	Advance interest of minority groups		
	Ensure women's representation	Representation of women	{24, 36, 31, 32, 23, 21, 29, 35, 33, 27, 18}
	Advance women's rights		
	Advocate for women's issues		
	women's issues	Equality	{10, 22, 18, 26, 17, 7, 12, 19, 13}
	Allow for women to be seen as humans		
	Women have equal footing with men		
	Balance the scales		
Does not ensure gender parity			
Unsustainable			
			{6, 5, 1, 3, 11, 4, 16, 2, 8, 30, 9}

		Does not reward competence/hard work	Negative perception about quotas	
		No discernible difference		
		Equal outcome rather than opportunity		
		Abuse the system		
Women's political participation benefits women		Represent women issues	Represent women issues.	{8, 35, 30, 26, 1, 22, 25, 15, 9, 17, 33, 27, 24, 13, 11, 36, 5}
		Protect women's interest		
		Champion GBVF cause	Influence legislation/policy	(28, 2, 18, 35, 30, 27, 7, 11, 4, 36, 31, 22)
		Cater for women's needs		{8, 15, 36, 10}
		Ensure women empowerment	Gender-consciousness in policy-making	
		Make women-sensitive policies	Role model to young women/girls	(14, 3, 6, 19, 20, 19)
		Influence legislation on women issues	Challenge stereotypes	{34, 18, 12}
		Debate on women issues	Issues	{23, 21, 29, 16, 3}
		Expression of women issues in government		
		Women's issue placed on political agenda		
		Approach issues with consideration to women		
		Inspire young girls		



	Role model to young women Encourage increased participation of women Change patriarchal system Challenge gender stereotype Party politics prevails Women don't support each other Self interest Does not benefit women		
Percentage needed to protect women's interests	Greater than 50%	Numbers matter	{23, 21, 28, 29, 34, 2, 8, 35, 26, 15, 17, 33, 20, 27, 24, 7, 13, 11, 36, 31, 6, 10, 22, 25, 12, 19, 32}  {14, 16, 30, 9, 3, 5, 1}
	Less than 50%		
	Numbers should reflect women's interest		
	Percentage not necessary	Numbers don't matter	
Perception about Gender-based violence/femicide	National crisis	Reactions to rate of GBVF	All participants
	Evokes anger		
	It is a pandemic		
	Great concern	Drivers of GBVF	
	Prevalent		
	Appalling		
	Serious challenge		
			All participants

	Problematic socialization Entitlement of men Male ego Disintegration of morals Men have lost their role Violent society Patriarchy Lack of adequate resources Failure of government Government not taking it seriously Lack of awareness on GBV Inconsistent effort Police to be blamed		
Effectiveness of legislative outcomes in reducing GBVF	Legislation is a powerful tool Preventive measures Remove gender barriers Legislation speak to people's needs Creates enabling environment Remove gender barriers Address women issues	Legislation is effective.    Conditional effectiveness  Pessimistic perception	{13, 28, 14, 29, 16, 34, 2, 18, 35, 26, 15, 9, 17, 33, 20, 24, 7, 12, 11, 4, 36, 5, 1, 6, 10, 22, 25}   {2, 19, 35, 4, 3, 12, 32, 8}

	<p>Advance women's rights</p> <p>Only way out</p> <p>Informed by the people</p> <p>If they are conscious</p> <p>Needs proper execution</p> <p>Too top-down</p> <p>Party factions</p> <p>Parliament is ineffective</p> <p>Not there yet</p> <p>Lack of awareness on laws</p> <p>Hesitant to agree</p> <p>Not much power</p> <p>Implementation is important</p>		
Impact of presence of women on legislative/policy outcomes	Raise awareness	Representation and Awareness	{28, 34, 33, 10, 15, 7}
	Keep conversation alive		
	Come out strong on women's issues	Support and advocacy	{2, 18, 8, 35, 26, 15, 9, 33, 20, 13, 7, 4, 10, 22, 25}
	Support for women issues		
	Consensus for women's issues		
	Creates understanding for women's issues	Policy-making	{23, 21, 14, 8, 35, 30, 17, 20, 24, 4, 3, 36, 5, 22, 32}

