

FROM AFFIRMATIVE TO FORMATIVE ACTION FOR WOMEN IN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP: THE CASE OF THE PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA

LINDA LILIAN

PhD Candidate at the College of Humanities and Social Science Makerere University Uganda

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the essentials of having competent women leadership in recruitment, participation and representation. The argument for recruitment of women leaders in numbers is negated in favour of having an empowered version of women leader aspirants, leaders and ex-officials. As well as an empowered male version of leaders able to value and elevate the concept of women leadership. A three step approach is presented in this paper for the possible enrichment of the affirmative action gender stance of having women in leadership and emphasis on the ethical tenets of leadership for both men and women are emphasized.

KEYWORDS: Women, Political Leadership, Quality, Mentoring, and Numbers

INTRODUCTION

The struggle for women numbers in politics particularly in the legislative body faces the contention of whether numbers form the result clout or simply the mass clout. Previous arguments pro-women numbers in leadership subscribed to the idea that if the number of women increased there would be impact. Contemporary thought contends this concept pointing to the fact that patriarchy is far entrenched into the leadership system making the supposedly women inclusion concept incompetent since the available mentorship and enrolment is based on the patriarchal norms of leadership rather than the feminine. This implies that women joining the leadership trek would be no better than their already existing male counterparts or worse become silent participants in the leadership columns. More to that it is argued that numbers may not translate to results.

Besides as Valerio (2011) argues the future of women cannot just rest in the ambitions of a segment of the female population. Notably as its indicated that the adoption of masculine style of leadership by women has led to such titles as iron lady rather than the recognition of a dignified female leadership symbol.

Goethal et.al (2004:546) argue that political leadership is often considered antithetical to women's roles, so female candidates have to persuade the public that they have the same leadership qualities as men or else they have to transform the public notion of leadership, an issue which raises ethical question in this paper, particularly regarding whether the kind of political leadership women provide transforms or conforms.

OBJECTIVES OF THE DISCUSSION

- To critique the affirmative action campaign and approach
- To examine prospects for quality women leadership

Scope of the Discussions

The paper focuses on the parliament of Uganda examining women members of parliaments competence.

Situation Assessment

Since rising to world attention, the course of increasing women in leadership has bore results with women gaining ground in political office. On world record Rwanda has the highest number of women in parliament, followed by Cuba, Bolivia, Seychelles and Sweden among others. ¹ However as Chioma (2011:233) argues that against the affirmative action results there has been increased participation of women in government but in most cases women remain marginalized in political decision making. Mansah Prah (2013:37) concurs with this citing that women representation in government in the case of Uganda has not significantly increased their power to influence development decisions at the both national and local government level.

LOCUS OF DELIBERATIONS

Following a collection and review of data in line with the ethical implications of women leadership in the parliament of Uganda the following discussion points emerged:

- Is Quantity quality
- Quality recruitment in women leadership rather than quantity recruitment
- Mentorship and coaching are pertinent to women leadership recruitment as well as gender mainstreaming for both male and female leaders
- A gendered definition of good leadership

Is quantity quality?

The biggest argument noted in a workshop² accruing to a presentation on the ethical implications on was numbers give voice for women. In the same workshop participants pointed out less impact had been realized in substantive women representation thus representation was symbolic.

Referring to other scholars on this concern it is noted that though numbers are morally good in a descriptive sense they are ethically challenged if the numbers do not contain quality components.

Quoting Eagly and Lovenduski, Mackay (2001:47) cites that equal opportunities procedure, together with weak positive actions measures such as compulsory quotas for women on shortlists and balanced panels all act to make it more likely that selectors will consider well qualified women, but do not guarantee it.

Klausen and Maier (2001:12) when it comes to addressing issues, women do not form a bloc and one of the effects of the quota system, has been to make disagreements between female representatives more visible.

