

AFRICA UNIVERSITY

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**AN ASSESSMENT OF THE APPLICATION OF GENDER
EQUALITY POLICY IN THE HAUT LOMAMI LOCAL
GOVERNMENT, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO**

BY

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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER IN PEACE AND
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Abstract

In this study, opportunities, issues and challenges related to gender equality in Haut-Lomami province, DRC were discussed. 60% of respondents said ineffective implementation of gender equality policies are key political factors affecting political leadership inequalities. Followed by weak implementation of equal representation laws with 23%. Whereas, 17% said marginalization and discrimination of women leaders. The purpose of this study purpose was to explore and to evaluate whether the gender equality policy is wholly implemented in Haut-Lomami local government and to see if women politicians leaders have been empowered through the law of the parity between men and women as an empowering factor for them to avoid women leadership disparities in public institutions and to take up leadership and decision-making at the local government level, although they can be allowed to participate in several activities in politics and public administration, also to assess if women leaders have support from public policymakers and institutions dealing with gender equality concerns. The study looked at the factors that push women leaders not to participate in empowerment processes and how the Central government of DRC can rectify this at the local government levels. The liberal Feminist Theory informed this study and was based on the assumption that in order for women to achieve equal status, all stereotyped social roles for men and women had to be abolished. We agree with the many scholars when they said that the abolishment of gender exclusion of professional roles was necessary for the achievement of women's equality informed this study and they help the researcher to come up with research questions that address the problem. As a result, the objectives of the research were achieved. The research were carried out under qualitative research because in order to know the perception of women and men about women's political participation in leadership positions in the new province of Haut-Lomami, DRC and the appropriate research design for the current research was empirical. The sample size process is sixty (60) citizens. The sample was selected using quota sampling as technique because the researcher identified the informants. Primary data sources for this study were included personal documents which were obtained from informants and council files. These documents were provided insights on the organisation of local government and provincial government levels, their objectives and structure in Haut-Lomami province, DRC. Other relevant documents were sought. Primary sources involved the use of interviews in the form questionnaires. The concern of the research was to investigate the extent to what citizens participate in local governance in Haut-Lomami province, DRC and from what has been contributed by the respondents, the research has made number of reaffirmations. Firstly, the research confirmed the lack of the political will by ruling party and legislators or policymakers to allow women to access to the decision-making bodies and the researcher has therefore concluded that the effective or full implementation of gender equality or parity as it is mentioned in the 2006 DRC's Constitution is an only way to fight against women's discrimination, exclusion and marginalization in public institutions in the Haut-Lomami local government, Democratic Republic of the Congo.

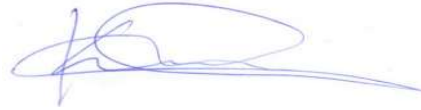
Keywords: Gender equality, Local government, Gender inequality and Women political participation in leadership.

Declaration

I declare that this dissertation is my original work except where sources have been cited and acknowledged. The work has never been submitted, nor will it ever be submitted to another university for the award of a degree.

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Dedication

This Dissertation is dedicated to all women leaders in Haut-Lomami local government, Democratic Republic of the Congo facing challenges about gender equality, discrimination and marginalization against women by men.

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AU	African Union
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
F	Female
ILPG	Institute of Leadership, Peace and Governance
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
M	Male
N°	Number
NA	National Assembly
NGOs	Non-Gouvernemental Organizations
SDGEA	Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Populations Fund
UNwomen	United Nations Women
US	United States
VAW	Violence Against Women
VSLAS	Village Savings and Loans Associations

Definition of Key Terms

Local Government

Local governments exist to provide services. Nevertheless, one camp sees local government as the effective means of ensuring services are aligned with local conditions and local needs, as vehicles to obtain widespread public participation in democracy decision-making and as defense against the tyranny of a centralized bureaucracy (Stephen, 1993) Further, Local government is an institution, which matters concerning the people living in the particular locality (Stone, 1963).

Gender Equality

Gender equality, which is one of the views supported by liberals, is a state of equal access to opportunity and resources on the gender, decision-making plus participation in the economy; valuing the stature of different behaviors, equal needs and aspirations despite the gender. Equality on gender, equality in men and women, has the concept that all human beings, men and women, can without charge to develop on their personal abilities, making choices without the limitations of rigid gender roles, stereotypes as well as prejudices. Gender equality denote that the different aspirations, behavior as well as the needs of both men and women are looked in to, valued and favored in equal measures (Green, 2017)

Gender inequality

Gender inequality is a grave issue that impacts nearly every society, but it is particularly prevalent in African countries. Because of its cultural orientation, which is designed to promote male superiority and female vulnerability, Africa tends to be more affected by this issue. Discrimination and harassment between people or groups of individuals in this case, men and women leads a condition of inequality that contributes to gender inequality (Judith, Peter & Evaristo, 2025)

Women Political Participation in Leadership

Gender equality in the various political arenas worldwide has been a challenging task to achieve despite the efforts made by most countries in embracing democracy. Further, realization of gender equality in matters of political participation and its leadership is yet to be achieved. The involvement of women in political leadership is low, over the globe and not only limited to African countries (Mary, 2018).

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

It is logical to maintain that the Haut-Lomami Province is one of the 26 provinces of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) with a population of 3 666 000, 54% of which are women according to (UNDP, 2024). Located in the northern part of the DRC, the Haut-Lomami Province was one of the four districts of the former province of Katanga, which was divided into four provinces in June 2015 during decentralization process. Today, the Haut Lomami is a province on its own separated from the former main Katanga province in accordance with article 2 of the 2006 Constitution and the law of programming N ° 15/004 of February 28, 2015 determining the installation of new provinces. The Haut Lomami is composed of a mono-ethnic group of people called Baluba of Katanga's former province, established on the masculine domination style of living. Men are considered as having more power over women in that women are not expected to perform some of activities acknowledged to be performed only by men leaders according to their culture for example house building. This displays disparity between women and men leaders in public institutions. The investigation of socio-cultural and economic situation of Haut Lomami illustrates that gender inequality continue in both private and public institutions. In general, women and girls face challenges in gaining access to legal rights, education, health and economic resources among others. On the other hand, the researcher considers that women can achieve greater activities if they have appropriate and adequate level of education. This research will focus on an Assessment of the application of Gender Equality Policy in the Haut Lomami Local Government, Democratic Republic of Congo.

1.2. Background of the Study

(Chelo, 2020) further argues that gender parity is an issue, which has discussed worldwide. Within International and National Organizations on how to promote equal opportunity between men and women for good governance. The above researcher also maintains that women have been facing many challenges in participating in political institution.

The battle of gender-parity, which resulted in the enactment of the parity Act in October 2015 in DRC aimed to promote gender equality, and equal rights, opportunities throughout national life. This may include the equitable participation of women and men in the management of State affairs. Unfortunately, this Act did not meet the expectations of its application.

Law No. 15/013 of 1 August 2015 on the modalities of application of women's rights and gender parity: functional equality which consists of equal representation between men and women in access to decision-making bodies at all levels and in all areas of national life, without discrimination; in addition to the principle of numbers, it also indicates the conditions, positions and placements.

According to (Chelo , 2020) Congolese women are not successfully represented and have never participated in the governance of the country since 1960, year of the independence of the country (JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency, 2017).

No woman has ever been a head of state but the President of the Republic of DRC appointed in 2024 a female as a head of government (prime minister), neither head of armed groups. Several obstacles further make women's participation in the electoral process more difficult than men's do. These obstacles include cultural factors such as

deficit of civic duty, practical obstacles such as family responsibilities or even the fear to compete with men, physical security-related fears and economic obstacles that make access to infrastructures difficult, as well as a high level of ignorance.

(Lusey et al, 2018). Although (mbambi, 2010.) argue that women constituted 63 % of the DRC electorate and were extensively mobilized as a propaganda tool during the 2006 National Election, however the current inclusive representation of women is only 7.2% in the high positions of in recent times established institutions (parliament as well as in the government). The DRC government, national assembly and major political and public administrative institutions are largely run by men. Moreover, men run many of the organizations that describe the DRC civil society.

Strangely, there are even system of government that provide service for women that are run by men in the DRC. Currently there is no woman member of the office of the Senate and there is only one single woman among the seven members of the office of the National Assembly. Out of the 108 Senators, there are only 6 women of which only one is the chair of a commission (on socio-cultural affairs). There are 43 elected women out 500 elected members of the DRC national assembly. Out of the 45 members of the Government, there are only 5 women of which 4 ministers and 1 vice minister.

There is no woman Governor or Vice Governor of the 11 current Provinces of the Republic. The Constitution interdicts discrimination against women in all political and economic activities (Article 14), but there is no law or policy that safeguards women's just representation. The 2006 electoral law's Article 13-3 maintains that each party should have a candidate list presenting men and women equally, including the handicapped. Conversely, Article 13-4 of the same law says that the list, which does

not need to have the same number of men and women, will not be canceled for the election in 2006.

The revision in 2015 dropped the 30% quota for women and does not accommodate parties to have women on candidate lists. In 2010, women accounted for 8.4% of the National Assembly and 4.6% of the Senate, which is far below the parity agreed out in the Constitution. These statistics are some of the lowest among African countries and specifically the sixth lowest among 51 countries. There are five women among 45 cabinet members. Among them, four are ministers and one woman is a vice minister. Of the old system's provinces, 11 had no female provincial governor or vice provincial governor. In 2012, 35 National Assembly Special Committees had only one female chairperson of the social and cultural committee. The Democratic Republic of the Congo developed a National Gender Policy (2017-2021), which aims to achieve gender equality and social empowerment (JICA, 2017).

Likewise, even though the constitutional provisions favorable to a significant representation of women in national and provincial institutions. This is how the consecration of parity (gender equality) in its article 14 of the constitution of the third Republic promulgated since February 18, 2006, by the President of the Republic Joseph Kabila Kabange. He had dedicated it to the principle of promoting equal opportunities and the empowerment of women. Julia & Marie (2020), agree that a new Constitution was adopted in 2006 that enshrines the principles of gender equality and equal representation. Furthermore, several local and international civil society organizations (CSOs) worked together to bring the government's attention to the unpunished crimes of sexual violence committed during the armed conflicts.

The observation is that studies are encouraged for young boys, while the education of women is neglected. This is one of the causes of the low representation of women in the institutions of the Republic. This traditional approach still sticks to us today and is deteriorating. However, in the majority of Congolese households in general and Kinshasa in particular, the woman ensures the survival and management of the family. The gender that public policy makers promote therefore appears as "a strategy to transform the concerns and experiences of women and men in an integral dimension at the level of development, execution, supervision and evaluation of program policies in all spheres". So that women and men benefit from the same advantage and inequality is not perpetuated.

In addition, Gender aims at equity, that is to say, to take into account the identity and specificity of women and men in actions to achieve social justice. Equity also advocates for the participation of women in decision-making positions at the national, provincial and local levels, as development actors on an equal footing with men.

Regarding the promotion of the involvement of Gender in the policy of decentralization, the adaptation of the national legislation already ratified by the Democratic Republic of Congo, each has its own way of perceiving Gender "which for some is a form of dictatorship of the international community, a bomb of instability of African marriages, a campaign for the promotion of women, an ideology of disorder of the Congolese cultural identity or a structure that tries to establish a division of social classes between men and women". As a result, the eight objectives adopted in September 2000 on the summit, which brought together 189 member countries of the United Nations, the third objective constitutes a major asset for women in the world. This protects the principle of promoting equality between men and women. Insofar as decentralization aims at the autonomy of territorial entities, their participation in

development and in the management of public affairs. It can promote the participation and significant representation of women. It is clear that we cannot talk about the development or social change of a society without taking into account the competence, equity, and adequate training of the individual.

Gender equality has been elevated to the level of the core principles of regulations and DRC Constitution because of the establishment of the gender equality policy. The implementation of gender equality policy in the Haut-Lomami Local Government by the DRC Central Government plays an important role in assuring DRC to adopt in the system of gender equality, thence fore this helps people to observe gender equality and the result is that gender equality has been elevated to the level of the fundamental principles of the DRC Central government.

However, it is logical for one to advocate that without the establishment of gender policy the elevation of gender equality to the level of core principles of the 2006 DRC Constitution would not have to exist. Prior to the coming of the western infiltration in Africa, women will be regarded as inferior dirty and weak and were not supposed to be leaders. However, it is logical for one to argue that, women are not inferior; they are all human just like men. Therefore, culture and traditions are barriers to gender equality.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo has ratified several international, regional and sub-regional legal instruments relating to human rights, including: (i) the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; (ii) the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women; (iii) the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child; (iv) the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of

Discrimination against Women; (v) the SADC Protocol of Understanding on Gender and Development; (vi) United Nations Resolution 1325.

These international, regional and sub-regional legal instruments regarding gender equality policy all proclaim equality of rights between men and women and constitute guarantees for the Democratic Republic of Congo to take legal and administrative measures for the enjoyment of these rights by women (CEDAW, 2000).

(UNWomen, 2022) basically maintain that the 2006 constitution of the Democratic Republic of Congo establishes a deeper basis for gender equality with the focus of promoting parity between men and women in public institutions, but this is far from being achieved. In addition, it is logical to say that indicators show that 42.8% of women in DRC are survivors of domestic violence, 39% of Congolese women leaders have been endangered or injured and 27% of women in DRC are victims of harmful traditional practices. Disparities permeate different areas of society; very few women have access to decent jobs, and women and girls are less likely to have access to education than men and boys.

The political field is no stranger to these findings. In this particular aspect, it is shameful to observe that all women who wish to enter political or public institutions in the Democratic Republic of Congo in general and in the Haut-Lomami province in particular had often encountered at the workplaces: (i) abuse; (ii) harassment (iii) toxic masculinity; and (iv) gender stereotypes, which disappoint them from even applying for positions. Women's political participation in DRC has decreased over the past two elections, from an overall 13.6% in 2006, to 11.7% in 2018. Gender stereotypes do not only affect women before entering politics, but also continue to be inflicted when

women enter political parties (UNWomen study). ‘It is a men-dominated field, women are told they will face abuse’ stated a panelist at a UN Women debate.

Women in DRC currently occupy only 27% of positions at the highest level of decision making at national level in parliament and government, including 10% of the National Assembly. Nonetheless, findings of a study carried out by UN Women and Sweden, (2022) on the past elections show Women are proportionately more likely to be elected than their male counterparts are. Women political representation increased from 8.4% in 2006 to 10% in 2018 at national level; 6.8 to 10.2% at provincial level; and 4.6 to 19% at senatorial level, despite a decrease in their candidacies.

Congolese citizens are prepared to see political women rise. Achieving men-women equal political representation in DRC is fundamental for the country’s sustainable development, and there is no better time to achieve parity than now.

Women should feel encouraged and safe to run for high-level political roles. As pointed out by Her Excellency the Minister of Gender, Family and Child in DRC, Gisèle Ndaya Luseba, “this theme is timely in the run-up to the next elections of 2023 to face the many challenges relating to the participation of women in political life and the democratic conquest of power.”