	Women's lived experience reflect in policy		{29, 2, 12}
	Favorable legislation for women	Party faction come before women issues;	
	3 new bills passed because of women's influence in parliament	Challenges limit their effectiveness	{14, 29, 16, 2, 27, 11,3, 36, 1, 6, 12, 19}
	Multi-party women's caucus		
	Lobby government		
	Disconnect between laws and actual problem		
	Not driving force for ending GBVF		
	Legislative outcome not automatic due to women's presence		
	No noticeable difference		
	MPs show reluctance		
	Patriarchal attitude limit women		
	Party politics		
	Not doing enough		
	Ruling party doesn't prioritize women issues		
Self-evaluation of the impact female MPs have	Lead conversations on GBVF issues	Have made impact	{23, 21, 28, 16, 34, 2, 18, 35, 30, 26, 15, 9, 17, 24, 33, 20, 7, 27, 4,
	Passed new legislations		

made in addressing GBVF.	Multi-party women's caucus drives women's issues	Limited impact	6, 10, 13, 22, 31, 32, 5}
	Create awareness and force debates on GBVF		
	Programmes on GBVF		
	Support for NGOs and GBVF victims		
	Demand accountability from executive		
	Lack of proper implementation limit effort	No impact	{1, 14, 8, 11, 3, 5, 25, 12, 19}
	Need considerable number to drive change		
	Need awareness on new laws		
	Party politics		
	Lack of awareness on laws		
	Inconsistent effort		
	Not enough effort in sponsoring bills		
	No action taken		
	Not done anything extraordinary		
Measures to address the rate of GBVF	Legislations	Political and institutional factors	
	Political will		

Implementation of GBV laws	Cultural and societal efforts	(28, 14, 2, 18, 16, 20, 7, 4, 36, 1, 6, 10, 22, 32, 12, 19)
Strengthen institutions		
Review education curriculum		
Sensitization on GBV		
Community-based approach	Strengthen policing and justice system	(28, 14, 13, 16, 11, 3, 7, 9, 17, 15, 12, 6, 5, 36, 31, 26, 30, 18, 29, 8, 34)
Transformation of society		
Collective efforts		
Reform policing system	Support and collaboration	(29, 1, 4, 23, 16, 35, 30, 15, 9, 27, 24, 11, 36, 31, 25, 22)
Improve reporting system		
Strengthen courts	Economic empowerment for women	(21, 14, 34, 35, 26, 33, 3, 5, 32, 22)
Harsher penalty for perpetrators		
Women should support women		
Safe space for women		
Economic empowerment		
Address root causes		
Change patriarchal culture and traditions		
Break gender stereotypes		
Heal societal ills		

Increasing women's political representation	Political education	Education	{29, 2, 8, 15, 14, 9, 7, 3, 25, 12}
	Training and capacitation		
	Fix education system	Transform the system and Changing culture	{7, 17, 30, 1, 36}
	Engage young women on parliamentary		
	Women should gain educational qualifications	Support and Women empowerment	{3, 10, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 35, 36}
	Enabling environment for women	Role model and mentorship	{4, 5, 9, 10, 17, 25, 30}
	Change political culture		
	Dismantle gender stereotypes		
	Reform discriminatory laws		{3, 24, 28}
	Socialization on equality		
	Encouragement and mobilization		
	Women advance women issues		
	Empowerment of women		
	Economic empowerment		
	Support and collaboration		
Unity of women			

	Own their agency		
	Men should collaborate		
	Motivate young women		
	Stronger female examples		
	Quotas		

### Appendix 2: IPA Analysis Table for Female MPs in Botswana

Super-Ordinate Themes	Emergent Themes	Sub-Ordinate Themes	Participants contributing to this theme
Motivation for being in politics	Develop constituency and people	Development	All participants
	Passionate about helping others	Representation for Women	39
	Encourage young girls		
	Be part of change	Changing the system	All participants
	Want my voice to be heard		
	Want to improve things		
	Want to make a difference		
	Empower people		
Necessity of Gender quotas	Allow women to have a voice	Inclusion	39
	Quotas make way for women		
	Patriarchy makes us consider quotas	Representation	