Kramarae and Spender (2000:1597) noted that women's lack of political clout has a great deal to do with the quantity and quality of women already in leadership positions, with class difference among women and the broader political considerations. This is noted in Ugandan example given by Veney and Zeleza (2001:79) quoting Kwesiga, the

¹ Inter-parliament Union data table as per June 2015, <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>

² Globethics.net Workshop organized at Makerere University 2014, http://www.globethics.net/news/all-news/-/asset_publisher/uK4o/content/key-issues-in-global-ethics-reflections-on-uganda

author's note that the women's movement in Uganda is not one single movement as such; rather it consists of many subsections, which are currently uncoordinated movements.

For the Uganda parliament in reference to the PhD study results³ it is vivid that having women representatives from each constituency has enrolled women into political leadership yet as noted by respondents from the media, civil society and academicians as well as some of the women members of parliament, inclination is more to the political party than to advocating key development concerns as well as significant women related needs. The proximity of women coalition to common cause is therefore dilute and there is a sense of them having been co-opted into leadership rather than nurtured into it.

In this paper the moral of quantity is likened to the calculation $1 + 1 = 2$, which indicates an increase in size but not necessarily the much needed empowered 1^2 which could as well be equivalent to the 2. Yet with one difference that it is an empowered 1 with higher capacity than the former. Thus if their 2 empowered 1's the outcome would equal a result 4 rather than just a 2.

This is showcased in the results in the PhD study where male members of parliament (11) and some women members of parliament (15 out of 24) in the parliament of Uganda revere women who come into parliament after tussling it out with male contestants, which they acclaimed as 'merit' rather than those who are brought in on the women ticket. In the responses women like Hon. Betty Nambooze and Hon. Namayanja are spoken of and their capacity to stand out in both voice and action when it comes to parliamentary debate. The weird response however from men is to paint such women as 'men' rather than hold on to their proud success as women who have succeeded.

The urge to have an impact driven action haunts the concept of women's representation in political leadership if the fruits of their works are minimal and their representativeness of fellow women's needs is negligible. Powley (2006:10) lashes out to the realities of the symbolic representation act citing "Some of this criticism – external and internal – is warranted and reflects the desire to have a larger impact on society, but it masks the fact that women's participation in Rwanda's parliament is nascent and that legislation is only the first step in a long process that requires commitment from all branches of government and all sectors of society."

Which brings to focus the need of having that empowered 1 (woman) for double or triple effect. With the capacity to increase the confidence of the electorate in female leadership and the ability to cause change. Rather than just have that 1 woman lured into leadership by the trend and patriarchal benefit systems only to turn out worse than her male counterparts in service delivery and competitiveness.

Quality Recruitment in Women Leadership: Implications

Having numbers is a moral good and therefore has a probability outcome. That is it could work or not work at all when it comes to having the required effect of women empowerment. Notably socialization has not done justice to male and female equity. Blustein (2006) argues "socialization experiences can have a profound impact on how both women and men perceive their work options, circumscribe and foreclose on potential work choices and construct meaning out of their vocational identities."

Women are programmed by gender to handle soft-core capabilities while men are wired to pick up hard-core

³ Linda Lilian, PhD Study on Ethical Implications of Women in Political Leadership

capabilities, which negate the fact that a human equilibrium requires the balance of the two capabilities in each individual. In different setting this equilibrium has been tempered with. In some context the extreme was felt with women being left out of the highly paid workforce, capacity building exercises and top leadership echelon. In the African context women to some extent had their share of leadership opportunities and equal rewarding mechanisms however after colonialism the infusion of the western chauvinistic concepts changed the gender principles.

In pre-colonial Africa women had a political backing based on religious standing and motherhood. According to Egara Kabaji (2005:20) Achonolu (1995) uses the term 'motherism' as a 'multidimensional afrocentric theory to define what she sees as being the 'essence of African womanhood.' She argues that African feminism is distinctly heterosexual and pro-natal and grants a pivotal place to the distinctively supportive roles to the African as opposed to the Western women.

This is reflected in the role of women for instance in Kigezi located in South Western Uganda, where scholars like Murindwa point out the status of women such as the Nyabingi Abagirwa who had command on both men and women in society. According to Murindwa (1991:22) "Nyabingi had developed through the grievances of the oppressed. Its common object of attack was the privileged groups and individuals. In so doing, men, women and children were drawn into the folds. This was for their spiritual beliefs and partly in fear of its powers and malice."