Congolese women especially those from Haut Lomami, generally face all types of barriers due to illiteracy, domestic violence, lack of motivation, support and many more. Male dominance prevails in leadership government positions. Illiteracy among women still high; and causes them not to participate in political institutions and political leadership participation, particularly in the Haut Lomami Province (Mpanga, 2018). Consequently, there is an urgent for leaders especially men policymakers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo needs to empower women through education so as

for the harmonious development of the country that women develop together with men.

However, the sad side is that not all these legal frameworks are having an impact on the lives of women, as the law is not implemented. The Democratic Republic of Congo institutional frameworks and mechanism for the advancement of women remain extremely weak (Marie-Madeleine, 2006). DRC sends reports to CEDAW Commission; however, despite several key reform provisions contained in the DRC Constitution and various recommendations by the CEDAW Committee, on many different levels, the Congolese Legislation remains contradictory and discriminatory towards men.

In addition, the last recommendations received from CEDAW Committee since the 2006 report, are yet to be addressed. Women remain marginalized from the political and judicial systems. Discrimination is particularly obvious in the areas of ownership, labour, education, political and socio-economic rights (CEDAW, 2006).

In Kenya, numerous studies have been conducted on determinants of women participation in political leadership and factors affecting women in political leadership. For instance, Mungai (2014) conducted a study on determinants of women participation in political process in Orange Democratic Movement Party and Otieno (2012) conducted a study on the factors influencing women leaders to access to political life.

U.N Agenda for 2030 on Sustainable Development Goals embrace the specific goal towards gender equality, which aims to stop on discrimination and cruelty towards girls and women in ensuring equal opportunities and participation in all the areas of life. Advancing female political participation is a means to the attainment of the SDGs.

It is amongst the Targets for Goal Five that “Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life” (UNWomen, 2017).

(UNWomen, 2022) basically maintain that the 2006 constitution of the Democratic Republic of Congo establishes a deeper basis for gender equality with the focus of promoting parity between men and women in public institutions, but this is far from being achieved. In addition, it is logical to say that indicators show that 42.8% of women in DRC are survivors of domestic violence, 39% of Congolese women leaders have been endangered or injured and 27% of women in DRC are victims of harmful traditional practices. Disparities permeate different areas of society; very few women have access to decent jobs, and women and girls are less likely to have access to education than men and boys.

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elections show Women are proportionately more likely to be elected than their male counterparts are. Women political representation increased from 8.4% in 2006 to 10% in 2018 at national level; 6.8 to 10.2% at provincial level; and 4.6 to 19% at senatorial level, despite a decrease in their candidacies.

Congolese citizens are prepared to see political women rise. Achieving men-women equal political representation in DRC is fundamental for the country's sustainable development, and there is no better time to achieve parity than now. Women should feel encouraged and safe to run for high-level political roles. As pointed out by Her Excellency the Minister of Gender, Family and Child in DRC, Gisèle Ndaya Luseba, "this theme is timely in the run-up to the next elections of 2023 to face the many challenges relating to the participation of women in political life and the democratic conquest of power."

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However, the sad side is that not all these legal frameworks are having an impact on the lives of women, as the law is not implemented. The Democratic Republic of Congo institutional frameworks and mechanism for the advancement of women remain extremely weak (Marie-Claire, F. 2010).

The DRC sends reports to CEDAW Commission; however, despite several key reform provisions contained in the DRC Constitution and various recommendations by the CEDAW Committee, on many different levels, the Congolese Legislation remains contradictory and discriminatory towards men. In addition, the last recommendations received from CEDAW Committee since the 2006 report, are yet to be addressed. Women remain marginalized from the political and judicial systems. Discrimination is particularly obvious in the areas of ownership, labour, education, political and socio-economic rights (CEDAW, 2006).

in several domains of national life remains preoccupying low in comparison with men. Women leaders are facing challenges in how accessing to decision-making tables, as well as to public institutions and economic resources at Central government levels including production factors remains very limited. Repetitive wars have caused negative effects; the situation has deteriorated in recent years due to the current persistent insecurity.

In fact, 61.2% of Congolese women live under poverty against 51.3% of men, while 44% of women cannot attain economic suitability (Media St Paul, 2007). Furthermore, the situation of gender-based violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo; especially domestic violence on women and young girls is very worrying. Collected national data (UNFPA, 2014) on various forms of violence against women (VAW) demonstrate how it strongly correlates with under-development (human, economic, social and infrastructure). These statistics according to Ngungu (2010) show how women are vulnerable, and they illustrate the numerous abuses committed against women because of dominant position conferred to men by the society and the inferior status of women in the DRC (Ngungu, 2010). The Haut Lomami Province is not excluded from the situation through which women leaders are undergoing, especially

because it is in a patriarchal style of living whereby men are believed to have more power over women.

This study will focus on an Assessment of the Application of Gender Equality Policy in the Haut Lomami Local Government, Democratic Republic of the Congo.

1.3. Statement of the problem

Since its accession to independence, the Democratic Republic of the Congo has made struggles to deal legal opportunities to men and women for their protection and security. On the other hand, much remains to be completed to tolerate women to have adequate access to decision-making at all economic, political and social activities. To all above it is observed many issues such as inequalities in rights, women leadership disparities at both public and private sectors, opportunities and gender persist between men and women and cause the Democratic Republic of Congo to be unable to find the valuable contribution of women to the accomplishment of its sustainable human development goals.

This impotunity of disparities between men and women is saw in almost all areas of national life, above all in the political, economic, social and cultural areas, inequalities that certainly lead to discrimination hindering the acceptable implementation of gender parity policies. Faced with this situation, the Constitution of 18 February 2006, as amended and improved to date, protects, in its articles 12 and 14, the principles of equality of rights, opportunity and gender. Gender equality or sexual equality is the state when both men and women are able to get access to economic actives, political arena and social activities.

This means that when boys, girls; men and women are given freedom or autonomy to participate in the economic arena, decision making, social and political arena gender equality has been achieved. Gender equality has been elevated to the level of the core principles of the Congolese 2006 Constitution due to the implementation of the gender policy that encouraged Congolese people to observe and act.

In order for the Congolese to achieve their goals of the establishment of gender equality, Congolese leaders should have good governance, for example accountability, responsibility, accommodating, efficiency, effective, security as an atmosphere of economic development, observing the rules of the law and human rights.

1.4. Purpose of Study

This study will be focused on the Gender equality at Haut-Lomami Local Government, DRC. In this study, the focus will be on the assessment of the Gender equality in the Public institutions in Haut-Lomami province.

The purpose of this study is also to explore and to evaluate whether the gender equality policy is wholly implemented in Haut-Lomami local government and to see if women politicians leaders have been empowered through the law of the parity between men and women as an empowering factor for them to avoid women leadership disparities in public institutions and to take up leadership and decision-making at the local government level, although they can be allowed to participate in several activities in politics and public administration, also to assess if women leaders have support from public policy makers and institutions dealing with gender equality concerns.

The study will also look at the factors that push women leaders not to participate in empowerment processes and how the Central government of DRC can rectify this at the local government levels.

1.5. Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

- (i) To examine factors that delay the participation of women politicians leaders in public institutions be effective for them to take up leadership at Haut-Lomami local government positions in the DRC.
- (ii) To explore the effectiveness of the measures on women participation in Public Institutions according to the 2006 Constitution of the DRC, essentially in the Haut Lomami local government.
- (iii) To assess the impact of law of parity between as an empowering factor for women politicians leaders to take up leadership at Haut-Lomami local government positions in the DRC.

1.6. Research Questions

- (i) What are factors that delay the participation of women politicians leaders in public institutions be effective for them to take up leadership at Haut-Lomami local government positions in the DRC?
- (ii) How effective is the participation of women participation in Public Institutions according to the 2006 Constitution of the DRC, essentially in the Haut Lomami local government?

- (iii) What is the impact of law of parity between men and women as an empowering factor for women leaders in politics to take up leadership at Haut-Lomami local government positions in the DRC?

1.7. Assumptions of the study

The study assumes that socio-economic, socio-cultural and male leadership discrimination including lack of political will factors can affect the full implementation of gender equality policy according to DRC's 2006 Constitution towards the achievement of parity between men and women leaders in Public institutions at the local government level in Haut-Lomami province. Gender inequalities and gender discrimination will contribute negatively to implement fully gender equality in DRC especially in Haut-Lomami province. That the socio-cultural based on male domination over women leaders will be a reason for gender inequalities and women leadership disparities at the local government level.

1.8. Significance of the Study

The main purpose of this study will to boost gender equality in Haut-Lomami Local Government by knowing that appointing women in different Provincial Institutions such as: Provincial Assembly, Local Government Institutions including Decentralized Territorial Entities is necessary to avoid gender inequalities and women leadership disparities concerning female leadership placements into the Local Government level. The major groups of people who will be likely to benefit from this study will be as well as Provincial Minister of Gender, Family and Child, other relevant ministers including Provincial Division of Gender, Family and Child, the gender thematic working group and interested donors, NGOs, Civil Society Organizations

1.9. Delimitations of the Study

The study assesses the implementation of Gender Equality policy in the Haut-Lomami Local Government in Democratic Republic of Congo from 2015 to 2024.

1.10. Limitations

In addition, the researcher will encounter the issues in terms of translating the objectives and questions into Kiluba, Swahili and French, which are local languages spoken in the Haut-Lomami province, the answers, will be given in local languages then translating them again into English. Meanwhile, this will mitigate by looking for money, which will allow the researcher to meeting all respondents who will be expected to answer on the questionnaire or interview schedule.

1.11. Summary

This chapter established the background of the study in question and clearly states the problem therein and the objectives of the study. It is based on a framework that design of a suitable data collection strategy will be done which will enable the researcher in carrying out the study.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter covers theoretical framework and review of related literatures, which will be reviewed in order to discuss gender equality amongst the local government of Haut-Lomami province according the 2006 DRC's Constitution. The key areas of discussion include theoretical framework, relevant of theoretical framework to the study (title); review of related literatures; and the gap.

2.2 Liberal Feminist Theory

It is documented that (Wollstonecraft, 1975) found feminist Theory in her study on the Vindication of the right of women, she questioned the viewpoints about women which are destructive and inequitable. Actually, it is totally true because Women leaders in the Haut-Lomami are currently facing challenges to get equal treatment and it is observed gender inequalities, women leadership disparities including discrimination regarding employments and leadership positions. It is enormously important to maintain that gender equality are considered as critical issues in DRC and especially in Haut-Lomami province.

(Adawo, 2011) in his inspiring study suggested that the modern liberal Feminist Theory was based on the assumption that in order for women to achieve equal status, all stereotyped social roles for men and women had to be abolished. We agree with the above scholar when he said that the abolishment of gender exclusion of professional roles was necessary for the achievement of women's equality. Nevertheless, it is extremely important to articulate that the Theory of the Liberal Feminist is considered

according to (Agassi, 1989) as a view that supported equal not special treatment for women and men.

According to (Judith, 2017), feminist theory definitely and critically conceptualizes the aspirational ideals of gender equality and females' empowerment. Although feminist theory is appropriate to critically assess a corporation's CSR agenda, feminist ideals serve only as "soft law" for corporations worldwide.

2.2.1. Understanding the Concept of Gender

According to (Edwardson, 2012) gender is naturally agreed as a culturally and socially regulated set of norms and principles centered on expectations and challenges about masculinity and femininity. Gender defines and distinguishes the individual lives of women and men as made by social relations and culture (Grown et al; 2005) ; Connell, 2009) when feminist movements began to rigorously separate the concept of gender became widely popular: "the cultural difference of women from men, based on the biological division between male and female.

2.2.2. Understanding the Concept of Gender Equality

As the focus matter of this research proposal is gender equality in Haut-Lomami province Local Government, it is essential to provide a definition of how this concept is perceived by feminist and professional researchers as it has been defined in several different ways in academic literature.

2.2.3. United Nations Declaration on Gender Equality

(Jennie, 2018) further maintains that prior to Agenda 21 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Convention on elimination of all forms of discrimination against

women (CEDAW) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 18, 1979, and took form as an international treaty on September 3, 1981 (UN, 2000). And yet by 1992 when Agenda 21 was established, and arguably now when SDGs are under implementation, several of the same issues around women's marginalisation and discrimination in policy-making have yet been addressed, the processes have shown a strong resistance to feminist thought.

Analysis shows for instance that between 1975 and 2000 the most commitments of countries to CEDAW were made during the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995 and the UN Fourth World Conference on Women (True, 2016:313) the researcher suggests that the circumstance and the actors affect the possibilities of policy change. Examples of affecting circumstances include timing, financial pressures, and peer pressure, for example countries could act following regional assessments demonstrating that others are taking action, thus creating a wave-effect.

(UN, 1967) argues that the General Assembly acknowledged that even though the Charter of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the international Covenants on Human Rights and other instruments of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and despite the progress made in the matter of equality of rights, there continues to exist considerable discrimination against women.

It is also revealed by General Assembly that discrimination against women is unequal with human dignity and with the well-being of the family and of society, stops their participation on equal terms with men in the political, social and economic and cultural life of their countries and is an obstacle to the full development of the potentialities of women in the service of their countries and humanity.

On the other hand, the article 1 of United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, Resolution adopted by the General Assembly in 1967 shown that discrimination against women denying or limiting as it does their equality of rights with men , is basically unjust and constitutes an offence against human dignity.

2.2.4. African Union Declaration on Gender Equality

African adopted the “Solemn Declaration on gender Equality in Africa” in 2004; thus proposed to monitor on gender mainstreaming (SDGEA, 2006). The DRC has ratified the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa in 2009.

(AU, 2004) maintains that the African Union hands of states have recognized that major challenges and obstacles to gender equality still remain and require concerted and collective leadership and efforts from all African officials including networks working on gender and development. They also discovered that Decision on gender parity is a historic achievement that does not yet exist in any other continent or regional organizations.

2.2.5. The most potential definition is provided by UNESCO’s Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Framework (2003) as follows:

Gender equality means that women and men have equal conditions for realizing their full human rights and for contributing to, and benefiting from, economic, social, cultural and political development. In this regard, it is logical to maintain that according this framework Gender is consequently the equal valuing by the public of the similarities and differences of men and women, and the roles they acting. It is built on women and men being full partners in their public affairs and their society.

2.2.6. National Laws on Gender Equality in DRC

According to 2006, DRC's Constitution especially in its article 14 it is said as follows: The public authorities see to the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and ensure the protection and promotion of their rights. They take in all areas, and most notably in the civil, political, economic, social and cultural areas, all appropriate measures in order to ensure the full realization of the potential of women and their full participation in the development of the nation.

They take measures in order to fight all forms of violence against women in their public and private life. Women are entitled to equitable representation in national, provincial and local institutions. The State guarantees the achievement of parity between men and women in said institutions. The law determines the conditions for the application of these rights.