	<p>Quotas give women the chance</p> <p>Need someone that understand what is happening</p> <p>Represent women</p> <p>Equal chance</p> <p>Equal to fair ratio in politics</p> <p>Having quota is better than not</p> <p>Not one for quotas</p>	Equality	
Women's political participation benefits women	<p>Would not say benefit</p> <p>Women are the voice of other women</p> <p>Motivation to young girls</p> <p>Cater for women's needs</p> <p>Champion women issues</p> <p>Women's voice are represented</p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p>	<p>Advocacy</p> <p>Role model</p> <p>Represent women issues</p>	<p>39</p> <p>40, 41</p>
Percentage needed to protect women's interests	<p>40%</p> <p>50%</p> <p>Fair ratio</p> <p>Enables needed representation</p>	Numbers matter	40, 41

	Parliament needs to be gendered	Quality	39
	Depends not so much on number		
	Quality of women matters		
Perception about gender-based violence and femicide	Painful one	Negative perception	All participants
	Very high in Botswana		
	Personal experience		
	Very present	Drivers of GBVF	All participants
	Happens everyday		
	Society is broken		
	Boy-child not raised properly		
	Education not working		
	Wonder why people perpetuate violence		
	We should focus on root causes of GBV		
Legislation can be used to protect women's interest	They can if they are evolved women	Affirmative	40, 41
	Hesitant because of our minute number	Lack of critical mass	
	Do not have the needed influence	Collaborative effort	39
	Need adequate resources		
	Support from others		

	It's a cooperation thing		
Presence of women on GBVF legislative outcomes	Raise awareness on GBV	Awareness	39, 41
	Speak on GBV issues	Advocacy	
	Fighting for increase in funding for GBV	Demand for resources	
	Parliamentary task team on GBV		
	Parliamentary caucus for women		
	Demand for resources		
Female MPs have made impact on GBVF	Funding for NGOs	Have made impact	39
	Support shelter homes	Limited impact	40, 41
	Funding for GBVF issues		
	Advance GBVF issues		
	Parliamentary caucus for women		
	Echo women's issue in parliament		
	Awareness has been made		
	Ensured something can be done		
	We have tried		
Reduction of GBVF	Empower women economically	Women empowerment	39

	Quotas to create space	Socialization	40
	Provision for GBV in budget		
	Independence of women from men	Protective measures Strengthen institutions	41
	Work on raising the boy-child		
	Restraining order		
	Shelter homes		
	Policing system		
	Penalties for perpetrators		
	Healing		
Increasing women's political representation	Reform political system to welcome women		
	Work on patriarchal culture		
	Political education	Advocate for inclusion	41
	Study towards political leadership		
	Women should take more active roles		
	Fight to be part of decision-making		

### Appendix 3: IPA Analysis Table for Women in CSOs in South Africa

Super-Ordinate Theme	Emergent themes	Sub-Ordinate Themes	Participants contributing to it
Awareness of gender quotas	I think all parties use quotas	Yes	All participants  38
	Yes	Unaware	
	Certain parties do		
	Not aware of any law		
Necessity of gender quotas	Helps to legislate change	Participation of women	38
	Quotas ensure participation of women		
	Transformation	Transformation of the system	37
	Correct gender imbalance		
	ensure women are in leadership roles		
Women's political participation necessary to protect women's interest	Women are represented	Representation of women	38
	MPs advance party mandate not women issues		
	Need more vocal women	Need women to occupy strategic positions	
	Women need to hold strategic positions		

