

Nyerere's Perspectives on Democracy: Women's Participation in Multiparty Elections in Tanzania

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Abstract

Elections are an important part of any democratic system. In many elections across the globe women are key players in the electoral process and indeed often the determining factor in elections. The role of women in elections is of increasing importance in Tanzania, as evidenced in the country's general elections in 1995 – 2015 under the multiparty system. This paper offers an opportune moment to reflect on how Tanzania can and is transforming the role of women from passive players into a dynamic force for change for change and democracy. While reflecting on Nyerere's perspectives on democracy, this paper undertakes a critical examination of the role of women in elections with the aim of highlighting factors which influence voting behavior. The paper argues that, women can become a key player in addressing the encounters for a force to a flourishing democracy if gender equality can be upheld to give space for the ability of women to participate in the political process. In the end, the paper explores what we can learn from Mwalimu

Nyerere's ideas on democracy and elections as we face the disturbing phenomenon of deprived performance in democratic elections.

Key words: *Democracy, Women Participation, Multiparty Elections, Gender Equality, Tanzania*

1.0 Introduction

One of the features, among others, that remain common to almost all countries in developing democracies is that women's constitutional rights to participate in electoral processes are very unfriendly. While it is well acknowledged that democracy is as much about citizenship rights, participation and inclusion, women who want to participate in elections are confronted with political, cultural and economic challenges, not only as voters but also as candidates and later on as elected leaders (Shvedova, 1998 as cited in Meena, 2010). This is contrary to the appealing thesis among commentators of democratic reforms who asserts that the quality of democracy is determined by the extent to which different social groups participate in established forms of political institutions (Mushi, 2010; Linz & Stepan, 1996; David, 1994). It is from this background that, this paper attempts to discuss role of women in electoral processes with reflection to multiparty general elections held in Tanzania from 1995 to 2015. The discussions are also informed by an increasing realisation in the governance discourses that empowerment of women and the establishment of gender equality are crucial to democracy (UNDP, 2013; Inglehart, *et al.*, 2005; Ruiz, 2013; Cornwall & Goetz, 2005). This is to say, effective participation of women in electoral processes are considered to be equally fundamental in enhancing democracy and speed-up development process while reducing tensions in our societies especially those related to disregarding women to hold

leadership positions (Meena, 2010; Abu-Zayd, 1998; Carroll, 1994). Borrowing from Mwalimu J. K. Nyerere's perspectives on democracy, analysis is being made to interrogate further the state of women's role and participation in multiparty elections in Tanzania. Our argument is that despite growing commitment to democratic principles and citizen's participation, women still face serious cultural, economic and political barriers that constrain their effective participation in democratic electoral processes and development at large.

2.0 Methodological Approach

This paper has benefited from qualitative approach to digest and develop better understanding of issues raised regarding the topic at hand. The paper employed qualitative analysis of secondary data literally termed as second hand analysis (Cnossen, 1997; Prasad, 2005). The approach was considered to be appropriate due to the reason that it offered cost-effective way of gaining a broad understanding of the topic at hand through careful and diligent handling of already existing data set (Cnossen, *ibid.*; Novak, 1996) which is common method in the discipline of political science and public administration. In this regard, the interest was to analyze practices in multiparty elections in Tanzania based on secondary data so as to generate insights as critically informed by Nyerere's perspectives on democracy. In order to avoid being overwhelmed with the volume of data, a well-defined purpose of the paper helped to create a clear focus which was to bring in the mainstream the discourse regarding gender equality and women participation in political processes including elections. Besides, there is no less validity with secondary data provided one is well informed about how it was collected (Berg, 2004; Bernard, 1994). Therefore, this is an analytical paper that interrogates secondary data availed from various reports from 1995 to 2015 general

elections in Tanzania. An official websites of Tanzania National Electoral Committee (NEC) and The Parliament of United Republic of Tanzania were used as authentic sources of information used in the analysis contained in this paper. Furthermore, secondary data from other institutional reports and findings from previous studies were also used to inform arguments made in this paper.