According to (Matundu and Faray-Kele, 2010) show, just how women are vulnerable, and they demonstrate the several misuses committed against women because of dominant position discussed to men by the society and the lower status of women in the DRC (Matundu and Faray-Kele, 2010). The Haut Lomami Province is not excluded from the situation through which women are experiencing, particularly because it is in a patriarchal style of living whereby men are believed to have more influence over women.

The Democratic Republic of Congo approved international legal instruments notably the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which offers the principle of parity between men and women in its first two articles. The DRC established the Ministry of advancement of Women in 1980 and ratified the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1986.

The preamble of the 2006 DRC Constitution supports the principle of equality between men and women. Furthermore, the Articles 5, 14 and 15 set up the foundation of legitimizations of any policy of equality and equity in the public institutions in DRC. Furthermore, Article 14 of the Constitution offers: “the State shall have the duty to safeguard the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and ensure the respect and promotion of their rights”.

In addition, the state must “take measures to address all forms of violence against women at both public and private life”, and ensure the “full participation of women in the development of the country” above all assuring the “rights to significant representation of women in public institutions” at the Central government and Local Government. Besides, by adaptable the application of these rights, the Government must guarantee the application of the principle of parity between women and men in these institutions for the protection of women and young girls

2.2.7. Factors affecting Women leadership inequalities in Haut-Lomami local government

The social structure of the sexual characteristics and the practices of socialization contribute to keeping women out of the political Institutions at both Central and Local Government levels. Because of that, Political affairs are considered as a public space and actions of women are limited to private spaces at the domestic and community level.

There is the lack of a culture that supports women leaders in politics in Haut-Lomami Local Government, Democratic Republic of Congo to have an important curiosity in politics in public institutions in the DRC.

The factors that affecting women leadership disparities in public institutions and that can be a source of preventing women leadership to exercise their political and civic rights at the Central and Local Government levels can be band together into: (i) Socio-cultural challenges. (ii) Political challenges; and (iii) Economic challenges.

2.2.7.1. Socio-cultural challenges

Particular to the Congolese are the civilizations and traditional beliefs inherited from local customs, which do not be aware of any political role for women leaders, on occasion prohibiting women leaders to speak in public or to participate in the executive procedure, given the influence of social bias, marital status and religion. Their husbands or male figures in forming ideas on voting and political participation often lead women and they are not allowed to participate at all economic, political and social activities.

It is observed that Churches in particular, which are enormously influential mediators of socialization in the Haut-Lomami Province, Democratic Republic of Congo, usually abuse fundamentalist understandings of the instructions from the Bible to the conclusion that God wanted the obedience of women to men.

While articles 43 and 44 of the 2006 DRC's Constitution insist on free obligatory education and the eradication of illiteracy, unfortunately, most adolescents especially in rural area in Haut-Lomami local government frequently drop out of school because of premature marriage and pregnancy.

In their interesting work done by (Tushiminina et al., 2021) further argue that the demographic and health survey carried out by the Ministry of Planning in 2007 shows that 20% of Congolese women aged between 15 and 49 years did not receive any

formal education, compared to only 5% of men of the same age. As many as 40% of all women nationally are illiterate, compared to only 15% of men, with a literacy rate varying according to the place of residence: 19% of women living in urban areas are illiterate, against 58% in rural areas and also in terms of economic status. Improving the education of women will increase women's overall eligibility to run for office as well as enhance their knowledge of civic rights.

We agree with the above scholars because when women be educated there are opportunities to lead offices and power equal to their fellows Congolese men.

2.2.7.2. Political challenges

(Tushiminina, et al, 2021) articulate that women are confronted with the reluctance of the population to vote for women. Their only means of trying to convince potential supporters is through verbal campaigns, which is different from the campaigns traditionally carried out by their male counterparts, which consist in particular of giving gifts.

Thus, the democratization Policy Brief on Women's Political Participation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) of the political party process is a challenge, which must be considered to achieve greater empowerment of women and to promote their visibility in the political arena. Many females are unable to meet the new electoral law for candidates running for a parliamentary seat of a three-year university degree.

We support these point of views but we add ideas regarding the requirements prior to participate in political institutions it is required to be a member of political parties that are supporting the ruling party and sometimes women are less interested to join both ruling parties and opposition parties because of that many of them are not allowed by

their husbands to participate in political arena because men leaders are using sexual harassment against their colleagues women leaders and this can be one of the reason of low participation of women leaders in Public Institutions in Haut-Lomami Province, DRC.

According to (Andjadimandja, 2019) financial, environmental, customary and many other problems are at the root of the increase in illiteracy among women. It is the real obstacle to the development of society insofar as it constitutes a brake on the participation of women leaders in decision-making bodies in DRC. One cannot become a Member of Parliament, Senator, Minister, President, without having acquired a certain level of education. Yet, the observation made is that women are more and more exposed to this scourge than men.

2.2.7.3. Economic challenges

(Tushiminina, et al, 2021) maintain that poverty and lack of economic security are often cited as some of the major barriers to women's political participation. Poverty is a reality for the majority of Congolese women with more than 61% of Congolese women living below the poverty line. Women have little to no control over their income as men, making women dependent on their male relatives, control finances. The Family Code was revised in July 2017, allowing women to open bank accounts and apply for loans without their husbands' permission. Following this move, at the community level, Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) have been heavily implemented through international NGOs and have brought some measure of financial independence to women outside of urban areas.

We approve arguments from the above scholars by saying that in order to participate in political institutions and other related political field in Haut-Lomami local

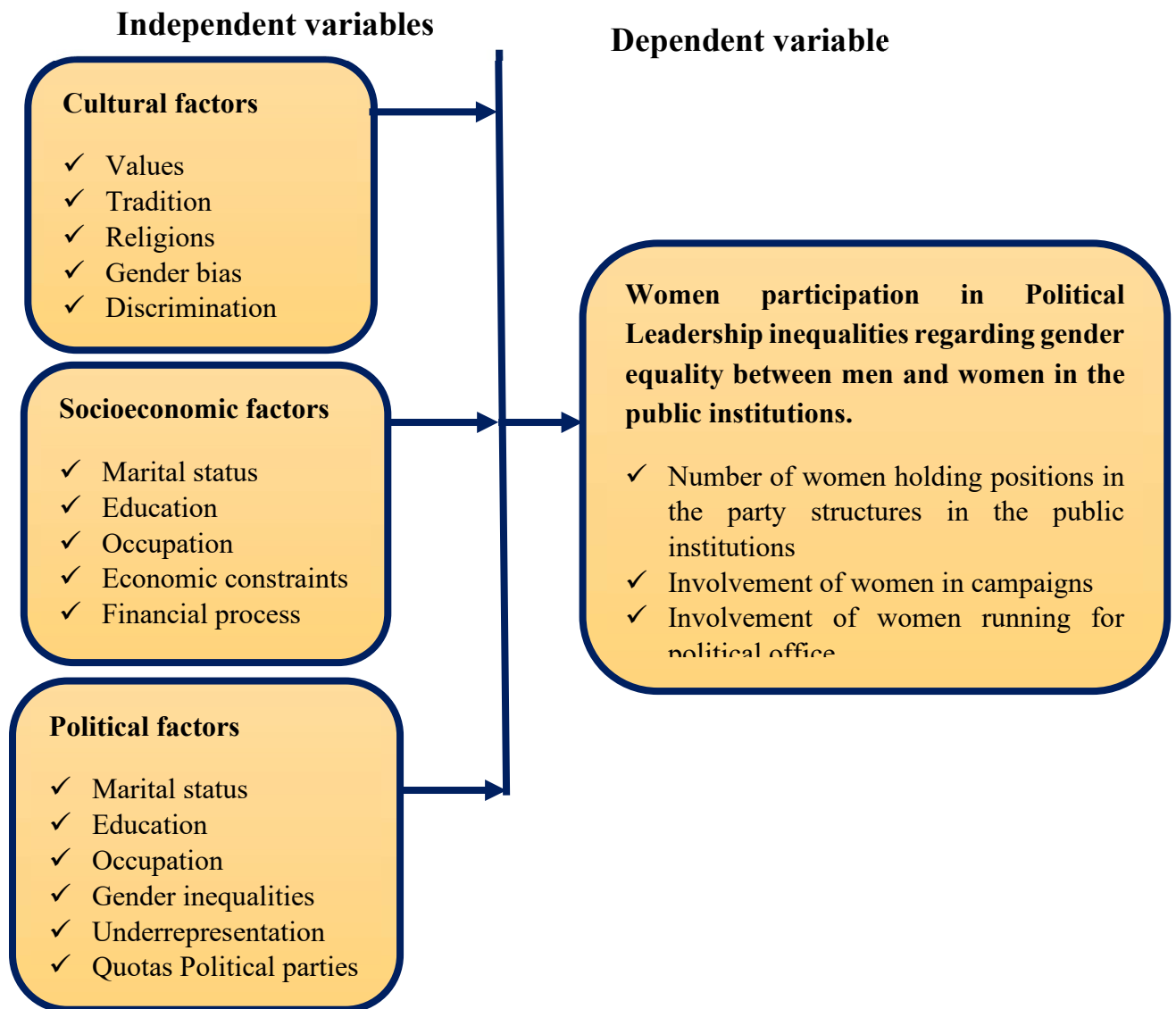
government and in DRC, policymakers especially political party's managers are asking money before accessing in power and in some important responsibilities. Women in this case are excluded in political participation because they lack money to corrupt men leaders and sometimes, political officials of ruling parties. This means women are facing challenges to participate in political institutions because of economic issues and the highest level of poverty.

In his exciting dissertation (Mpanga, 2018) further argues that women have the equal rights to freedom from poverty, discrimination, environment degradation and security. Thus, to fight these problems and to meet the challenges in order to sustain human development, it is crucial that women should be empowered and involved in local government as decision-makers, planners and managers.

The empowerment of women is not a compartmentalized issue, but rather a vital thread that runs through the entire sustainable human development.

This point of view is share with the researcher because there is no way to avoid women leadership inequalities in Haut-Lomami just to empower women in public institutions and allow women to participate in decision-making process so that women can have power to gain freedom and fair participation.

FIGURE 1: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



2.2.6. Other Supporting Theories: Patriarchy and Women’s Subordination

(Abeda, 2021) in his inspiring PhD’s study further considered patriarchy by saying that it is the prime obstacle to women’s advancement and development. He also argues that despite differences in levels of domination the broad principles remain the same for instance, men are usually in control.

The above supporting theory is very essential because it talking about male dominance, this is similar to domination of men to women leaders in Haut-Lomami and control over a wide range of national and public institutions where parity between men and

women is not achieved even though laws and regulations at both international and national levels are struggling to implement gender equality or parity in the Democratic Republic of Congo in vain. On the other hand, in the Haut-Lomami province men leaders have material power and the women leaders are still economic dependence on them. This means that men leaders are superior and women being inferior due to their dependence on the men who are policymakers and are not able to allow women to access to the decision making in economic, political and socioeconomic activities. Regarding labour division in the Democratic Republic of Congo as a democratic nation including the Haut-Lomami province, both central and local authorities have through laws and regulations recognized the role of women leaders to the domestic arena although the men take charge of the modern economy in the world outside. However, women's duties in the domestic sphere of influence in the national life in the Haut-Lomami province take most of their energy and time consequently sendoff them with neither much energy or much freedom and the autonomy of attention to involve in the creative actions than male in the public institutions continuously do. Due to this, there is continuation of control by male who hold vital socio-economic hierarchy and the connected of major institutions of modern culture such as law and politics.

Nevertheless, men domination and the restriction of women to domestic work is the basis for women's oppression and subordination in the Haut-Lomami. In this regard, Stereotypes in gender as well as individuals that describe women as powerless to take leadership positions and serve therefore keeping women leaders in the public institutions in the Haut-Lomami province to be discriminated or marginalized in their status by underlining their supposed weaknesses have made group arrogances in the direction of women. In the instances of marginalization of women commencing influential positions, it there keep an eye on weakening of the principles to democratic

growths, preventing on societal economic development. Hence, it remains vital to adopt measures that enhance women's political participation in leadership positions in Haut-Lomami province to achieve sustainable development and social transformation.

On the other hand, men are considered as having more power over women in that women are not expected to perform some of activities known to be performed only by men according to their culture for instance house building. This shows inequality between women and men. The analysis of socio-cultural and economic situation of Haut Lomami shows that gender inequality or disparity persist in every sector. Generally, women and girls face challenges in accessing legal rights, education, health and economic resources among others. However, the researcher believes women can achieve greater accomplishments if they have appropriate and adequate level of education. This research focused on Education as an empowering factor for women to take up Leadership in public institutions in the Haut-Lomami province.

As well known, the patriarchal nature of the Democratic Republic of Congo in general without forgetting the Haut-Lomami, which is one of the twenty sixth province of the country, it is extremely important to argue that women's political participation in the leadership positions and accessing to the decision-making process are often subordinate or inferior in comparison of their men's colleagues. In these particular patriarchal cultures, men leaders or politicians in the Haut-Lomami province are up to now regarded as forbearers of information and in future take over other thoughts. In this regard, it is essential or indispensable to think through patriarchal societies that has a direct significance consequently it is structural discrimination of women's political participation in politics including public institutions, in addition small businesses are held and accomplished by men. On the other hand, women's political leadership disparities are remarkably high in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and

principally among women's workers in the public institutions or public corporations. Particularly moreover, one critical factor that pushes educated women's leaders to start-up their self-employment, because of unemployment which they are victims due to men's marginalization and discrimination. Nevertheless, the Haut-Lomami province as a patriarchal society, it is observed that educated women's leaders have few opportunities and women face more constraints than their men colleagues do. Because of to all above, women's political leaders in the Haut-Lomami province especially young women faced when starting a business in a nation, the Democratic Republic of Congo. Understanding this theoretical statement and from the viewpoint of the discovered population is significant known the criticality of entrepreneurship to economic development including women's political participation leadership disparities and socioeconomic factors in order to allow 50 per cent of educated women's leaders in the public institutions with the focus to reduce poverty of women in political areas.

2.2.6. Research Gap

The literature stays much criticizing gender inequality and discriminatory against women political leaders by men policymakers leaders in the Haut-Lomami Province, Democratic Republic of Congo to enhance women political leadership particularly the illiterate women who are currently less appointed in rural areas than male leaders.

2.2.6. Chapter Summary

The chapter attempts to clarify what other researchers have published in an effort to highlight the connection between the past and current study. Different theories related to this study was also studied and the Liberal Feminist Theory is intensely approach up-to-date this study. The theories, books, journals and articles including policies and

rule of law regarding Gender equality and parity in Democratic Republic of Congo and related supporting documents talked about gender issues that were read shed more light on the current study, will help build up the research problem and will assess research questions.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

It is logical for one to maintain that, the research methodology, which the current study will establish, will elucidate in this chapter. The research design and research instruments will be discussed. Study population and the sampling matters will be discussed. The procedure of data collection, presentation analysis will be also specified.