Critical mass needed to protect women's interests	50%	Numbers matter in protecting women's interest.	All participants
	Percentage should reflect population		
	Need to have women at all levels of governance		
Rate of gender-based violence and femicide	Very high	GBVF is prevalent.  Causes of GBVF	All participants
	Feel like violence is condoned		
	Marital rape still acceptable		
	Patriarchal system		
	Women not seen as equals		
	Reporting problem		
Effective legislations addressing GBVF of in	Guarantees right	Law is a means to an end.  Law is limited	37  All participants
	Starting point		
	Only as effective as implementation		
	No awareness on laws		
	Law has its limitations		

Inclusion of women addressed GBVF	No relationship	More of civil society efforts rather than MPs	38
	It's more of civil society		
Female MPs have made impact in addressing GBVF	Limited impact	Limited impact	37
	They have collaborated with NGOs doing GBVF work	No impact	38
	One female MP in a community does not help		
	No they have not		
Recommendation on ending GBVF	Review education curriculum	Education on GBV	All participants
	Education on GBV	Legislative training and education	All participants
	Training and awareness on GBV		
	Education and training on legislations	Transformation of society	38
	Financing	Collective effort	38
	Society needs to be transformed		
	Male MPs should work on GBVF		
	Quotas	Quotas	37

Increasing women's political participation	Address obstacles hindering women's participation	Awareness	
	Raise awareness on importance of women's political participation		

#### Appendix 4: IPA Analysis Table for Women in CSOs in Botswana

Super-Ordinate Themes	Emergent Themes	Sub-Ordinate Themes	Participants contributing to this theme
Awareness of gender quotas	There are specially elected MPs – women benefit from that	Specially elected MPs	43
	No	No quotas	All participants
	Not sure		
Necessity of gender quotas	Creates enabling environment	Inclusion of women Participation of women Protects women	All participants
	Ensure women are not left behind		
	Accommodate disadvantaged groups		



	Effective in getting women into power		
	Backlash against women who take leadership roles		
Women's political participation necessary to protect women's interest	Represent women issues	Representation of women's interest  Do not constitute critical mass	42
	Advance women's interests		
	Women get into power and join the men		43
	Women are few so their voice get swallowed by men		
	Women MPs should only represent women issues		
Critical mass needed to protect women's interest	50%	Definite critical mass  Numbers has its limitations	All participants
	Even with numbers they still deal with patriarchy		
	Numbers doesn't guarantee a feminist outlook		42
Rate of gender-based violence and femicide	Appalling	GBVF is very prevalent.	All participants
	Dismally high		
	37% in 2018		

	Femicide not recorded as crime against women just as murder	Lack of recognition as a gender problem	42
	Something not done		
Effectiveness of legislations in addressing GBVF	There is a domestic violence act	There are laws to address GBVF.  limited due to several factors	All participants  All participants
	Policies are there but there is lack of implementation		
	Law-making not enough		
	Patriarchy and culture always takes over		
	Justice system doesn't understand GBVF		
Inclusion of women in parliament addresses GBVF	No considerable change from MPs	MPs have not done anything.  Civil society does most of the work	43  All participants
	MPs only talk but no action		
	Efforts come from CSOs		
	We have had changes		
Female MPs have made impact in addressing GBVF	No they have not	They have not made impact	All participants

Recommendation on reducing GBV	Education	Education	42
	Grassroot education on GBVF	Awareness	43
	Sensitization on GBVF	Institutional improvement	
	Awareness on GBV		
	National database that capture GBV		
	Improve reporting system		
	Remove perpetrators from parliament		
Increasing women's political representation	Use quotas to ensure women are in politics	Quotas	42
	Education on human rights	Understand importance of human rights	43
	Elect women that understand human rights		
	Education for female leaders	Political education	
	Community sensitization	Community sensitization	43



Faculty of Humanities

Fakulteit Geesteswetenskappe  
Lefapha la Bomotheo



Department of Political Sciences

## Appendix 5: Informed Consent Form for Participants

Department of Political Sciences  
University of Pretoria  
Pretoria 0002  
012 420 2034 (office)

(Interviewee Particulars)

TITLE:

INITIALS AND SURNAME:

INSTITUTION:

POSITION / APPOINTMENT:

ADDRESS:

### ***INTERVIEW: INDIVIDUAL INFORMED CONSENT***

1. Zainab Olaitan is a registered postgraduate student for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in the Department of Political Sciences, University of Pretoria. She is conducting research on ***Gender Quotas and the Substantive Representation of Women in African Politics: Case Studies of Botswana and South Africa*** under the supervision of Professor Christopher Isike.
2. The purpose of the study is academic (in fulfillment of degree requirements) and is aimed at understanding how the presence of women in parliament affects the substantive representation of women in Africa specifically gender-based violence and femicide.
3. This interview is semi-structured and explores themes pertaining to the research. The purpose of the interview is to obtain some perspectives, explanations, and

experiences on the relationship between gender quotas and substantive representation of women from female members of parliament, civil society organisations in the field.

4. With the permission of the interviewee, the inputs of this interview will be utilised for purposes of writing and documenting the research thesis.
5. The interviewee may choose whether to remain anonymous or not and whether note taking, recording or both, would be preferred as a means for capturing the interview.
6. If requested in advance and to ensure that the account of views expressed as an expert in the field is correct, the interviewee will be given insight into all references attributable to him/her and the interview in the mini-dissertation/dissertation/thesis prior to its examination and publication.
7. There will be no risks or discomforts (physical or mentally) to the interviewee.
8. The interviewee may – by notifying the researcher and without any consequences – withdraw and terminate his/her participation prior to, during or after the interview. Should the interviewee withdraw, records of the interview will not be used for research purposes and will be destroyed.
9. The data and/or notes generated by the interview will, in accordance with university policy and requirements, be stored for 15 years at Department of Political Sciences, University of Pretoria. The research results will be documented in the form of a thesis that will be available in the public domain at the University library.
10. The research data generated through the interviews will be used for the stated purposes of the aforesaid thesis and is not intended for re-use. Should an application be made for the re-use of the research data after the completion of thesis and during the mandatory storage period, re-use will be subject to the written approval of the interviewee.
11. The interviewee has the right of access to the researcher and/or the academic department (see the contact particulars indicated in the letterhead) should the need arise.

Please complete and sign the attached form for individual informed consent and return it to the researcher for record purposes.

**Sincerely,**

**ZAINAB OLAITAN**

**U19251531**



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA  
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA  
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

## Faculty of Humanities

Fakulteit Geesteswetenskappe  
Lefapha la Bomotho

Department of Political Sciences



**Department of Political Sciences**

**University of Pretoria**

**Pretoria 0002**

**012 420 2034 (office)**

**PROPOSED TITLE:** Gender Quotas and the Substantive Representation of Women in African Politics: Case Studies of Botswana and South Africa.

### RESEARCHER'S INFORMATION

**STUDENT NUMBER:** u19251531

**STUDENT NAME:** Zainab Olaitan

**DEGREE:** Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

### INTERVIEW: INDIVIDUAL INFORMED CONSENT

I, the undersigned,

TITLE:

INITIALS AND SURNAME:

INSTITUTION / COMPANY/INTEREST GROUP:

POSITION / APPOINTMENT:

ADDRESS:

have been fully informed about the purpose of the research and understand the conditions of informed consent under which I shall be interviewed. I hereby grant permission for the interview on condition that:

**\* Delete what is not applicable**

the interview \*may / may not be \*electronically recorded / documented in an electronic format / documented in a written form for research purposes.

\*my name and affiliation to \_\_\_\_\_ may be used and cited for the purposes of \*the thesis only/the thesis and related articles.

\*if the researcher wishes to pursue publication at a later date, my name and affiliation to \_\_\_\_\_ \*may be cited / may be cited only with prior informed consent

\*my name may not be used or cited, or my identity otherwise disclosed, in this research project, thesis or related articles, but that the interview can be used or cited on a basis of anonymity

\*the interview may not be used or cited, or my identity otherwise disclosed, in this research project, thesis or related articles.