Similarly the 1929 Aba rebellion in Nigeria also revealed women engagement in political activity to attain their rights. According to Cutrufelli (1983:170) the rebellion was provoked by rumors that recent taxation levied on men would soon apply to women. It was a rebellion organized by women against paying taxes and the corrupt ways of the colonial authorities, a sign that the Igbo women had the leadership acumen to defend their rights.

Based on this background the yardstick for women leadership, recruitment of women into leadership ought to be based on the modalities of both supply and demand. In that the women elevated into leadership have the capacity to supply the required potentials of causing impact as well as the needed demand that demonstrates them to be the change society needs to see. The supply also delves on the huge female human resource available that would readily be empowered into the ethical course of socio-political and economic activity. As empowered human resource channeled through quality. The demand for women leadership would meet level contest with men, where the women ticket for recruitment would not be based on them merely being women, but in their capability to deliver. Thus enhancing their ability to contest with men and win, on equal ground of competence.

The adage of having a serving of massive food quantities with no nutritional value but taste being unhealthy, in contrast with having a modest serving with adequate nutritional value and thus the ability to sustain the body, should be likened to the service of the women empowerment context with masses rather than motivations towards better result.

QUALITY LEADERSHIP

Quality is about exhibiting excellence in a service, character or action, which normally generates a worth of approval by those who experience it. The excellence is substantive and therefore in leadership it is not just about enrollment but the capacity to practically add value to the system show value to the electorate and give value the followers. Of which value is measured in the

According to Rotberg (2012:13) leadership with a positive vision create an ethos that enables and empowers good

governance: absent such leadership, governance falters and political goods are not supplied adequately or well.

Therefore quality leadership has the capacity to up good performance and eliminate failure as well as poor functionality of a system. By performance the effectiveness of leadership is gauged in the ability of the leader to attain suitable results, satisfy the needs of the electorate as well as contribute to the advancement of the system.

In Thomas Hobbes theory of Leviathan⁴ morality is lacking without the state, which is manned by a leader (leviathan). The state, which is formed in a social contract, where the people (citizens) come to agreement with the leadership, giving up their freedom to a capable sovereign. The sovereign (leader) makes laws to regulate the people, monitors situations, takes lead in decision making and applies deterrent measures. Therefore the efficient system is one managed by a worthy Leviathan able to mitigate situations, make effective interventions, generate justice, and execute duties and appropriate judgment.

For the women enrolled into leadership, therefore, quality weighs more than quantity. If there are going to make a difference and be the transformation leadership requires. Thus a lot of focus has to be placed into generating a women-force of able leader that strengthen the opportunity of changing societal views of women leadership and increasing the potential of making women highly competitive aspirants for leadership.

Quality Management in Women's Political Leadership

Morphet Janet (2015:152) stipulates that quality management is an important means of management and ensuring that quality standards are met. She further stipulates that an approach to quality management is quality audit, where projects are assessed against specific criteria including policies, procedures and requirements. It may include an evaluation of delivery methods and an assessment of the necessary projects in meeting its objectives.

Every program/project has a start and an end for which the circumstances of its commencement are examined, its progress consistently reviewed and closure planned and set with sustainability as well as contingency plans. The continuity of any program or project requires evaluative appreciation. These contribute to the quality the program/project delivers in the short and long run.

Against this argument therefore the quota system and affirmative action for women considered, as a program/project is an initiative deserving of examination, review, planning and evaluation. For its pre and post conceptions the measure of productivity ought to outweigh the consideration of any doubt caste upon it.

Therefore when women are recruited into the political system the benefit of their value ought to lay precedence for the sustainability of the program. This may not be done by mere enlisting of women and dwelling on assumptions of possible results but requires critical thought and strategy to ensure that the women under recruitment wield the capacity to cause positive impact in overall performance in influencing public policy and development works as well as in building the capacity of other women to lead and better their livelihood.

Rather than focusing merely on the numbers of women leaders we need to evaluate women's location in the power hierarchy and their actual leadership responsibilities (Farida Jalazai 2013: 2).