3.2 Research Design

(Oyedele, 2011) further describes the research design is as the plan, structure and strategy used for exploration to obtain answers to research questions and to control variances. The cross-sectional survey method was employed as the research design for this study, which was because it allows the collection of information from a representative sample of a target population.

The social issue under study will be an assessment of the application of gender equality policy in the Haut Lomami Local Government, Democratic Republic of Congo, and the researcher explored main causes that are not allowing women politicians leaders to participate in public sector especially in the Public institutions in Haut-lomami local government. This research design will help the researcher to assess the application of Gender Equality and the law of the parity between men and women. Policy in the Haut Lomami Local Government, Democratic Republic of Congo.

3.4. Study Population

AJai & Amuche, (2015) argue that population refers to the totality of objects or individuals regarding which inferences are to be made in a study. It refers to the group of people, items or units under investigation and includes every individual. In this esteem, the population will be selected for observation and analysis. population with regard to research is the totality or aggregate of events, groups, persons, objects, test items, etc. which form the subject matter of research observation. The province of Haut-Lomami has five main Institutions such us (i) Provincial Assembly, (ii) Governor's Office, (iii) Mayor's Office, (iv) Communes 'Offices, and lastly (v) Local Government of Haut-Lomami and all of them are located in Kamina (the Captital city of the province of Haut-Lomami). So given the vast nature in terms of population of which more or less 100 public employees in the city of Kamina.

This research will be focused on 100 women leaders and inspired leaders in Kamina, The study also will be interested to four groups of people among "Haut-Lomami" specifically, local authorities, women, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) including Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) that are dealing with gender equality issues in Haut-Lomami province, churches and Researchers and Journalists in order to get trustworthy information.

3.5. Sampling

AJai & Amuche (2015) argue sampling is the process of selecting a sample from the population. For this according to them, the population is divided into a number of parts called sampling units. For studying any problem, it is difficult to study the entire population. It is hence useful to pick out a sample out of the Universe proposed to be covered by the study. The process of sampling makes it possible to draw effective

suggestions or overviews. Orodho & Kombo (2002) say that sampling is a process of selecting a number of individuals or objects from a population such that the selected group contains elements representative of the characteristics found in the entire group. Bhattacharjee, (2012) explains it as a statistical process of selecting a subset (called a sample) of a population of interest for purposes of making observations of about that population. While, Nichols (2000) further argues that in qualitative research that seeks in-depth understanding of a particular problem, a sample size in the range of 30 to 50 is normally enough for a small-scale study and 50 to 100 for a large scale.

3.3. Sample size

Due to the vast nature of the area, it will be impossible to include everybody in the study population so a sample had to be used. First, a number of four local authorities will be selected for an in-depth study, as representative cases, guided by the local government bureaucrats. It was also imperative to ensure that respondents in the sample will be representative of the study area's population. As the study focused on the new province of Haut-Lomami, DRC, therefore, the sample size process is fifty (50) citizens this is because other 50 citizens will not be able to answer correctly questions which will be asked in the research questions.

However, the sample was representative of all groups of population cited above. The sample was selected using quota sampling as technique because the researcher will identify the informants. The strata constituted a) Level of education b) Native/nonnative c) Time (different council regimes) following the above, gender differences will be taken into consideration. It was difficult to ensure gender balance because of the fact that women will be busier than men with household will. This left them little or no time for such an exercise. In addition, most of Kamina's women have

fled, as it is a society where women are always inferior to men. A simple quota sampling technique will be used to select informants that were representative of the target population.

3.4. Qualitative Research Methods

(Nkwi, Nyamongo & Ryan, 2001) in their inspiring research argue that qualitative research is any research, which uses data that do not indicate ordinal values. This kind of research includes gathering and working data with texts, images or sound. Further, qualitative research seeks to understand how and why things came about and in relation to this investigation (Ngulube, 2000). It helps to understand why full implementation of gender equality according to DRC's Constitution can allow and facilitate women participation at local levels in Haut-Lomami province. How important is the women' participation at local levels in Haut-Lomami province, DRC.

3.5. Data Analysis

Data analysis will be carried to set up factors affecting women political leadership disparities at local government of Haut-Lomami province, DRC. Qualitative data will be used in this study. The research will use thematic method of analyzing the collected data easily without calculation or numerical values. In this regard, it is well known that analysis is one of the most common forms of analyzing in qualitative research. However, it places of interest, investigate, examining and recording pattern or themes with data. Themes are pattern across data sets that are important to the description of a phenomenon and are linked to a specific research question. Furthermore, the data will gather with in-complexity surveys or questionnaires and interviews will be designed targeting four sets of participants officials of Governor's office of Haut-Lomami, Provincial Assembly, Provincial Minister of family, gender, child's

protection in Haut-Lomami, and Civil Society Organizations including Mayor's office of Kamina city and women in politics leaders in public institutions and their knowledge and experience with the implementation of gender equality policy and gender mainstreaming at local level without forgetting process at Haut-Lomami local government.

3.6. Ethical Consideration

Research ethics are a vital factor of research studies with which every investigator should be attentive, should consider, and should be able to face. The researcher will seek the authority and the permission of the local authorities. The Africa University through AUREC, which gave me the opportunity to be allowed to carry out the research, gave the letter of introduction. As elucidated by (Labaree, 2018), research ethics generally serve the wellbeing of the participant.

The researcher will do this as long as the study focuses on An Assessment of the Application of Gender Equality Policy in the Haut Lomami Local Government; Democratic Republic of Congo helped the researcher with their experiences on how the policymakers are dealing with the issue of gender equality and parity between men in the Haut-Lomami local government. The Researcher ensured that all data will be kept under lock and key and not to be shared with those not in the study. The Researcher will show respondents the result of the study and the data is destroyed after when they are analysed. The Researcher ensured those who cannot read and write have the questions read out to them. The researcher never forced any participants who wanted to withdraw from being respondent.

3.7. Summary

The chapter covered research design that will be used to conduct the study. The cross-sectional survey method was employed as the research design for study, because it allows the collection of information from a representative sample of a target population. Interviews and questionnaires were used as research instruments. Sampling methods and target sample population will be employed. Sources of data used are given as primary sources.

Data is collected from the general population through questionnaires, which are distributed and will be collected the same after two days and for officials in the Haut-Lomami province, DRC interviews will be conducted after making appointments. Data will be presented in narrative descriptions. Analysis will be done through close content and content analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.0. Introduction

This chapter presents the data collected from the respondents, their analysis and interpretation.

4.1. Response rate

Founded on overall studies of gender policy implementation in the Haut-Lomami Local Government, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and particular reports on local government, the following calculation plans the application of gender equality policies in Haut Lomami, derived from a hypothetical survey of 100 individuals with a 60% response rate (60 respondents).

$$\text{Formula: } \frac{\text{Completed Responses}}{\text{Total Sample Size}} \times 100$$
$$\frac{60}{100} \times 100 = 60\%$$

The Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents (N=60)

TABLE 1: A FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION SHOWING THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

Parameter	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Age of respondent	18-35	10	17
	36-49	36	60
	50 and above	14	23
	Total	60	100

On the responses gathered 60% have ages from 18-35 and followed by ages from 50 and above with the 23%. While, ages from 18-35 symbolize 17%. These responses

mean an age from 36 to 49 is critical because through this particular age women are still very young and are motivated to participate in political participation in leadership. This insertion supported by (Banza, 2019) and (Mpanga, 2018) who said age of interviewed differ from 35 to 45 because according to these authors, this kind of age is critical for participating in any activities.

Recommendation: youth from the age between 18 to 35 must be involved in decision-making in order to avoid any form of discrimination of gender equality and youth participation in the Haut-Lomami local government, Democratic Republic of the Congo.

TABLE 2: EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF THE RESPONDENTS

Parameter	variable	Frequency	Percentage
Educational status	Primary education	10	17
	Secondary education	11	18
	Tertiary education	39	65
	Total	60	100

On the responses gathered 65% of respondents had tertiary education. On the other hand, 18% of the respondents had secondary education. Although, the respondents who had primary education made up of 17%. These responses mean the majority of the respondents were educated at the high school. This insertion supported by (Kilomba, 2025) who said 70% of women in seven provinces of DRC did high school. According to (Mpanga, 2018), women interviewed are educated at the level of tertiary education with 76%. However, (Bernard, 2019) said the majority of Congolese women interviewed 94% had tertiary education.

Recommendation: Girls should attend high schools because the law on parity or equality between men and women require for women to be educated equally as well as their counterpart men.

TABLE 3: MARITAL STATUS OF RESPONDENTS

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Married	12	20
Divorced	11	18
Single	37	62
Total	60	100

On the responses gathered 62% of findings are single. Followed by married (20%). While, divorced made up 18%. These responses mean married women are not allowed by their husbands to participate in political leadership positions that is very critical to deal with gender inequality in the Haut-Lomami local government. This insertion supported by (Peter & Chunyan, 2026) who said 66, 3% of respondents are single against 27, 9% married. In contrary, (Bernard, 2019) said 62, 3% of women are married. Recommendation: In order for women to fight against gender inequalities, husbands must allow their wives to be involved in political participation in leadership positions to avoid patriarchal approach and discrimination in politics.

TABLE 4: OCCUPATION OF RESPONDENTS

Parameter	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Occupation	Civil servant	14	23
	Unemployed	36	60
	Politician	10	17
	Total	60	100

On the responses gathered 60% of respondents said they are unemployed. However, 23% said they are working as civil servants. While, 17% only are serving as politicians. These responses mean the majority of respondents are unemployed because many women are engaged in informal economy especially those who are married. However, just few women are involved in formal sector as well as serving as civil servants and politicians. This insertion supported by (Mpanga, 2018) who said though the right to employment is constitutionally recognized for all (DRC Constitution, 2006), women only constitute 2, 8% of state waged employment activities against 12 % of men in the DRC; regardless of their 53% representation in the population (Media St Paul, 2007, MONUC, 2010). Generally, opportunities for women have been limited. Especially in higher-level positions, they are underrepresented and unemployed in the formal workforce, and generally earn less than their male counter-parts in the same jobs.

Recommendation: Women must be allowed to participate in the decision-making by appointing them equal treatment to men. This may help them to combat gender inequalities. This can avoid unemployment of women and gender equality must be full achieved.

TABLE 5: RESPONSES REGARDING CULTURAL FACTORS AFFECTING WOMEN POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN THE HAUT-LOMAMI LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Parameter	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Does culture encourage women to participate for political leadership positions?	Yes	15	25
	No	45	75
	Total	60	100

On the responses gathered 75% of the respondents disagreed that culture in Haut-Lomami local government, Democratic Republic of the Congo do not encourage women leaders to participate to any political leadership positions. While, 25% of the respondents agree that culture in the newly province of Haut-Lomami encourages women to participate in the public institutions including in the decision-making as partners of their male coworkers. These responses mean cultural factors are key element that effecting gender inequalities in both public and private institutions. This insertion supported by (Mpanga, 2018) who said in the DRC, particularly in the Haut Lomami due to cultural constraints, women were subject to exploitation by men whereby women were confined to domestic and agricultural works; with cultural belief that education is not meant for empowering women. In other words, empowering women through education was a sort of destroying culture; yet education is a good tool whereby it is a way of investing power within women in order to have control over their own lives. (Banza, 2019) also said discrimination in power sharing between men and women 95% and exclusion of youth ladies in the participation process with 80% percent of respondents because according to the researcher, Culture in the Haut Lomami still a barrier or a hindering factor to women empowerment through education. In other words, culture in the DRC, especially in the Haut Lomami is a big challenge associated with education of women.

Recommendation: Cultural such as Patriarchal norms and traditional values, Stereotypes, perceptions of incompetence and lack of full implementation of gender parity policies and Influence of Traditional and Religious leaders must be avoided in order for policymakers to allow women to participate in decision-making 50/50% gender equality.

TABLE 6: FREQUENCY SHOWING THE PRIORITY OF WOMEN’S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION PRIORITIES TO ACCESS TO LEADERSHIP POSITIONS.

Parameter	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Women's priorities	Family responsibilities	37	62
	Civil servant	11	18
	Other careers	12	20
	Total	60	100

On the responses gathered 62% of respondents said that women’s priorities are involved in family responsibilities, those with other careers symbolize 20%. While, 18% represent civil servants. These responses mean the majority of respondents interviewed are dealing with family responsibilities like taking care babies and households. This insertion supported by (Chelo, 2020) who said the woman who is already out of her home most of the day still has to take care of her home when she returns. Husband and children are waiting for her, as well as a lot of housework. It must tackle all its tasks in the most efficient way possible. Her love for her home comes before herself, to the point that at the end of her day she cannot give herself a moment for her training. On the other hand, at all times, the woman divides her time between her home and her activities for the survival of the household “small business, market gardening, etc.” In an economic crisis, women survival activities are supported and, in some cases, compensated for the contribution of the unemployed man.

Recommendation: Women must have priorities in civil service and other careers because family responsibilities shall not allow women leaders to fight against men's discrimination in politics because of gender stereotypes and social norms.

TABLE 7: FREQUENCY SHOWING HOW DO SOCIAL NORMS AND STEREOTYPES AFFECT WOMEN'S ABILITY TO HOLD LEADERSHIP POSITIONS.

Parameter	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
social norms and stereotypes affect gender equality	Patriarchal views	15	25
	Lack of full implementation of Gender equality policies	45	75
	Total	60	100

On the responses collected 75% said lack of full implementation of gender equality policies are serious social norms and stereotypes, which strongly affect women's ability to hold leadership positions. While, 25% said that patriarchal views affect women leaders to hold leadership positions in the Haut-Lomami local government, Democratic Republic of the Congo. These responses mean social norms and stereotypes affect gender equality and cannot allow the achievement of gender equality mentioned in the 2006 DRC's Constitution and international legal frameworks promoting gender equality or parity between men and women in Democratic Republic of the Congo. This insertion supported by (Chelo, 2020) who said the persistence of stereotypes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, especially those referring to the status of women, is a testament to the difficulty that still exists today in admitting a non-stereotypical idea of the human being, whose freedom and singular identity do not

allow themselves to be locked into categories all made. There is a series of ideas received and images preconceived around gender parity in the public sphere, which condition the vision that Congolese society is making of this concept. Very often folk songs are true vectors of the objectification of women and their exclusion from the political space.

Recommendation: In order to completely implement gender equality policy in the Haut-Lomami local government social norms and stereotypes must be avoided because there affecting gender equality to be achieved.

TABLE 8: FREQUENCY SHOWING THE IMPACT OF CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS BELIEFS ON WOMEN’S GENDER INEQUALITY IN THE HAUT-LOMAMI LOCAL GOVERNMENT, DRC.