3.0 Cultural Theories and Women's Participation in Elections

Theoretically, traditional cultural theories have essentially long been suspected to function as a major barrier to women's representation in elected office (Inglehart, *et al.*, 2005). Theories of socialization, argues Sapiro (1983) and Carroll (1994), have for long time emphasised the importance of the division of sex roles within a particular society, and by extension in a country. Indeed, this might have more serious impact in political communities with egalitarian attitudes towards women as political leaders like Tanzania where cultural explanations hypothesize that women are more often reluctant to run and, if they seek the office, they will fail to attract sufficient support to win (Sapiro, 1983; Carroll, 1994). It can be recalled that a few years after independence in 1961, Tanzania abandoned multiparty electoral system as a framework of competitive politics under the egalitarian policy framework of *Ujamaa and Self Reliance*. Thus, re-introduction of multiparty system in 1993 suggests having a fresh start after three decades of single-party electoral system.

Reflecting on the cultural hypothesis above and general attitudes of people in Tanzanian communities this may plausibly have a direct influence upon whether women are prepared to come forward as candidates for office and even decision to go for ballot casting and whom to be voted for on the voting day. The

framework has also not excused political institutions such as political parties in the ways they set and apply criteria used to evaluate suitable candidates to be nominated. No wonder, Lovenduski and Norris (1993) proposes innovations such as the adoption of gender quotas in party recruitment processes as a strategy to enforce indirect influence upon the overall institutional context.

Furthermore, the cultural hypothesis provides probable reasons as to why women in elected office have advanced much further in some democracies rather than others. For example, Karvonen & Selle (1995) point out countries in Nordic Region to have managed to establish similar proportional representation electoral systems in comparable countries like Switzerland, France or Belgium despite the fact that all these nations are relatively similar European societies, as affluent post-industrial welfare states. In the same vein of thinking, Abu-Zayd (1998) associate culture to have been influenced political communities with strict Islamic background to be lagging behind in terms of number of women in parliament, even for the more affluent Arab societies like Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon. So to say, argues Inglehart, *et al.*, (2005) that, political culture has therefore commonly long been suspected to be an important determinant of women's entry into elected office. It is from the point of view of political culture wherein Nyerere's perspective on democracy is being reflected regarding women's role and their participation in multiparty elections in Tanzania.

4.0 Nyerere on Democracy

Julius Kambarage Nyerere (1922-1999) was born in Butiama, east of Lake Victoria, the son of a Zanaki chief, in what was then the British colony of Tanganyika. Nyerere became a Tanzanian statesman and first President of Tanzania (1962-1985) and he was

affectionately known as *Mwalimu*. As head of a one-party republic, Nyerere was committed to African liberation, offering sanctuary in Tanzania to members of South Africa's African National Congress and numerous other "freedom fighters" from Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Angola, and Uganda. Nyerere was a strong supporter of indigenous African culture, and his government emphasised *Ujamaa* (Swahili, "familyhood"), a form of rural socialism. Nyerere resigned as Tanzania's president in 1985, but continued as head of the CCM ruling party until 1990, when the country's constitution was revised to allow multi-party elections.

Nyerere was a strong believer democratic principles such freedom, equality and rule of law. For Nyerere democracy defined not only about the right to a form of government in which power is invested in the people as a whole, but also where that powers are usually exercised on their behalf by elected representatives. According to Nyerere, freedom was equated to the right of man to stand up-right as a human being. He therefore believed in a society where all citizens are able to act and live as they (he or she) chooses, without being subject to any undue restraints or restrictions. This is to say for Nyerere, all human being are equal and deserve same treatments before the law (rule of law) as well as cultural and social considerations.

Nyerere did believe that, elections are the central component of a healthy democratic system because it gives an opportunity for someone to choose or to be chosen by vote so as to take position in public offices. Elections were very important exercise to Nyerere, indeed, that is why when Tanzania had to have elections he took much of his time to address how elections can be meaningful exercise for all citizens. This is because Nyerere knew that without an informed electorate the potential for democratic

transformation is also limited. Therefore, it should be clearly established that in order to participate effectively in elections, citizens need information on registration and polling processes, as well as on the records and platforms of candidates and parties.