Interviewee signature: ----- Date:----- Place: -----

Researcher signature: ----- Date:----- Place: -----

Supervisor signature: ----- Date:----- Place: ----- (if applicable and/or required).

## **Appendix 6: Interview Schedule for Participants**

### **Gender Quotas and the Substantive Representation of Women in African Politics: Case Studies of Botswana and South Africa.**

#### **Part I: For Female Members of Parliament**

Thank you for agreeing to this interview, this interview is being carried out to understand the relationship (if there is any) between the number of women in politics and the protection of women's interests specifically the reduction of gender-based violence and femicide rate. So there are no right or wrong answers to any of the questions, I am interested in your opinions and experiences. The interview will span between 30 minutes to one hour depending on your responses.

#### **Section 1: Probing questions:**

1. How are you feeling?
2. Can you share a bit about yourself?
  - a. What is your age demography?
  - b. Which province are you from?
3. Which party do you belong to?
4. When did you become a member of parliament?
5. What motivated you to become a politician?

#### **Section 2: Questions on quota system**

6. Does your party select female candidates for election based on a quota system?
7. If so, what percentage of women does your party field for election?
8. Is the quota system necessary to ensure the participation of women in politics?

#### **Section 3: Questions about number and impact**

9. Does the participation of women in politics benefit the general women populace? If yes, kindly state how?
10. To protect the interest of women, do you think it is necessary to have a certain percentage of women participating in politics? If yes, what percentage?
11. What do you think of the rate of gender-based violence and femicide in your country?



12. How does the presence of women in politics impact on legislative and policy outcomes with regards to gender-based violence/femicide?
13. Can the law be used by female MPs to protect the interest of women specifically looking at gender-based violence and femicide?
14. Can you say that female MPs in your country have made an impact with regards to addressing gender-based violence and femicide?

#### **Section 4: Recommendations**

15. What measures can you recommend to ensure the protection of women's interest particularly in combatting gender-based violence/femicide?
16. Besides quotas, what suggestions can you offer to improve the quality of political representation of women in your country?
17. What role can female MPs play in the recommendations you stated above?

#### **Conclusion**

18. We have come to the end of the interview; is there anything you would like to comment on that has not been asked?
19. I would appreciate if you can recommend another female MP to participate in this interview as it would help my research.

*Thank you for your time and the valuable information you shared in this process.*

#### **Part II: Interview Schedule for Females working in civil society organisations.**

Thank you for agreeing to this interview, this interview is being carried out to understand the relationship (if there is any) between the number of women in parliament and the protection of women's interests specifically the reduction of gender-based violence and femicide rate. So there are no right or wrong answers to any of our questions, we are interested in your opinions and experiences.

#### **Section 1: Probing questions**

1. How are you feeling?
2. What is the name of your organisation?
3. What does your organisation do?
4. How does your organisation's work relate to gender-based violence and femicide?

## **Section 2: Questions about Quota system**

5. Does your country select female candidates based on quota system for elections?
6. Are you aware of any political party in your country that selects female candidate based on quota system?
7. Is the quota system necessary to ensure the participation of women in politics?
8. Would you say the quota system has been effective in ensuring increased women participation in politics?

## **Section 3: Questions about numbers and impact**

9. Is the participation of women in parliament necessary to advance the protection of women's interests?
10. If you were to quantify the number of women needed to be in parliament to enable change, what percentage would you recommend as minimum needed?
11. What do you think about the rate of gender-based violence and femicide in your country?
12. How effective is policy-making in the fight against gender-based violence and femicide?
13. Has there been considerable change in the fight against gender-based violence and femicide with the inclusion of women in parliament?

## **Section 4: Recommendations**

14. Besides increasing women's participation in politics through quotas, what other measures are there to ensure the reduction of gender-based violence and femicide rate?
15. Do you think removing obstacles to enable direct election of women into political positions would help?
16. How can your organisation and other related civil society organisations aid these recommendations that you made above?

## **Conclusion**

17. We have come to the end of the interview; is there anything you would like to comment on that has not been asked?

*Thank you for your time and the information you shared in this process.*