Parameter	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
The impact of cultural and religious beliefs on women’s leadership in public institutions	Misinterpretation of religious texts	11	18
	Patriarchal norms and stereotypes	37	62
	Unequal access to education and economic resources	12	20
	Total	60	100

On the responses gathered 62% said that patriarchal norms and stereotypes have the impact of cultural and religious beliefs on women’s leadership in public institutions. Nevertheless, 20% said unequal access to education and economic resources. Whereas, 18% said misinterpretation of religious texts. These responses mean patriarchal norms and stereotypes have the impact on women’s political participation leadership positions in public institutions. This insertion supported by who said

Recommendation: traditional leaders and cultural practices must understand that women are not only created to have babies and carrying households but also women may be allowed to access to the highest level of leadership position equally with men.

TABLE 9: FREQUENCY SHOWING HOW TRADITIONAL GENDER DO ROLES AND EXPECTATIONS INFLUENCE WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS IN HAUT-LOMAMI PROVINCE, DRC?

Parameter	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
How traditional gender do roles and expectations influence women’s participation in politics	Sociocultural obstacles	10	17
	Lack of full implementation of gender equality policy and legislation	38	63
	Focus on domestic responsibilities	12	20
	Total	60	100

On the responses gathered 63% said traditional gender roles and expectations that influence women’s participation in politics have influenced by the lack of full implementation of gender equality policy and legislation. On the other hand, 20% said focus on domestic responsibilities. While 17% said sociocultural obstacles. These responses mean the majority of respondents maintain traditional gender as a key component that influence women’s participation in politics by preventing lack of full implementation of gender equality policy and legislation. This insertion supported by (Chelo, 2020) who said deep-rooted social traditional norms and cultural practices continue to hinder women's advancement and reinforce gender inequality. While the DRC has introduced legislation aimed at promoting gender equality, including prohibiting discrimination in employment, challenges remain in implementation and enforcement.

Recommendation: in order to full implement and reinforce gender equality policy and legislation traditional gender must be avoided by allowing women to have equal treating during appointment of leaders and managers in the Haut-Lomami local government.

TABLE 10: HOW DO SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS AFFECT WOMEN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP INEQUALITIES IN HAUT-LOMAMI PROVINCE, DRC?

Parameter	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Socioeconomic factors affect women participation leadership inequalities.	Family responsibilities	11	18
	Limited economic opportunities	40	67
	Unequal access to education	9	15
	Total	60	100

On the responses gathered 67%. Said limited economic opportunities are factors affecting women political leadership inequalities in Haut-Lomami local government, DRC; 18% said family responsibilities. On the other hand, 15% said unequal access to education. These responses mean socioeconomic factors affect women participation leadership inequalities because women face challenges on how to access in economic activities. This insertion supported by (Myriam , 2023) who said persistent socio-cultural disparities restrict women’s engagement in social and economic life and public decision-making. Women’s representation in politics is limited, currently occupying about 4.6% of seats in the Senate and 10.3% in the National Assembly (compared with an average of 20.6% among low-income countries). According to (Darla, 2021) Women mostly obtain resources or support from others, such as friends or family, who are used as intermediaries or back-up social capital. The proportion of female business owners, using informal methods of financial support, is 85 % compared with 58.24 % for men.

Recommendation: women leaders should be given opportunities to participate in socioeconomic sectors with the focus to avoid women's limited economic opportunities by doing so; policymakers must not marginalize socioeconomically women in the Haut-Lomami local government.

TABLE 11: POLITICAL FACTORS THAT AFFECT WOMEN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP INEQUALITIES IN HAUT-LOMAMI PROVINCE, DRC.

Parameter	Variable	frequency	Percentage
Political factors that affect women political leadership disparities	Political harassment and violence	10	17
	Voter bias against female leaders	11	18
	Discrimination and exclusion of women in appointments and decision-making	39	65
	Total	60	100

On the responses gathered 65% said discrimination and exclusion of women in appointments and decision-making are political factors affecting women political leadership inequalities in Haut-Lomami, DRC. Followed by Instead, voter bias against female leaders with 18%. While, political harassment and violence with 17%. These responses mean it is logical to articulate that Political factors that affect women's political leadership inequalities in the Haut-Lomami local government are particularly known as discrimination and exclusion of women in appointments and decision-making because men as policymakers are discriminating women during appointment process. This kind of exclusion of women cannot allow the full implementation of gender equality in Democratic Republic of the Congo in general and in the Haut-Lomami local government in particular. This insertion supported by (JICA, 2017). who said discrimination, gender bias, and negative perceptions of women's leadership

abilities also pose significant challenges for women who strive to pursue political careers

Recommendation: DRC’s Central government policymakers and legislators must automatically promote gender equality with the focus to allow women to access to all economic, political and social activities because women have potential to work toward Sustainable Development and are able to fight against corruption and exclusion.

TABLE 12: POLITICAL FACTORS THAT AFFECT WOMEN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP INEQUALITIES IN HAUT-LOMAMI PROVINCE, DRC.

Parameter	Variable	Frequency	percentage
Extent do political factors affect women political leadership inequalities in public institution.	Gender relations	10	17
	Gender inequalities	39	65
	Gender discrimination	11	18
	Total	60	100

On the responses collected 65% said gender inequalities are considered as an extent do political factors affecting women political leadership inequalities in public institutions. Followed by gender discrimination with 18%. While, 17% represent gender relations. These responses mean politically it is observed gender inequalities caused by discrimination and unequal treatment because men leaders are not prepared to promote gender equality in public institutions. This insertion supported by (Darla, 2021) who said gender inequality occurs when men and women do not have equal treatment or conditions to realize their full human rights in social, cultural, economic, and political spheres. It is in this regard, the imbalance of similarities and differences of men and women and their roles, perceived by society, must be noted.

Recommendation: gender discrimination and gender inequality must be avoided if policymakers and political party's leaders could accept to implement gender equality in both public and private sectors.

TABLE 13: HOW DO POLITICAL FACTORS AFFECT WOMEN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP INEQUALITIES IN PUBLIC INSTITUTION IN HAUT-LOMAMI LOCAL GOVERNMENT, DRC?

Parameter	Variable	frequency	percentage
Political factors affecting women political leadership inequalities	Weak implementation of equal representation laws	14	23
	Ineffective implementation of gender equality policies	36	60
	Marginalization and discrimination of women leaders	10	17
	Total	60	100

On responses gathered 60% said ineffective implementation of gender equality policies are key political factors affecting political leadership inequalities. Followed by weak implementation of equal representation laws with 23%. Whereas, 17% said marginalization and discrimination of women leaders. These responses mean Ineffective implementation of gender equality policies are main causes of Political factors affecting women political leadership inequalities in the Haut-Lomami province. This insertion supported by (Chelo, 2020) who said the Democratic Republic of the Congo will raise the two major problems for the implementation of the Law on gender equality or parity through the findings made. This is first: Socio-cultural gravity; secondly: the approach to be used to enforce this law.

Recommendation: political factors affecting women political leadership inequalities must avoid if policymakers and legislators will promote effective implementation of gender equality policies in both politics and public administration.

TABLE 14: WOULD YOU CONSIDER COMPETING FOR A CIVIC OR PARLIAMENTARY POSITION?

Parameter	Variable	frequency	Percentage
Competing for a civil or parliamentary	Yes	11	18
	No	49	82
	Total	60	100

On the responses collected on considering competing for a civil or parliamentary by women leaders 82% disagreed and were not prepared to do so. While, 18% agree. These responses mean women do not trust other women involved in politics. This insertion supported by (EASSI, 2012) who said women in Democratic Republic of the Congo even though they account for the majority of the electorate did not vote for women candidates and it is estimated that close to 78% of women gave their vote to male candidates. In South Kivu province this percentage reached 82 percent.

Recommendation: in order to promote effective implementation of gender equality policies women must trust other women competing for a civil or parliamentary.

TABLE 15: MEASURES OF WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP IN HAUT-LOMAMI PROVINCE, DRC?

Parameter	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Measures of women participation in political leadership.	Number of women holding positions in the party structures	16	27
	Involvement of women running for political offices	44	73
	Total	60	100

On the responses gathered regarding measures of women participation in political leadership, 73% said involvement of women running for political offices. While, 27% represent number of women holding positions in the party structures. These responses mean any measures of women participation in political leadership be influenced by Involvement of women running for political offices. This cannot allow the achievement of gender 50/50 parity mentioned in the DRC's 2006 Constitution. This insertion supported by (Shikha & Tshombe Lukamba, 2011) who said the concept of 50/50 parity or equality is still not incorporated into the elections laws, and needs to be reviewed against the backdrop of traditions and the conventional outlook of the DRC society as a whole. In the DRC, the post-transitional constitution adopted by referendum in December 2005 has gone as far as to guarantee 50/50 parity between men and women.

Recommendation: Involvement of women running for political offices should be measured in order to allow women leaders to take leadership positions in Public sector.

TABLE 16: HAVE YOU EVER PARTICIPATED IN ELECTIONS IN THE COUNTRY FROM 2018 TO 2023?

Parameter	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Participation of women leaders in DRC's Elections from 2018 to 2023.	Yes	10	20
	No	40	80
	Total	50	100

Responses regarding participation of women leaders in DRC's elections from 2018 to 2023 are presented in Table 25. The results show their individual opinion as regards their political participation in the study area. 20% agreed while 80% disagreed. These responses mean during DRC's Elections from 2018 to 2023 majority of women interviewed in the Haut-Lomami local government, Democratic Republic of the Congo

did not participate as candidates. This insertion supported by (Ghislain & Frederick, 2020) who said the gender disparity or inequality in the DRC has been attributed to women’s lack of requisite educational qualifications. On the contrary, the DRC has not made significant progress towards the achievement of parity. During the 2011 elections, women were underrepresented as electoral candidates and selected officials. There was no female candidate running the Presidency of the Republic and the less than 10% female candidates represented, were up for 828 political candidates, only 59 were female candidates, making up for a meagre 7%.

Recommendation: Political party’s leaders must respect quotas of 30 to 50 per cent of women in the vote lists in order to allow women leaders to participate on the coming future 2028 elections.

TABLE 17: HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU PARTICIPATED IN ELECTING LEADERS FROM 2018 TO 2023?

Parameter	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Many times, have you participated in electing leaders from 2018 to 2023?	One	15	25
	Two	9	15
	Not at all	36	60
	Total	60	100

On the responses gathered concerning how many times, women leaders have participated in DRC’s elections from 2018 to 2023 to elect leaders the majority of the respondents said 60% do not participate to any elections. Although, 25% of them said they have participated one time, 15% participated two times. While, 15% said they have only participated twice. These responses mean there is low participation of women leaders in elections held in 2006, 2011, 2018 and 2023 in Democratic Republic of the Congo because many political parties refuse women in their electoral lists. This

insertion supported by (Ghislaine & Frederick, 2020) who said most political parties refused to place women on their electoral lists. A similar scenario played out during the 2006 elections, with less than 10% female representation in parliament.

Recommendation: gender policies and regulations must be strengthened in order to allow women to participate in electoral cycles in the Haut- Lomami local government, Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Interview Guide to Haut-Lomami Officials

SECTION A: General Information

TABLE 18: WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO TAKE PART IN THE CAMPAIGN IN VYING WITH MEN LEADERS IN HAUT-LOMAMI PROVINCE, DRC?

Parameter	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Motivation to take part in the campaign in vying with men leaders in Haut-Lomami province.	Fighting against patriarchal system	20	33
	Promoting gender parity and equal access for men and women.	40	67
	Total	60	100

On responses gathered 67% maintain promoting gender parity and equal access for men and women as a key component of the motivation, which allow women to take part in the campaign in vying with men leaders in Haut-Lomami local government, Democratic Republic of the Congo. While, fighting against patriarchal system and avoiding men’s discrimination are both symbolized 33%. These responses mean Promoting gender parity and equal access for men and women can motivate women to take part in the campaign in vying with men leaders in Haut-Lomami province by

avoiding men domination through patriarchal approaches. This insertion supported by (Abeda, 2021) who said Patriarchal society gives absolute priority to men and to some extent limits women’s human rights. Patriarchy refers to the male domination both in public and private spheres.

Recommendation: only promoting gender equality or parity (50/50) per cent between men and women must motivate to take part in the campaign in vying with men leaders in Haut-Lomami province

TABLE 19: WHAT ARE FACTORS AFFECTING WOMEN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP INEQUALITIES IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS IN HAUT-LOMAMI LOCAL GOVERNMENT?

Parameter	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Factors affecting gender equality in political institutions	Cultural factors	14	23
	Economic factors	10	17
	Political factors	36	60
	Total	60	100

On the responses gathered 60% said that the majority of respondents maintain that political factors as factors affecting women political (leadership inequalities in public institutions in Haut-Lomami local government. Followed by cultural factors with 23%. While 17%, maintain economic factors. These responses mean majority of women interviewed believe that political factors affect gender equality in political institutions because of exclusion, marginalization and discrimination of men against women in political participation leadership positions. This insertion supported by (Chelo, 2020) who said Congolese women need to be aware of the situation in order to get out of this limitation of marginalization. However, democracy requires women to struggle to be heard in order to position themselves and to be at the level of all political bodies’ decision-making, notably by strengthening their leadership in politics to better position

themselves in the leadership of political parties and elective positions. Alas, their low representation in political institutions as well as political party leaders in the D.R.Congo illustrate a kind of lack of leadership of women in politics.

Recommendation: politicians and policymakers must avoid discrimination, exclusion and marginalization of women in politics unless they accept to implement effective gender equality in public institutions.

TABLE 20: WHAT ARE OTHER RELATED LEADERSHIP GENDER INEQUALITIES ARE FACED BY WOMEN POLITICAL IN HAUT-LOMAMI LOCAL GOVERNMENT, DRC?

Parameter	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Other related leadership disparities faced by women political in Haut-Lomami province.	Economic participation	9	15
	Social norms	11	18
	Lack of full Implementation of gender policies	40	67
	Total	60	100

On the responses collected 67% said that the majority of respondents maintain lack of full implementation of gender policies as one of the most important other related leadership inequalities faced by women political in Haut-Lomami local government, Democratic Republic of the Congo with. Followed by social norms with 18%. While, economic participation with 15%. These responses mean lack of motivation to take part in the campaign in vying with men leaders in Haut-Lomami province are other related leadership disparities faced by women political in Haut-Lomami province. This insertion supported by (Julia & Marie, 2020) who said institutions are needed to implement the law, such as focal points and gender desks that can address women's claims. Lack of female representation in all areas of society: here is a need to

encourage girls and young women to participate more in the public and professional sphere. High illiteracy rate and gender education gaps contribute to low participation. Recommendation: In order to motivate women to take part in the campaign in vying with men leaders in Haut-Lomami province, political parties must use quotas of 30 to 50 per cent. This may be essential to promote gender equality and fighting against women’s discrimination and marginalization in public institutions.