Nyerere's stance on treating people differently through prejudice was quite open. He fought against all kinds of discrimination at national and international levels. Nyerere named all kind of discrimination as '*ukaburu*' referring to unfair treatment of one person or group, usually because of prejudice about race, ethnicity, age, religion, or gender. Because of that, Nyerere used his all of his efforts to unite Tanzanian by building broad unanimity. Mwalimu aspired to developing a widespread agreement among all the members of a group in which there is absence of conflict. Nyerere disliked power monger politicians in favour of patriotic leaders who were patriotic and loved their people and country at large. He also believed that patriotic leaders are likely to be articulate and hence able to clearly express their thoughts, ideas and feelings coherently without causing social damages in lines of race, ethnicity, age, religion, or gender.

Nyerere's legacy on gender equality is clearly seen in the way he consistently criticised oppressive gender relations as far back as 1944 when he wrote an essay about freedom of women. The significance of this attempt is highly appreciated because of the fact that he did this long before any serious movement towards women's liberation was born anywhere in the world, even in the western world, let alone Africa (Shayo, 2011). In this regard, Nyerere is highly regarded by feminist docent as architecture of gender equality in addition to being remembered for his commitment to fight for people's rights in Tanzania before and after independence. Shayo (2011) for example, associates Nyerere's passion for gender equality with his early years of life

of which he grew up in rural areas and witnessed different forms of discrimination against women. In this regard, the author argues that Nyerere's attitude to gender equality did develop empathy for the poor, marginalised, and the excluded including men and women respectively. No wonder, immediately after independence he explicitly expressed his commitment to promote gender equality by putting a male and female figure in the national logo and in the national constitution. Mwalimu Nyerere also inspired and paved the way for today's political parties to be more considerate to include all sections of people in the society. He made this possible by bring together different sections of the general society in the party structure. This is vividly experienced today and widely adopted by political parties and other civil society organisations as they involve different groups such as youths, women, parents, cooperatives and many others that continue functioning as an effective mechanism for promotion of participatory and inclusive democracy.

5.0 Women's Political Participation in Tanzania

There has been a continuous effort to ensure effective participation and engagement of women in democratic processes and community development at large. This includes participation in elections and holding of positions in political institutions such as parliaments, cabinets, and other electoral positions. Tanzania has experienced different paths to political leadership with gradually increasing number of women through their own efforts or by the politics of affirmative action. The motivation has been to ensure women's access to power within representative institutions which is considered to be a key to advancement of women's empowerment and off-course one of major internationally agreed indicator towards gender equality (URT, 1992). At this point in time, political decision makers and intellectuals in academic

discourse, when reflecting on Nyerere's perspective on democracy, need to ask the important question that; *are women making differences in political participation?*

As in many countries of Africa, the period before independence (Pre – 1960s) decision making positions were dominated by men as most communities were governed through chiefdoms (DAW, *et. al.*, 2005). Decisions on important community issues were formally made by council of elder—again primarily men. However, through such social infrastructure women had a certain level of influence on formal decisions making structures. Just like in modern days, there were few women who were privileged and often exploiting other women and men. Over time, gender relations were affected by series of migrations, foreign conquests of Arabs, German, British, Belgians, French, etc. These co-opted the patriarchal structures and undermined other traditional institutions which gave women ritual, production and reproduction roles. In Tanzania during the struggle for independence, women contributed in various ways to national and regional independence movements. Reference is made to respected women elders such as Lucy Lameck, Sophia Kawawa and Titi Mohamed (Meena, 2009).

The transition period from colonialism to an independent state provided opportunities for women and marginalised groups to gain access to political powers; though minimal. The founding documents e.g. the constitution did not address particular issues promoting the development of both men and women. Until amendments during 2000, there was no reference within the constitution that specifically prohibited discrimination on the basis of sex. On the other hand, constitution allowed continuation of multiple systems of law; i.e. customary, religious and statutory – which leads to discrimination against women in issues of marriage, inheritance and custody of children. Among others,

some of the constraints facing women's election to political offices at the time included: negative traditional attitudes; lack of time due to productive and reproductive roles; lack of influence and abilities to break through male dominated party structures; and constraining laws and policies.

However, some specific avenues were created to promote women's participation in the party and government whereby a few women obtained positions, for instance, in the party women political wing – UWT, Bibi Titi Mohamed was elected first Chairperson and later on became Deputy Minister for Cultural and Social Services. Recognising the low number of women, 10 seats were designated and reserved for women in parliament from the 1970s. The number was later on increased to 15 in 1985, also representing youth, women, cooperatives, workers and parents. In 1991 there were only 2 women out of 20 Regional Commissioners; 8 women out of 82 District Commissioners; and 4 women out of 82 District Executive Directors (TGNP, 1997).

The transition from the single party to multiparty political system went hand in hand with growing awareness on issues of gender in relation to development and democracy. Non – Governmental Organisations (NGOs) played a major role during transition period by advocating for women's empowerment and raising gender equality issues for public debate. Organisations were formed to fill the gap in relation to networking and collective actions for organisations already working on gender issues (the formation of TGNP, TAWLA, TAMWA, to mention but few). The political system operated under the single party system [special seats – 15% for parliamentary and 25% for local council seats] continued to be the strategy chosen to accommodate women's demand for participation in politics. Each party was allocated number of seats equivalent to the % of constituencies

gained in general elections. The special seat avenue was provided for women to gain access to political positions but, possibilities of women winning constituency seats has continued to remain fundamentally unchallenged.

The national initiatives in an attempt to bring women at the mainstream of democratic political processes have mainly been organised through the framework of special seats. Special seats for women are basically a quota system which was introduced in 1985 to increase the number of women in parliament (Strachan, 2015). On the face of this initiative there has been significant increase of proportion of female Members of Parliament (MPs) which was set to reach the threshold of 30% of total number of all members in the house as set by Southern African Development Community (SADC).

The special seat framework has been challenged for not being able to make women become competitive as it seems to be more gift position than competencies (Yoon, 2011). In the same vein, Seppanen & Virtanen (2008) challenged the selection methods used by political parties and described them to lack transparency and introduce the potential for corruption, including sexual corruption and in turn to undermine the integrity of female candidates, leave alone complicating women MPs' accountability to the female constituency, as their loyalty lies primarily with their party. Despite all these challenges, still Tanzania has continued to make use of the same and it is giving good signs of its intention. The key argument for embracing this framework is that by ensuring greater representation of women in parliaments it is likely and potentially an appropriate approach towards an improved aggregation and articulation of women's concerns.

From the argument above, indeed it is highly encouraged that positive legislative changes for women have been made. Yoon

(2011) considers special seats to have promoted women’s participation and representation, improved interactions between male and female MPs, and indeed gradual change of negative attitudes towards women in politics. No wonder, there has been significant increase of women MPs in the parliament from 16% (44) out of all 268 MPs in first multiparty election 1995 to 38% (139) in fifth general election held in 2015. It can be recalled that the previous data indicated slow increase of number of women MPs (Table 1) fluctuating from 8% in 1961 to 11% in 1990.

Table 1: Male and Female MPs from 1961 - 2015

Year	Total	Men	Women	% of Women
1961	80	74	6	8%
1965	185	176	7	4%
1975	234	218	16	7%
1980	239	213	26	11%
1985	244	217	27	11%
1990	248	220	28	11%
1995	268	222	44	16%
2000	295	232	62	21%
2005	323	226	97	30%
2010	357	229	128	36%
2015	392	248	144	37%

Source: TGNP, 1997; NEC, 1997 - 2016

The current trend continues to build confidence of women to be able to participate in political processes effectively. This goes hand in hand with recent campaign by civil society organisations

demanding for the quota for female representation in parliament to be increased from 30 per cent to 50 per cent. Some issues are on continuous debate regarding whether special seat system are supposed to be a temporary measure or not and whether special seat MPs have to hold their seats for how many terms. While the conclusion of the debate is yet to be deliberated, Yoon (2013) suggests to have provided answers for the debate regarding permanency or temporal existence of special seats as well as term limit for special seats MPs by referring to three (3) special seats MPs who won constituency seats. In this regard, one is tempted to believe that, women exposed to politics through special seats can turn into serious candidates and competitive enough to manage finding their own way in respective constituencies hence they are equally competitive as male candidates. However, this seems to be too early and immature conclusions given the long lasted social, cultural, economic and political culture that gave men member competitive advantages over women group.

Despite the growing consensus in the literature on the lack of gender equality within political parties in Tanzania (Babeiya, 2011; Tenthani, 2014; International IDEA, 2014), women's engagement in politics has been increasing in Tanzania in recent years. It is an apparent observation of this paper that there is male dominance in political parties due to their systems of organisation that is potentially lacking enough support for female party members from the party leadership. Seppanen & Virtanen (2008) are of the same view as they list down challenges such as limited political networks, gender-biased social and cultural norms, limited political experience, and financial constraints. While almost all political parties seem to have a gender agenda in their party policies and constitutions, still there is overwhelming male dominance in their practices. International IDEA (2014), for example, acknowledges Tanzanian political parties' constitutions

and manifestos do include gender provisions despite the rhetoric of its implementation. One would expect political parties to walk on their talks (starting from their respective parties) as a way of impressing women who are relatively equal or the majority of voters in almost all elections held in the country.

Generally speaking, women participation can be enhanced through transformation of political organs such as parliaments into a strong and viable political institution. This is to say, increased participation of women in politics needs to go hand in hand with improvements in the quality of participation and the allocation influential roles to women. The women's political participation literature in Tanzania is continuously getting updated regarding the forms of participation, their contributions, and challenges encountered (IRI, 2016; Strachan, 2015; Ocran, 2014; Meena, 2010). Indeed, the state of political participation is not smooth enough to allow political agendas to be developed by women—by taking part in politics—through a range of activities. Literature also presents the fact that there is an ongoing discussion and debate, lobbying and activism in formal and informal ways that aims at locating women's political participation in the country. In so doing the focus is to ensure Tanzania become an exemplary democratic society that allows genuine articulation and presentation of political agendas of all social groups in decision-making arenas and key social forums.

6.0 Women and Multiparty Elections in Tanzania

Advancing equal participation of women in political processes and public life at large is still very much a work in progress around the world. This is because; women worldwide are woefully underrepresented in public office and political life (Inglehart, *et. al.*, 2005). Regarding women participation in elections our concern is about status of women whether they have an equal opportunity to take part in the political process. In this light there are three levels that this paper pays an attention i.e. equal participation as voters, as candidates, and as elected leaders. While analyzing these levels we shall through and eye to see what

types of barriers stand obstacles to women's participation in elections.

(a) Women Participation as Voters

Primarily, it is very important to draw attention to the point that, there are two different systems and procedures employed with regard to voter's registration. One is that of "passive" registration systems—wherein civil authorities compile voter lists automatically based on civil residency and other records. Under this system it is obvious that all qualified adult men and women will be registered hence establishing equal opportunity for all citizens to participate in election processes. Second system relates to countries with "affirmative" registration systems, in which the voters themselves must apply to be on the voter lists (ODHIR, 2012). Here is where Tanzania belongs, and the system has some potential obstacles that may be practical or bureaucratic in nature or due to technical deficiencies or limitations in administrative capacity, that may pose special difficulties for women.

Considering the statistics in all elections soon after re-introduction of multiparty political system in 1992, the status suggests to have relative majority of female than male voters. In 1994 Tanzania held ward councilors election of which the National Electoral Commission (NEC) used as preparatory grounds for 1995 general election for president and members of parliament. During 1994 ward councilor's election a total of 7,967,350 voters out of 10,627,122 expected voters were registered and female voters constituted relatively equal number of all male registered voters. The first general election was held in 1995 making use of an updated voter's register book which was used during ward councilor's election in 1994. In one year time no significant change could be expected and so there could be relatively the

same statistics of registered voters as per 1994 ward councilors election.

In 2000 Tanzania held another regular general election to elect president, members of parliament and ward councilors. A total of 10,303,891 voters were expected in the voters register and be able to participate in the said election. The actual registration shows that 10,088,484 voters were registered wherein 49% (4,939,359) were women and 51% (5,149,129) were men. Reflecting on the statistics of the first two elections (in 1995 and 2000) it is observed that number of female voters was significant with difference of only 1% (209,770) and indeed cannot be underestimated. During 2005 general election women were 51% (8,119,072) of all registered voters while men voters were 49% (7,800,677) out of 16,578,466 expected voters in Tanzania Mainland. Likewise, statistics indicates the same distribution of male and female voters in Zanzibar whereas female voters were 51% (8,029) and male voters were 49% (7,715). The number of male and female voters has continued to maintain to maintain the same parity with more female than male voters in the subsequent general elections held in 2010 and 2015. Observing the trend of male and female voters as presented above, it is clear that there is a relatively high percentage of female than male voters. However, representation of female voters has and continues to be less promising starting from nominations and getting into elected positions.

(b) Women Participation as Candidates

The nomination of candidates for positions of ward councilors, members of parliament and president in Tanzania electoral system is regulated and controlled by statutory provisions and the processes starts from participating political parties. The route of women participation as candidates also starts from respective political parties due to the reason that all candidates nominated by

NEC are qualified in preliminary stages in parties they represent. In this regard, it can be recalled that no independent candidate is allowed in Tanzania despite efforts made activists and civil society organisations. Arguably, nomination within political parties has not been friendly enough to encourage women participation in elections for the positions of ward councilors, members of parliament and president.

In all elections held soon after re-introduction of multiparty politics in Tanzania, the percentage of ward councilor's candidate nominations by NEC has never reached 10% of all candidates in each election. Data indicates that, during 1994 ward councilors election, the nomination of candidates by respective political party's portrayed bad start as it recorded only 1.3% (57) female candidates out of all 4,078 candidates from all political parties hence leaving the overwhelming majority 98.7% (4,021) to be occupied by male candidates. Since then, number of women candidates who aspired for councillorship nomination in political parties has been increasing even though percentagewise it is not impressive. Records indicates further that, in 2000 general election there was fewer female candidates nominated by NEC from all participating political parties. Also, statistics reveals only 5.8% (441) who were female out of all 7,561 candidates nominated for the positions of ward councilors in 2005 general election. Likewise, there were only 7% (559) out all 7,934 nominated candidates in 2010 and 6% (670) out 10,716 nominated candidates during 2015 general elections (NEC, 1997 - 2016).

As observed in the nomination of ward councilor candidates, the trend for nomination of members of parliament has also been not impressive whereby male domination has been experienced throughout five elections held since the re-introduction of multiparty politics in Tanzania. For example, during 1995 general

election nomination of candidates for members of parliament witnessed male domination from all political parties whereas the following election held in 2000 recorded 8.4% (72) female candidates out of 856 candidates in total who were nominated by their respective parties to contest for 231 seats of members of parliament. Furthermore, during 2005 general election women constituted 13% (159) of all 1,222 candidates nominated for the positions of members of parliament. Slight increase was observed in 2010 and 2015 general elections wherein 18.4% (191) out of 1,036 and 19% (233) out of 1,209 female candidates were nominated respectively (NEC, 1997 - 2016).

The nomination of presidential candidates in all general elections (1995 – 2015) within respective political parties indicates to be in favour of male than female candidates. While there was no female candidate nominated in 1995 the situation was the same for 2000 and 2010 general elections where nomination of presidential candidates were made by only four (4) political parties (CCM, CUF, TLP and UDP). None of them considered female candidates either for the position of president or running mates except NCCR – Mageuzi whose candidate was disqualified for the reason that some of the requirements were not fulfilled. One female candidate out of all ten (10) presidential candidates emerged during 2005 general election¹. Also, three (3) female candidates appeared as running mates in three different political parties namely CHADEMA, NCCR – Mageuzi and TLP. The 2015 general election sounded more impressive in a way due to the coming of more women looking for nomination as presidential candidates in their respective political parties. At least for CCM, good number

¹ The late Anna Claudia Senkoro was nominated as presidential candidate by her political party PPT – Maendeleo and Yusuph Rashidi Mshenga as running mate during 2005 general election. Number of female candidates in the position of running mate were originally two (2) but CHADEMA nominated female candidate after the sudden death of their male candidate Mr. Jumbe Rajab Jumbe.

of female candidate registered their interest and they were eliminated in the due process by the party. In the end, one female candidate was nominated by NEC through ACT – Wazalendo and another female candidate from CCM was nominated as running mate thereafter became Vice President of United Republic of Tanzania.

As candidates, women faces some challenges including limited budget, the use of abusive language (by counterpart male candidates) and violence in their campaign meetings, to mention but few. Likewise, during voting day there were long queuing and some voters could not tolerate hence left without voting. All these challenges, among others, constrained effective participation of female candidates in the expense of male candidates. Reiterating on the significance of financial constraints Babeiya (2011) considered this to more impactful hindrance to some candidates especially women due to the reason that money is often used to garner support during elections. Thus, the historical circumstances in Tanzania places women at weaker financial base than their male counterparts hence find it harder to mobilize the resources required to win elections. In some cases, TEMCO (2011) observes that, majority of women participate in all earlier stages of elections but few were able to vote and be voted for, hence, denies the constitutional right of women to vote for their leaders they wished to. The report gave specific reference to 2010 general election which experienced poor voter turn-up where only 42.8% (8,626,303) out of all 20,137,303 registered voters.

(c) Women Participation as Elected Leaders

National and local elections can support women's political participation in decision making bodies as elected leaders. However, realisation of this dream depends on coming up with specific measures in order to overcome the barriers of gender discrimination. Since re-introduction of multiparty politics in

Tanzania the state of women participation as elected leaders has also not been impressive when looking at results of women candidates in elections. The results in 1994 and 2000 election presents fewer elected women while the significant number of women councilors were chosen through women special seats. In 2005 and 2010 elections women representation was felt more through special seat members who constituted 28% (988) of all 3,540 councilors and 27% (926) of all 3,463 councilors in 2005 and 2010 elections respectively. Also, in the 2010 election there was 5% (204) of all 3,946 elected councilors thereafter made 40% (1,608) when added to 1404 special seats councilors (NEC, 1997 - 2016).

Representation in the positions of MPs 16.4% (44) in 1995 election which was constituted by 3.5% (8) of 232 MPs elected from constituencies and 36 MPs selected through the window of special seats. During 2000 general election, female candidates registered the victory 5% (12) out of all 231 seats for MPs from constituencies and in the end the house had 21.5% (60) female MPs including those selected through special seats. There was 24% (75) special seats MPs in 2005 out of 307 special seats and elected MPs. Progressive trend was observed in 2010 election which recorded 30% (102) of all 341 elected and special seat MPs. The number increased slightly in 2015 elections whereby 26 elected female MPs and 113 special seat MPs constituted 38% (139) of all 377 MPs including those elected from constituencies and those selected through special seats arrangements (NEC, 1997 – 2016). It be observed that data presented is this regard suggests to have more significant representation through special seats that those elected through the ballot papers when compared to male candidates.

Presidential elections have experienced limited participation of female candidates whereby in all five elections that gave CCM

victory there has been no significant challenge from female candidates. Only in 2005 and 2015 elections witnessed female candidates in the presidential race while there were none in 1995, 2000 and 2010 elections. While the last candidate in the 2005 presidential race garnered 0.14% (16,414) of all 11,365,477 valid votes, the only female candidate garnered 0.17% (18,783) as compared to 80.28% (9,123,952) votes garnered by winner of the race. Furthermore, during 2015 presidential race the only female candidate scored 0.65% (98,763) out of 15,193,862 total votes hence ranked third from CCM and CHADEMA who scored 58.46% (8,882,935) and 39.97% (6,072,848) respectively (NEC, 1995 – 2016b). Despite being defeated by far female candidate in 2015 election portrayed strong and positive emerge among women politicians in multiparty elections as she was able to make a case for what she was standing for even compared with other male candidates.

7.0 Lessons from Mwalimu Nyerere's Perspective

Mwalimu Nyerere's contribution to encouraging greater participation of women in elections cannot be overemphasised and provides a number of important lessons that remain relevant even today. The first lesson is that, civic education is of high importance in ensuring that the general population (women in particular) know their voting rights and understand the voting process, and to enable women to access relevant information. It can be recalled that soon after independence Nyerere declared three major enemies of the nation namely: ignorance, diseases and poverty. Nyerere knew exactly that for an individual (male or female) to be able to participate in political processes the said three enemies could serious hindrance. In this regard, Nyerere did establish free education for all – including adult education aiming at educating the entire population so that they become informed

citizenry not only in political processes but also in development processes. Nyerere believed that academic and civic education can emancipate weaker groups in the community (in this case women) given the major challenge of low levels of literacy, cultural and social restrictions as well as inadequate availability of substantive information which the major feature of the time.

The second lesson is that, discrimination of any type is very harmful in political processes and it is potentially poisonous for social cohesion. In all his efforts of building the Tanzanian nation, Nyerere never discriminated any community members on any basis be it religion, ethnicity, sex/gender, age, and the like. He strongly believed that all men are equal and their dignity deserves to be respected and valued. Furthermore, Nyerere strongly believed that women in Tanzania constitute a core part of democratic process stakeholders due to their potential contribution although their engagement is yet to be harnessed to the maximum capacity. He demonstrated this by ensuring an increased number of women in political platforms that define the destiny of the society i.e. ward councils, parliament and cabinet. It is therefore, a sensitive duty of today's leadership generation to strategize and encourage that elections are free and fair and ensure that women enjoys equal opportunity with men to enter politics as competitive candidates and thereafter as elected leaders.

A third lesson is that the type of electoral system bares specific implications for the successful participation of women in political processes. Throughout his leadership Nyerere was very concerned with political institutions and political arrangement that could allow equal opportunity for both men and women. For example, he believed that political parties should be strong institutions that offer equal opportunities to all members regardless to their sex, tribe, ethnic background and the like. Indeed, this was of high

importance because it is a necessary pre-requisite that candidates should be nominated by a particular political party. Today, limited number of female candidates should be also linked to democracy within political parties of which Nyerere stood for. Fair play field is needed and avoid power mongers to exploit women's poverty to get into power through small gifts such as petty money, clothes, and blind promises.

The fourth lesson is that, social and economic empowerment is necessary for rural communities to be active participants in political processes. Today, National Electoral Committee and other election commentators have repeatedly cited economic limitations as one among serious barriers for women to effectively participate in election processes. There are those who cannot get registered, go for campaign meetings, and go for voting only because the same time is needed to look for income which will sustain their daily survival. Also, there are others who attempts to enter into electoral competitions but cannot effectively manage to finance their political activities, hence become victims of the situation. This is why during his leadership Nyerere implemented comprehensive primary health care programme aiming at having a healthy society which could in turn participate effectively in political and development processes. He also established neighbourhood villages as social and economic strategy for people to work together in an attempt to fight poverty and bring participatory development while building self-reliant communities which could avoid the divide between the have and have not.

8.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, it important to note that political decision making in Africa has changed over time, hence, affecting respective societies differently, especially women's access and participation

to politics and decision making at large. Since re-introduction of multiparty political system in 1992 women's participation in multiparty elections in Tanzania has become an interesting topic among students of gender studies, governance and human rights. While the available statistics suggests having growing trend of women engaging in political processes, there still a lot of work to be done towards improved political environment for smooth participation and increase proportion of women engaged in political processes.

Despite some challenges encountered, Tanzania is increasingly breaking down traditional barriers and women are becoming effective politicians and government leaders. It is critical that women serve as leaders alongside men so that they are present when decisions are being made, resources are being allocated, and laws and policies are being formulated so that decisions reflect their priority issues and interests. Therefore, it is high time to challenge cultural theories on women participation in elections and thus political parties are highly encouraged to open-up more opportunities which will marks new eras for women to appear on higher positions of country leadership. Lessons from Nyerere's perspective have enlightened our understanding on the importance and how to go about ensuring equal opportunities for political participation by women, and freedom from discrimination on the basis of gender within our political institutions.

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