Quality management of women in political leadership would therefore be a three step approach integrating

⁴ Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan

formative, causative and evaluative action to induce effect. The process would also integrate the electorate/civil society, male political leaders, female political leaders and aspiring female political leaders.

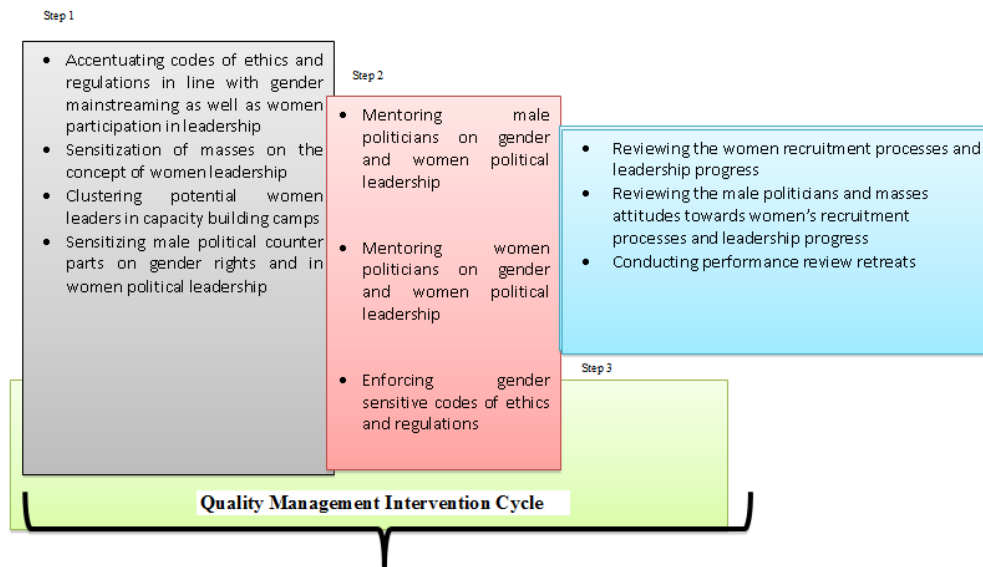


Figure 1

Morfaw John (2009:131) notes that Total Quality Management (TQM) implementation is identified in 2 areas; macro and micro. Macro factors include those, which are concerned with issues such as leadership, resources and surrounding infrastructure. The leadership should champion new ideas, there should be continuity of leadership, a healthy civic infrastructure, shared vision and goals by leaders, trust among those in power, available outside resources and models to follow. The micro factors should center on top management support, customer focus, long term strategic plans, employees recognition and training, employees empowerment and team work measurement and analysis of products and process and quality assurance. Basing on the above observation, both TQM areas ought to be reflected in the implementation of the quota system/women recruitment into political leadership where at macro level women ought to champion novel ideas, set continuity precedence in women enlistment into leadership and have a healthy public foundation with a shared vision of leadership. At micro level women ought to engage top leadership support to their advantage, have focus on the constituents they represent and causes, with the capacity to set long term strategic plans and uphold recognition of women leaders who have made a positive mark while training to better their skills and group cohesion.

Confucius emphasis on the importance of virtuous political leadership trickles down to the demand of having virtuous leadership for quality delivery. Critics of Confucianism view in political selection suggest that those with appropriate political talents can be identified only through long-term observation and assessment of a person's behavior and contribution in his or her political career. Hence selecting the politically talented requires a two step process first the seemingly capable ones could be identified by holding competitive civil service examinations in which any one may participate, this can supposedly indicate how virtuous they are or selection of those with political talent must rely on local knowledge government (government seeks people who are already virtuous in their private lives). Second the truly talented will be promoted in time (Rhodes and Hart, 2014: pg 67-68).

Valerio (2011) further argues that in the area of government regulation and public policy women representation could be strengthened by expanding enforcement of anti discrimination enforcement policies related to child care, elder

cares, parental leave may need revision to increase women's labour participation, increase male care giving investment and reducing work related family conflict.

Additionally it is important to have men more involved in making women leadership a success, thus the need to open their mind view to what it means to be a woman both in terms of every day behavior and career development.

MENTORSHIP AND COACHING

With an influx of women joining political leadership in Uganda it would seem inevitable that more women would begin to fill top political offices on individual merit rather than on a female ticket. However, few women remain unable to contest against men and few have made it to the ministerial level of governance based on a competence basis. The few who reach at the top successfully make it to the top of their field, but it is a rough sway to the ultimate political peak. Some of the women renown to have made it to the peak includes Miria Matembe, Rebecca Kadaga, Namboze Betty,

The remaining women who participate in Ugandan politics continue to grope at leadership like the 3 blind men defining an elephant its tail, trunk and legs. They come into office on a women's ticket and without a guided view of leadership except that which their political parties and the political environment in which they're born into leadership. Hence a demand for mentorship as well as effective coaching becomes imminent for women leaders in Uganda.

Reid Marcia (2007: 67) citing O'Neil and Blake Beard 2002, Tharenou 2005 points out that studies concluded women showed preference for mentoring relationships between female mentors and mentees because they had similar views, ethics, values and opinions.

Life is a continuous mentoring process. Every human starts out blank and is groomed into what they become by the environment, experiences, cultures and people around them. The mentoring process goes on for a lifetime where the persons who do the grooming are the mentors guiding the mentees.

A mentor often is therefore a person with more experience and skill able to guide, counsel and be a role model to the mentee. Thus the mentee often has a high regard for this particular personality and willingly submits to their guidance.

Lisa Catherine Erich (accessed 2015) states that Mentors are significant others who play many roles and, at times, they can be coach, counselor and trainer'. She says 'Coaching is (the process of) unlocking people's potential to maximize their own performance. It is helping them to learn rather than teaching them.' (Whitmore, 2009, p. 10)⁵ then points out that Mentors play the role of counselor when they provide special types off support to others who find themselves in stressful or difficult circumstances. (p.3) Erich notes that Training is a structured process of teaching whereby a trainer focuses on developing the skills, knowledge and attitudes required to complete a task or perform a job.

According to Allen et.al the art of mentoring can be traced through generations and is linked to ancient history. In the early years mentoring was termed apprenticing where the apprentice (protégé) learns from their employer (mentor) in order to learn a craft (e.g. Blacksmith) and one day take over the business or open their own shop (Allen et al., 2008).⁶

Mentoring is widely considered a critical component to career success. It provides opportunities for protégés to gain a broader perspective and learn more about their business, as well as to network and build social capital

⁵ Developing Performance Mentoring Handbook

⁶ Bramley, Burke ET.AL (2012) Mentoring in the Workplace: An Exploratory Study of the Protégé's Perspective, P.4, <http://seanlyons.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/Mentoring-in-the-Workplace.pdf>

(the value of connections to people and their networks). Mentorship is especially important for women's success because they often have difficulty building social capital at work, particularly in settings where there are fewer women (Chrisler & McCreary, 2010).

Thus as the move for affirmative action continues to progress with the campaign for women enrollment into leadership and gender mainstreaming mentoring, coaching and training should be highly regarded as options for quality recruitment and management.

In the case of Uganda many years later since affirmative action became a norm, in all sectors gender mainstreaming remains a biological rather than a result oriented application. On record in implementation measurements are mostly gauged in on sex in numbers rather than results and the downside of the initiatives is male conversion to a positive score of being supportive is minimal.

Consequently the need for mentorship, coaching and training to attain quality women leadership cuts across the two sexes. Both male and female recruits into leadership require the remedial initiative.

From the PhD study conducted most of the members of parliament interviewed from the parliament of Uganda, indicated confidence in women like Hon. Kadaga, Hon. Namayanja and Hon. Miriam Matembe. This confidence was built on their performance, eloquence, and ability to contend with the pace of their male counterparts as well as manage their personal life ethos.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper delves on the concern of women in political leadership but with an ethical lens gliding on the fact that the strength of recruiting women in political leadership is in the capacity to develop their competence to lead rather than just focusing on how many women can be brought on board. The argument championed is quality oriented. For in the quality of leadership women offer the deliberation envisages the possibility of upping women leaders performance, competitiveness even against their male counterparts, public ratings of voting for women into leadership and the representation of significant women as well as development concerns.

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