TABLE 21: WHAT ARE THE RECOMMEND MEASURES TO ADDRESS THE WOMEN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP INEQUALITIES AND GENDER INEQUALITIES IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS AT HAUT-LOMAMI LOCAL GOVERNMENT, DRC?

Parameter	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Recommend measures to address the women political leadership gender inequalities in Public institutions.	Legal and policy reforms	41	68
	Reinforce current legal frameworks	9	15
	Providing financial support for female candidates	10	17
	Total	60	100

On the responses collected 68% said that the majority of respondents maintain legal and policy reforms as recommend measures to address the women political gender inequalities in public institutions at Haut-Lomami local government, Democratic Republic of the Congo. Followed by providing financial support for female candidates with 17%. While, 15% said reinforce current legal frameworks. These responses mean officials consider that legal and policy reforms are considered as recommend measures to address the women political leadership gender inequalities in Public institutions in the Haut-Lomami local government, DRC. This insertion supported by (Chelo, 2020) who said The elaboration of the law laying down detailed rules for the application of women rights and parity is an application of article 14 of the Constitution of 18

February 2006. It reinforces the commitment of the Congolese State to build a more just society where the behavior, aspirations and different needs of man and woman are taken into account. Thus, the purpose of this Act is to promote gender equity and equal rights, opportunities and genders throughout national life, including the equitable participation of women and men in the management of State affairs (Explanatory memorandum to Law n° 15/013 of 1 August 2015).

Recommendation: reinforcement of current legal frameworks promoting 50% men and 50% women in public institutions should be implemented in order to avoid gender inequalities.

SECTION B: Factors affecting women political leadership gender inequalities in Public Institution in Haut-Lomami province, DRC

TABLE 22: IN YOUR OWN PERSPECTIVE HOW HAS CULTURAL FACTORS HINDERED WOMEN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP GENDER INEQUALITIES IN HAUT-LOMAMI PROVINCE, DRC?

Parameter	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Own perspective regarding cultural factors hindered women political leadership disparities in Haut-Lomami.	Patriarchal norms and traditional values.	44	73
	Influence of Traditional and Religious leaders	16	27
	Total	60	100

On the responses gathered that the majority of respondents said, patriarchal norms and traditional values as own perspective about cultural factors hindered women political leadership gender inequalities in public institutions in Haut-Lomami local government, Democratic Republic of the Congo with 73%. While, by influence of

religious leaders with 27%. These responses mean according to interviewed officials in the Haut-Lomami local government; patriarchal norms and traditional values are cultural factors hindered women political leadership disparities in Haut-Lomami. This insertion supported by (Mpanga, 2018) who said the Haut Lomami is composed of a mono-ethnic group of people called Baluba of Katanga, based on the patriarchal system of living. According to the above scholar, men are considered as having more power over women in that women are not expected to perform some of activities known to be performed only by men according to their culture for instance house building. This shows inequality between women and men. On the other hand, the analysis of socio-cultural and economic situation of Haut Lomami province at local government level shows that gender inequality still persist in every sector.

Recommendation: traditional values based in patriarchal norms could be eradicated by implementing gender equality because without achieving gender equality may harm women who are marginalize by men leaders.

TABLE 23: IN YOUR OWN PERSPECTIVE, HOW HAS SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS HINDERED WOMEN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP IN HAUT-LOMAMI, DRC?

Parameter	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Own perspective about socio-economic factors hindered women political leadership disparities in Haut-Lomami.	Marital status and Education	15	25
	Occupation	9	15
	Property ownership of the Community in Haut-Lomami and Financial process	36	60
	Total	60	100

On the responses on own perspective, how has socio-economic factors hindered women political leadership in Haut-Lomami province, Democratic Republic of the

Congo. The results showed that, 60% maintain property ownership of the community in Haut-Lomami and financial process. Followed by marital status and education with 25%. Whereas, 15% retain occupation. These responses mean poverty has a negative aspect for allowing women’s political participation in leadership positions because if women are living under the line of the poverty, it is critical to them to participate in political sphere of influence. This insertion supported by (Mastara & Chigorimbo, 2021) who said Poverty and lack of economic security are often cited as some of the major barriers to women’s political participation. Poverty is a reality for the majority of Congolese women with more than 61% of Congolese women living below the poverty line. Women have little to no control over their income as men, making women dependent on their male relatives, control finances.

Recommendation: In order to allow women to participate in political sphere of influence, policymakers or legislators must empower women in socioeconomic activities.

TABLE 24: IN YOUR OWN PERSPECTIVE, HOW HAS POLITICAL AND LEGAL SYSTEM FACTORS HINDERED WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP IN HAUT-LOMAMI?

Parameter	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Own perspective regarding Political factors hindered women participation in political leadership in Haut-Lomami.	Gender relations	6	10
	Gender equality policy implementation	42	70
	Women voter registration of the political parties operating in Haut-Lomami	12	20
	Total	60	100

On the responses collected on own perspective, how has political factors hindered women political and legal system factors hindered women participation in political leadership in Haut-Lomami province, Democratic Republic of the Congo, 70% keep up gender equality policy implementation, Democratic Republic of the Congo. Followed by women voter registration of the political parties opening in Haut-Lomami province with 20%. While, only 10% keep in mind gender relations. These responses mean the lack of effective gender policy implementation are serious political factors hindered women participation in political leadership in Haut-Lomami because it is very important to achieve gender equality through political will. This insertion supported by who said Women are confronted with the reluctance of the population to vote for women. Their only means of trying to convince potential supporters is through verbal campaigns, which is different from the campaigns traditionally carried out by their male counterparts, which consist in particular of giving gifts. Thus, the democratization of the political party process is a real challenge which must be considered to achieve greater empowerment of women and to promote their visibility in the political arena

Recommendation: Politicians must implement gender policy according to the 2006 DRC's Constitution in order to avoid discrimination and gender stereotypes.

TABLE 25: WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES WOMEN IN HAUT-LOMAMI PROVINCE, DRC FACE THAT HINDER THEM FROM PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL INSTITUTION LEADERSHIP LEAD TO IN LEADERSHIP?

Parameter	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
The challenges women in Haut-Lomami province face that hinder them from participation in political institutions leadership.	The battle for gender equality, which resulted in the acting of the Parity Act in October 2015.	40	67
	The promotion of the fair implementation of the rights and duties of women and men and the strengthening of women access and position at the level of the decision-making sphere.	20	33
	Total	60	100

On the responses gathered on the challenges women in Haut-Lomami province face that hinder them from participation in political institutions leadership, 67% said the battle for gender equality, which resulted in the acting of the Parity Act in October 2015. Followed by the promotion of the fair implementation of the rights and duties of women and men and the strengthening of women access and position at the level of the decision-making sphere with 33%. These responses mean the battle for gender equality, which resulted in the acting of the Parity Act in October 2015 and the 2006 DRC's Constitution are main challenges that women in Haut-Lomami province local government face that hinder them from participation in political institutions leadership positions. This insertion supported by (Chelo, 2020) who said at the national level, the Democratic Republic of the Congo has ratified all instruments relating to the advancement of women in all areas of national life. Articles 14 and 15 of the Constitution of 18 February 2006, to name but a few, clearly stipulate that women must participate fairly in the political institutions of the Republic. Just recently, the

parity or gender equality battle found an outcome through the Parity law promulgated in October 2015. This law comes to clarify the measures of application of the constitutional provisions evoked. From now on before, the Democratic Republic of Congo 2006 Constitution of the Republic stipulates that “the state shall ensure the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and ensure the protection and promotion of their rights in all fields, including civil, political, economic, social and cultural fields. The state will take all appropriate measures to ensure the full development and full participation of women in national development. It will also take action against any form of violence against women in public life and in private life. Women have the right to fair representation in national, provincial and local institutions. The state shall ensure the implementation of gender equality in these institutions” (Article 14).

Recommendation: in order to allow women to participate in political leadership positions in public institutions at both central and local government levels, it could be essential to achieve gender equality according to the 2006 DRC’s Constitution.

TABLE 26: WOMEN’S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION LEADERSHIP INEQUALITIES AT THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL OF DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO FROM 2006 TO 2025.

Prime Minister Government	Gender	Period	Number of members		Total of members	%	
			M	F		M	F
Gizenga I	Male	2007-2008	52	8	60	87	13
Gizenga II	Male	2008-2010	55	5	60	92	8
Muzito I	Male	2008-2010	48	5	53	91	9
Muzito II	Male	2010-2011	38	5	43	88	12
Matata I	Male	2011-2012	41	5	46	89	11
Matata II	Male	2012-2014	31	5	36	86	14
Badibanga	Male	2016-2017	59	8	67	88	12
Tshibala	Male	2017-2019	56	3	59	95	5
Ilukamba	Male	2019-2021	59	8	67	88	12
Sama Lukonde I	Male	2021-2022	40	16	56	71	29
Sama Lukonde II	Male	2022-2023	41	16	57	72	28
Suminwa I	Female	2023-2024	37	17	54	69	31
Suminwa II	Female	2024-2025	36	17	53	68	32

In this above table 41, it is revealed that women’s political participation leadership disparities at the Central level of Democratic Republic of the Congo increased and decreased in different period over the leadership of Prime Minister Governments. The most increased women’s political participation leadership disparities due to men’s domination over women leading national ministries are observed during Tshibala’s period with 95%. Followed by Gizenga II with 92%; Muzito I with 91%; Matata I with 89%; Muzito II, Badibanga and Ilukamba with 88%; Gizenga I with 87%; Matata II with 86%; Sama Lukonde I with 72%; Sama Lukonde II with 71%; Suminwa I with 69% and Suminwa II symbolize 68%.

In divergent, women political leadership inequalities or disparities decrease systematically. During Gizenga I 13%; Gizenga II 8%; Muzito I 9%; Muzito II 12%; Matata I 11%; Matata II 14%; Badibanga 12%; Tshibala 5%; Ilukamba; 12%; Sama Lukonde I 29%; Sama Lukonde II 28%; as a female Prime Minister since the accession of Democratic Republic of the Congo gender parity is not fully implemented because Suminwa I has 31% and Suminwa II has only 32%. The analysis highlights that the most significant male domination (highest disparity percentages) was observed during Bruno Tshibala's government, while the lowest (highest women's participation) is noted under the current Prime Minister Judith Suminwa Tuluka.

The following table provided offers a historical view of the percentage of male domination or in reverse, women's participation in national ministries. The data put forward a measured, though varying, and decrease in gender inequalities over the years, culminating in the first female Prime Minister.

TABLE 27: ANALYSIS OF WOMEN'S POLITICAL LEADERSHIP INEQUALITIES AT NATIONAL LEVEL

Prime Minister (Period)	Male Domination Percentage	Women political Participation leadership Percentage	Trend
Tshibala	95%	5%	Highest recorded inequalities
Gizenga II	92%	8%	High inequalities
Muzito I	91%	9%	High disparity
Matata I	89%	11%	High inequalities
Muzito II, Badibanga, Ilukamba	88%	12%	High inequalities

Gizenga I	87%	13%	High inequalities
Matata II	86%	14%	High inequalities
Sama Lukonde I	72%	28%	Decreased inequalities
Sama Lukonde II	71%	29%	Decreased inequalities
Suminwa I	69%	31%	Systematically inequalities
Suminwa II	68%	32%	Lowest recorded inequalities

Note: The Suminwa II government was a cabinet rearrangement announced in August 2025, not a new prime ministerial term. The percentages for Suminwa I and II refer to the share of men, with women's political representation at 31% and 32%, respectively. On the other hand, it is essential and indispensable to maintain that the current Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is Judith Suminwa Tuluka, the first woman to hold the highest leadership position in the Central Government since taking office on June 12, 2024. It is well known that Her first government was formed with 52 members, and it take account of 16 women, which symbolizes approximately 31% female political representation, a significant high at the time of its formation. On the other hand, a following cabinet rearrange, mentioned as Suminwa II, which was announced in August 2025, maintains a similar level of women political representation, with reports indicating 16 women in the 54 members of central government. While a significant step towards gender equality, the statistics show that the constitutional goal of gender parity is not yet fully implemented, as men still hold the majority of ministerial positions (around 68-69%).

TABLE 28: WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION LEADERSHIP INEQUALITIES IN PROVINCIAL ELECTORAL CAMPAIGNS IN HAUT-LOMAMI PROVINCE, DRC IN 2023

	Territories of Haut-Lomami	Number of participation		Number of registered electoral candidates	%		Elected candidates	
		M	W		M	W	M	W
2023 Electoral cycle in DRC at provincial level	Bukama	720	150	870	83	17	6	0
	Kabongo	587	151	738	80	20	4	1
	Kaniama	273	108	381	72	28	2	1
	Kamina	330	99	429	77	23	2	1
	Kamina City	80	55	135	59	41	1	0
	Malemba-Nkulu	647	205	852	76	24	4	2

Based on general information regarding the 2023 elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) at the provincial level, **women remain highly underrepresented in elected provincial positions in Haut-Lomami**, consistent with national trends. Specific official data breaking down the number and percentage of *elected* candidates by gender for each of the territories listed Bukama (men 83%, women 17%), Kabongo (men 80%, women 20%), Kaniama (men 72%, women 28%), Kamina (men 77%, women 23%), Kamina City (men 59%, women 41%), Malemba-Nkulu (men 76%, women 24%). On the other hand, participation candidacy numbers regularly put forward a much lower representation for women in both candidacy and potential election outcomes across all territories in Haut-Lomami, ranging from 17% to 41%.

In terms of participation including candidacy, there are figures that reflect the broader reality in the Democratic Republic of the Congo especially in the Haut-Lomami province where socio-cultural norms, patriarchal systems, and economic factors and political factors act as major barriers to women's political participation.

TABLE 29: STATISTICS FOR WOMEN IN SENIOR POSITIONS IN NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS FROM 2007 TO 2025

Category	Year	Total Staff	Women	%	Men	%
Government	2007-2011	216	23	10,6	193	89,3
National Assembly	2007-2011	500	64	12,8	436	87,2
Senate	2007-2011	108	23	21,2	85	78,7
Accumulated total and percentage		824	110	13,3	714	86,6
Government	2012-2023	388	61	15,7	327	84,2
National Assembly	2012-2023	500	50	10	450	90
Senate	2012-2023	109	19	17,4	90	82,5
Accumulated total and percentage		997	130	13,0	867	86,9
Government	2024-2025	107	34	31,7	73	68,2
National Assembly	2024-2025	485	50	10,3	435	89,6
Senate	2024-2025	100	20	20	80	80
Accumulated total and percentage		692	104	15,0	588	84,9

Table 29 data for women in senior positions in national institutions from 2007 to 2025 in national institutions. Source Archives de l'Assemblée Nationale, 2023. The above statistics provide gender parity in national and legislative executive in Democratic Republic of the Congo from 2007 to 2025. It is important to note that Table above tells us that at present national executive branch only gives an evolutionary place to women leaders in the government. Actually, the percentage of female leaders in the current National Government does not exceed a significant number 32%.

TABLE 30: KEY TRENDS FOR WOMEN POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN SENIOR LEADERSHIP POSITIONS (2007-2025).

Category	Period	Total Staff	Women	% Women	Men	% Men
Government	2007-2011	216	23	10.6%	193	89.3%
National Assembly	2007-2011	500	64	12.8%	436	87.2%
Senate	2007-2011	108	23	21.2%	85	78.7%
Accumulated Total	2007-2011	824	110	13.3%	714	86.6%
Government	2012-2023	388	61	15.7%	327	84.2%
National Assembly	2012-2023	500	50	10.0%	450	90.0%
Senate	2012-2023	109	19	17.4%	90	82.5%
Accumulated Total	2012-2023	997	130	13.0%	867	86.9%
Government	2024-2025	107	34	31.7%	73	68.2%
National Assembly	2024-2025	485	50	10.3%	435	89.6%
Senate	2024-2025	100	20	20.0%	80	80.0%
Accumulated Total	2024-2025	692	104	15.0%	588	84.9%

The total accumulated percentage of women in these national institutions has seen an insignificant increasing trend, increasing from 13.3% in 2007-2011 to 15.0% in 2024-2025. On the other hand, the most significant increase is observed in the national executive branch. The percentage of women in senior government leadership positions more than doubled from 10.6% in 2007-2011 to 31.7% in the 2024-2025 period.

Although, the percentages in the National Assembly and Senate have remained quite stable, with insignificant increase and fall across the periods, in general remaining between 10% and 21%. Even though the positive trend in the executive branch, men leaders in public institutions in Democratic Republic of Congo in general including at the provincial levels continue to hold the vast majority of senior leadership positions across all public institutions and periods, regularly representing over 68% of the total staff.

TABLE 31: WOMEN HOLDING MINISTERIAL POSITIONS IN HAUT-LOMAMI PROVINCE, DRC

Honourable Presidents	Sex	Period	Number of Provincial Ministers		Number of Employees		Total by sex		Total of Gender	%	
			M	W	M	W	M	W		M	W
Mukolwe	M	2016-2017	10	2	300	162	310	164	474	65	35
Mwenzemi	M	2017-2018	10	2	645	177	655	179	834	79	21
Lenge	M	2018-2019	10	2	556	168	566	170	736	77	23
Ngandu	M	2019-2021	10	2	504	160	514	162	676	76	24
Wabatame	M	2021-2022	13	2	509	176	522	178	700	75	25
Mushimbi 1	F	2022-2023	13	2	728	310	741	312	1053	70	30
Mushimbi 2		2023-2024	11	2	354	165	365	167	532	69	31
Marmont	M	2024-2025	8	2	350	169	358	171	529	68	32

The overhead table revealed critical women political leadership disparities in the Executive provincial government in the Haut-Lomami, Democratic Republic of the Congo from 2016 to 2025 the findings shown that the increased male participation in leadership in the Executive provincial government in the Haut-Lomami is observed in the period from 2017 to 2018 when Mwenzemi was the second governor of Haut-Lomami with the frequency of 79%; followed with 77% from 2018 to 2019 during the

leading of Lenge Mpoyo who was the third governor of the Haut-Lomami province; the period from 2019 to 2021 when Denis Ngandu was the fourth governor and this indicated 76%, Under the period of Wabatame (2022-2024), from the fifth governor with 75%; throughout Mushimbi 1's period from 2022 to 2023 with 70%; from 2023 to 2025 during Mushimbi 2's period with 69%, during the leadership of Mormont Banza's period (2024-2025) with 68% and lastly the period from 2016 to 2017 is less increased with 65% under the leadership of Mukolwe who was the first governor of Haut-Lomami province. The most increased women participation in leadership disparities indicated the period from 2016 to 2017 under Mukolwe's leadership with 35%; followed by 32% under Marmont's leadership; 31% during the leading of Mushimbi 1; 30% under the leading of Mushimbi 2; 25% under Wabatame's leading; 24% under Denis Ngandu's leading; 23% under the leading of Lenge Marcel. While, the most decreased women participation in leadership disparities is observed from Mwenzemi's leadership from 2017 to 2018 with 29%.

TABLE 32: WOMEN HOLDING LEADERSHIP POSITIONS IN THE PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY OF HAUT-LOMAMI PROVINCE, DRC

Honourable Presidents	Sex	Period	Number of Provincial Ministries		Number of workers		Total by sex		Total of Gender	%	
			M	W	M	W	M	W		M	W
Kamwanda	M	2015-2018	17	1	27	16	44	17	61	72	28
Katandula	M	2019-2021	24	4	20	23	44	27	71	62	38
Mushimbi	F	2021-2022	24	4	32	22	56	26	82	68	32
Mutombo	M	2022-2024	25	3	52	43	77	46	123	63	37
Muleba	M	2024-2025	22	6	85	37	107	43	150	71	29

The above table showed critical women political leadership disparities in the Provincial Assembly of Haut-Lomami, DRC from 2015 to 2025 the findings revealed that the increased male participation in leadership in the Provincial Assembly of Haut-Lomami province is observed in the period from 2015 to 2018 when Kamwanda was Honourable President with the frequency of 72%; followed with 71% from 2024 to 2025 during the president of Muleba; the period from 2021 to 2022 when the first female leader led this important provincial indicated 68%, Under Mutombo (2022-2024) with 62%; throughout Katandula's period from 2019 to 2021 with 62%; lastly the period from 2021 to 2022 is less increased with 62% because the Provincial Assembly was led by the first female leader in the Haut-Lomami province. The most increased women participation in leadership disparities indicated the period from 2019

to 2021 under Katandula with 38%; followed by 37% under Mutombo’s leadership; 32% during the leading of Mushimbi. While, the most decreased women participation in leadership disparities is observed from Muleba’s leadership from 2024 to 2025 with 29% and with 28% from 2015 to 2028 during Kamwanda’s period and the first Honourable president of Provincial Assembly of the Haut-Lomami province.

TABLE 33: ANALYSIS BY LEADERSHIP PERIOD

Period	Honourable President	Male %	Female %	Observations
2015-2018	Kamwanda (M)	72%	28%	Highest male dominance observed.
2019-2021	Katandula (M)	62%	38%	Highest female representation observed.
2021-2022	Mushimbi (F)	68%	32%	The only female president; female participation decreased from the previous period.
2022-2024	Mutombo (M)	63%	37%	High female participation maintained.
2024-2025	Muleba (M)	71%	29%	Significant decrease in female representation.

The above table offers a detailed analysis of gender representation in leadership positions within the Provincial Assembly of Haut-Lomami Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo, across the years 2015 to 2025. Regarding

the summary of observations: the period of 2015–2018 under President Kamwanda showed the highest level of male participation (72%). While, the highest percentage of women in leadership occurred between 2019 and 2021 under President Katandula (38%). On the other hand, interestingly, during the occupancy of the first female leader, President Mushimbi (2021–2022), the female participation rate was 32%, which was lower than the preceding (38%) and subsequent (37%) periods led by male presidents.

Furthermore, the most recent period (2024–2025) under President Muleba shows a significant regression in female participation, dropping to 29%, nearly matching the lowest point recorded in 2015-2018. In conclusion, the data illustrates that while women have held significant positions, including the presidency of the assembly; systemic disparities remain substantial, indicating a need for targeted interventions to promote gender balance in political leadership within the Haut-Lomami province.

TABLE 34: THE WOMEN HOLDING LEADERSHIP POSITIONS WITHIN THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF KAMINA

Mayer of the City of Kamina	Sex	Period	Number of the Mayer of Kamina		Number of Employees		Total by sex		Total of Gender	%	
			M	W	M	W	M	W		M	W
Mukandila Julie	F	2018-2022	0	1	122	18	122	19	141	87	13
Umba Ndolo	M	2022 until now	1	0	65	10	66	10	76	87	13

Regarding gender Balance, the data shows that despite having a female mayor during the 2018-2022 period, the overall percentage of female employees (13%) remained the same during the following period under a male mayor (13%). While, the current appointed Mayor of Kamina is Umba Ndolo. On the other hand, Mukandila Julie held the top leadership position as mayor as the single woman in a mayoral role during her period from 2018 to 2022. Furthermore, it is extremely important to articulate that the quantity of the Mayer of Kamina, Haut-Lomami Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo in the above table looks to refer to the total of people holding that specific mayoral role within that period, indicating she was the only holder during her period, just as Umba Ndolo has been for his. The provided statistics emphasizes especially on the mayor and general employees. It does not list other women in specific leadership positions beyond the mayoral role.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

The research was conducted in the Haut Lomami local government, Democratic Republic of the Congo. is one of the 26 provinces of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) with a population of 3 666 000, 54% of which are women according to (UNDP, 2024). Located in the northern part of the DRC, the Haut-Lomami Province was one of the four districts of the former province of Katanga, which was divided into four provinces in June 2015 during decentralization process. Today, the Haut Lomami is a province on its own separated from the former main Katanga province in accordance with article 2 of the 2006 Constitution and the law of programming N ° 15/004 of February 28, 2015 determining the installation of new provinces. The Haut Lomami is composed of a mono-ethnic group of people called Baluba of Katanga's former province, established on the masculine domination style of living. Men are considered as having more power over women in that women are not expected to perform some of activities acknowledged to be performed only by men leaders according to their culture for example house building. This displays inequality between women and men leaders in public institutions. The investigation of socio-cultural and economic situation of Haut Lomami illustrates that gender inequality continue in both private and public institutions. In general, women and girls face challenges in gaining access to legal rights, education, health and economic resources among others. On the other hand, the researcher considers that women can achieve greater activities if they have appropriate and adequate level of education. This research focused on an assessment of the application of Gender Equality Policy in the Haut Lomami Local Government, Democratic Republic of Congo.

5.2. Discussion

Excessively, the battle for gender equality, which resulted in the acting of the Parity Act in October 2015 and the 2006 DRC's Constitution are main challenges that women in Haut-Lomami province local government face that hinder them from participation in political institutions leadership positions. This insertion supported by (Chelo, 2020) who said at the national level, the Democratic Republic of the Congo has ratified all instruments relating to the advancement of women in all areas of national life. Articles 14 and 15 of the Constitution of 18 February 2006, to name but a few, clearly stipulate that women must participate fairly in the political institutions of the Republic. Just recently, the parity or gender equality battle found an outcome through the Parity law promulgated in October 2015. This law comes to clarify the measures of application of the constitutional provisions evoked. From now on before, the Democratic Republic of Congo 2006 Constitution of the Republic stipulates that "the state shall ensure the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and ensure the protection and promotion of their rights in all fields, including civil, political, economic, social and cultural fields. The state will take all appropriate measures to ensure the full development and full participation of women in national development. It will also take action against any form of violence against women in public life and in private life. Women have the right to fair representation in national, provincial and local institutions. The state shall ensure the implementation of gender equality in these institutions" (Article 14). They are limited in terms of leadership and participation in sectors like politics, civil society, and the private sector from the local, national, and up to the global levels. Women particularly girls face challenges, which include lower educational outcomes and traditional harmful practices. Due to ignorance of law, their rights and lack of effective participation to formal education which is a women

empowering tool for women's participation in government political positions, Congolese women particularly those from the Haut Lomami province face several challenges and these cause them not to effectively participate in the political affairs.

The challenges women in Haut-Lomami province face that hinder them from participation in political institutions leadership, 67% said the battle for gender equality, which resulted in the acting of the Parity Act in October 2015. Followed by the promotion of the fair implementation of the rights and duties of women and men and the strengthening of women access and position at the level of the decision-making sphere with 33%.

In this study, the researcher came up with a liberal Feminist Theory, which was based on the assumption that in order for women to achieve equal status, all stereotyped social roles for men and women had to be abolished. We agree with the above scholar when he said that the abolishment of gender exclusion of professional roles was necessary for the achievement of women's equality. Nevertheless, the Theory of the Liberal Feminist is a view that supported equal not special treatment for women and men. In addition, the researcher came up with a research design and methodology, data collection and data analysis techniques that were used to conduct this study, targeted population and sampling, and ethical considerations were also included. Data were collected, discussed and interpreted. Finally, the researcher came up with a conclusion and recommendations. The cross-sectional survey method was employed as the research design for this study, which was because it allows the collection of information from a representative sample of a target population.

The social issue under study will be an assessment of the application of gender equality policy in the Haut Lomami Local Government, Democratic Republic of Congo, and

the researcher explored main causes that are not allowing women politicians leaders to participate in public sector especially in the Public institutions in Haut-lomami local government. This research design will help the researcher to assess the application of Gender Equality and the law of the parity between men and women. Policy in the Haut Lomami Local Government, Democratic Republic of Congo.

5.3. Conclusions

Law No. 15/013 of 1 August 2015 on the modalities of application of women's rights and gender parity: functional equality which consists of equal representation between men and women in access to decision-making bodies at all levels and in all areas of national life, without discrimination; in addition to the principle of numbers, it also indicates the conditions, positions and placements. On the other hand, women leaders in the Haut-Lomami are currently facing challenges to get equal treatment and it is observed gender inequalities, women leadership disparities including discrimination regarding employments and leadership positions. It is enormously important to maintain that gender equality are considered as critical issues in DRC and especially in Haut-Lomami province. The political field is no stranger to these findings. In this particular aspect, it is shameful to observe that all women who wish to enter political or public institutions in the Democratic Republic of Congo in general and in the Haut-Lomami province in particular had often encounter at the workforces: (i) abuse; (ii) harassment (iii) toxic masculinity; and (iv) gender stereotypes, which disappoint them from even applying for positions. Women's political participation in DRC has decreased over the past two elections, from an overall 13.6% in 2006, to 11.7% in 2018. Gender stereotypes do not only affect women before entering politics, but also continue to be inflicted when women enter political parties.

5.4. Implications

The assessment of socio-cultural, political and economic factors in the Haut Lomami local government, Democratic Republic of the Congo shows that gender inequality persist at both public and private institutions. Usually, women leaders and young women face challenges in accessing in decision-making, legal rights, education, health and economic resources among others. On the other hand, the researcher have confidence in women can achieve greater accomplishments if they have suitable and sufficient level of education. This study is indispensable in the sense that gender equality is attractive more and more worrying and central issue concerning women empowerment in any community around the world as well as in the Haut-Lomami local government, Democratic Republic of Congo. It seeks to explore political will from policymakers and legislators to promote the full implementation of gender equality laws in order to achieve women empowering tool for women's political participation in leadership positions and look at if women are subject to empowerment or are they subject to exploitation by men. It also evaluates the factors that affecting women's political participation in leadership inequalities in public institutions and how the local governments can correct this. The Study will help for information and material of use by the public institutions and Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) or Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) as well as researchers who will be interested to work in this field (an Assessment of the Application of Gender Equality Policy in the Haut Lomami Local Government, Democratic Republic of Congo).

5.5. Recommendations

Based on the research, the researcher would like to recommend the following:

1. Further strengthening and effectively implementing laws, regulations and policies promoting gender equality.
2. Addressing social norms and cultural factors barriers that maintain gender inequality.
3. Increasing women's access to education, economic opportunities, and women's political participation in leadership positions.
4. Ensuring women have the means to fully participate in socioeconomic institutions and decision-making.
5. Central Government through policymakers and legislators should fight against all forms of discrimination against women, especially discrimination meant to delay women's political participation in leadership positions.
6. Policymakers and legislators at both Central and local government levels should protect and safeguard women against all forms of violations against women; for example, sexual abuses or violations, discrimination, marginalization and gender stereotypes, which limit them to participate in public institutions.
7. Women holding government political leadership positions in Haut-Lomami local government should stand and advocate for women human rights. In other words, they should be voice of the voiceless women in order to enable their fellow women to participate in decision-making and empowerment procedure.
8. NGOs and CSOs dealing with human rights affairs in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and churches should also stand to speak on behalf of women human rights; especially speak against all forms of discrimination and violations meant against women advancement.

9. The 2006 DRC's Constitution claims gender equality or parity between men and women that is good; but it has never been pragmatic. The researcher would recommend that gender equality or parity should be achieved as declared 50% men and 50% women in terms of satisfaction of empowerment processes through both electoral lists and appointments.

5.6. Suggestions for Further Research

Further research on gender equality in Haut-Lomami should prioritize analyzing the impact of socio-cultural norms and gender traditional norms on women's political participation leadership disparities, assessing the effectiveness of the implementation of gender equality or parity between men and women, and assessing women's access to economic resources, specifically in politics.

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APPENDICES

FIGURE 2: INFORMED CONSENT GUIDE

Identify yourself

My name is KABOJA NTSHIKALA Tantine, a final year (Master in Public Policy and Governance) student from AU. I am carrying out a study on an assessment of the Application of Gender Equality policy in the Haut – Lomami Local Government; DRC. I am kindly asking you to participate in this study by answering questions /filling in the space provided on the questionnaire.

What you should know about the study:

Purpose of the study:

The purpose of the study is to explore and to evaluate whether the gender equality policy is wholly implemented in Haut-Lomami local government and to see if women politicians leaders have been empowered through the law of the parity between men and women as an empowering factor for them to avoid women leadership disparities in public institutions and to take up leadership and decision-making at the local government level, although they can be allowed to participate in several activities in politics and public administration, also to assess if women leaders have support from public policy makers and institutions dealing with gender equality concerns . As the study focused on the new province of Haut-Lomami, DRC, therefore, the sample size process is fifty (50) citizens this is because other 50 citizens will not be able to answer correctly questions which will be asked in the research questions. However, the sample was representative of all groups of population cited above. The sample was selected using quota sampling as technique because the researcher will identify the informants. The strata constituted a) Level of education b) Native/non native c) Time (different council regimes) following the above, gender differences will be taken into consideration. It was difficult to ensure gender balance because of the fact that women will be busier than men with household will. This left them little or no time for such an exercise. In addition, most of Kamina's women have fled, as it is a society where women are always inferior to men. A simple quota sampling technique will be used to select informants that were representative of the target population.

Procedures and duration

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to answer to a certain number of questions orally or by writing. It is expected that this will take about 30 minutes.

Risks and discomforts

There is no risk for that because the study is only for academic purpose.

Benefits and/or compensation

The benefit for this study is that its results will show the Haut – Lomami people opinion about gender equality policy and to identify the factors or challenges that push women leaders not to participate in empowerment processes and how the Central government of DRC can rectify this at the local government levels. In addition, it will constitute a document that other researchers would use.

Confidentiality

The Researcher ensured that all data will be kept under lock and key and not to be shared with those not in the study. The Researcher will show respondents the result of the study and the data is destroyed after when they are analysed. The Researcher ensured those who cannot read and write have the questions read out to them. The researcher never forced any participants who wanted to withdraw from being respondent.

Voluntary participation

Participation in this study is voluntary. If participant decides not to participate in this study, their decision will not affect their future relationship with the Haut-Lomami Local Government authorities) If they chose to participate, they are free to withdraw their consent and to discontinue participation without penalty.

Offer to answer questions

Before you sign this form, please ask any questions on any aspect of this study that is unclear to you. You may take as much time as necessary to think it over.

Authorisation

If you have decided to participate in this study please sign this form in the space provide below as an indication that you have read and understood the information provided above and have agreed to participate.

Name of Research Participant (please print)

Date

Signature of Research Participant or legally authorised representative

If you have any questions concerning this study or consent form beyond those answered by the researcher including questions about the research, your rights as a research participant, or if you feel that you have been treated unfairly and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, please feel free to contact the Africa University Research Ethics Committee on telephone (020) 60075 or 60026 extension 1156 email

aurec@africau.edu

Name of Researcher

KABOJA NTSHIKALA TANTINE

CONSENTEMENT ÉCLAIRÉ

Je m'appelle KABOJA NTSHIKALA Tantine, étudiante en dernière année de Master en Politiques Publiques et Gouvernance à l'Université d'Afrique du Sud. Je mène une étude sur l'application de la politique d'égalité des genres dans la collectivité locale du Haut-Lomami, en RDC. Je vous invite à participer à cette étude en répondant aux questions et en remplissant le formulaire prévu à cet effet.

Ce que vous devez savoir sur l'étude :

Objectif de l'étude :

L'objectif de l'étude est d'examiner et d'évaluer si la politique d'égalité des genres est pleinement mise en œuvre dans la collectivité locale du Haut-Lomami et de déterminer si les femmes politiques ont été autonomisées grâce à la loi sur la parité hommes-femmes, ce qui leur permet d'éviter les disparités en matière de leadership féminin dans les institutions publiques et d'accéder à des postes de direction et de prise de décision au niveau de la collectivité locale. Elles peuvent également être autorisées à participer à diverses activités politiques et administratives. L'objectif est également d'évaluer si les femmes dirigeantes bénéficient du soutien des décideurs publics et des institutions concernées par les questions d'égalité des genres. L'étude étant centrée sur la nouvelle province du Haut-Lomami, en RDC, la taille de l'échantillon a été fixée à cinquante (50) citoyens, car les cinquante autres ne seront pas en mesure de répondre correctement aux questions de recherche. Cependant, l'échantillon était représentatif de tous les groupes de population cités ci-dessus. L'échantillon a été sélectionné par échantillonnage par quotas, car le chercheur identifiera les informateurs. Les strates étaient les suivantes : a) Niveau d'éducation, b) Autochtone/non autochtone, c) Temps (différents régimes communaux). Suite à ce qui précède, les différences entre les sexes seront prises en compte. Il était difficile d'assurer l'équilibre entre les sexes, car les femmes seront plus occupées que les hommes par les tâches ménagères. Cela leur laissait

Nom du chercheur

KABOJA NTSHIKALA TANTINE

INSTRUMENTS OF DATA COLLECTION

Section A: General Information

1. Gender

Male Female

2. Age Bracket

18 to 25 Years 26 to 35 Years
36 to 45 Years 46 to 55 Years
56 to 65 Years 66 and above

3. What is your highest level of Education?

Postgraduate Bachelors
Diploma Certificate
Secondary education Primary education

4. Marital status

Married
Divoree
Separated
Single
Widowed

5. What is your occupation?
6. What is your current leadership positions?.....

SECTION B: Cultural Factors

7. Does culture encourage women to participate for political leadership positions?

Yes No

8. If yes, why?

9. As a woman what is your priority?

Family responsibilities

Child rearing

Job

Other careers (specify)

10. To what extent do the following cultural factors affect women participation in Public Institution leadership in Haut-Lomami province, DRC?

Educational attainment

Property ownership

Access to financial resources

11. How do social norms and stereotypes affect women's ability to hold leadership positions?

12. What is the impact of cultural and religious beliefs on women's leadership in public institutions in Haut-Lomami province, DRC?

13. How do traditional gender roles and expectations influence women's participation in politics in Haut-Lomami province, DRC?

.....
.....
.....
.....

SECTION C: Socio-economic Factors

13. Is the availability of resources such as money, vehicles a major determinant of the participation of women in political leadership?

Yes No

14. Do women have adequate resources such as money, vehicles to sustain a campaign for a political seat?

Yes No

15. To what extent do the following socio-economic factors affect women participation in political leadership disparities in Haut-Lomami province, DRC? Where 1= No extent at all, 2= low extent, 3= moderate extent, 4= Great extent and 5=very great extent.

	1	2	3	4	5
Marital status					
Education level					
Occupation					
Property Ownership					
Financial process					

16. How do socio-economic factors affect women political leadership disparities in Haut-Lomami province, DRC?

.....
.....
.....

SECTION E: Political Factors

17. Are there political factors that affect women political leadership disparities in Haut-Lomami province, DRC?

Yes [] No []

18. If yes, which ones?

.....

19. To what extent do the following political factors affect women political leadership disparities in public institution in Haut-Lomami province, DRC? Where 1=No extent at all, 2=low extent, 3= moderate extent, 4= Great extent and 5= very great extent.

	1	2	3	4	5
Gender relations					
Gender inequalities					
Gender discrimination					

20. How do political factors affect women political leadership inequalities in public institution in Haut-Lomami province, DRC?

.....

21. Which other factors do you think affect women political leadership inequalities in public institution in Haut-Lomami province, DRC?

.....

SECTION F: Women participation in Political Leadership in Haut-Lomami province, DRC.

22. Would you consider competing for a civic or parliamentary position?

Yes [] No []

23. Would you vote for a woman who is competing for a civic or parliamentary seat?

Yes [] No []

24. Would you trust a woman with a civic or parliamentary political leadership?

Yes [] No []

25. How do you rate the following measures of women participation in political leadership in Haut-Lomami province, DRC? (5-Excellent, 4-Good, 3-Moderate, 2-Bad, 1-Poor)

	1	2	3	4	5
Number of women holding positions in the party structures					
Involvement of women in campaigns					
Involvement of women running for political office					

Interview Guide

This study seeks to investigate an analysis of factors affecting women political leadership disparities in Haut-Lomami province, DRC. The data collected from this thesis will be purely for purposes of learning, the responses obtained will be treated with greatest confidentiality and the names of respondents are not required.

SECTION A: General Information

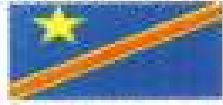
1. Have you ever participated in elections in the country from 2018 to 2023?
2. How many times have you participated in electing leaders from 2018 to 2023?
3. Have you ever taken part in campaigns over women leadership in Haut-Lomami province, DRC?
4. What motivated you to take part in the campaign in vying with men leaders in Haut-Lomami province, DRC?
5. What are factors affecting women political leadership disparities in public institutions in Haut-Lomami local government?
6. What are other related leadership disparities are faced by women political in Haut-Lomami province, DRC?
7. What are the recommend measures to address the women political leadership inequalities and gender inequalities in public institutions at Haut-Lomami local government, DRC?

SECTION B: Factors affecting women political leadership disparities in Public Institution in Haut-Lomami province, DRC

1. How can you describe the women political leadership disparities in public institution in Haut-Lomami province, DRC in the past four years?
2. In your own perspective how has cultural factors hindered women political leadership inequalities in Haut-Lomami province, DRC?
3. In your own perspective how has socio-economic hindered women political leadership in Haut-Lomami, DRC?
4. In your own perspective how has political and legal system factors hindered women participation in political leadership in Haut-Lomami?
5. What are the effects having women participation in political institution leadership lead to in leadership in Haut-Lomami province, DRC?
6. What are the challenges women in Haut-Lomami province, DRC face that hinder them from participation in political institution leadership lead to in leadership?

FIGURE 8: PERMISSION TO UNDER TAKE RESEARCH

REPUBLIQUE DEMOCRATIQUE DU CONGO
PROVINCE DU HAUT-LOMAMI



Assemblée Provinciale
La Province

Kamina, le 15/01/2026

N° 058 / P / AP / HL / MTB / 2026

Transmis copie pour information aux :

- A Son Excellence Monsieur le Gouverneur de la Province du Haut-Lomami ;
- Honorables Membres du Bureau de l'Assemblée Provinciale du Haut-Lomami (Tous) à KAMINA

The Academic Administration
Africa University
B.P. 75018

RE-PERMISSION TO UNDER TAKE RESEARCH FOR THESIS FROM JANUARY TO JUNE (IN RESPECT OF) (KABOJA NTSHIKALA TANTINE).

With reference to student's letter dated January 5th 2026, I am directed to write and inform you, that the above named student (Kabojá Ntshikala Tantine) with registration number Reg No: 243027 has been accepted to carry out his research Dissertation titled: "An Assessment of the Application of Gender Equality Policy in the Haut Lomami Local Government, Democratic Republic of Congo, and data collection in the Haut-Lomami Province, Democratic Republic of Congo as contained in her letter.

Yours faithfully !



Honorable MULEBA TSHINWISHI Basile



Assemblée Provinciale du Haut-Lomami site au N°1484, Av. des Hermines, commune et ville de Kamina, République Démocratique du Congo



FIGURE 12: AUREC APPROVAL TO UNDERTAKE RESEARCH



AFRICA UNIVERSITY
A Practical Methodist Research Institution
"Investing in Africa's future"

AFRICA UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (AUREC)

P.O. Box 1320 Mutare, Zimbabwe, Off Nyanga Road, Old Mutare-Tel (+263-20) 60075/60026/61611 Fax: (+263 20) 61785 Website: www.africanu.edu

Ref: AU4538/26

25 March, 2026

Kaboja Ntshikala Tantine

C/O Africa University

Box 1320

MUTARE

RE: **AN ASSESSMENT OF THE APPLICATION OF GENDER EQUALITY POLICY IN THE HAUT LOMAMILocal Government, Democratic Republic of Congo**

Thank you for submitting the above-titled proposal to the Africa University Research Ethics Committee for review. Please be advised that AUREC has reviewed and approved your application to conduct the above research.

The approval is based on the following.

a) Research proposal

- **APPROVAL NUMBER** AUREC 4538/26
This number should be used on all correspondence, consent forms, and appropriate documents
- **AUREC MEETING DATE** NA
- **APPROVAL DATE** March 25, 2026
- **EXPIRATION DATE** March 25, 2027
- **TYPE OF MEETING:** Expedited
After the expiration date, this research may only continue upon renewal. A progress report on a standard AUREC form should be submitted a month before the expiration date for renewal purposes.
- **SERIOUS ADVERSE EVENTS** All serious problems concerning subject safety must be reported to AUREC within 3 working days on the standard AUREC form.
- **MODIFICATIONS** Prior AUREC approval is required before implementing any changes in the proposal (including changes in the consent documents)
- **TERMINATION OF STUDY** Upon termination of the study a report has to be submitted to AUREC.



Yours Faithfully

MARY CHINZOU

FOR CHAIRPERSON

AFRICA UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE