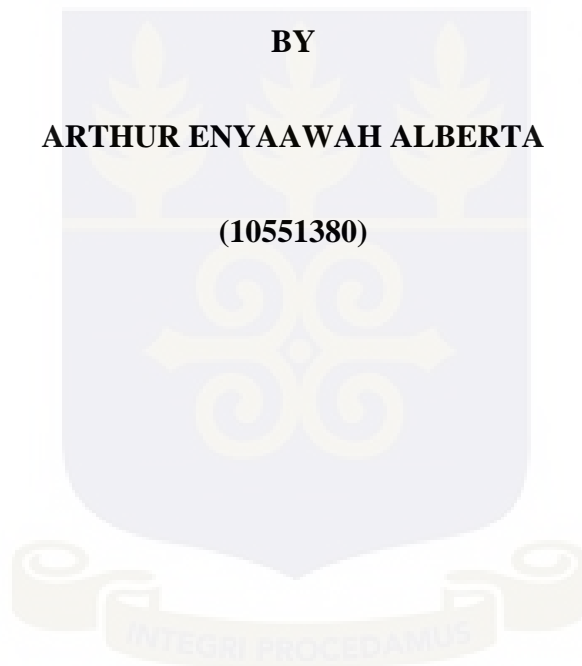


**UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES**

**POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITY (PWDs) IN
GHANA**

**BY
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**THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON IN
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DECLARATION

I, **ARTHUR ENYAAWAH ALBERTA**, hereby declare that this thesis is an independent and personal work produced under the supervision of **DR KUMI ANSAH-KOI** and **DR BOSSMAN E. ASARE** towards the award of a Master of Philosophy in Political Science in the Department of Political Science, University of Ghana. Secondary materials used for this study have been duly acknowledged.

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ABSTRACT

The Persons with Disability Act, 2006, makes provision for inclusive participation for persons with disability (PWDs) in Ghana's political governance. Nonetheless, political participation of PWDs in Ghana is generally low. The study, therefore, seeks to examine the extent of implementation of the Disability Act in promoting political inclusion of PWDs. It identifies Actors and motivations for advocacy and policy implementations for political inclusion of PWDs, challenges to participation and proposes measures for political inclusion in local and national political governance.

Qualitative research approach was adopted for the study. Primary data was gathered from interviews and respondents selected using the purposive sampling procedure. Primary data was analysed qualitatively within the framework of the Human Rights-Based Theory that underpins this study. Relevant literature served as secondary data sources for the study.

The study found that Ghana's Disability Act has no significant influence on the political inclusion of PWDs. There exist a gap between policy and implementation because the Act sets no guidelines for political engagement. Significant improvement in electoral participation from 2008 is thus informed by efforts of a coalition of Civil Society Organisations and specific state institutions. The study also found that the growing influence of partisan activities in local government elections informs the withdrawal of PWDs from the electoral participation at the grassroots level. Financial support for a party's preferred candidates makes local electoral participation competitive and burdensome for PWDs due to their low financial status.

The findings suggest an amendment to the Disability Law with a separate provision of guidelines for political inclusion and an effective Legislative Instrument (LI) to enforce strictly the processes for PWDs political inclusion. It recommends an enforcement of sanctions in the Local Government Act (1993), to address issues of political interference in local government elections. It also recommends an executive commitment to an institutionalisation of an affirmative political action to enhance inclusion of qualified PWDs in local and national governance. Generally, findings from the study carry important lessons for addressing the persistent challenges that impede political participation of PWDs in Ghana.



DEDICATION

I humbly dedicate this work to my grandfather, Matthew Kwesi Eghan and to my parents, for their wonderful support towards my educational life.



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CA	Capability Approach
CDD-GHANA	The Ghana Centre for Democratic Development
CODEO	Coalition of Domestic Election Observers
CPP	Convention People's Party
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DACF	District Assemblies Common Fund
EC	Electoral Commission
ENDAN	Ethiopian National Disability Action Network
EU	European Union
GBU	Ghana Blind Union
GFD	Ghana Federation of Disability Organisations
GSPD	Ghana Society for the Physically Disabled
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
HRAD	Human Rights-Based Approach to Development
LI	Legislative Instrument
NCCE	National Commission for Civic Education
NCPD	National Council for Persons with Disability
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPP	New Patriotic Party
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OPWD	Organisation of Persons with Disability
PHC	Population and Housing Census
PWDs	Persons with Disability
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation

WPA

The World Program of Action concerning Disabled Persons

WWDs

Women with Disabilities



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.0 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Persons with disability (PWDs) have been perceived as objects of pity who need help through charity rather than as persons with inherent rights and dignity (Schulze, 2009). Though the United Nations has increasingly placed disability as a human rights issue, PWDs continue to suffer discrimination and marginalisation in society. They are confronted with challenges in accessing social services like health, employment, education, transport systems, and encounter barriers to active participation in society (WHO, 2011). Studies have shown that stigmatisation they face as a result of having one form of disability or another affects their full integration into mainstream society (Sonpal & Kumar, 2012; Ofuani, 2011).

In Ghana, persons with disability equally experience marginalisation, deprivation and exclusion from engaging in social and political activities and are classified among the poorest in society (Voice Ghana, 2014). In the political process, Sackey (2014) indicates that participation of persons with disability (PWDs) is low. PWDs rarely contest as candidates for political positions in Ghana's political governance. Even in district level political administration where there exist a decentralisation programme to include PWDs, participation is limited (Mensah *et al.*, 2008). Those who have tried to contest in local elections have had to deal with issues of stigmatisation and resource constraints (Sackey, *op. cit.*), thus, less could be said concerning their active participation in national political governance. Low participation of PWDs in Ghanaian

politics has been attributed to the negative cultural perceptions, social criticisms and environmental barriers they encounter in society (Slikker, 2009). This was manifest in 2013 when a section of Ghanaian chiefs strongly opposed the appointment of a visually impaired to head a Ministry (myjoyonline.com, 2013). The President's appointment of Dr Henry Seidu Daanaa, as Minister for Chieftaincy and Traditional Affairs, was described as an abomination because it is a taboo for a person with disability to interact directly with chiefs even though his appointment was based on competence. Schur & Adya (2013) assert that negative cultural attitudes and stigmatisation could reduce interest in the political process.

It is important to emphasise that low political participation of PWDs is not limited to developing countries. PWDs in highly developed and democratic countries are equally confronted with barriers that hinder their participation in the political process. In America for instance, problems of mobility, illness, low educational and income levels (Hall & Alvarez, 2012) are identified as factors that negatively affect the participation of some PWDs. Hall & Alvarez add that in some parts of the USA, PWDs continue to encounter barriers to exercising their voting rights. PWDs in states like New York, Alabama, Kentucky, and Delaware encounter barriers to voting absentee due to the strictness of regulations guiding absentee voting (ibid.). In Canada, Prince (2007 cited in Sackey, 2014) similarly highlights negative social attitudes and resource constraints as reasons for low participation of some PWDs in the electioneering process. Schur & Adya (op. cit.) argue that these challenges are likely to result in a lower political participation of PWDs as compared to their non-disabled peers.

There have been quite a number of studies in Ghana on political participation of persons with disability following the adoption of the Persons with Disability Act in 2006.

Among these are Sackey, (2014), Voice Ghana (2014) and Mensah *et al.*, (2008). However, there has not been empirical research into how the adoption of the Disability Act over a decade, with its provision of participation in political activities, under Section 1, has informed participation or its potential to influence participation of PWDs in the political process. Again, these studies have not identified extensively, actors whose involvement in the political process is relevant for the inclusion of PWDs in the Ghanaian political process. This work, therefore, is a pioneering study that sets out to address the gap in the literature of political participation of PWDs by investigating the extent of implementation of the Disability Act towards enhancing political rights of PWDs in Ghana. It also focuses on identifying the coalition of actors involved in political advocacy for PWDs and their motivations.

1.1 STATEMENT OF RESEARCH PROBLEM

Political participation is a fundamental right and must be enjoyed by every citizen including persons with disability. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) recognises the importance of political inclusiveness and provides a set of guidelines based on which participation of PWDs could be enhanced in political and public life. This provision is made in Article 29 of the CRPD (Golding, 2010). The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) also prioritise the need for inclusive participation for all, thus, seeks to promote political inclusion for PWDs under Target 2 of the SDG Goal 10.

In Ghana, citizen's participation in political activities is provided for in Article 21 (3) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana and does not exclude persons with disability. It states;

All citizens shall have the right and freedom to form or join political parties and to participate in political activities subject to such qualifications and laws as are necessary in a free and democratic society and are consistent with this Constitution.

Due to their vulnerability, however, Parliament in 2006 adopted a special document, the Persons with Disability Act, with the aim to promote the enjoyments of rights (Oye-Lithur, Stickney, & Nathan, 2007) including the right to political participation. The right to political participation is provided for in Section 1 of the Disability Act, under, “Rights to family and social activities”. This notwithstanding, there is still evidence of the low participation of PWDs in Ghana’s political process even in local governance participation at the grassroots level where there exist a decentralisation programme to ensure effective participation of PWDs. In national political governance, least could be said on PWDs occupying key positions in the decision-making process. Again, the continuous appeals on the government and development stakeholders by Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPWDs) for better political and electoral privileges are indications that PWDs in Ghana are not yet equal participants in Ghana’s political process.

With regards to the above concerns, to what extent has the Persons with Disability Act been implemented to enhance political inclusion of PWDs in local and national political activities?

1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of the research are;

1. To investigate the extent of implementation of the Persons with Disability Act in enhancing political participation of PWDs in local and national political governance.
2. To identify measures adopted to improve participation of PWDs in the political process following the passage of the Disability Act in 2006.
3. To identify the various Actors who are into advocacy and policy implementation towards promoting political rights of PWDs and their motivations.
4. To identify challenges to effective participation of PWDs in national and local political governance and propose measures to address them.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following questions will guide the conduct of this research;

1. To what extent has the Persons with Disability Act been implemented to enhance the political rights of PWDs?
2. What measures have been implemented to improve PWDs participation in the political process following the adoption of the Persons with Disability Act?
3. Which Actors advocate for political rights of PWDs and what motivates their actions?
4. What are the challenges that hinder effective inclusion of PWDs in national and local political governance and how can these be addressed?

1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research is undergirded by The Human Rights-Based Approach to Development (HRAD).

Over the years, development has been measured based on economic growth. In contemporary times, development is more understood as a process geared towards improving human lives and capabilities. It suggests the existence of measures to increase educational opportunities, health care, employment as well as promoting political freedoms. The right-based approach to development outlines the guidelines based on which the objectives of this new development can be achieved (Hamm, 2001). Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is one of the main actors promoting the Human Rights-Based Approach to Development (Katsui, 2008).

A human rights-based approach is defined as “a conceptual framework for the process of human development that is normatively based on international human rights standards and operationally directed to promoting and protecting human rights” (UNICEF, 2016). Following the launch of the reform programme that sought to mainstream human rights in all aspect of society, the human rights-based approach has received considerable attention in the works of development agencies. The UN adopted the “Common Understanding on a Human Rights-Based Approach” in 2003 to foster a common understanding of human rights. It also recognises that human rights principles should be the framework on which development programmes and policies are formulated. These principles include; “universality and inalienability; indivisibility; inter-dependence and inter-relatedness; non-discrimination and equality; participation and inclusion; accountability and the rule of law” (Frye & Deshotel, 2014, p. 3). The

rights-based approach is comprehensive in addressing a wide range of civil, cultural, social economic and politically related human rights issues. It serves as principles on which human rights are realised for human development (OHCHR, 2006).

1.4.1 The basic assumptions underlining the Human Right-Based Approach

Among the assumptions that underline the Human Right-Based Approach Theory are;

1. Every person is inherently entitled to the enjoyment of human rights by virtue of their humanity. This makes them rights-holders (Carmona, 2014).
2. States are duty-bearers charged with the responsibility of policy implementations towards the fulfilment of rights and the creation of an environment within which rights can be enjoyed (OHCHR, 2006).
3. Equal opportunities must be given to vulnerable and minority groups in society. These include the poor, women, ethnic minorities, persons with disability, children, to mention a few. Duty bearers are required then to put in place special provision to protect and enhance the enjoyments of rights for these group.

The Right-Based Approach aims to address inequalities and discriminatory practices that affect the growth of development. It focuses on people who are most marginalised, excluded and discriminated against in society and requires that interventions be made to reach out to these marginalised segment of the population. It identifies and addresses barriers in society that may hinder effective enjoyments of human rights. A right-based approach to development is important because it put in place a conceptual and practical framework through which human rights are realised (UNDP, 1999 cited in Malone & Belshaw, 2003, p. 77). It also serves as the guidelines for the implementation of

inclusive policies and programs towards the protection and fulfilments of rights of the vulnerable in society including PWDs (Worm, 2012, p. 12).

This approach works differently from a Need or Charity-Based Approach. In Cornwall & Nyamu-Musembi (2004), it is argued that whereas the right-based approach advocates for an equal share of available resources to help the marginalised in society, a need-based approach is associated with charitable intentions. Katsui explains that because a need or charity-based approach views people as objects of pity and charity who receives voluntarily from givers in order to fulfil their needs, it has been criticised heavily and replaced by a right-based approach which fulfils rights of individuals based on national and international laws (Katsui, op. cit.).

1.4.2 How is the Human Rights Approach Theory applicable to addressing Disability and socio-political exclusion?

In the context of disability, the human rights-based approach theory defines disability along the social model where a person is only disabled in the face of existing barriers or impediments. It moves disability away from the medical notion which sees impairment as resident in a person and establishes that removal of all forms of barriers would enhance the capabilities in a person with disability (Worm, 2012). Worm explains further that, a human rights-based approach to disability in development means it is necessary for persons with disability to equally participate and be included in every aspect of society as their non-disabled peers.

The human rights approach to disability was adopted by the United Nations, with the passage of the “Standard Rules for the Equalisation on Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities” in 1993 (United Nations, 1993 cited in Lang, 2001, p. 17). According to

Worm (op. cit), human rights-based approach to disability charge states, society and institutions, known as, “duty bearers”, with the responsibility of meeting the rights of persons with disability. Persons with disability referred to as, “right holders”, are also obliged to claim their rights from their duty bearers. By way of states granting PWDs equal rights, some core human rights principles should be applied. These are equality, non-discrimination, participation and empowerment, transparency and accountability (Worm, 2012, p. 5) drawn from the key principles of the Human Rights Approach to Development. These are Inclusion, Participation, Accessibility, Non-discrimination, Respect for difference and diversity, Equality of opportunities and Respect for inherent dignity (ibid.).

The Human Right-Based Approach to Development goes beyond simply including PWDs in development programmes but it entails a commitment to human rights principles outlined in international human rights laws (ibid.). In the briefing paper on “Disability and a human rights approach to development”, Lindqvist (2004) contributes to Worm’s assertion. He states that the rights-based-approach to disability is linked to development. It entails putting in place measures to enable PWDs access services in society. This requires removal of hindrances to the enjoyment of rights and requires that governments implement programmes necessary for the attainment of rights for PWDs (Disability Dialogue, Issue No. 4, SAFOD cited in Lindqvist, 2004). Katsui contributes to this by stating categorically that in the context of disability in development, it is necessary to consider issues such as removal of existing barriers creating poverty for PWDs, putting the approach in political perspective and addressing the controversy between rights and charity (Katsui, op. cit.).

In the light of the above, states are obliged to put in place laws that would ensure the enjoyment of human rights by PWDs without discrimination in any form. According to the OHCHR, these laws must be enforced to ensure that persons with disability are fully included in all aspects of society. Katsui (2008) summarises the theoretical significance and strengths of this approach to disability. First of all, he states that the right-based approach to development includes all human beings including the most vulnerable groups such as persons with disability in mainstream discourse. Secondly, the rights-based approach obliges duty bearers such as states and institutions to fulfil certain rights through the implementation of laws. Duty bearers have a responsibility to fulfil the enjoyments of rights-based on national and international laws. Persons with disability, therefore, are not just beneficiaries but rather rights-holders with legal claims to their rights (ibid.).

Last but not least, Katsui highlights that the right-based approach demands transnational obligation stipulated in Article 32 of the United Nations CRPD. In this case, international actors are important duty bearers who would contribute to the fulfilment of the rights and social inclusiveness of PWDs across the borders of states (ibid.).

1.4.3 Human Rights-Based Approach and Political Participation of PWDs

The Human rights-based approach serves as the basis for the full inclusion of PWDs in social and political process. It is premised on six core human rights principles which are in accordance with the CRPD. In relation to promoting effective political participation of persons with disability, the principle of Participation and Inclusion would be our focus for discussion. Under the principle of participation and inclusion;

Every person and all peoples are entitled to active, free and meaningful participation in, contribution to, and enjoyment of civil, economic, social, cultural and political development in which human rights and fundamental freedoms can be realised (Frye & Deshotel, 2014, p. 4).

The principle of participation and Inclusion aims to strengthen the participation of PWDs both in mainstream society and in the political process by making them more articulate to make their own choices in society. It is towards empowering and developing the capabilities of right-holders that are, PWDs to be able to claim their legal rights from their duty bearers (Worm, 2012, p. 6). The general principles of participation and inclusion in all aspects of society are grounded firmly in the CRPD's Article, 3, 4(3) and Article 29. Participation in the political process is specially provided for in Article 29 under the theme, "Participation in Political and Public life", where state parties are tasked with the responsibilities of implementing measures that would promote effective political participation of PWDs (Worm, 2012, p. 28). Participation is one of the basic requirements for full and effective inclusion in society. To enhance the full participation of PWDs in the decision-making process both at the local and national levels, the rights-based approach requires the government and development organisations to include mechanisms for participation in development programmes. It as well requires that Disabled Persons Organisations are involved in policy-making through seeking their opinions (Worm, 2012, p. 29). Fulfilment of these requirements signifies the achievement of the Rights to Political and Public life in the CRPD (Worm, 2012, p. 31). The principle of participation and empowerment would only be effective if the country in question has signed and ratified the CRPD (Worm, 2012, pp. 28-31).

Ghana has ratified the international legal treaty, the CRPD. It is in this regard required to put in place necessary measures to enhance inclusiveness of PWDs in society and especially in political activities. The government is required to formulate and implement policies that aim at empowering PWDs to actively participate in mainstream society. These policies must conform to human rights principles to achieve the goals of the rights-based approach to development. Ghana's adoption of the Person's with Disability Act (Act 715) in 2006 was a step in this direction. However, the various criticisms it has seen makes it necessary and proper to review the Disability Act and make amendments to conform to the CRPD which is the standard legal treaty for promoting disability rights worldwide.

1.5 DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following concepts are defined as used in this research. These are, “a person with disability” and “political participation”.

1.5.1 A Person with Disability

The United Nations defines disability as “an evolving concept and that disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others” (UN General Assembly, 2006). This definition by the UN fits disability into the bio-psychosocial context of understanding disability, thus, perceiving disability not only as a medical condition but putting into perspective the human rights issue that arises as a result of the social and environmental barriers.

According to the World Health Organisation (2011), more than one billion people live with some form of disability in the world. Disability is complex, dynamic and multidimensional (p. 3). It consists of a range of contested conditions which create challenges for definition and measurement of the concept (WHO, 2011; Albert, 2004; Koppelman, 2002). Nonetheless, the World Health Organisation (WHO) in their disability report, classifies these range of diverse conditions under two broad categories; visible and invisible impairments. Visible impairments are those obvious conditions, for instance, the wheelchair or crutch user etc. Invisible impairments may include congenital health conditions suffered by children like the cerebral palsy and arthritis or long-term health conditions as dementia suffered by older people (WHO, 2011). Other infectious diseases including tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, and a cluster of childhood diseases including “measles, mumps, and poliomyelitis” may be classified as impairments or said to create impairments (WHO, 2011, p. 32).

In Ghana, the 2012 Population and Housing Census (PHC) report defines persons with disability as “those who were unable to or were restricted in the performance of specific tasks due to loss of function of some part of the body as a result of impairment or malformation” (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012, p. xiii). This definition of disability premised on impairments as a cause of the individuals non-performance either than environmental barriers goes to emphasise that disability is not yet perceived in the social model context in the Ghanaian society. Visual impairment, hearing impairment, Intellectual disability, physical disability, speech and communication disorders, emotional or behaviour disorder are identified as some forms of disability prevalent in Ghana (ibid.).

For the purpose of clarity, the usage of the term “a person with disability” in this study relates to visible impairments, limited to visual impairment and physical disability (wheelchair, crutch and calliper users). These two forms of disability are selected based on the report from the 2010 Population and Housing Census as recording the highest prevalence in Ghana. Visual impairment records the highest percentage of 40.1% followed by physical disability being 25.4%.

1.5.2. Political Participation

Political participation is simply understood as “political engagement or public involvement in decision-making” (Lamprianou, 2013, p. 22). According to Verba, Nie, & Kim, (1978), there is no universally accepted definition of the concept. However, depending on the research context, scholars could conceptualise an appropriate definition based on any of the series of criteria that has evolved over the years to explain political participation.

Conceptualizations of political participation may differ depending on a scholar's choice of any of the following criteria around which definitions of political participation has evolved. First of all, is political participation an active or a passive behaviour? (Verba, Nie, & Kim, 1978; Loon, 1970). Secondly, is political participation a voluntary act or can people be forced to participate in the political process? (Verba, Nie, & Kim, 1978; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). Thirdly, should participation necessarily have an intended purpose or can it be undertaken with no intended goal? (Conge, 2016). Again, should an act be legal or conventional in order to be termed participation or could participation take illegal and aggressive forms? (Verba, Nie, & Kim, 1978; Huntington & Nelson, 1976). Last but not least, must participation be an individual affair or must

the individual be part of a larger group to be seen as an active participant in the political process? (Verba, Nie, & Kim, 1978). Verba, Schlozman, & Brady (1995) for instance define political participation as an "activity that has the intent or effect of influencing government action, either by affecting the making or implementation of public policy or indirectly by influencing the selection of people who make the policies" (1995, p. 38). According to them, political participation involves different forms of voluntary activities such as campaigning, being in contact with political officials, joining a political party, contributing resources to help political campaigns, demonstrations, lobbying, involving in community politics, voting and voluntary engagement in other electoral activities (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995).

Their definition limits participation to active political behaviours that citizens voluntarily engage in (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995) thus political activities that are forced on an individual is not a measure of participation. Again participation should have an intended motive and a target which according to them is the government. By implication, if activities by private citizens do not have any influence on government's decision-making process, it is less regarded as participation. (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). Their explanation of political participation, however, exclude aggressive behaviours as civil disobedience, political violence (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady 1995), "protest, extra-legal violence, or rebellions" (Verba, Nie, & Kim, 1978, p. 1) therefore limiting participation to conventional and legally accepted behaviours. Their definition of political participation is seen as premised on four of the above-mentioned criteria.

Barnes *et al.* (1979) disagree on the exclusion of aggressive political behaviours in their definitions of political participation. In "Political Action: Mass Participation in Five Western Democracies", Barnes *et al.* (1979 cited in Conge,) critically examine

aggressive political activities, in other words, some illegal and unconventional political acts, as protest and violence in 5 democratic states; Britain, the USA, Austria, the Netherlands and Germany. Their findings indicated that citizens were likely to engage in violence, protest, strikes, demonstrations and other unconventional activities as means to seek political redress or influence government actions. Political participation is then not limited to legally accepted means but citizens may adopt violent means if it will help achieve political objectives (Barnes *et al.*, 1979 cited in Conge, 2016). Though Verba, Nie, & Kim (1978) focus solely on legal political behaviours in their work, “Participation and Political Equality: A Seven-Nation Comparison”, they nonetheless share similar opinion with Barnes *et al.* (1979, cited in Conge, 2016) and Huntington & Nelson (1976) that some illegal and unconventional acts of violence and rebellions are important alternative means through which citizens can influence government.

This research adopts Verba, Schlozman, & Brady’s (1995) conceptualization of participation premised on three of the mentioned criteria. These are, participation must be an active process, voluntary and with an intended motive. Thus citizens must voluntarily involve themselves in political activities and with an intent of influencing government decision. The study excludes aggressive political behaviours for influencing government action. Based on these three criteria, (active participation, voluntary and intent to influence government action), the concept political participation employed in this study encompasses a number of voluntary political activities that citizens actively or directly engage in at national and local governance. These include participation in the electioneering process as an elector or an electoral official, contesting elections, holding political positions, being a member of a political party and participating in activities of the party.

1.6 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Participation in the political process is a basic right for all citizens. This notwithstanding, involvement of persons with disability in Ghana's political process remains low. The Persons with Disability Act, (Act 715), adopted in 2006, provides for political inclusion for PWDs in Section 1. It states that "A person with disability shall not be deprived of the right to live with that person's family or the right to participate in social, **political**, economic, creative or recreational activities". On the basis of this provision, it is important that studies be conducted to examine the extent of implementation of this provision in the Disability Act to enhance political inclusion of PWDs within the ten years of its passage. It is also imperative to identify emerging issues which hinder PWDs political inclusion and propose measures that would enhance effective inclusion of PWDs in Ghana's political governance.

1.7 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

The study is organised under five (5) main chapters.

Chapter One consists of the background to the study of Persons with disability and the definition and statement of the research problem. This chapter also outlines the objectives of the research, the research questions the study seeks to find answers to and the theoretical framework which undergirds the study.

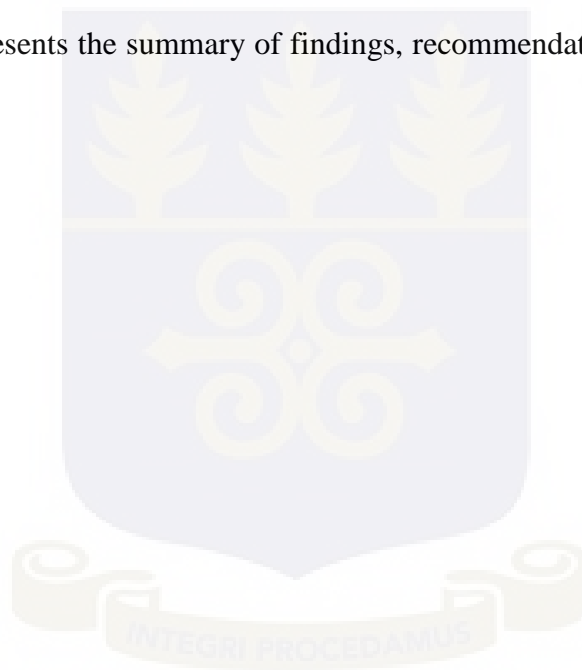
In Chapter Two, relevant literature on political participation of Persons with disability is examined. Books, journal articles and other relevant internet materials were used in the review of the literature to achieve the research objectives and to answer the research questions. These relevant materials bring forth the opinions of different authors on

political participation of PWDs and importantly, measures to improve political rights of PWDs.

Chapter Three is an outline of the methodology of the research. It discusses the strategy needed to address the research problem and the methods that were used for data collection. The limitations of the research are outlined in this chapter.

Chapter Four entails an analysis of data generated for the research. Data in relation to the study objectives is examined in this chapter.

Chapter Five presents the summary of findings, recommendations from the study and conclusions.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The importance of citizen's participation in the political process cannot be over-emphasised. Political participation is a fundamental right in every democracy. In democracies, the inclusion of citizens in the political process is a measure of a country's level of democratic growth. Democracy is said to have deepened if it provides for the political inclusion of even the most vulnerable and minority groups including persons with disabilities (PWDs). Participation in the political life enables PWDs to contribute to the decision-making process and also serves as a basis for inclusion in other aspects of society (Golding, 2010). It is, therefore, necessary to include PWDs in the political process through the implementation of policies to this effect.

The right to political participation of persons with disability is established in the international treatise on disability. Prominent among these is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Article 29 of the CRPD sets guidelines based on which PWDs would be actively included in the political process. The UN Sustainable Development Goals which seeks to end inequality and discriminatory practices within and among countries by 2030 addresses participation in political activities for all persons including PWDs under Target 2 of Goal 10. This goes to emphasise the importance of inclusive participation for development. Ghana's 1992 Constitutional provisions on citizens' participation in political activities do not exclude persons with disability. Inclusiveness is therefore fundamentally accepted and must be

enjoyed by all including PWDs. Schur *et al.* (2002, p. 168, citing Verba, 1996) emphasise that being absent from the political life signifies the inability to directly express one's needs. It is thus necessary that PWDs actively engage in the political process.

This chapter is divided into five sections. The first, captioned under "General studies on disability", examines some models that explain the concept disability and how disability is generally perceived around the world. The second section focuses on the socio-cultural, political and economic situation of persons with disability in Ghana. The legal basis for the protection of rights of PWDs are discussed briefly in the next section. Sections four and five address some barriers to the effective political participation of PWDs and discusses the role of some key actors in enhancing political inclusion of PWDs.

2.1 GENERAL STUDIES ON DISABILITY

2.1.1 Understanding the concept Disability: Models for Explanation

A number of studies have addressed disability along the lines of some existing models. This study, however, focuses on a review of the literature on three of the models widely accepted for explanations on disability. The Social Model, Medical Model and Bio-psychosocial model are thus reviewed in this section.

Much of the explanations on disability have revolved around the social and medical models. Generally, the medical model perceives disability as a deficiency innate to the individual which requires medical intervention. The social model views disability as a result of the physical and environmental barriers in society that confronts a person with

a disability. The bio-psychosocial model, on the other hand, is a newly introduced model that acknowledges the need to address both the social and medical models because both present partial explanations on disability. This section discusses views of various scholars on these outlined models for understanding disability as well as a range of disability-related issues.

Slikker (2009, cites Oliver, 1990) examines the medical model from the viewpoint where disability is perceived as an inherent defect that needs nothing more than medical intervention. Under this description, an individual with a disability is considered abnormal and should be exempted from normal social obligations in order to receive medical care. Given the pivotal role that human capital contributes to social development, I contest this conception of disability which seeks to hinder the capabilities an individual with a disability may possess to contribute to society. This argument gains grounds as Slikker identifies that a major defect of this medical model is its failure to address the range of issues in society that limits the capabilities of persons with impairments. According to her, the medical model rather justifies social segregation, restricts PWDs from taking decisions for themselves and creates negative perceptions about persons with impairments, thus, affecting their involvement in mainstream society as compared to their non-disabled peers. In her review, Slikker also emphasises that the medical model puts PWDs in a disadvantaged position as it “creates a cycle of dependency and exclusion” from society in the long run (Slikker, 2009, p. 11 cites Kaplan, 1999; Oliver, 1990). In the light of recent recognition for inclusive participation of PWDs in mainstream society, the medical model does not fit the context of this study which seeks to promote capabilities of PWDs for active involvement in society through the human rights lens.

In addressing limitations of previous studies on the medical model, Brisenden (1986) lays stress on a shift from the strict medical view of disability which implies a clarity in certain terminologies that connotes negative impression about PWDs. A reference as, “the disabled” (p. 2) for instance, connotes weakness, sympathy and pity towards a person with an impairment. The theoretical basis for this study brings to understanding that disability has seen a shift from the need or charity approaches where PWDs are seen as objects of pity needing assistance to PWDs being seen as holders of rights. Any address that seeks to situate a PWD in a context either than within the human rights approach is an impediment to his rights. Appropriately, terminologies as “a person with disability” will suffice as an address for such a person. Negative terminologies diminish the significance of the individual and limit their potentials to contribute to national development. To dissociate disability from a strict medical condition, Brisenden calls for a clear distinction between a disease and a disability. While a disease manifests physically on the individual, has no solution and hinders the individual’s capabilities, a disability is as a result of the nature of the environment within which the individual finds himself (p. 6).

Albert (2004) like Trani *et al.* (2011) and Lang (2001), explains that a rejection of the medical model enforced the emergence of the social model. Albert points out that discrimination and social exclusion of PWDs from society is not because of the inherent medical condition, but rather the existence of social, environmental, institutional and attitudinal barriers in society which hinders PWDs participation in society. In this regard, Albert argues that disability according to this model is a “socio-political issue” (p. 3) which must be addressed from both social and political perspectives through policy implementation. This “socio-political” understanding of disability is significant

because, in the discourse of addressing social barriers for human development, a greater responsibility lies with political authorities, also called, duty-bearers, to ensure implementation of various policies and measures which would address social barriers. A strength of Albert's work which contributes to this study is his equation of the social model to the human rights and environmental approaches to development. He explains that removal of the physical environmental barriers in society (as emphasised by the social model) is a means to promote and protect the rights of persons with disability. Trani *et al.* (2011) similarly submit that the social model is linked to the capability approach model (CA), a human development approach which mainly focuses on developing an individual's potentials and abilities in order to participate in social, economic and political activities. The CA situates explanations to understanding disability within the context of human development, thus, focuses on implementing policies that aim to enhance capabilities and enhance social inclusion for PWDs (p. 149). These understanding of the social model reflect the core human rights principles that form the theoretical basis of this study, the human rights-based approach to development.

However, in Albert, a neglect of a person's medical condition is a weakness of the social model in that, an interaction between the physical being and the social environment will determine the quality of the social participation of persons with disabilities. It is thus imperative to reconcile the medical needs of PWDs with addressing the barriers in the wider social environment as posited in Lang (2001) and Trani *et al.* (2011).

Hughes & Paterson (1997) shed light on the significant role of the medical model to sociological explanations of disability. They develop the claim that a neglect of the

defects of the body in discussions on the social model weakens the social models' explanation of disability. Hughes & Paterson (1997) posit that though the social model has critiqued and replaced the medical model, explanations on the relationship between the body and defect still lies with the bio-medical domain. Disability as a defect within an individual can only be addressed through medical intervention and not based on a socio-political analysis. They, therefore, emphasise a consideration of the medical model to understanding disability. Beyond addressing all environmental and social barriers to aid social inclusion of PWDs, is the existence of the ill-health that may hinder the enjoyment of provisions in the social environment. It is, therefore, necessary that the ill-health or defect be addressed at par with the social or environmental issues for PWDs to be actively involved in all social and political activities without limitations.

Now the idea of reconciling the medical model with the social model (Trani *et al.*, 2011; Lang, 2001; Hughes & Paterson, 1997) gives rise to the bio-psychosocial model for understanding disability. Generally, this model is significant to this study as it perceives disability entirely in the context of human rights. It forms the basis for the definition of disability in the United Nations CRPD which is the universal legal instrument for this study. The UN's definition of disability outlines the three domains of disability highlighted in the bio-psychosocial model; the impairment, the person with the impairment and the society within which the individual finds himself. The Ethiopian National Disability Action Network (ENDAN, 2010) in addressing this model explains explicitly that since disability is a product of interaction between an individual's certain conditions or functional limitations and his or her physical, social, and attitudinal barriers (p. 12), medical interventions to address the defects that limit the individual's

potentials and capabilities is as equally relevant as removal of all forms of social and environmental barriers that restrict the person's participation in society. In effect a merger of the two models for addressing issues of disability informs inclusiveness.

According to the World Health Organisation (2011), more than one billion people live with some form of disability in the world. These persons are plagued with a number of challenges which informs social exclusion and marginalization. Across the world, PWDs encounter difficulties in accessing social services like health care and education. Disability by its nature is complex, dynamic and multidimensional (p. 3) and consists of a range of contested conditions which create challenges for its definition and measurement (WHO, 2011; Albert, 2004; Koppelman, 2002). Nonetheless, the World Health Organisation (WHO) in their disability report, classifies these range of diverse conditions under two broad categories; visible and invisible impairments. Visible impairments are those obvious conditions, for instance, the wheelchair or crutch user etc. Invisible impairments may include congenital health conditions suffered by children like the cerebral palsy and arthritis or long-term health conditions as dementia suffered by older people (WHO, 2011). Other infectious diseases including tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, and a cluster of childhood diseases including "measles, mumps, and poliomyelitis" may be classified as impairments or said to create impairments (WHO, 2011, p. 32).

2.2 GHANAIAN STUDIES ON DISABILITY AND INCLUSIVE PARTICIPATION

The 2010 Population and Housing Census defines persons with disability in Ghana as "those who were unable to or were restricted in the performance of specific tasks or

activities due to loss of function of some part of the body as a result of impairment or malformation” (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012, p. xiii). According to the Ghana Statistical Service (2012), 737,743 representing 3.0% of the country’s population live with either one or more of the various forms of disability.

Out of this population, 350,096 are males with 387,647 being females with disabilities (p. 81). There are more females (52.5%) than males (47.5%) with some form of disability in Ghana. With the regional distribution, the Volta Region records the highest population with disability (4.3%), followed by the Upper East (3.8%). The Eastern and Central Regions follow with 3.6% and 3.4% respectively. Brong Ahafo Region records the least population of persons with disability of 2.3%. The most common forms of disability in Ghana are Visual impairment (40.1%), physical disability (25.4%), emotional behavioural problems (18.6%) and intellectual malfunctioning (15.2%). Visual or sight impairment records the highest prevalence. There are 38.0% males and 42.0% females with visual impairment (p.12-13).

Though this statistic serves as useful data for research on disability, it is not comprehensive on the actual population of PWDs in Ghana. It only focuses on the population of only persons with severe disability. Importantly, this may pose challenges to policy implementation due to the possible allocation of insufficient budget for PWDs. A presentation of no data on children with disability in Ghana could equally result in challenges to policy implementations in the instance of addressing specific needs of children with disability. Again, data on more women than men with disability in Ghana as indicated in the PHC report could be detrimental to the national development process since women in general play effective roles towards socio-economic development. In society, women are classified as the minority and vulnerable. A woman with a disability

is classified as more vulnerable and is likely to experience higher discrimination in employment, education and may fall within the poorest of persons with disability in society. With this knowledge, it can be concluded that more women with disabilities affect human capital needed to drive the nation's development process. It becomes imperative for the government to make provisions that would make women with disabilities productive either than idle in any means possible.

Most studies on disability and inclusion in Ghana have identified socio-cultural beliefs and perceptions as the major causes of PWDs exclusion from mainstream society (Opoku-Boadi, 2015; Sackey, 2014; Golding, 2010; Slikker, 2009; Mensah *et al.*, 2008).

In Ghanaian societies, disability is perceived as resulting from witchcraft, a curse or punishment for sins committed by the individual or the family. These Socio-cultural beliefs and attitudes have led to PWDs being tagged with degrading names and several descriptions. The perceptions create barriers which consequently lead to marginalisation of PWDs in the political process (Sackey, 2014; Voice Ghana, 2014; Mensah *et al.*, 2008), unemployment which leads to poverty (Opoku-Boadi, 2015; Voice Ghana, 2014) and challenges in social life (Mensah *et al.*, 2008; Slikker, 2009). Treatment of PWDs in Ghana has not yet seen a shift from the charity and medical model which informs marginalisation to the human rights approach model where non-discrimination and equal treatment are key to addressing issues of disability. PWDs are still perceived in terms of pity rather than as bearers of rights.

In the political process, studies have concluded that PWDs participation is generally low. Less involvement of PWDs in political activities features in both local and national

governance (Sackey, 2015; Voice Ghana, 2014; Mensah *et al.*, 2008). PWDs have little influence in the decision-making process at the national level and rarely participate at the grassroots level where there exists a decentralization programme to enhance participatory democracy. Low participation of PWDs in the general political process is attributed to a number of factors including the absence of government policies to promote participation, unemployment, illiteracy and inadequate financial resources. In addition, PWDs face discrimination and negative social perceptions that affect their confidence to engage in the political process. Until 2013 when the first visually impaired lawyer was appointed a Minister of State, Ghana had not seen the rise of a qualified person with disability to such a position. Electoral participation, however, has seen an improvement in recent times (especially with 2015 and 2016 local assembly elections and national elections respectively). This improvement is a result of various policy measures and social interventions adopted by the government, Non-Governmental Organisations and Civil Society Organisations by way of promoting political rights of PWDs.

These studies on political participation for the Ghanaian person with disability have had several legal basis prominent is the constitutional provisions outlined for political involvement. Nonetheless, there has not been any address of disability political rights in the context of the Disability Act (Act 715), especially when it provides for political participation under section 1. This weakness is not justifiable since all these studies (Sackey, 2015; Voice Ghana, 2014; Mensah *et al.*, 2008) were conducted within a timeframe when the Persons with Disability Act (2006) had already been passed. In this regard, this research seeks to address this limitation by investigating into how the

adoption of the 2006 Disability Act which provides for political rights for PWDs has influenced participation in local and national political governance for PWDs.

Opoku-Boadi (2015), Slikker (2009) and Mensah *et al.*, (2008) agree that high level of poverty recorded among PWDs in Ghana can be attributed to unemployment and underemployment. Though disability unemployment situations could largely be attributed to illiteracy, there are quite a number of qualified PWDs who can be effective in various employment sectors. Opoku-Boadi's (2015) research with focuses on disability and challenges to employment brings to light the different perceptions employers hold concerning PWDs. While some employers discriminated on the type of employment suitable for PWDs based on the type of disability, others perceived PWDs as less productive and would not employ them under any grounds. Denial of PWDs the right to employment when they qualify is an infringement on the right to employment, especially in a society with laid down legal documents which seek to protect such rights. Section 2 of the Disability Act makes provisions in this regard. Employment has a significant influence on an individual's ability to participate actively in the social and political process. It provides the necessary skills and experiences for effective leadership and this can be translated into the political life. Employment also provides financial resources that enhance effective involvement in political activities. A gainfully employed person with disability could be an active member of a political party, support political campaigns and contest for political positions. Most political activities are driven by financial resources. Denying a person with disability access to employment opportunities even when they fit for the job not only keep them in the state of poverty but affects their inclusiveness in other aspects of society. This includes participation in political activities. A democratic state like Ghana that seeks to promote

inclusive participation for PWDs should in this regard ensure the protection of economic rights for PWDs as emphasised in the Persons with Disability Act.

Women with disabilities (WWD) cannot be neglected in the discourse on disability right protection. WWDs encounter double discrimination in society as a result of the inherent disability and their sex as females. Slikker (2009) and Mensah *et al.* (2008) confirm that severe negative attitudes in society inform extreme marginalisation of women with disabilities in Ghana. Golding (2010) sheds light on understanding how disability affects women's inclusion in society and the limitations it places on their political lives. According to her, most women with disability are unlikely to have access to education or employment opportunities. This results in their categorization among the poorest in society leading to exclusion from social and political life (p. 27).

Golding (2010) expounds that a number of institutional, environmental and attitudinal obstacles hinder full participation of women with disability in the political process. Women's domestic responsibilities, for example, place limitations on the time available to them for active political involvement. Also, high levels of illiteracy and unemployment which characterise most women with disability cannot be translated into political life. Education and employment are among a number of factors that influence active political involvement (p. 28). Cultural perceptions have also influenced stigmatisation against women with disability which affects self-esteem, thus limiting involvement in social and political activities.

Generally, political involvement of women in and across the world remains minimal, thus, not much could be said for women with disability. This study recommends that, as states implement policies to involve non-disabled women in politics, it is as well

relevant to address barriers that confront women with disabilities involvement in the social and political process. In enhancing the Ghanaian woman with disability's involvement in the political process, it is necessary to reduce the level of illiteracy which creates political apathy. This could help them participate in politics not necessarily as candidates for elections, but as voters, poll workers, election monitors, etc. It is important for some number of women with disability to be involved in the political process to represent the interest and voice opinions of other women with disability since they are more vulnerable.

2.3 LEGAL BASIS FOR THE PROTECTION OF RIGHTS OF PWDS

2.3.1 The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

For a long time, persons with disabilities were perceived as objects of pity who need help through charity rather than as persons with inherent rights and dignity. Based on the notion that human rights are inherent in humans by virtue of their humanity, the United Nations have thus made efforts to protect rights of PWDs in several of its human rights documents (Schulze, 2009).

Prior to the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2006, the UN in 1971 adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Mentally Retarded Persons to protect the rights and welfare of the mentally disadvantaged in society. Though not the first, this document was among the earliest UN efforts to protect persons with mental disabilities. The 1975 Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons followed to further the rights of PWDs. The 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) also made special provisions to protect the rights of children with disability. Disability was recognised as part of the potential grounds for discrimination

in Article 2 of this Convention (p. 12). The World Program of Action concerning Disabled Persons (WPA) was also adopted by the UN General Assembly to rehabilitate and promote equal opportunities for Persons with Disability. According to Schulze, a decade on Persons with Disability followed the adoption of the WPA and spanned from 1983 to 1992 (ibid.). In 1993, the UN Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities were adopted. These rules on equalisation spelt out “a strong moral and political commitment on behalf of States to take action for the equalisation of opportunities for persons with disabilities” (Schulze, 2009, p. 13).

Schulze asserts that though these treaties were adopted to protect and promote human rights, they had no legal implications to promote the enjoyment of rights of PWDs. This meant that PWDs were continually sidelined in society and faced barriers to enjoying their rights. The preamble to the CRPD confirms this. It states;

[k] Concerned that, despite these various instruments and undertakings, persons with disabilities continue to face barriers in their participation as equal members of society and violations of their human rights in all parts of the world (UN General Assembly, 2006).

She also emphasised that before the CRPD, none of these existed documents provided rights of all PWDs to live as equal citizens in society. There was the need therefore to adopt a more comprehensive and integral international document which would protect the rights and dignity of PWDs and ensure the full and effective enjoyment of all existing human rights (Schulze, 2009, p. 10-13) as well as their inclusion into mainstream society.

The United Nations thus adopted the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2006 to promote the rights of PWDs and to ensure their full inclusion in society. The adoption of CRPD was a response to the absence of an international treaty that specifically protects people with disabilities (p. 75). The CRPD provides for a number of rights including the right to equality and non-discrimination, rights for women who have disabilities, PWDs right to education, access to health and right to work and employment. The rights of persons with disability to participate in political and public life are also stipulated in Article 29 and guidelines for participation, clearly outlined under this Article.

In Article 29 on “Participation in political and public life”, state parties are responsible for guaranteeing political rights for PWDs and create equal opportunities for them to participate in elections as voters, ensure accessibility and easy understanding of the voting procedure as well as protect PWDs to vote by secret ballot. Article 29 also emphasise opportunities for PWDs to contest elections, hold political offices and participate in all forms of public functions. State parties are tasked with promoting a conducive environment devoid of discrimination to assist PWDs to participate fully and effectively in all public affairs. States must as well encourage PWDs to participate in activities of organisations which relates to the public and political life and in activities of political parties.

The range of human rights provisions in the CRPD are grouped under 50 key Articles. The provisions in the Optional Protocol to the Convention are also grouped under 18 Articles.

2.3.2 Legal Basis for the Protection of the Rights of PWDs in Ghana

In Ghana, a number of legal documents exist to promote rights and wellbeing of persons with disability. For the purpose of achieving the objectives of this study, a focus is placed on three legal documents which make provisions for PWDs participation in the political process. These are the Persons with Disability Act (2006), the 1992 Republican Constitution and the Local Government Act of 1993. These documents are the legal framework within which PWDs are incorporated into the political process to enhance their inclusion. They are therefore discussed and scrutinized under the analysis section of this study (Refer to Chapter Four).

2.4 INCLUSIVE PARTICIPATION; CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY PWDs IN DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING STATES

Persons with disability in developed and developing countries encounter some barriers in participating in the political process. This section would, therefore, combine studies from both developed and developing nations in the discussions on barriers that impede effective participation of PWDs in the political process.

It is important to establish that there is the inadequacy of literature on political participation of persons with disability in Africa because there is little research done so far regarding issues of concern to persons with disability. This study would, therefore, contribute to the few existing literature on disability and political inclusion in Africa.

In Ghana, the existing literature on PWDs political inclusion identifies stigmatisation as the major challenge to political participation and this is influenced by the Ghanaian cultural beliefs (Sackey, 2014; Slikker, 2009; Mensah *et al.*, 2008). A number of factors

that as well act as impediments to the active participation of PWDs at the grassroots and national level political governance are discussed.

Examining the extent of political participation in local government and the challenges persons with disability encounter in engaging in local political activities in Ghana, Voice Ghana (2014) sought to investigate into PWDs level of knowledge and involvement in some local political activities such as Town Hall Meetings and public hearing sessions (Voice Ghana, 2014). The study which was spread across 10 districts in the Volta Region of Ghana found that out of the study population of 297 persons with disability, only 121 respondents had participated in Town Hall Meetings, 128 had no knowledge of Town Hall Meetings and 48 respondents were not able to participate due to mobility issues. Also, it was found that none of the 297 PWD-respondents had ever participated in public hearing sessions. Three reasons identified for non-participation in town meetings and public hearing sessions included lack of information on such activities, mobility problems and lack of interest in participation. The research concludes that PWDs participation in local governance is low. The location for this study is significant since the 2010 Population and Housing Census identifies the Volta as the region with the highest prevalence of PWDs.

Voice Ghana's (2014) research provides confirmatory evidence that there exist several other political opportunities available to PWDs to actively engage in the political process other than the conventional participation in the electoral process as voters. There is, however, the need for public education and sensitization on these forms of local political activities since most PWDs have little or no idea on them. There is also the need for public awareness creation to sensitise the general public on the need to accept and involve PWDs in all communal political oriented activities. Most

importantly, it is imperative for the government and all stakeholders to address attitudinal, informational, physical and institutional barriers that may challenge effective participation in these areas.

Illiteracy and resource constraints have also been identified as obstacles to PWDs active participation in political activities in Ghana (Sackey, 2014; Mensah *et al.*, 2008). Effective participation in politics is generally influenced by education and available resources of which financial resource is key. Education and income play significant roles in enhancing active participation in politics. Most persons with disability, however, are less educated and not financially equipped for the cost involved in active politics. Addressing the challenges of illiteracy and finance should inform active participation of PWDs, however, Sackey (2014) makes an interesting case in his study. He informs that even in the situation where a PWD is financially equipped and academically qualified to participate actively in the political process, the obstacles that are posed by the physical environment becomes additional challenges to deal with.

Sackey (2014) significantly captures the most prevalent forms of disability in Ghana identified by the current Population and Housing Census (PHC). These are the visually impaired, the physically disabled, persons with hearing or speech functional disorders and the intellectually disabled. I particularly appreciate his inclusion of persons with albinism in the study. Though not captured in the 2010 PHC, the growing trend in the level of discrimination and threat to the life's of persons with albinism demands that considerable attention is paid to addressing issues of albinism and obstacles they face in society. The study is also significant in identifying factors that affect political participation of the Ghanaian person with disability. This could serve as a useful tool for the government on disability policy implementation. More so, Sackey recommends

the institutionalisation of an affirmative action to involve PWDs in the political process. The political commitment of the executive to the success of an affirmative action program to this effect is very fundamental. Like Uganda, Ghana could reserve some quota of seats in parliament for educated, qualified and competent PWDs. The program could successfully be implemented if it is devoid of party affiliations but based on merits and academic qualification.

Like Sackey, most studies on the participation of PWDs narrowly conceptualise participation on electoral politics and specifically, voting, without focusing on other means of participation available to PWDs. This narrow conceptualization, however, is a limitation which accounts for Sackey's failure to address other challenges that relate to other forms of participation such as joining a political party or community-based organisations, contacting party officials, signing a petition or involving in some unconventional political activities.

Priestley *et al.* (2016) in response to the above, address this gap in the literature of participation in their assessment of participation of persons with disability in Europe. Priestley *et al.* perceive participation of PWDs in a broader political spectrum. They hence broaden participation to include individual and collective involvement in the public sphere which is set in the context of a “multi-scalar governance from global to the local”

(p. 1). Their definition of political participation is rooted in human rights and premised on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). A range of political rights not limited to voting are made available to PWDs in Article 29 of the CRPD. These include joining political parties or associations, contesting for

elections, holding public office at all levels of government and as facilitators in the use of new technologies and assistive devices for PWDs (UN General Assembly, 2006). Other forms of political activities available to PWDs aside voting are identified by Golding (op. cit.). They include election administrators, poll workers, policy advocates, elections monitors, candidates, educators and campaigners. This study can be situated in the context of their study as it seeks to address local and national level participation from other perspectives aside electoral participation (holding political positions, being a member of a political party and participating in activities of the party). The underlying notion is to identify other pertinent challenges which previous studies have overlooked as a result of narrow conceptualizations. Nonetheless, these activities require some level of literacy, thus education is requisite for persons with disability in order for them to engage actively in these outlined political activities.

A study on barriers to the political participation of three categories of persons with disabilities - visually impaired, hearing impaired and physically impaired, in the Buea municipality in Cameroon concludes that socio-economic, cultural perceptions and physical barriers were hindrances to participation in political activities at both local and national levels. These barriers affect their involvement in the decision-making process, appointment to political offices and involvement in the voting and electoral processes (Opokua, Mprah & Saka, 2016).

In Nigeria barriers to the enjoyment of basic political rights (voting) for the most marginalized including persons with disability takes a shift from the widely discussed socio-cultural factors identified in the earlier studies. In the recent 2015 elections, report from International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) not only identifies violence that characterized Nigeria's electoral process as negatively affecting PWDs

participation, but also identifies systemic failures including lack of tactile voter guides for the visually impaired, barriers to accessible voting information and inaccessible polling units to people with physical disabilities as impediments to their political involvement. The significant time commitment for registration and voting is also daunting to PWDs, especially as they are often required to wait for extended periods of time in unsheltered areas. Also, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) lacks reliable data on the location and needs of people with disabilities. This makes it even difficult to address some challenges to accessibility (“Building Election Accessibility in Nigeria”, 2015).

The right to vote, however, is fundamental and critical to democracy. “Disability-inclusive elections in Africa” (2017) reports that though the CRPD underscores the equal right of PWDs to participate in political life, PWDs in many low-income countries, including those in Africa, are often unable to cast their vote or participate as candidates in the electoral process. The report is emphatic on the poor documentation of activities regarding the political participation of PWDs. This in effect makes it difficult to draw inferences on the kind of interventions to put in place in addressing issues that confront PWDs in the political process.

As mentioned earlier, PWDs in some developed countries also encounter challenges in participation in the political process. America and the United Kingdom are no exceptions. Some studies have sought to identify challenges the American with disability encounter in the American political process (Schur & Adya, 2013; Hall & Alvarez, 2012). Whereas Hall and Alvarez identify specific challenges that are pertinent to voter turnout and registration of persons with disability in the United States, Schur and Adya focus on examining generally the extent of PWDs involvement in

mainstream political activities in America. Both studies identify mobility challenges, issues with absentee voting and problems with polling centres as barriers that hinder participation (Schur & Adya, 2013; Hall & Alvarez, 2012).

According to Hall and Alvarez, mobility challenges associated with disability particularly limit the movement of PWDs to registration centres and restrict movement to polling centres to cast ballots. They also indicated that most PWDs were in the category of lower level of education and lower income earning (Hall & Alvarez, 2012). In terms of education, a higher percentage of PWDs respondents for the research (about 61%) had lower educational levels. Only 21% out of the total population were employed. These two variables (education and employment) have a significant influence on political participation. A disproportionate number of persons with disability in this category is an indication of a high possibility of lower engagement in the political process. Strict regulations that guide absentee voting in some states also reduces the interest of PWDs in the voting process. Participants of the study who are persons with disability also identified insufficient time allotted to voting as a challenge to voting. Some PWDs indicated they may need assistance to vote or enough time to understand the technical terms and languages on the ballot. Time constraints thus had a negative impact on their participation as voters (p.48). Also, assessing voting booth using a wheelchair and a crowded polling centre creates concerns for PWDs in participation in the voting process.

Schur & Adya (2013) categorised factors that impede PWDs participation in America under resources (time, finances and civic knowledge), psychology (personal interest, values, and self-efficacy) and political recruitment (p.3). Each of the identified categories has a significant influence on voting (Conway, 2001; Verba, Schlozman, &

Brady, 1995) and other forms of political participation. They are of the view that persons with disability continue to remain sidelined in the political process even though the American Disability Act exists to promote enjoyments of rights in various forms. Their assertion that PWDs are still sidelined in the face of the American Disability Act questions the significance of a legal document which should serve as the grounds for which PWDs are included in active participation. This calls for an implementation of legal provisions and restructuring of some policies which limit participation. For instance, if voting absentee is more convenient for PWDs, then states with strict regulations guiding absentee voting should restructure policy measure guiding voting absentee to enhance PWDs involvement in the political process.

In the United Kingdom, a review of the diversity of public and political life highlighted a number of factors that confront minority groups including PWDs. Among these were the lack of accurate, or in some cases any data about persons with disability, which makes it difficult to address issues of concern to them. It was also identified that there was no clear evidence about the impact policy and procedural changes have had in practice and challenges with following initiatives due to a lack of sustained leadership to implement policy recommendations. The review recounts, however, that the right to participate in political decision-making is necessary to smoothen the pathway to politics for disabled people in England, Scotland and Wales.

Though persons with intellectual disability and mental health problems are categorised among the most vulnerable groups of persons with disabilities, this study presents no reports on their participation for a number of reasons. Ghana in 2012 passed the Mental Health Act to protect civil and political rights of persons with mental and intellectual disabilities, nonetheless, there still exist some restrictions on how these rights are

exercised. It could be argued that the Mental Health provisions conflict with the constitutional provision in Article 42 which stipulates that a citizen who is eligible to participate in the electoral process as a voter is of sound mind. Article 42 of the 1992 Constitutions thus states;

“Every citizen of Ghana of eighteen years of age or above and of sound mind has the right to vote and is entitled to be registered as a voter for the purposes of public elections and referenda”.

To a significant extent, I agree to legal restrictions on political participation, precisely voting, for persons with extreme mental health and intellectual disorders based on a number of reasons. First of all, a person with mental health disorder is of unsound mind and may not be in the capacity to reasonably decide on an important issue as voting, which involves selecting leaders to control the affairs of an entire nation. Secondly, though human rights are inherent and must be enjoyed by all, they cannot be considered absolute. Human rights are “subject to reasonable restrictions” as indicated in Cooray (1996). In this regard, limitations to the enjoyment of certain rights are legitimate and necessary for the nation’s interest. Nonetheless, persons who do not exhibit signs of extreme mental ill health could be allowed to exercise their franchise upon a thorough assessment by a medical officer and if confirmed medically fit, may be granted the right to vote.

Challenges that confront PWDs in developed and developing counties identified under this section could be grouped under socio-cultural perception/ attitudes, environmental barriers and systemic failures. The human rights-based approach theory suggests that, in order to incorporate PWDs into society, there is the need for the government and development stakeholders to implement policies and put in place measures that would

enhance inclusive participation of persons with disability, especially in the political process.

2.5 THE ROLE OF KEY ACTORS IN PROMOTING INCLUSION OF PWDS IN GHANA'S POLITICAL PROCESS

Though low participation of PWDs in the political sector continues to remain a challenge, the issue of disability political inclusiveness is gradually gaining momentum in Ghana. This is because various stakeholders have committed to working in various capacities to ensure that PWDs are actively involved in the political process. Among these are the Electoral Commission, political parties and Organisation of Persons with Disabilities (OPWDs). Measures by these stakeholders would be highlighted and discussed briefly in the sections below.

2.5.1 The Electoral Commission

The Electoral Commission (EC) of Ghana is a key institution of democracy that is responsible for all election-related issues. The EC has committed to ensuring the inclusiveness of PWDs in the political process since the year 2000. It has worked with Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPWDs) and various NGOs to ensure that measures are put in place to enable PWDs to participate in the democratic process especially in exercising their rights to vote. Mensah *et al.*, (2008) outlined that in the year 2000, almost 80 people with disabilities were involved in the electioneering process as electoral officials. Qualified PWDs took up roles as electoral observers. Tactile ballot jackets were introduced within that year to assist the blind and visually impaired to cast their ballot secretly. The tactile ballot was for pilot testing and thus limited to a few polling centres.

The 2004 elections saw a significant improvement in PWDs inclusiveness in political activities. The EC worked with the Ghana Federation of Disability Organisations to work on awareness creation on the voting rights of PWDs, there was voter education on televisions and radio stations all geared towards awareness creation on the need to include PWDs in the political process. Significantly, the year 2004 saw a rise from 80 to 117 PWDs who were involved in the electioneering process as election observers nationwide. The Commission organised workshops to train these persons to enable them to work effectively in that capacity. In 2004 general elections, tactile ballot folders were introduced in every polling centres to assist blind and visually impaired persons in voting independently (ibid).

The EC has continued in its effort of inclusiveness for PWDs. The establishment of a Gender and Disability Department in 2008 to assist with addressing issues of gender and disability with relation to electoral activities confirms the Commissions commitment to issues of disability. In order to enhance effectiveness, the Gender and Disability Department operates in all ten regions of the country (Electoral Commission of Ghana, 2016). As an institution of democracy, the Commission's various implementations to get persons with disabilities participate actively not only as voters but as electoral officials is a hallmark of Ghana's democratic process. By means of enhancing full participation of PWDS in the electioneering process, the EC makes it a priority to work with various stakeholders to protect and promote the voting rights of PWDs. It does so by eliminating all forms of barriers that confront PWDs in the electoral process, thus increasing voter turnout of PWDs across the country.

Prior to the 2016 general election, the EC's role in ensuring that PWDs are mainstreamed into political activities was highly commendable and highly appreciated

by persons with disabilities and the general public. Following the December 2016 elections, the EC put in place various reform measures to involve PWDs actively in the electoral process. Among these were embarking on voter education and information dissemination for all including persons with disabilities, inclusive registration and ballot design for the blind and visually impaired. It also committed to ensuring that voting sites were accessible and opportunities made available for PWDs to work as electoral officials. The Commission outlined its efforts to organise workshops to train PWDs who qualified and were willing to work as electoral officials during the 2016 general elections (Electoral Commission of Ghana, *ibid.*).

As citizens, PWDs have equal right to participate in the electioneering process. Nonetheless, the condition of “disability” requires that certain measures are put in place to enhance the enjoyment of their political rights. All these measures by the Electoral Commission is a recognition of equal rights for persons with disabilities as citizens of Ghana.

2.5.2 Political Parties

Political parties also have a significant role to play in the political process. Political parties have been described as the “gatekeepers” of democracy (Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, 2011, p. 3). Hofmeister & Grabow (2011, p. 8) outline that, “without political parties, a modern representative democracy is not conceivable”. This is because political parties form the backbone of every democratic state. They serve as the grounds for the active involvement of citizens in political activities, for recruitment and selection of leaders to run the affairs of a state. To fully achieve the aim of democracy as a “government of the people, by the people, and for the people”,

politics requires among other things that citizens participate actively in political interactions and in all activities of the political party to which they belong (ibid, p. 7).

In Ghana, most political parties have committed to ensuring political inclusiveness of PWDs. An outline of a number of social protection policies for PWDs is included in party manifestoes. This research would focus on three of the numerous political parties in Ghana, considering a brief review of opportunities and implementations put in place for PWDs to enhance political rights. These parties are the National Democratic Congress (NDC), the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the Convention People's Party (CPP). The NPP and NDC are two major parties in the country that have been the pillars of the nation's democratic practice and as such relevant to any discussion on political participation. The CPP, on the other hand, is selected because it has exhibited commitment in the area of disability right protection and thus cannot be left out on disability and political participation. The CPP's 2016 flagbearer is a person with a physical disability.

2.5.2.1 The National Democratic Congress

In 2008, a section of the NDC manifesto made provisions for the rights of PWDs. The provisions emphasised the increase in access to education and provision of adequate funding for special schools in the country. The Manifesto made no direct provisions in the political space for PWDs, however, relying on scholarly works (Hillygus, 2005; Carpini & Keeter, 1997; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995) on the significant role of education as a determinant for political involvement, I would argue in support of the educational policy outlined in the 2008 manifesto of the NDC. Increasing access to educational opportunities for PWDs especially in formal schools is a means to

improving knowledge and skills which could then be translated into political engagement. Access to education is therefore fundamental to political participation.

In 2012, the NDC manifesto went a step further with its outline of social interventions policies to protect rights of the minority and vulnerable groups including PWDs. Among the policies for PWDs included ensuring that the required legislative instrument (LI) is passed to aid implementation of the legal document, ensure implementation of provision in the Persons with Disability Act (715) and also to increase from 2% to 2.5% the portion of the District Assemblies Common Fund allotted to support persons with disability (*The National Democratic Congress Manifesto*, 2012, p. 41). These were geared towards mainstreaming disability issues in the development process. In pursuing these policies, the Manifesto outlined that the NDC Government undertook some measures among which is the establishment of the National Council for Persons with Disability (NCPD) as a public council that would see to the implementation of the Disability Act and other implementations related to issues of disability (*The National Democratic Congress Manifesto*, 2012, p. 39). Since its establishment, the NCPD has done little with regards to its functions as a disability council. With regards to the Disability Act, the NDC only finalised the Legislative Instrument for Parliamentary approval but could not pass it to aid implementation of the national disability act. In this regard, the Act continues to exist as a skeletal legal document. Nonetheless, in 2013, the NDC government committed to its effort to include PWDs in the decision-making process. Significantly, the President appointed a visually impaired person for ministerial position for the first time in the country. Dr Henry Seidu Daanaa, a visually impaired lawyer was appointed as the Minister for Chieftaincy and Traditional Affairs in 2013 based on his qualification and competence.

In October 2016, there was yet another milestone made in the political sector for PWDs. The NDC launched a braille version of its 2016 manifesto for the blind and visually impaired ahead of the general elections. This according to former President John Mahama, was an indication of government's recognition of the rights of the visually impaired persons (Citifmonline.com, 2016). The above goes to emphasise that the National Democratic Congress (NDC) is committed to its social democratic principles of rights protection for persons with disabilities in Ghana.

2.5.2.2 The New Patriotic Party (NPP)

The New Patriotic Party is also committed to promoting rights of PWDs in various aspects including their rights to political involvement. There have been sections of the party's manifesto dedicated for an outline on rights for PWDs. In 2008, the section of manifesto for persons with disability focused on ensuring the passage of the Persons with Disability Act into Law and take steps to ensure its implementation. According to the party's manifesto, provisions for the inauguration of the National Council on Persons with Disability were in place and the party will in consultation with various organisations embark on programmes to protect the rights of persons with disability in its new government (*The New Patriotic Party Manifesto*, 2012). With the party's belief that society is incomplete if issues of PWDs are not incorporated into government's development plan, the 2012 manifesto outlined certain provisions that would promote disability rights. These included encouraging PWDs to be economically independent, proposed community-based projects that would integrate PWDs in society. Though not political provisions, were geared towards mainstreaming PWDs in society.

The NPP's 2016 manifesto also guaranteed equal opportunities for appointment into public offices for PWDs, an amendment to the Disability Act (715) to international

standard, passing a Legislative Instrument for the implementation of Act 715 and resourcing the National Council on Persons with Disability (NCPD). The Manifesto also outlined a decentralisation of the NCPD at all regional levels by way of enhancing coordination of disability activities. According to the Manifesto, the party would ensure an implementation of the increase in the DACF to 3% and most importantly improve and resource educational sectors for PWDs (ibid., 2016). Skills and knowledge from education as explained earlier is fundamental to political involvement. We are hopeful that as outlined in the manifesto document, the NPP government would implement these policies to promote inclusiveness of PWDs in all sectors of the society.

2.5.2.3 The Convention People's Party

The Convention People's Party in 2008 made history in the political system with its launch of a braille version of the Party's manifesto for blind and visually impaired persons. This step was to ensure that persons with visual impairments have access to information on the party's policies which would inform their decision in the electoral process. The 2008 Manifesto Document made certain provisions for PWDs to enhance enjoyments of rights. The party would ensure the effective allocation of the 2 % of District Assembly Fund for PWDs, ensure the Disability Act is implemented through a properly set up National Council on PWDs. Fast forward, in 2016, the party made yet another political hallmark by electing a PWD as the National flagbearer. These are indications that the CPP is committed strongly to promoting inclusion of PWDs in the political space.

The above brief highlights on the three political parties' Manifesto Documents and policies are indications that these organisations believe in social interventions for

vulnerable groups in society. Ghana's democracy could be said to have deepened to a significant level with these social intervention measures from political parties.

2.5.3 Organisation of Persons with Disability (OPWDs)

Organisation of Persons with Disability (OPWDs) are Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) with membership mainly being persons with disabilities. In Ghana, there exist a number of OPWDs and these include the Ghana Blind Union (GBU), the Ghana Society for the Physically Disabled (GSPD) and the Ghana National Association of the Deaf (GNAD) etc. Though these groups work to advocate for rights of their respective members, they are less influential as individual organisations. In order to be more influential in contributing to both national and local level policy-making, OPWDs have come together under one body that acts as a mouthpiece for the larger disability society and acting as representative for all these smaller groups at national, regional or district levels. The Ghana Federation of Disability Organisation (GFD) is the umbrella body of which these OPWDs belong (Mensah *et al.*, 2008).

The GFD is a Civil Society Organisation that advocates for disability-inclusive laws and policies for promoting the rights of persons with disabilities in Ghana. In the area of political governance, it works to ensure that PWDs are actively involved in the political process. In 2008, the GFD was involved in active advocacy for the appointment of qualified PWDs to higher political office. This was documented in its advocacy strategy paper presented to the government through the Public Service Commission. Among the highlights in the strategy paper were;

1. A reservation of at least 1% of all appointments to senior positions such as chief directors, deputy directors of ministries, heads of departments and agencies to qualified PWDs.
2. Ensure that all state ministry, department and agencies (MDAs) have at least 1% of employees who are qualified PWDs (cited in Sackey, 2014, p. 11)

In 2016, the Federation called on key stakeholders including the Electoral Commission to factor issues of PWDs in the electioneering process for the 2016 election. It called on the EC to improve accessibility, access to information and communication for PWDs in order for them to actively take part in the 2016 electioneering process. To political parties, the GFD called on them to factor disability-related issues in their manifestoes and communicate their campaign messages in various forms to make it easily accessible to PWDs (Graphiconline.com, 2016). GFD coordinates with the various disability member groups to deliberate on issues of concern to PWDs and it is committed to ensuring that persons with disabilities are mainstreamed in all activities of the society.

2.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter reviewed the literature on some models for understanding disability. The medical, social and bio-psychosocial models were explained with regards to understanding disability. While the medical model perceives disability as a medical condition that needs medical intervention, the social model argues that the condition of disability is caused by social and environmental barriers that confront a PWD in society. Addressing these social and environmental barriers would improve a PWDs participation in all social activities. The bio-psychosocial model, on the other hand, advocates for a merger of both medical and social models in addressing issues of

disability. This means both medical treatment and removal of all forms of environmental barriers to enhance the enjoyment of rights is necessary to address issues of disability. The literature also addressed the political, social, economic and cultural situation of persons with disability in Ghana and issues related to their participation in mainstream activities. It was realised that involvement of PWDs in society is generally low. A review on barriers that hinder political involvement of PWDs identified a number of challenges including cultural attitudes, environmental barriers, illiteracy, unemployment and inadequate financial resources among others. These hindrances could be addressed when the environment is made accessible to PWDs, legislations are implemented to enhance inclusion in society and awareness created on the need for PWDs participation in society. There should also be legislation on non-discrimination of qualified PWDs in the employment sector and enrolment of PWDs in formal and special schools enforceable by law. Finally, the chapter discussed some measures by key stakeholders in Ghana to enhance inclusion of PWDs in the political process. Among these actors are the Electoral Commission, Political Parties, Organisation of Persons with Disabilities (OPWDs) and the Ghana Federation of Disability Organisations (GFD) which is a representative of various disability organisations in Ghana. These actors have in several ways committed to ensuring that persons with disabilities equally get the opportunity to be involved in the political process. Efforts of these stakeholders is a signal that the Ghanaian society, in general, is committed to protecting and promoting the rights of PWDs in all aspects of society.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the methodology employed for the conduct of this research work. It captures the appropriate methods for the research and design for data collection and analysis. It also explains in detail the philosophical paradigm adopted to address the identified research issues. This chapter finally addresses adequately the limitations encountered in the conduct of the research.

3.1 RESEARCH METHOD

Different research methods are available to researchers in research conduct. Among these are the qualitative research method, the quantitative research method and the mixed method research design which is a combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009, 2012; Creswell, 2003). The research method adopted for a successful study of this research work is the qualitative research method.

3.1.1 Qualitative Research Method

Creswell explains qualitative research approach as involving exploratory means to understanding a social or human problem (Creswell, 2009). The qualitative research approach adopts flexible methods for detailed data collection thus the use of in-depth interviews, observation and review of documents are among the common sources for data collection (Creswell, 2009; 2003). Qualitative research has quite a number of

advantages that make it different and highly recommended for social research as compared to other research methods. Strauss & Corbin (1998) for instance, assert that qualitative research method is useful for obtaining complex and difficult details of some senses oriented phenomena that cannot be examined with the quantitative research approach. Bhattacharjee (2012) emphasises that qualitative research requires a few population which generates detailed information, unlike quantitative research which relies on a large population size for generalisation. Qualitative research is thus useful for getting in-depth information on a particular subject under study. Choy (2014) states that the use of flexible data collection tools like interviews for an enquiry helps to bring to light relevant issues or information which would not be obtained using quantitative data collection tool like a questionnaire. The narrative and descriptive nature of this research approach save the statistically handicapped researcher the stress of numerical computation.

The adoption of the qualitative research strategy for the conduct of this work is informed by its applicability to issues that cannot be quantified. This research aims to undertake an in-depth study of a case either than generalising based on a larger number of units. In examining Ghana's Disability Act and political participation of persons with disability, the qualitative strategy is highly recommended because the researcher needs specific and in-depth information from persons who are victims of the issue under description, persons with knowledge of the provisions of the Disability Act and how it relates to PWDs political participation as well as specific institutions and organizations who have roles to play in ensuring inclusiveness participation. The researcher believes that detailed information could be obtained from these group of people with the use of an interview which relates to qualitative research. As stated earlier, the use of an

interview is one of the flexible methods for detailed data collection. Qualitative research and its means for data collection help engage research participants actively in the research process for a deeper understanding of the issues in order to achieve the objectives, thus, its adoption is relevant to the conduct of this study.

3. 2 PHILOSOPHICAL PARADIGM

It is important to identify the philosophical paradigm or assumptions that underpin any research project since they tend to influence the conduct of the research. Based on the philosophical paradigm, the researcher can explain clearly the reasons for adopting a particular research approach, either Qualitative, Quantitative or Mixed Method. Other scholars have referred to the philosophical paradigms as worldviews, epistemologies or ontologies. Creswell (2009, p. 6) for instance, adopts the use of “worldview” and explains it as "a basic set of beliefs that guide action". Creswell identifies four different worldviews. These are; “postpositivism, constructivism, advocacy or participatory and pragmatism” (ibid.). Creswell, (2003) explains that philosophical assumptions help researchers to make claims what knowledge is (ontology), how we know it (epistemology), the values that go into it (axiology), how we write about it (rhetoric) and finally the processes for studying it (methodology) (Creswell, 1994, cited in Creswell, 2003).

Among these four identified philosophical assumptions, constructivism and advocacy or participatory worldviews are selected as frameworks to better understand this research. The constructivist view allows for knowledge construction through interaction with others, thus it would help explore various means to enhance political participation of PWDs and identify actors championing disability policies through open

interactions and discussions with individual participants. The advocacy or participatory stance is as well adopted because it aims at empowering and enhancing inclusiveness of minority groups who have been neglected in society. In other words, it aims to correct social injustices and promote rights of such minority and vulnerable groups. Persons with disability who are at the focal point of this research are one of such minority groups hence my choice of adopting advocacy or participatory stance to support the constructivist view for this study. Generally, this research aims at promoting inclusiveness of persons with disability in political activities and empowering them to actively involve in mainstream activities. These two philosophical views are explained in detail in the sections below.

3.2.1 Constructivism

Constructivism is also referred to as social constructivism. This claim to knowledge is most often combined with interpretivism. Its ideas were drawn from the works of Mannheim, Berger and Luckman in 1967 and Lincoln and Guba in 1985. The basic assumption underpinning the social constructivist worldview is that humans long for an understanding of the world within which they find themselves (Creswell, 2003). According to Mason (2002), social construction or interpretivism focuses on understanding and interpreting the social world rather than making predictions. This grounding makes the constructivist paradigm suitable for this study which not only aims at investigating the extent to which the Disability Act has been implemented to enhance rights of PWDs but also to identify various actors spearheading disability advocacy in Ghana and as well as to explore other means to improve participation of PWDs in the political process. The goals of this research could be achieved by relying on different participant's views through interactions and discussions with them. This is what social-

constructivists engage in. The different subjective views expressed by participants in open interactions and discussions are informed by the social interactions they have with others and historical and cultural norms that influence their way of life. These different views are what the qualitative researcher studies in order to make certain conclusions. Mason (2002) thus states that social constructivism focuses on people's perceptions and interpretations as the sources for obtaining primary data and insider information.

Constructivists rely on open-ended interactions with participants because it is an opportunity for the researcher to gain detailed knowledge or information from participants as he listens carefully (Creswell, 2009).

3.2.2 Advocacy or Participatory

Advocacy or participatory philosophical stance was developed based on a realisation that post positivist theories and structural laws did not put into consideration the marginalised and minority groups in society. Individuals who developed this philosophical view also saw the need to address issues of social injustices that characterise society (Creswell, 2009). The advocacy or participatory worldview believe that social constructivist's redress of issues of marginalised people was short-lived. They argue that research inquiry should be geared towards implementing reforms that may positively affect the lives of people. In this regard, research inquiry and political agenda must be inextricably connected. They also advocate for an address of some issues as equality, empowerment, oppression, inclusiveness. The minority group of concern to the researcher play active roles as research participants. The overall objective of an advocacy or participant research is to advance an agenda for change to better the lives of marginalised people (Creswell, 2009; 2003).

The objectives of this research on political participation of persons with disability are geared towards ensuring inclusiveness of persons with disability into active political participation. This research believes that PWDs equally have rights to participate in the political process and must be empowered to enjoy these rights. Empowerment and inclusiveness can be made possible through policy implementation and structural changes political oriented. This would then make them equal citizens in society. The aims of this research to inquire into the Disability Acts potency to enhance political rights, the various disability interventions and actors in advocacy and measures to improve political involvement of PWDs in Ghana, fits within the agenda of the advocacy or participatory worldview. Creswell (2009, p. 6) summarises the Advocacy or participatory worldview's agenda as "Political, Empowerment issue-oriented, Collaborative and Change-oriented".

3.3 SOURCES OF DATA

Two major sources for data collection are adopted in this study. These are the primary and the secondary data sources.

The primary sources of data were obtained from field interviews conducted by the researcher. Secondary sources of data for the research were gathered from books, journal articles, and reports, documents from web pages and disability human rights documents. These are the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the Ghana Persons with Disability Act, 2006 (Act 715). Databases such as SAGE Publications, JSTOR, and Science Direct were used to obtain the journals on disability and political participation. Both sources of data helped enrich the empirical study.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

The study adopted the interview method for the collection of primary data. In-depth interview was used as a qualitative research technique to obtain detailed responses from the respondents. The use of interviews allowed for more detailed questions to be asked in order to achieve a high response rate useful for this study.

3.4.1 Interviews

Interviews were conducted using a flexible semi-structured interview guide. In order to provide an outline of topics to be covered in the interview, the interview guide was scripted. Interview questions were carefully formulated for clarification of the themes under investigation based on the research objectives. Though questions were based on the outline on the guide, the researcher followed with subsequent questions based on the answers given by the respondents. To keep the flow of conversation, respondents were allowed to express their experiences and knowledge of the concepts. This technique was to enhance the quality of responses from respondents who had detailed knowledge and experience on the topic under study. In as much as the researcher avoided asking leading questions, probing was key in the interview process. The researcher politely introduced a different theme when discussion on a particular theme was over. Respondents were allowed to pause and given enough time to reflect on questions in order to provide significant and detailed responses.

Interviews were mainly face-to-face except for few cases where the respondent was outside the reach of the researcher, phone interviews were used. Face-to-face interviews were recorded with a tablet computer for a later transcription in order to capture every answer given by the respondent. Phone interviews were recorded using the mobile

equipment's internal recorder. Saved recordings were transferred to a computer for safe storage and duplicates of recordings stored in the researcher's email as backup materials. Each of the face-to-face interviews lasted approximately fifty minutes and phone interviews lasted approximately forty minutes.

3.5 SAMPLING PROCEDURE

The purposive sampling method was adopted to achieve the aims of this study. Purposive sampling is a type of non-probability sampling technique which allows the researcher to conveniently and deliberately select respondents with a fair knowledge of the study. With the purposive sampling method, the researcher is supreme in the selection of which respondents are relevant to the research (Kothari, 2004).

There are various types of purposive sampling methods. This research adopts the maximum variation sample to conveniently select respondents with fair knowledge on the research issue. The maximum variation sampling is a search for variation in perspectives from units that are of interest to the researcher. It focuses on gaining a deeper understanding of a situation under study by looking at it from diverse perspectives (Patton, 1990). In Patton & Cochran (2002, p. 10), they explain that though purposive sampling method generally focuses on deliberately selecting participants who would generate useful data for the research, the maximum variation (a type of purposive sampling) ensures that the selected "sample is credible and covers the main groups you are interested in" (p. 10). Patton & Cochran add that selecting respondents using maximum variation is strictly based on the purpose of the research. Based on the researcher's judgement of which participants have a fair idea of the research topic, the

researcher carefully selects 12 different respondents likely to provide credible information to achieve the objectives of this research.

The twelve (12) respondents selected for the interview consisted of two (2) state institutions. They are the Electoral Commission and the National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD). Three (3) political parties (the National Democratic Congress, the New Patriotic Party and the Convention People's Party). Two (2) Disabled Persons Organisations (DPOs) based on the researcher's conceptualization of disability (the Ghana Blind Union and the Ghana Society for the Physically Disabled). A Non-Governmental Organisation actively involved with disability political research in local governance (Voice Ghana), two (2) PWDs who are active participants in local governance and two (2) PWDs in national level political participation.

3.5.1 Justification for Selection of Respondents

The Electoral Commission (EC) of Ghana is a key state institution of democracy responsible for all election-related issues in Ghana. The EC is required to make necessary provisions that would enhance electoral inclusiveness of all citizens including persons with disability. The researcher found it necessary to interact with the Commission to be informed of specific measures put in place by the EC for persons with disability with regards to the electioneering process.

The National Council for Persons with Disability was selected because it is established by the Persons with Disability Act (715) to propose policy measures and strategies that would enhance PWDs participation in mainstream social activities. Further probing confirmed the NCPD as a body that operates under the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection. This Ministry is mandated to promote rights of vulnerable groups

in society through policy implementations. It thus becomes imperative to engage the NCPD on the policies implemented to promote the enjoyments of rights and the extent to which the Council and the Ministry have fared in enhancing inclusiveness of PWDs in mainstream activities including participation in the political process.

Political parties form the backbone of every democratic state and cannot be exempted in the discourse of political participation. In this regard, the National Democratic Congress (NDC), the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the Convention People's Party (CPP) are selected. The NDC and NPP are selected because these are the two major and dominant political parties and are the pillars of Ghana's democratic process. Issues relating to democracy and governance cannot be discussed without involving these two dominant political organisations. The Convention People's Party, on the other hand, was selected because of the remarkable achievement of having its national political aspirant as a person with a physical disability. It therefore cannot be left out in discussions on political participation of PWDs.

Also, the Ghana Blind Union (GBU) and the Ghana Society for the Physically Disabled (GSPD) were selected based on the recent Population and Housing Census Report in 2010. It indicates that these two forms of disability record the highest prevalence in Ghana. Visual impairment records 40.1% with physical disability being 25.4%. Representatives from these disability organisations were preferably executive members. The reason is that the executive member is privy to considerable information concerning the organisation and is more likely to be abreast with emerging issues on disability and knowledge of the Persons with Disability Act and could give credible and in-depth information that would be relevant to this study.

Voice Ghana was selected because it is a Non-Governmental Organisation managed for and by persons with disabilities. It has contributed immensely towards improving the enjoyments of rights of PWDs in various sectors in society. Voice Ghana has been active with the conduct of a number of political research in the area of local governance and advocacy for political inclusiveness for persons with disability. It also partners various local and foreign organisations to promote political rights of persons with disability in Ghana.

Two persons with disability involved in active politics at the national level selected for interview are the presidential aspirant of the CPP, Lawyer Ivor Greenstreet and the former Minister for Chieftaincy and Traditional Affairs, Dr Henry Seidu Daanaa. These two persons fit within the researcher's selected group of disability, that is, physical disability and visual impairment respectively.

Two (2) persons with disability in local governance (a visually impaired and physically disabled), were also selected for interview because the research as well focuses on participation in local governance. Issues pertaining to PWDs participation in local governance could only be made known to the researcher by PWDs who themselves are active members in local governance, hence their involvement. These two are selected from the Volta region with reason that the region records the highest population of PWDs in Ghana.

3.6 FRAMEWORK FOR DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

In the analysis section, both secondary and primary data were analysed. The legal instruments within which PWDs are incorporated into the Ghanaian political process were scrutinised under the analysis section. Primary data obtained from interviews was

transcribed and analysed qualitatively using the qualitative content analysis technique. According to Schreier (2012), the content analysis technique is a method used by social science researchers to analyse data systematically. It involves organising and preparing raw data for analysis, reading through the data in order to group data into essential parts according to the themes on which interviews are structured, assigning codes to interrelated issues for effective analysis and finally grouping interrelated data for the purpose of description and interpreting (Creswell, 2007). Also, the primary data was analysed within the framework of the human rights-based approach theory. This approach serves as the basis for the full inclusion of PWDs in social and political process. It aims to strengthen the participation of PWDs both in mainstream society and in the political process by empowering them, making them more articulate to make choices and developing their capabilities as right-holders. In relation to promoting effective participation of PWDs in the political process, the principle of Participation and Inclusion informed the discussions.

Names used in the data analysis are the real names of the respondents interviewed. Most of the respondents gave consent for their names or positions to be quoted where need be.

3.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Two out of the twelve selected respondents were not available for interview. These are the flagbearer of the CPP and the CPP as a political organisation. The flagbearer of the Convention People's Party (CPP) had travelled early. A request for assistance with flagbearers email address with the aim of contacting via email was fruitless. He thus could not be interviewed for the research. Also, the CPP as an organisation could not

assist the researcher with an interview schedule with any of the members of the Party's Executive Committee. Upon submission of a letter of introduction for an interview to the secretary, there was a constant reminder for her to assist with an interview schedule with one of the party's Executive members. Eventually, she explained that due to some reasons none of the executives were readily available for an interview. The CPP could therefore not assist the researcher with an in the conduct of the study.

The researcher also had challenges with meeting some respondents in person thus resorted to phone interviews with these persons. Respondents whose offices had been visited on countless occasions yet could not make time for the interview agreed to assist with a telephone interview. Though the telephone interview was helpful, it had a disadvantage. The timings of phone calls were not favourable for some respondents due to their busy schedule. Their willingness to assist with the interviews, however, meant that only a few minutes of their time could be spared for a phone interview. Due to the time limits, the researcher could not probe further to get detailed responses as expected.

Again, countless visits to some of these places without meeting respondents was hectic and financially burdensome due to the transport cost involved. In some places where public commercial vehicles did not patrol, the researcher had to resort to taking taxi cabs, paying more money for transportation yet not meeting the respondent.

3.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the methodology for this study. Qualitative research method was adopted. Data was obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The use of interview as a primary data collection tool was useful for obtaining detailed information from the respondents. Based on a purposive sampling procedure, ten (10) respondents

were interviewed. Interviews were transcribed and analysed using the content analysis. The chapter highlighted a number of limitations including difficulties in meeting some respondents and financial constraints.



CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is presented in two sections. The first section deals with the discussion and analysis of the legal frameworks within which PWDs are incorporated into the political process. Analysis and discussions of the qualitative data gathered from the field interviews follow in the second section.

4.1 DISCUSSION/ ANALYSIS OF GHANA'S LEGAL DOCUMENTS FOR THE PROTECTION OF RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITY (PWDs)

The protection of rights of persons with disability in Ghana is enshrined in the 1992 Constitution. Commitment to promoting the rights of persons with disability led to the adoption of the “Persons with Disability Act (Act 715)” in 2006 to provide a legal framework for persons with disability in the country. It was in fulfilment of Article 29 of the 1992 constitution obligation to make laws to protect the rights of PWDs and to fulfil Ghana's international obligation (Oye-Lithur, Stickney, & Nathan, 2007, p. 1).

The sub-sections below discuss briefly the disability rights provisions in the 1992 Constitution, the Persons with Disability Act, 2006 and the Local Government Act of 1993 which provides for rights of PWDs in local governance.

4.1.1 1992 Constitution of Ghana

Article 29 of the 1992 constitution is devoted to promoting the rights of persons with disability in Ghana. This section provides for the rights to live with families and to

participate in mainstream societal activities. It also emphasises PWDs rights to differential treatment in relation to their residence and living conditions. Article 29 further guarantees protection against discriminatory treatment and ensures that public buildings are accessible to PWDs. In addition, it outlines that special incentives be given organisations that employ a significant number of PWDs as well as PWDs who are into businesses. Finally, Article 29 (8) of the Constitution mandates that “Parliament shall enact such laws as are necessary to ensure the enforcement of the provisions of this article”. The Persons with Disability Act (Act 715) was thus adopted in 2006 in accordance with this constitutional provision.

4.1.2 The Persons with Disability Act, 2006 (Act 715)

Parliament adopted the Persons with Disability Act in 2006 to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities in Ghana. The Act guarantees a number of human rights grouped under 8 key sections. These are Rights of persons with disability (PWDs), Employment, Education, Transportation, Health-care facilities, miscellaneous provisions, Establishment and functions of National Council on Persons with Disability (NCPD), Administrative and Financial provisions.

Section one of the Disability Act on “Rights of persons with disability” provides for a range of rights which includes the right to live with family and participate in all social, political, economic, creative and recreational activities. Most importantly, PWDs engagement in political activities is provided for in this section. Section 1 also ensures the rights to equality in respect of residence and requires that in the instance where there is a need for a specialised establishment for a person with disability, it should be close to a non-disabled peer. This section also provides for equality of PWDs. Accordingly,

a person with disability shall not be subject to discrimination in society or discriminated against in the quest for employment on basis of disability. The right to equal treatment and non-discrimination is internationally recognised and established in Articles 3 and 5 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol.

Section two of the Disability Act tasks the Ministry in charge of social protection with the responsibility of assisting PWDs in securing jobs through the public employment centres. In order to ensure that more qualified PWDs are not denied employment, the Act guarantees some incentives for employers who employ a significant number of PWDs. It states, “The Government shall grant a person who employs a person with disability an annual tax rebate of the taxable income in respect of each the number of persons with disability employed...” (Persons with Disability Act, 2006). Employers are responsible for the provision of requisite working tools, appropriate training and a conducive working environment for efficiency in the workplace. PWDs are equally responsible for work materials handed to them and would be legally accountable for the sale of any of the provided work materials. The Ministry would as well establish regional and district rehabilitation centres to cater for needs of PWDs who are unable to participate in mainstream society. Rehabilitation centres shall be within the communities to enhance social integration. There are a number of rehabilitation centres for PWDs in Ghana. It includes Edwinase Rehabilitation Centre and Accra Rehabilitation Centre.

The relevance of education to national development cannot be downplayed. The right to education is provided for in Article 26 (1) of the 1948 Universal Declaration of

Human Rights (UDHR) and is applicable to every individual including persons with disability. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states;

Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit (UN General Assembly, 1948)

The CRPD specifically provides for the right to education in Article 24 where state parties are responsible for ensuring an all level inclusive education for persons with disability. Article 25 of the 1992 constitution also guarantees equal educational opportunities for all persons. Thus it states that “basic education would be free, compulsory and available to all;” (Article 25 (1) (a)) and does not exclude persons with disability. Due to their vulnerability, however, special provisions are made in section three of the Disability Act to promote the educational rights of PWDs. The section guarantees the establishment of Special schools for PWDs who due to special disability conditions, cannot enrol in formal schools. Special schools for PWDs in Ghana include Cape Coast School for the Blind and Deaf, Akropong School for the Blind, Ashanti School for the Deaf, and the New Horizon Special School among others. The Act also outlines that the Minister of Education shall provide facilities in a selected institution in each region to reasonably accommodate persons with disability. Special education in sign language and braille writing or reading would be undertaken in public vocational, technical and teacher training institutions in each region and established by Legislative Instrument. The Ministry shall also provide appropriate training for basic school leavers who cannot pursue further formal education. Finally, parents or guardians are lawfully required to enrol their children with disability in these schools.

The Ministry in charge of transportation is required to take into account the transport needs of PWDs. Section four of the Disability Act stipulates this. Owing to addressing transport needs of PWDs in Ghana, there would be no tax or import duties on vehicles imported for use by persons with disability. Motorists are also lawfully required to aid PWDs in the use of the road as pedestrians. Section four of the Act also requires that special parking spaces be reserved exclusively for use of PWDs in all parking lots. The Civil Aviation Authority as well has a duty to provide facilities that would enhance movement of PWDs in the port.

The health needs of persons with disability are addressed under section five of the Disability Act. Persons with a severe disability shall benefit from the free medical treatment policy by the Health Ministry. Health professionals would be educated on disability health issues as part of training in health institutions. Not only this, but the Act also provides for periodic health screening of children for the purposes of detecting, preventing or managing disability during infancy. The Health Ministry would work with District Assemblies and Social Welfare Departments to operate health centres for assessment and diagnosis of mothers and children.

There are other rights of PWDs in sports, culture and national activities provided for in section six. Thus facilities should be made available for PWDs to actively involve in these activities. Section six as well guarantees tax exemption for persons involved in the manufacturing of appliances needed for use by PWDs. This section as well makes legal provision to protect persons with disability. Thus in the instance of a PWDs arrest, detention or trial, the person's disability shall be taken into account.

Act 715 establishes the National Council for Persons with Disability (NCPD) in section seven. The NCPD is responsible for proposing policies and strategies to enhance effective participation of PWDs in mainstream society. It is as well responsible for coordinating and monitoring all disability-related programmes. The Council is composed of “high-ranking representatives from a number of key ministries as well as from OPWDs and organisations or institutions working for PWDs” (Slikker, 2009, p. 24).

Finally, the Administrative and financial provisions in the last section of the Persons with Disability Act provides for the appointment of an Executive Secretary who would handle the administrative activities of the Council. The Council would be financed partly by Parliament, through donations and gifts, and with money approved by parliament from the Ministry of Finance.

Though the Disability Act outlines the above human rights, it has however seen some criticisms. The Disability Act is inconsistent with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). There are some glaring omissions in Act 715 which makes it deficient in promoting the rights of PWDs. Mensah *et al.* (2008) for instance, submit that the Disability Act grants no legal definition of disability unlike seen in the CRPD. Ghana’s Disability Act also omits provisions for women and children with disability. Women with disability suffer multiple discrimination resulting from their sex and the inherent disability and are the most vulnerable group of all persons with disability. Article 6 of the CRPD specifically addresses the needs of women with disability. The Convention outlines that state parties must ensure the development and empowerment of women and girls, as well as provide measures for the enjoyments of fundamental rights. Ghana’s Disability Act, however, makes no such

provisions for women and girls with disability. In addition to these, the Act makes no provision on equality and non-discrimination against PWDs, a clause which would be necessary to eliminate all forms of discriminatory practices against PWDs in Ghana (Mensah *et al.*, op. cit.). Measures for equality and non-discrimination of PWDs are outlined in Article 5 of the CRPD. State parties are responsible for providing appropriate measures to eliminate discriminatory practices against PWDs in society. Act 715 has also been criticised as not having a legislative instrument to aid effective implementation of the Disability Act.

Importantly, though Section 1 (“Right to family life and social activities”) of the Disability Act makes provision for participation in political activities, this provision is vague and has no guidelines on PWDs engagement in the political process. It states, “A person with disability shall not be deprived of the right to live with that person’s family or the right to participate in social, political, economic, creative or recreational activities”. It could be realised that this provision is not elaborate on political participation and has no guidelines on specific measures to include PWDs in the political process as outlined in Article 29 of the CRPD. The gap between policy and practice could be attributed to these omissions found in the Disability Act.

Ghana has however signed and ratified the CRPD and its Optional Protocol in 2007 and 2012 respectively. This affirms her commitment to respect the rights of PWDs. Following the ratification in 2012, there have been various calls on the government to amend the Disability Act to conform to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). It is necessary that the Persons with Disability Act, (Act 715), be reviewed and amended to meet international standards, specifically,

the human rights provisions in the CRPD. It would then be effective in promoting the enjoyment of rights for persons with disability in Ghana.

4.1.3 Local Government Act (Act 462) of 1993

In Ghana, local government is significant to development and administration in the local areas. The 1992 Constitution makes provision for “Decentralisation and Local Government” by way of enhancing citizens participation in the local governance process Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (2010). Citizen participation is fundamental to the local governance and inclusive development process. It is a reflection of the constitutional right of all Ghanaians including persons with disability to participate in the planning, implementation and monitoring of local development processes Asong (2015).

The Local Government Act (462) of 1993 reinforces the decentralisation and local government provision of the 1992 Constitutions. Act 462, like the 1992 Constitution, provides for participation of persons with disability in the local governance process. In subsection (5) of section (6) on “Qualifications and disqualifications”, it is stated;

...a person is not disqualified from being elected or appointed to a District Assembly by reason only of the status, position profession, religion, creed...or physical disability of that person

Participating in local governance is an opportunity for PWDs to be involved in the decision-making process. It is therefore imperative for local government authorities, disability organisations and the National Commission for Civic Education to educate and inform persons with disability on the need to participate in activities of the District or Local Assembly. It could either be in the form of contesting assembly elections or contributing to District or Local Assembly meetings etc.

4.2 ANALYSIS OF PRIMARY DATA

The data collected using interviews aimed at addressing the research questions that are posed in chapter one in order to achieve the objectives of this research. The fundamental goal of the data collection exercise was to investigate the extent of implementation of the Persons with Disability Act (715) to enhance PWDs political inclusion following its passage in 2006. It also aimed at identifying several actors in the political space and contributions to political advocacy for PWDs. Views of Actors were sought on their motivations for active advocacy and implementation of measures to ensure participation of PWDs in the political process. Finally, data collection aimed at identifying some emerging issues and general challenges that confront PWDs in the political process and measures to address them.

Generally, respondents were selected based on the notion of their knowledge on the existence of the Persons with Disability Act and also abreast with current discussions on disability political inclusion. For democratic institutions, selection was informed by their role as stakeholders in development, and for PWDs, their level of education and involvement in political governance.

4.2.1 Respondents knowledge of Human Rights Provisions of the PWD Act (Act 715)

The responses from the field interview was an indication that all ten (10) respondents had knowledge of the existence of the Disability Act. However, not all the respondents were abreast with the human rights provisions of the Act. Seven (7) respondents had knowledge of the Act's human rights provisions and how they relate to protecting rights of persons with disability in Ghana. These were the NCPD, the GBU the GSPD, Voice

Ghana and the three politicians with PWDs. The three (3) other respondents, though have a critical role to play on PWDs political involvement, were not abreast with human rights provisions of the Disability Act. They are the Head of Disability and Gender (EC) and the two political parties (NPP and NDC).

Among the seven respondents with knowledge of the provisions of the Act are four (4) who represent disability advocacy organisations that play an advocacy role in issues affecting PWDs. These are the NCPD, the GBU, the GSPD and Voice Ghana. These organisations hinted that their efforts in advocating for PWDs inclusiveness in the various sections of society are informed by the provisions outlined in the Disability Act. The Director of Voice Ghana, for instance, stated;

in order to address issues of disability, the organisation mainly focuses on the policy legislative framework that is, the Persons with Disability Act. It juxtaposes its provisions to the Universal Convention which Ghana has ratified by taking the various sections of the Act into consideration. This enables to know the shortfalls in the Disability Act and how to address the gaps in order to promote the enjoyment of rights. Doing this has helped to know that with political participation there is no much focus as far as the Act is concerned and so we work in that direction to ensure that PWDs get the opportunity to participate in the political process (Personal interview, March 20, 2017).

This goes to emphasise the need for disability advocacy organisations to be informed on the provisions of disability laws in order to know its shortcomings. This would then inform their policy intervention measures in promoting disability rights.

The three politicians with disability who expressed knowledge of the human rights provisions of the Disability Act informed that, as persons with disability, knowledge on the human rights provisions of the Act is important for defending themselves and advocating for their rights when need be. Vivian Nartey indicated that;

the Persons with Disability Act is Ghana's legal document that protects PWDs rights, therefore it is necessary for us as persons with disabilities to know its provisions... (phone interview, March 30, 2017).

Upon further inquiries on how the Act is made available for persons with disability, she informed that for the visually impaired, the Act is in Braille Version for easy access. She added that the various disability organisations organise workshops on regular intervals to educate their members on the provisions of the Disability Act.

For the three (3) key institutions of democracy (The EC and two political parties) that knew of the existence of a Disability Law yet had no knowledge of the basic human rights provisions of the Act, it becomes questionable how these key institutions attempt to address issues of concern to persons with disability in Ghana. Anecdotal evidence, for instance, informs that the Electoral Commissions commitment towards improving PWDs right to participate effectively in the electioneering process are informed by continuous appeal from Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPWDs) on the government for better political and electoral privileges to improve their participation in the political process.

4.2.2 The Extent to which the Persons with Disability Act has informed Political Participation of PWDs

Parliament's adoption of the Persons with Disability Act was geared towards promoting the rights of persons with disabilities and mainstreaming them into society. Responses from the seven respondents with knowledge of the human rights provisions of the Act informed that the Disability Act over a decade has not been successful in promoting the rights of PWDs including the rights to political participation.

First of all, the majority of respondents with knowledge of provisions of the Act argued that Ghana's Disability Law makes no detailed provisions for political rights for persons with disability. The reason given was that the Act has no separate section or outline of guidelines for PWDs participation in the political process as it is clearly seen in the CRPD. According to these respondents, the political provision in Section 1, under "Rights to family life and social activities", is vague and insufficient to protect the political needs of PWDs. There exist, therefore, a gap between the Act as a policy, and implementation. By implication, the Disability Act has no linkage to protecting any form of involvement in the political process. The respondent from GBU reported that;

Ghana's disability law would be more effective in mainstreaming PWDs in political activities if it is bold and specific on the issue of political participation as outlined in Article 29 of the UN Convention. This would mean that government would be seen making specific interventions to guarantee the rights of PWDs as far as civic and political rights are concerned (personal interview, March 13, 2017).

Again, the majority of the respondents informed that the Disability Act lacks a Legislative Instrument (LI) that would aid its implementation. This makes it unable to promote any form of right for PWDs. Speaking on the Disability Act (715) and political participation, the former minister for chieftaincy and traditional affairs, Dr Seidu Daanaa stated;

There is a gap between the Act as a policy document and policy implementation for the protection of rights of PWDs. Anytime law operates in space and is out of touch with social reality, it becomes a mere spectator of tragedy. This has been the situation of Ghana's Disability Law since its passage in 2006 and until parliament finally amends the Act and pass the legislative instruments to enforce the Act, it cannot address disability needs (personal interview, April 06, 2017).

The above responses on the malfunction of the Disability Act in rights protection confirm Asante & Sasu's (2015) findings on the Disability Act's inability to protect

rights of PWDs in Ghana as a result of its gaps. Based on Sasu and Asante's assessment of Ghana's Disability Act in relation to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, a number of glaring omissions were identified in Ghana's Disability Law. Among these is an omission of guidelines on the rights to political participation for PWDs. Adoption of social intervention measures to cater for the rights of persons with disability is a part of modern democratic practices towards the realisation of human rights. In previous discussions on the human rights approach theory, the OHCHR (2006) outlines that for vulnerable and minority groups to attain equal opportunities with regards to the enjoyment of rights, states as duty-bearers are responsible for the implementation of policies towards the fulfilments of rights. In this regard, the state's adoption of a Disability Act to promote rights of PWDs is a social intervention measure in the right direction. There is, however, the need to ensure that the Disability Act is amended to include guidelines for political participation, and the Act enforced effectively for the fulfilment of political rights for PWDs. This would ensure the full realisation of inclusiveness for PWDs in the political process.

Protection of rights of PWDs according to the human rights theory, goes beyond simply including them in development programmes with the passage of disability laws. Worm (2012) emphasises that disability rights protection entails the commitment to human rights principles outlined in international human rights laws. Ghana's efforts to fully ensuring human rights of PWDs has led to a ratification of the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2012. Ratification of this international treaty is an indication of Ghana's acceptance of its legal provisions and readiness to commit to ensuring its realisation. The Persons with Disability Act must in this regard conform to the international disability treaty. We should see the Disability Act (715)

dedicate a section to political rights, outlining guidelines to include PWDs in the political process. The UN Convention provides for PWDs right in Public and Political life in Article 29 and the section outlines the guidelines needed to realise political rights of PWDs.

In sum, the Disability Act as a measure to promote rights of PWDs has not lived up to its purpose for adoption. Duty bearers including government and key stakeholders must work to ensure it is up to the task of protecting disability rights in social, economic, cultural and most importantly in the political space. Promoting human rights of vulnerable and minority groups in society is an indication of a country's level of democratic growth and development.

4.2.3 Actors and Interventions in the Political Space for PWDs

In the bid to enhance participation of persons with disability in the political process, various actors have committed to promoting political rights of PWDs in different forms. The activities ranged from advocacy to implementation of various policies and measure. This research foremost considered the role of certain key actors who are critical to PWDs political participation and their views sought on the measures towards enhancing PWDs participation in the political process. These selected actors were political parties (NPP and NDC), the Electoral Commission, the NCPD, GBU, GSPD and Voice Ghana. Views of all ten respondents were sought on other actors who are into active advocacy or implementations of policies towards enhancing PWDs inclusiveness in the political process. This section presents data on some interventions by these identified actors in promoting inclusiveness for PWDs in political participation.

Eight out of ten of the respondents informed the researcher on the Electoral Commission's (EC) significant role and improvements on measures in promoting PWDs rights. The GSPD respondent, Elvis Alipui, for instance, reported that;

The Electoral Commission's conduct of 2016 election was disability friendly. I was an observer in five different polling centres and the EC put in place a lot of measures to aid PWDs to participate effectively. The voting booth for the physically challenged was purely accessible. Wheelchair users could vote without assistance. Unlike the previous years, I could not vote without assistance from an abled person. I used to call the police officers at the polling centres to come and help me... (personal interview, March 9, 2017).

The GBU respondent, also a member of the Advocacy Committee of the GBU and a representative on the CODEO Advisory Board also emphasised on the ECs provision of the tactile ballot jackets and training for blind and visually impaired persons on the use of the tactile ballot jacket and the braille. This enabled the blind and visually impaired to vote independently and secretly. The EC's significant efforts in ensuring the inclusiveness of PWDs was across both local and national participation where PWDs who participated in Local Assembly elections enjoyed some basic interventions including accessible polling centres, voter education and provision of the tactile ballot for the visually impaired during the election period.

Vivian Nartey, an Electoral Area aspirant, stated that tactile ballot jackets were available for persons with visual impairment to vote independently. She stated;

I did not need assistance from anyone to enable me to cast my vote in the Local Assembly elections. The District Electoral Commission provided the tactile jackets and it helped me and other visually impaired persons to vote independently (phone interview, March 30, 2017)

Vivian detailed that the office of District Electoral Commission organised workshops to train the visually impaired on the use of the tactile ballot jacket as well as sensitised PWDs on the need to participate in the governance process.

Addressing the major interventions by the Electoral Commission, the Head of Gender and Disability responded that the Commission established the Gender and Disability desk in 2008. This department was established to assist with addressing issues of gender and disability with relation to electoral activities. In order to enhance the effectiveness of the Gender and Disability department, it operates in all ten regions of the country. In an interview with the Head of Gender and Disability, she stated that the EC makes it a priority to work with various stakeholders especially, the Ghana Federation of Disability Organisations (GFDO) to discuss relevant measures to protect and promote the electoral rights of PWDs. The Commission ensures the elimination of all forms of barriers that confront PWDs in the electoral process, thus increasing voter turnout of PWDs across the country. Sackey (2014), Voice Ghana (2014) and Mensah *et al.* (2008), have established in the literature that the existence of certain environmental barriers among other factors, contribute to low turnout of PWDs during elections and generally leads to low participation in the political process. The Commission's effort in this direction was an improvement on the turnout of PWDs during the 2016 general elections.

The EC's removal of all forms of environmental barriers to enhance PWDs participation in the political process fits within the social model's address of physical barriers that hinder the effective participation of PWDs and this is expounded in works by Albert (2008) and Trani *et al.* (2011) in the literature review. In a similar vein, this commitment on the path of the Electoral Commission relates to the core principles of

the human rights approach theory that underpins this work. Now, in the context of addressing challenges to mainstream participation, the human rights-based theory argues that a person is only disabled in the face of existing environmental barriers or impediments (Worm, 2012; Katsui, 2008). With these measures by the Electoral Commission, PWDs who were hitherto incapable of participating in the electoral process due to environmental inaccessibility could now participate actively as electors. Again, with reference to the theoretical framework, that is, the human rights-based approach, Worm (2012) and Katsui (2008) explain that a human rights-based approach to disability in development means it is necessary for persons with disability to equally participate and be included in every aspect of society as their non-disabled peers. This is made possible when all forms of barriers that hinder participation are addressed. Again, the rights-based approach requires that Disabled Persons Organisations (DPOs) are involved in policy-making through seeking their opinions (Worm, 2012, p. 29). The EC clearly emphasised its coordination with the Ghana Federation of Disability Organisations (GFD) in the improvement of electoral participation. This involvement is necessary in the sense that, persons who themselves have disabilities, would be in the best position to point out the exact measures that would be necessary to enhance their inclusion in the participation process. According to Worm (2012), fulfilments of these requirements signifies the achievement of the Rights to Political and Public life in the CRPD (p. 31).

The Commission further outlined that with the assistance of the GFD, the Commission organises capacity building workshops for PWDs and inform them of the need to participate in both local and national level elections as citizens. She reported that;

The EC takes PWDs through capacity building by organising workshops before every electioneering process. Before the registration process, the Electoral Commission organises workshops to inform them on details about the registration exercise and the measures put in place to facilitate their participation and the reason why they need to participate. Generally, they are sensitised to take part in the electoral process. Before every local electoral election, we organise workshop for PWDs and they are informed about the law and the various reforms that have been put in place. Before the 2016 election, among the reforms was the change in CI 72 to CI 91 because the law had been massaged and thus given a new name. This new law had aspects of inclusions and preferential treatment for PWDs so the EC took PWDs through the CI and all there is to know about the CI. PWDs were conscientize on how they can participate as electors and as candidate agents... (Personal interview, March 21, 2017).

The institution also informed that a number of PWDs were trained for work opportunities including electoral officials, educators, election monitors, and electoral observers. The respondent from the GSPD, Elvis Alipui, for instance, confirmed that he worked as an election observer in a number of polling stations for the EC. Basic education and qualification were, however, the underlining factors to working in such capacity. Now, the significant role of education as a determinant to active participation come to bare. Though several factors contribute to effective participation in politics, research has been emphatic on education as fundamental to the political process. Aside providing the requisite skill and knowledge for PWDs to take up the above-mentioned roles, education also helps to develop one's cognitive skills for a better understanding of the principles of democratic governance (Hillygus, 2005; Carpini & Keeter, 1997; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). It makes it important that all persons including PWDs attain a certain level of education that would enhance effective engagement in various forms of political activities either than the conventional means of ballot casting. Generally, the EC's efforts were commendable and appreciated by all respondents with disabilities.

The Electoral Commission's various reform measures are grouped under voter education and information dissemination, inclusive registration, ballot design, site accessibility, opportunities for PWDs as electoral officials and capacity building workshops. These reforms are briefly explained with emphasis on reforms for the visually impaired and physically disabled persons.

The ECs inclusive voter education and information dissemination were geared towards enhancing citizen's awareness of voting rights, inform and improve understanding of electoral issues. This was inclusive for all including persons with disabilities. With regards to ballot papers, the Commission ensured that ballot designs were simple and could easily be understood by all electoral participants. For the purpose of the blind and visually impaired, tactile ballot jackets were provided and the visually impaired trained to enable them to vote independently. The Commission also committed to making some polling stations which were hitherto inaccessible, accessible for persons with physical disabilities, especially for wheelchair and calliper users. Voting booths were redesigned by reducing the heights and making it easier for these users to easily cast their votes.

Being an institution of democracy, the ECs various implementations to get persons with disabilities participate actively not only as voters but as electoral officials is a hallmark of Ghana's democratic process. Voter turnout during the 2016 election and the different electoral roles handled by PWDs is an evidence of the extent to which the gap in political participation of PWDs is being addressed. Sackey (2014) reveals in the literature that PWDs have not only participated in Ghanaian elections as voters. In the year 2004, 117 PWDs worked as election observers in the country, however, this number has increased by a significant number by 2016. This indicates a gradual

improvement on PWDs active involvement in the decision-making process, especially in the electoral process.

Concerning the efforts of political parties as critical actors to this discussion, the researcher's inquisition on the number of PWDs registered with either of the two political parties (NPP and NDC) was welcomed with a negative response. The NPP and NDC party representatives informed that their respective parties do not have comprehensive data on PWDs membership though the parties give the necessary support to PWDs who come forth to contest party positions.

Now, the researcher sought to find out how these parties make provisions to cater for the basic rights of PWDs. Both political parties stated they are guided by ideological principles which determine the nature of policies or social interventions put in place to address minority needs when with political authority. According to the NDC General Secretary;

in the instance of dealing with the vulnerable and minority in society, the party's ideology informs the nature of interventions put in place to ensure the enjoyments of rights for persons with disabilities (personal interview, April 03, 2017).

Both respondents informed that their commitment towards PWDs rights, in general, reflects in the various policies highlighted in their manifesto documents and these are based on the party's ideological principle. Speaking on the NDC's social democratic ideology, the General Secretary was emphatic that;

As social democrats, the NDC believes in justice, equality and solidarity.... Because of the belief that we are all equal, the party believes that decisions that affect all must be decided by all. When the NDC is in government, it tries to bring people with disability into decision-making. This is because laws cannot be made to make life easier for people with disabilities without involving

them... This justifies Dr Daanaa's ministerial appointment by the NDC government in 2013 (personal interview, *ibid.*).

According to both parties, among the provisions they make to enhance the political involvement of members considered as minority is the reduction of filing fees and PWDs fit within this category. The NDC respondent went further to explain that aside reducing filing fees by 50%, PWDs who contests on the ticket of the NDC in parliamentary elections receive support with party paraphernalia's, and assistance with logistics for effective political campaigns. He also reported that in terms of voting, the NDC fights for the rights of fingerless people so that their faces are used for identification during the voting process. He emphasised that this provision is outlined in the NDC electoral laws. The NDC respondent again indicated that evidence of the party's commitment to political involvement of PWDs was seen in the ministerial appointment of Dr Seidu Daanaa in 2013 when it had political authority and the party's launch of a braille version of the 2016 manifesto for persons with visual impairments.

Other political parties that do not win political power may not be in the capacity to implement the various social intervention policies highlighted in their manifestos for the protection of PWDs rights. Nonetheless, these parties should not lose focus on ensuring that party office buildings are made accessible to PWDs, party constitution made available and in braille or audio formats for the blind and visually impaired members. There is also the need for a comprehensive data on the membership of PWDs to help address their specific needs. Parties should support PWD members who express interest in political contests either within or outside the organisation.

Political parties play key roles in every democracy. It is imperative that they contribute in different ways to ensuring that PWDs are involved in the democratic process. Their

role of recruitment, selection and training of leadership should not be limited to able-bodied citizens. PWDs who are active members and qualified could be identified and trained to perform specific roles within the party or within the broader political environment.

The GBU and GSPD, on the other hand, have worked in different capacities in mainstreaming PWDs in the governance. Respondents from GBU and GSPD made known that as Civil Society Organisation, they are regulated by law not to engage in partisan politics. Nonetheless, the organisations encourage and support members with interests in partisan and general participation in the political process. This is done through capacity building workshops to educate persons in disability laws. The reason is for them to be advocates for better rights and privileges for PWDs in the decision-making process. The various organisations sensitise members on the need to participate in the political process as a civic duty and train them to participate where need be.

The respondent from GBU highlighted that the Union trains selected members in using the appropriate means (tactile ballot jacket) to vote independently. In district assembly and general elections, these disability organisations collaborate with the mother organisation, that is, the Ghana Federation of Disability Organisations (GFD) and the Electoral Commission to ensure that PWDs are actively involved in the electioneering process. The role of the CDD - Ghana as an active actor in political advocacy for PWDs cannot be downplayed. According to the GBU respondent who represents the GFD on the CODEO Advisory Board, the CDD-Ghana as an advocacy institute ensures social interventions as part of its social accountability efforts to include the needs of persons with disability. He commended CDD-Ghana's effort in ensuring that the GFD has a space on the Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO) advisory board. The

CDD-Ghana serves as the coalition's secretariat. The GFD which act as the representative for all disability organisations came up as an influential actor in political rights advocacy for all disability organisations. The respondents emphasised particularly on GFDs role on an amendment to the Persons with Disability Act as well as its effective collaboration with the Electoral Commission to ensure PWDs actively participate in the electoral process.

GSPD respondent identified STAR-Ghana as an active political advocate for PWDs. He made known the role STAR-Ghana played in the 2016 elections for inclusiveness of persons with physical disabilities. His words are reported below;

Before the elections, Star Ghana also went with some members of GSPD including myself to check which of the polling centres were not disability friendly. Either a stone area, gutter area, on the veranda where you will climb staircases to access, either there's a tree which has its root spread such that a wheelchair user cannot move. All of these were checked to put right so that those with physical disabilities can vote easily (personal interview, March 9, 2017).

Not only that, he also informed the researcher on the role of the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) in the 2016 elections. The Commission embarked on public education to educate the masses on the rights of PWDs and to sensitise PWDs on the need to be involved in the political process. This was to reduce social stigma on the part of the general public and to improve on PWDs self-confidence and involvement in society.

The responses above is an indication that various stakeholders could work in different capacities to enhance political inclusiveness for PWDs. Being considered as marginalised in society, there is the need for various efforts to bridge the gap in society on the inclusiveness of person with disability. This effort does not solely lie with the

government or disability organisations but a collective responsibility that involves Civil Society Organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations, international organisations and political parties.

4.3 MOTIVATIONS FOR INCLUSION OF PWDS IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS

Based on human rights principles, the United Nations asserts that every person is inherently entitled to the enjoyment of human rights by virtue of their humanity. This makes them right-holders. Persons with disabilities by virtue of being human are inherently endowed with rights. Various actors have played active roles in ensuring that the rights of persons with disabilities are realised. Certain motivations underline their active advocacy for inclusiveness for PWDs.

The majority of the respondents subjected their responses to the above human rights principle. They agreed that persons with disability are citizens who need to enjoy equal rights as all citizens by virtue of being humans. In this regard, it is important that as development stakeholders, put in place measures to ensure the enjoyments of the rights. Voice Ghana, an advocacy NGO shared in the majority opinion. The Organisation believes that, as a human rights advocacy institution organised by and for PWDs, it is necessary to undertake various social intervention policies to ensure the political needs of PWDs are addressed. This would lead to equal rights of PWDs.

The respondent from the GBU shared a similar view. He emphasised that policy measures put in place to enhance engagement of PWDs in political activities are a result of recognising the issue of equal rights of all citizens in the political and civic space. He also informed that;

efforts put in place to enhance inclusiveness is mainly an appreciation and an acknowledgement of how far behind PWDs have been left hence the need to have interventions that would draw them closer (personal interview, March 13, 2017).

Hitherto the emergence of international human rights treaties that have fit disability issues in human rights discourse, Schulze (2009) emphasises that PWDs were seen as mere objects of pity whose needs were taken into consideration by voluntary caregivers. Issues of disability did not come close to being considered as a human rights concern.

The 1948 Universal Declaration on Human Rights which for the first time set the tone for human rights protection had no place for disability issues. Subsequent international human rights laws paid no attention to addressing disability until the United Nations adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of Mentally Retarded Persons in 1971. This document obviously addressed only a minimal portion of the entire disability community. Disability documents as the 1975 Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons and the World Program of Action concerning Disabled Persons from 1983-1992 according to Schulze (2009), though were passed as right protection documents, did not provide for PWDs to live as equal citizens and had no legal implications for rights protection. These were therefore skeletal frameworks that could not serve the purposes for which they were adopted.

Until 2006, when the UN finally adopted the Convention on the Rights of PWDs that guarantees full inclusion of PWDs in society, PWDs were not fully protected under human rights and issues of disability had not fully gained human rights concerns. A focus on the time frame between 1948 when the first human rights protection document was passed and the year 2006 when a legal document that fully includes PWDs in human rights discourse was adopted is indeed an indication that PWDs have long been

left behind in human rights discourse. It therefore makes it necessary to have interventions that would draw them closer.

The Electoral Commission also explained that Ghana's 1992 Constitution (Article 42) confers on all eligible voters the right to exercise their franchise. Persons with disabilities are not excluded from this constitutional provisions. Since the Commission is committed to involving all persons including person with disability in the electoral process it implements measures that would see to the realisation of this goal.

All these motivations discussed have a direct link to the human rights-based approach theory which aims at addressing inequalities that affect society's development. The right-based approach to development focuses on people who are marginalised and discriminated against in society and requires that interventions be made to reach out to them (Worm, 2012; OHCHR, 2009; Katsui, 2008). An appreciation of how PWDs have been marginalised and hence the need to have interventions that would draw them closer is indeed a major human rights step in the nation's democracy.

Importantly, the Disability Act had no bearing on any of the motivations for interventions or advocacy. It was propelled by the issue of equal rights for all citizens.

4.4 CHALLENGES THAT CONFRONT PWDs IN THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS

Data from the field study identified a number of challenges that confront PWDs in Ghana in the political process. Based on the responses, these challenges have been grouped into two categories. The first category has existed and have reoccurred in the literature of PWDs political participation. These include religious and cultural beliefs,

stigmatisation, low educational level, psychological challenges, insufficient resource and inaccessible environment. These have come up in various research on PWDs political participation including Sackey (2014), Schur & Adya, (2013), Hall & Alvarez (2012) and Mensah *et al*, (2008). All 10 respondents identified cultural or religious beliefs and low educational level as a major challenge to PWDs participation.

The second group of challenges that were identified from the field study are emerging issues which relate mostly to institutions and structures within the political environment. These include the non-existence of comprehensive data on PWDs membership in political parties, the politicisation of participation in local governance and the dysfunctional nature of the National Council on Persons with Disability (NCPD). These challenges have not been documented entirely in studies on political participation of PWDs. These sets of issues are discussed and analysed briefly.

4.4.1 Religious and Cultural Beliefs

Religious and cultural perceptions towards disability in Ghanaian societies result in several barriers which lead to exclusion of PWDs in society. All 10 Respondents unanimously agreed that in the Ghanaian society perception of people on disability as cursed and outcasts affects PWDs inclusion in political, economic and social activities. All the respondents with disabilities (3 PWD politicians, GBU and GSPD respondents) stated that religious and cultural beliefs inform the psychological notion of low self-esteem that put limitations on PWDs capabilities. This affects their confidence to participate in the political process. These respondents added that cultural and religious beliefs inform social stigmatisation towards PWDs. The visually impaired respondent, Vivian Nartey, informed;

It wasn't easy for me as a visually impaired person to be actively involved in the electoral process. Though my decision to contest the elections was encouraged and supported by the Ghana Blind Union and some women group in my area, a lot of people criticised me as being blind. Some people tarnished my reputation with insults as a blind person who has nothing to offer and also our culture does not permit the blind to lead any group because it was an abomination. These messages were used against me in the campaign (phone interview, March 30, 2017).

She added that though there were several campaigns and awareness creation for the involvement of PWDs in the Local Assembly election, perceptions people have formed on disability as a result of their cultural orientation led to stigmatisation against PWDs who expressed interest in contesting the Local Assembly election. Vivian informed that this resulted in the withdrawal of a number of PWDs from the contest. Upon an inquiry into how it was to combine disability as a woman with politics, she indicated that it was more challenging for her as a woman and also being visually impaired. While most people generally did not accept the idea of women being elected as the Assembly representative, it was worse with the woman being "blind". She stated that the nature of our society allows for men and not women to be leaders.

Vivian's predicaments confirm Slikker (2009) and Golding's (2010) emphasis on the higher discrimination women with disabilities experience in society. Slikker (2009) asserts that women with disabilities have to deal with severe negative attitudes in society since disability affects their inclusion in society and places limitations on their political lives. Golding, on the other hand, informs that a number of institutional, environmental and attitudinal obstacles hinder full participation of women with disability in the political process. Therefore their participation in politics is low. Women's political involvement across the world generally remains minimal, thus, least could be said for women with disability.

The NPP Director of Protocol also asserted that attitude towards disability are formed right from when a child is born with disability due to our cultural orientation. Most parents would keep children with disability from the public's eye and are mostly denied educational opportunities. This affects their involvement in society least to talk of involvement in political activities. These responses on cultural and religious perceptions confirm Slikker (2009) and Mensah *et al.* (2008) studies on the impact of the Ghanaian cultural and religious beliefs on PWDs inclusiveness in society. While cultural perceptions on disability dehumanise and affect PWDs self-esteem and opportunities for social involvement, this manner of thinking about disability creates several barriers for PWDs which inform social exclusion and discrimination (Slikker, 2009; Mensah *et al.* 2008). This affects the level of self-confidence and social interaction of many PWDs.

4.4.2 Low Educational Level of PWDs

Illiteracy has been an impediment to political participation of most citizens including persons with disability. This is one of the major challenges to PWDs participation identified by all respondents in the field interviews. According to Dr Seidu Daana;

there cannot be talks about PWDs in politics while we neglect considering the educational qualification. In as much as society is putting up conscious efforts to involve PWDs in politics, the mere fact of having a disability does not guarantee political inclusion. One must be qualified in order to take up a position or actively contribute to the decision-making and this comes with educating yourself (Dr Seidu Daanaa, op. cit.).

Illiteracy results in a person's inability to understand and contribute to making meaningful decisions in the political scene. The visually impaired representative of the GBU explained that;

political participation is greatly informed by an individual's ability to understand the fundamentals of the political system and the need to get involved as citizens Education is very fundamental to political involvement... (personal interview, March 13, 2017).

In a similar vein, the Head of Disability and Gender emphasised that though opportunities existed for PWDs to work as electoral officials during the 2016 Elections, qualification to apply was solely based on the person's level of education and not the disability. In the literature on the significant role of education in political participation it was realised that education provides the requisite skill and knowledge and develops a person's cognitive skills for a better understanding of the principles of democratic governance (Hillygus, 2005; Carpini & Keeter, 1997; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). Persons with disabilities must, therefore, focus on educating themselves in order to be active participants in the political process. A PWDs educational level could lead to his rise on the political ladder. Dr Seidu Daanaa emphasised that his appointment as a minister of state and political achievements was based on his level of education and this is exemplary for other persons with disability.

4.4.3 Challenges with Resources for Political Involvement

Inadequate financial and logistic resources hinder PWDs efforts to participate actively in the political process. Six (6) out of ten (10) respondents (GBU, GSPD, Voice Ghana and three PWD politicians) all referred to inadequate resources as a challenge to effective participation of PWDs in the political process. According to Vivian Nartey, the visually impaired contestant,

Campaigning in Local Assembly elections involves a high cost of financing unlike in previous years. Printing out posters, flying cards, logistics and fuelling of vehicles for intensive campaigns even in Local Assembly elections involves a lot of financial resource commitment Among the challenges I

encountered was with finance and mobility challenges. Unlike previously when assembly elections involved less finances, less campaigning, it is not same now. I had support from VOICE Ghana in printing some posters though but I had to print more posters in addition for an effective campaign. I invested all the capital from my trade into campaigning and I went bankrupt after the elections (phone interview, op. cit.).

The physically challenged respondent equally agreed on resources acting as impediments to PWDs participation. According to him, politics involved financial commitment towards rigorous campaigns and without financial assistance, most PWDs could not get involved. His words are recounted below,

Politics involves a lot of money. If not for the support I got from some sources I would have withdrawn. This is because people requested that you give them money and some material gifts in order for them to vote for you. I had to at a point use some of the money given by friends to sponsor some projects in a community (phone interview, March 30, 2017).

For persons with disability with an interest in contesting for political positions, access to resources remains a challenge. In most cases, insufficient resources to compete in the political race lead to withdrawal from the contest or lack of interest to start the process. While the GBU and the GSPD agree on this, they add that inadequate resource is a challenge not to only PWDs but also to disability organisations. The GBU respondent and representative on the CODEO Advisory Board made this known. According to him,

The Ghana Blind Union is challenged with inadequate resources for capacity building workshops and training for PWDs in the general political process and especially finance support for PWDs with partisan political interests (personal interview, March 13, 2017).

While the GBU respondent agrees that the Union as Civil Society Organisation like all CSOs is guided by law and must desist from partisan politics, he explained that the best form of assistance the Union can render to members with interests in partisan and

general participation in the political process is to support in that direction. Yet it is challenged with inadequate resources to work in such capacity to actively support members in that regard. Sackey (2014) gives an account of how inadequate resources have affected PWDs participation in the political process. According to him, only a few PWDs have attempted contesting parliamentary elections while a few have contested in Local Assembly elections since 1992 as a result of challenges with adequate resources for effective campaigning. PWDs are mostly classified as the poorest in society as a result of low level of employment, or underemployment, thus, they do not earn much to invest in political activities.

4.4.4 Inaccessibility

Five respondents agreed that challenges to accessible environment hinder PWDs active participation in the political process. These are two PWD politicians in local governance, the EC, the GBU, GSPD and Voice Ghana. Barriers in the physical environment may affect the easy movement of persons with disability and may reduce their interest in engaging in activities that involve movement. The Head of Gender and Disability explained that in the instance of voting, polling stations that are not accessible to PWDs may lead to a higher record of low turnout on election days. Similarly, political party offices or public buildings not accessible to PWDs may affect mobility in such areas. The Head of Gender and Disability stated that,

...to avoid recording a low turnout of persons with disabilities in the 2016 elections like previously, the Commission made it a point to ensure all polling centres were accessible to persons with disabilities. PWDs were asked not to hesitate to report to the Commission when a polling centre was inaccessible. Inaccessibility reports in the election were therefore reduced in the recently held general elections and the 2015 district assembly elections (Interviewed on March 21, 2017).

PWDs who contested Local Assembly elections did not have challenges with polling centre accessibility since the issue of accessibility was addressed by the Commission. Their concerns centred mainly on the nature of roads in certain remote communities that affected their movement to campaign. The nature of road according to them, affected the movement of other PWDs in such communities to polling centres to cast their votes. Vivian Nartey informed that;

the roads that led to some remote communities in the Chakpe Newtown Electoral Area in the Volta region where I contested were not motorable. It was difficult moving to campaign in these remote communities considering that I am visually impaired (op. cit.).

Conclusions could be drawn that PWDs in such remote communities may express a lack of interest in participating in the Local Assembly elections due to mobility challenges.

The second group of challenges that affect PWDs political participation are emerging issues which relate mostly to institutions and structures within the political environment. Some of these challenges may have existed over the years but have not been addressed yet. These are discussed below.

4.4.5 Absence of Comprehensive Data on Membership of PWDs

Lack of a comprehensive data on membership of PWD was a challenge identified by political parties and disability organisations. The two political parties unanimously agreed they had no comprehensive data on membership of PWDs. This could affect PWDs inclusiveness in the party's activities.

The NPP respondent explained that since the party does not know the total number of PWDs, during campaigns rallies, and Congress meetings, the party does not make any

special provisions for PWDs in that regard. The NDC respondent made a similar assertion that it has no comprehensive data on PWDs membership, however, the party's constitution addresses the broader needs of all persons considered as vulnerable in society and this includes persons with disability. Persons with disability have peculiar needs from other vulnerable groups. Measures to cater for women and the aged who are a part of the vulnerable in society may not necessary be beneficial to addressing the needs of PWDs. It imperative then to address separately the needs of PWDs in the party's constitution. The respondents from both parties indicated that gathering accurate data on members with disability across the nation is challenging. It involves huge financial resources commitment. This raises concerns on how effective the political needs of members with disability are catered for. Political parties' non-concern on PWDs integral involvement as members could contribute to PWDs lack of interest in being members of political organisations.

The condition of being disabled is in itself a hindrance to the right to association for most persons with disability. Article 21 (1) (e) of the 1992 Constitution allows for citizens to freely join any association they deem fit. It guarantees "freedom of association, which shall include freedom to form or join trade unions or other associations, national or international, for the protection of their interest". Political parties are one of such associations that guarantee active involvement for PWDs. As Hofmeister & Grabow (2011) indicated earlier in the study, "Without political parties, a modern representative democracy is not conceivable" (p. 8). This is because political parties form the backbone of every democratic state. Political organisations serve as grounds for the active involvement of citizens in political activities, for recruitment and selection of leaders to run the affairs of a state. They add further that, to fully achieve

the aim of democracy as a government “of the people, by the people, and for the people, politics requires among other things that citizens participate actively in political interactions and in all activities of the political party to which they belong” (ibid, p.7). Based on this argument, it becomes necessary that party’s pay keen interest on restructuring policies and implementing measures that would improve PWDs interest in party membership.

4.4.6 Partisan Nature of Local Government

The physically challenged and visually impaired respondent participants in the Local Assembly elections put to bare that the local governance process that provides an opportunity for PWDs to be involved in local governance is no longer effective. Both gave the reason that Local Assembly elections are now characterised by partisan political influence. Political parties and party individuals support their preferred candidates with huge finance for campaigns. This makes the contest overly competitive for PWDs who are already categorised among the poorest in society to compete. The visually impaired respondent, for instance, stated that the Municipal Chief Executive in her municipality granted resource support to her opponent and she denied all things she requested to enhance effective contest. Similarly, the physically disabled respondent confirmed that some executives of a political party talked him out of the district assembly elections because their candidate was in the contest. These current trends that characterise Local Assembly elections is an impediment to PWDs participation in the local governance process.

In subsections (1) and (2) under Section (7) of the Local Government Act’s “Mode of seeking election”, candidates are prohibited from associating with political parties and

political parties are by law prohibited from endorsing or sponsoring candidates in the local political contest. It is important that sanctions in subsections (4) and (5) of the Local Government Act be enforced strictly in addressing the issue of politicisation because it could lead to a destruction of the purpose of the local governance process.

4.4.7 Dysfunctional National Disability Council

Some respondents (PWDs and OPWDs) were emphatic on the NCPDs dysfunction in its efforts to protect and promote rights of PWDs. The Deputy Record Supervisor of the NCPD revealed that though the NCPD is constitutionally mandated to handle the affairs of PWDs, it has no major intervention with regards to political participation or general right protection of PWDs. This is because the Council is under-resourced and under-staffed, hence has not the relevant capacity to deal with issues of human rights. He explained further that the Disability Council is one of five departments under the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection. The Council's challenge is partly because it has no authority to control its own affairs as a Disability Council. It receives support directly from the Ministry and until the Ministry allocates budget towards any project, it cannot function in any capacity to promote PWDs rights. The Deputy Record Supervisor also explained that prior to the establishment of NCPD, issues of disability were addressed by the Social Welfare department in the Ministry. The establishment of NCPD should see the Social Welfare hand over authority of disability control to the Council, however, this is not fully done. The NCPD is thus not autonomous in its capacity.

The above-listed variables are identified as factors that hinder the participation of PWDs in the political process. It is however important to note that these factors are not

independent but are connected in different ways to impede participation in the political process.

4.5 MEASURES TO ADDRESS CHALLENGES TO PWDS PARTICIPATION IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS

The majority of the respondents with knowledge of provisions of the Act were emphatic on an amendment to the Disability Act with a section on political participation to address the political needs of PWDs. An amendment to the Act means it should conform to the international disability treaty, the CRPD. Respondent from GBU indicated that;

it would be most important to have the Act be bold on the issue of political participation as we have in the UN Convention. We feel that if the Act is very specific on the issue of political rights it would mean that we would see the government make specific interventions to guarantee the rights of PWDs as far as civic and political rights are concerned (personal interview, op. cit.).

Secondly, political participation of PWDs could be enhanced when various state actors treat issues of political inclusion of PWDs as an integral part of their planning. Interventions for PWDs political inclusiveness should not be an afterthought. In essence, political parties, development stakeholders

All ten respondents emphasised on sensitisation as a useful tool to involve persons with disability in the political process. According to the Head of Gender and Disability, it is necessary to sensitise PWDs on the need and reason for participation as citizens of a democratic state. She stated that this was one of the numerous measures adopted by the Commission to enhance PWDs involvement in the 2016 political process.

Dr Seidu Daanaa also emphasised that stakeholders and interest groups should be willing to support financially PWDs who have interest in participating in the political

process. This could aid address resource challenges which hinder PWDs participation in the political process. He added that;

If there are groups that support females in politics then similar should be done for persons with disabilities through finances and championing affirmative action... (personal interview, op. cit.).

Education was identified as key to addressing the low participation of PWDs in the political process. As indicated earlier, education is fundamental to political participation. Parents are encouraged to enrol their wards with disabilities in schools either than keeping them away from the public. Schooling is an opportunity to learn and interact with other people. It informs inclusiveness in mainstream activities and could enhance an individual's self-confidence in engaging in a variety of activities including participating in the political process. The NDC respondent explained that our educational institutions have facilities for PWDs to grow and achieve higher heights. Parents of children should therefore not deny them the right to education.

There is also the need for PWDs to participate in all activities within their communities. According to the two respondents who contested Local Assembly elections, involvement in communal activities lead to a recognition in society and it is a good ground for society to assess a person's weaknesses and strengths. The physically disabled aspirant for 2015 assembly election, for instance, informed that his activeness in communal activities made most people recognise him as a part of the community.

According to him;

Members of the community would be able to assess your strengths and weaknesses during those moments and know your capabilities. They would then not measure you based on your disability but rather based on your competence and performance People also recognise you as part of them and

will be willing to support you at all cost when you have been active with community participation (personal interview, op. cit).

Although the visually impaired 2015 aspirant for Chakpe Newtown Electoral area was particular on stigmatisation affecting her participation in the assembly election, she, however, stated that her involvement in the community's activities led to support and encouragement from most women groups in the community. This implies that social inclusiveness is partly a responsibility of persons who themselves have a disability.

In sum, the responses from the research participants could lead to a conclusion that though the political involvement of PWDs generally remains low, PWDs involvement in the electoral process as electors and electoral officials has improved significantly. This is largely attributed to accessible polling centres and implementation of several necessary measures by the Electoral Commission to promote inclusion in the electoral process.

It is imperative on other political development stakeholders to actively involve PWDs in other forms of political engagement rather than only in electoral politics. Political parties, for instance, have a major role to play as stakeholders in Ghana's democratic process. Issues of disability concern and involvement in party's activities should be treated as an integral aspect of a party's programs. This notwithstanding, PWDs right to association is based on voluntary will and not by compulsion. Therefore, there must be an interest in joining a political party in order to engage effectively in all activities of the party. In this regard, political parties would be tasked with the responsibility of making the necessary provisions that would enhance effective inclusion of PWDs in all party activities (campaigning, rallying, party meetings etc.) of the party.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The inclusion of persons with disability in the political process is a determinant of Ghana's level of democratic development. Over the years, the issue of low participation of persons with disability in local and national political governance has raised numerous concerns about the effectiveness of the Disability Act passed in 2006 to promote rights of PWDs. In this regard, the study primarily set out to examine the extent to which the Persons with Disability Act (715) has informed the inclusion of PWDs in political governance since it provides for political participation under Section 1. Interviews were conducted with open-ended questions to arrive at answers to the research questions. This chapter summarises the research findings, draw conclusions and suggest recommendations for inclusion of PWDs in the political process.

5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

5.2.1 Research Question 1

To what extent has the Persons with Disability Act been implemented to enhance the political rights of PWDs?

First of all, the study found out that though Section 1 of the Disability Act provides for participation in political activities, there is no significant influence of this provision on PWDs political inclusion. The reason is that there are no specific guidelines for political inclusion for PWDs as realised in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with

Disabilities (CRPD). This vagueness informs the gap between policy and implementation. Ghana's Disability Law has not been effective in enhancing political rights of persons with disability in Ghana.

The study also identified that major implementations by stakeholders for the political inclusion of PWDs were not influenced by the existence of a Disability Act. As emphasised earlier, on political participation, the Act spells out no specific functions based on which various political stakeholders would involve PWDs in political activities. The significant measures for the inclusion of PWDs in various political processes are, therefore, based on a recognition of equal rights as citizens rather than informed by the existence of a national Disability Law.

5.2.2 Research Question 2

What measures have been implemented to improve PWDs participation in the political process following the adoption of the Persons with Disability Act?

Within the ten-year period of adopting the Disability Act, the several interventions for political inclusion for PWDs have ranged from advocacy to the removal of environmental barriers that impede participation of PWDs in the political process. The study found that most of the interventions were towards improving PWDs participation in the electioneering process. Among the implementations for inclusion in the electoral process were accessibility to polling centres, inclusive voter education, accessibility to information and capacity building workshops to sensitise PWDs on the need to participate in the political process. Aside casting of ballots, opportunities existed for qualified PWDs to work as electoral officials and monitors in national and local electioneering processes. Also, with the CDD-Ghana serving as the Secretariat for the Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO), the GFD has a space on the

CODEO Advisory Board. In this regard, qualified PWDs had opportunities to work with CODEO as election observers and were trained for such purposes for the 2016 elections.

On advocacy, the GFD played active role in political advocacy for inclusion of PWDs. GFDs effort partly informed the various implementations by the Electoral Commission for PWDs inclusive participation in the electoral process. The National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) was also vocal on the need for PWDs to participate in the electoral process. Through the media, the NCCE created awareness and sensitised the general public on the need for PWDs involvement in political activities.

The study also found that Government's appointment of a visually impaired minister in 2013, a hallmark of the country's democratic growth, saw the provisions of special equipment that would enhance effectiveness in Dr Seidu Daanaa's work as a cabinet member. The provision of a voice reading machine to read memos, a braille note taker and headphones for listening to cabinet discussions assisted the visually impaired minister to participate actively in all cabinet discussions. This enhanced efficiency in his performance as a minister of state.

In a nutshell, there have been significant improvements in efforts by different stakeholders to improve the political participation of PWDs in local and national politics. However, the study found out that generally, most of the interventions were towards improving participation of persons with disability in the electoral process. Improvement in voter turnout and PWDs roles as electoral officials, evident in the 2015 and 2016 local and national electioneering processes respectively, is a confirmation of this assertion.

5.2.3 Research Question 3

Which Actors advocate for political rights for PWDs and what motivates their actions?

Several Actors have worked in different capacities to ensure the enjoyment of political rights for persons with disability. The study found out that the Ghana Federation of Disability Organisations (GFDO) have been influential in advocacy for political inclusion for PWDs. The Electoral Commission of Ghana and the Ghana Centre for Democratic Development have played key roles towards political inclusiveness for PWDs in the electoral process. The National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) has also been effective on public education and awareness creation on the need for political inclusion for PWDs. Non- Governmental Organisation as Voice Ghana and STAR-Ghana also played key roles in improving political rights for PWDs in Ghana.

Finally, the study found out that the need to promote the enjoyment of equal right for all citizens including persons with disability has been the motivating factor for the various social intervention measures.

5.2.4 Research Question 4

What are the challenges that hinder the effective inclusiveness of PWDs in national and local political governance and how can these be addressed?

The study found out that the local governance process which provides an opportunity for involvement of PWDs in grassroots participation is taking a more partisan outlook. Influence of political parties and political authorities in Local Assembly election was seen as a destruct to persons with disability with interest in the Local Assembly electoral process. Again, the research found that the National Council on Persons with Disability (NCPD) responsible for the proposal of strategies to promote the enjoyment

of all rights of PWDs including the rights to political involvement, is not autonomous and heavily under-resourced to take up such functions effectively.

Also, cultural and religious beliefs, stigmatisation, lack of self-confidence, low educational level, psychological challenges, inaccessible environment and inadequate financial resources were identified as persistent challenges that confront PWDs in the Political process.

Among the number of measures proposed to enhance PWDs involvement in the political process include an amendment to the Persons with Disability Act with a separate section and guidelines to political participation of PWDs. Sensitization of PWDs on the need to participate in the political process as citizens was found to be an effective measure that could get PWDs involved in the political process. Education was also found to be fundamental to political participation and could lead to higher achievements of PWDs in the political process. Finally, it was found that PWDs involvement in communal activities could inform social acceptance and a recognition in mainstream society. It reduces stigmatisation and marginalisation in all activities including political involvement. In this regard, persons with disability are encouraged to actively partake in activities of the local communities within which they live.

5.3 CONCLUSION

Various efforts have been made to mainstream PWDs in the political process. These have included interventions by state institutions, Civil Society Organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations and disability organisations. Though inclusiveness of PWDs in the political process has not fully been attained, evidence from this study is an indication that Ghana is gradually progressing in mainstreaming PWDs political

needs in the development process. The area of electoral politics, for instance, has seen significant improvement with voter turnout and involvement of PWDs as electoral officials.

Ghana's ratification of the CRPD should inform an amendment to the Disability Act, (Act 715), in order to enhance effective protection of rights for persons with disability. Protection of PWDs rights is not solely the responsibility of government, thus, key stakeholders should put in place measures to inform the involvement of PWDs in Ghana's political process. This is a means of contributing to the development process.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

This study recommends that Parliament considers an amendment to the Disability Act, with a separate section on guidelines for political inclusion. The amendment and provision of political rights should be backed by an effective Legislative Instrument that would enforce strictly the processes for inclusion of PWDs.

The study recommends that the Electoral Commission (EC) diversifies its means of making information accessible to persons with visual impairments. Information should be made accessible through audio formats rather than in braille version only to ease access to information.

Persons with disability are encouraged to involve themselves in communal activities. This leads to acceptance in the wider community within which they find themselves and it helps reduce social stigmatisation and marginalisation.

To political parties, I recommend that the role of recruitment, selection and training of leadership should be extended to PWDs. Persons with disability who are active

participants in the party's activities and qualified should be identified and trained to perform specific roles within the party or within the broader political environment. This would enhance their right to association and involvement in the democratic process. There is also the need for a comprehensive data on the membership of PWDs to help address their specific political needs within the political organisation.

I also recommend that the government and especially, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, commit to addressing the resource challenges that confront the National Council on Persons with Disabilities (NCPD). The Council should legally be made independent of the Social Welfare department to avoid conflicts in the performance of duties. This would enhance effectiveness in its functions as stated in section 41 of the Persons with Disability Act.

An affirmative action policy would also be effective to ensure the appointment of qualified PWDs into local and national political offices. This would enhance PWDs contribution to the decision-making process as they represent the interest of the broader disability community in local and national governance. The role of the executive is fundamental to the success of any affirmative action program. To this effect political commitment on the part of the executive is necessary for such an action program to be effective.

Finally, I recommend that the government enforces strictly the sanctions in subsections (3) and (4) under Section (7) of the Local Government Act (1993), against candidates, political parties and individuals who indulge in partisan politics in local government elections. This would ensure a level playing field for PWDs to participate in the local governance process. Also, appointments of membership of the Assembly under

paragraph (d) subsection (1) of Section (5), should include a quota of qualified PWDs who meet the criteria for appointment to a District Assembly. This would enable them contribute to decision-making in local governance.



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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: TABLE OF RESPONDENTS AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW.

Table 1: Interviews

	DATE	NAME (POSITION)	ORGANISATION	DISABILITY STATUS	INTERVIEW TYPE
1	09-Mar-17	Mr. Elvis Kosi Alipui (Chairman)	Ghana Society of the Physically Disabled, Accra Metropolitan	Physically Disabled	Personal interview
2	13-Mar-17	Mr. Alexander Bankole Williams (Advocacy Committee Member, GFD Representative on the CODEO Advisory Board)	Ghana Blind Union (GBU)	Visually Impaired	Personal interview
3	20-Mar-17	Mr. Francis Asong (Director)	Voice of People with Disability in Ghana (Voice Ghana)	Physically Disabled	Personal interview
4	21-Mar-17	Mrs. Abigail Nutakor (Head of Gender and Disability)	The Electoral Commission, Ghana	Not Applicable	Personal interview
5	22-Mar-17	Mr. Alex Kosi Akpo - 2015 Local Assembly Election Aspirant (Ake Development Electoral Area, Volta Region)	Unit Committee Member and GSPD Representative at Ho District Assembly, Former Civic Education Officer	Physically Disabled	Phone interview
6	24-Mar-17	Mr. Antwi Adjei (Director of Protocol)	The New Patriotic Party	Not Applicable	Personal interview
7	30-Mar-17	Miss Vivian Nartey - 2015 Local Assembly Election Aspirant (Chakpe Newtown Electoral Area, Volta Region)	Volta Regional Chair for Ghana Blind Union (GBU)	Visually Impaired	Phone interview
8	03-Apr-17	Mr. Johnson Asiedu-Nketsiah (General Secretary)	The National Democratic Congress	Not Applicable	Personal interview
9	06-Apr-17	Dr Henry Seidu Daanaa	Former Minister for Chieftaincy and Traditional Affairs	Visually Impaired	Personal interview
10	15-Apr-17	Deputy Record Supervisor	National Council for Persons with Disability (Under Ministry for Gender, Children and Social Protection)	Not Applicable	Phone interview

Source: Fieldwork

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR OPWDs (GBU & GSPD), VOICE GHANA AND NCPD

1. How many PWDs are registered with the organisation and how many are involved in active political participation?
2. What are some policies by the organisation for promoting political rights of members?
3. What are some challenges encountered by the organisation in the quest to promote political inclusiveness of its members?
4. How is the nature of relationship between the organisation and the National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD) in developing policies for rights protection?
5. Has the adoption of the Disability Act enhanced enjoyments of political right? (Promoting PWDs participation)
6. What measures have been implemented by other Disabled Persons Organisations (DPOs) to promote political rights following the adoption of the Disability Act?
7. Which actors (individuals or organisations) in the political system have been involved in political rights advocacy for PWDs?
8. Identify other actors whose involvement would be critical for a successful implementation of disability policies for political inclusiveness.
9. What measures would promote the inclusion of PWDs in the political system?

**APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR POLITICIANS WITH
DISABILITY**

1. What are some challenges encountered in participating in the political process?
2. What measures have been implemented enhance effective political participation?
3. Has the Persons with Disability Act (Act 715) been effective in promoting PWDs rights to political participation?
4. In what ways can participation of PWDs be enhanced in both local and national level political activities?
5. Identify the various actors (individuals or organisations) in the political system and ways through which these actors have been vibrant in advocating for political rights of PWDs.
6. Identify other actors whose involvement would be critical for a successful implementation of disability policies for political inclusiveness.
7. What measures would promote the inclusion of PWDs in the political system?



**APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE HEAD OF GENDER AND
DISABILITY (ELECTORAL COMMISSION)**

1. What are some policy measures or implementations by the EC to enhance effective participation of persons with disability (PWDs) in the electoral process following the adoption of the Disability Act in 2006?
2. How are PWDs involved in the Electoral Process?
3. What are some challenges encountered by the EC in the quest to promote political inclusiveness of PWDs?
4. Has the Disability Act (Act 715) been effective in promoting rights of PWDs in the political process?
5. In what ways can participation of PWDs be enhanced in both local and national level political activities?
6. Which actors (individuals or organisations) in the political system have been involved in political rights advocacy for PWDs?
7. Identify other actors whose involvement would be critical for a successful implementation of disability policies for political inclusiveness.
8. Are there some general policies or institutional recommendations that could promote the inclusion of PWDs in the political system?

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR POLITICAL PARTIES (NPP & NDC)

1. How many persons with disability (PWDs) are registered as members of the political organisation?
2. What major roles do members who have disability play in the party's political process?
3. What are some policy measures by the political organisation to enhance political participation of members with disability (in activities as rallies, campaign trips, meetings etc.)?
4. What challenges are encountered in dealing with members with disability and how are these challenges addressed?
5. Has the party laid down guidelines based on which PWDs would be involved in the party's political activities?
6. Has the Persons with Disability Act (Act 715) been effective in promoting PWDs rights to political participation?
7. Identify actors whose involvement would be critical for political inclusiveness of PWDs.
8. In what ways can participation of PWDs be promoted?

APPENDIX F: PERSONS WITH DISABILITY ACT, (2006) ACT 715

Attached is the Persons with Disability Act, (2006), Act 715.



Persons With Disability Act, 2006 Act 715

ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

Section

Rights of persons with disability

1. Right to family life and social activities
2. Differential treatment in respect of residence
3. Living conditions in specialised establishments
4. Exploitation of and discrimination against a person with disability
5. Party to judicial proceedings
6. Access to public places
7. Access to public services
8. Penalty for contravention

Employment of persons with disability

9. Public employment centers
10. Promotion of employment of persons with disability
11. Provision of tools
12. Posting, transfer and redeployment if person with disability
13. Appropriate training for the unemployed person with disability
14. Rehabilitation Centres
15. Community based rehabilitation

Education of persons with disability

16. Education of a child with disability
17. Facilities and equipment in education institutions
18. Free education and special schools
19. Appropriate training for basic school graduates
20. Refusal of admission on account of disability
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Act 715

THE SEVEN HUNDRED AND FIFTEENTH
ACT
OF THE PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA
ENTITLED
PERSONS WITH DISABILITY ACT, 2006

AN ACT to provide for persons with disability, to establish a National Council on Persons with Disability and to provide for related matters.

DATE OF ASSENT: 9th August, 2006

ENACTED by the President and Parliament:

Rights of persons with disability

Right to family life and social activities

1. A person with disability shall not be deprived of the right to live with that person's family or the right to participate in social, political, economic, creative or recreational activities.

Differential treatment in respect of residence

2. Except as otherwise required by the condition or the need for improvement of a person with disability, a person shall not subject a person with disability to differential; treatment in respect of residence.

Living conditions in specialized establishments

3. Where a person with disability has to be put in a specialised establishment, the environment and living conditions of the establishment shall, except as otherwise required by the condition of the person with disability, be as close as possible to those of a person without disability of the same age as the person with disability.

Exploitation of and discrimination against a person with disability

4. (1) A person shall not discriminate against, exploit or subject a person with disability to abusive or degrading treatment.

(2) An employer shall not discriminate against a prospective employee or an employee on grounds of disability unless the disability is in respect of the relevant employment.

Party to judicial proceedings

5. Where a person with disability is a party in judicial proceedings, the adjudicating body shall take into account the condition of the person with disability and provide appropriate facilities that enable the person with disability to participate effectively in the proceedings.

Access to public places

6. The owner or occupier of a place to which the public has access shall provide appropriate facilities that make the place accessible to and available for use by a person with disability.

Access to public services

7. A person who provides service to the public shall put in place the necessary facilities that make the service available and accessible to a person with disability.

Penalty for contravention

8. A person who contravenes Section 1, 2, 4, 6, or 7 commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding fifty penalty units or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding three months or to both.

Employment of persons with disability

Public employment centres

9. The Ministry shall through the public employment centres, assist to secure jobs for persons with disability.

Promotion of employment of persons with disability

10. (1) The Government shall grant a person who employs a person with disability an annual tax rebate of the taxable income in respect of each person with disability employed as shall be prescribed in Regulations made under this Act.

2. The Government shall grant special incentives to persons with disability engaged in business and also to business organizations that employ persons with disability.

11. A person who employs a person with disability shall provide

(a) the relevant working tools, and

(b) appropriate facilities

required by the person with disability for the efficient performance of the functions required by the employment.

Posting, transfer and redeployment of person with disability

12. (1) An employer shall not post or transfer a person with disability to a Section or place of the establishment not suited for the person.

2. Where a person in employment suffers a disability as a result of the employment, the employer shall counsel, re-train and re-deploy the person to another Sections more suited to the person with disability and this shall be in addition to any other relief which the employee is entitled to under the Workmen's Compensation Law, 1987 (PNDCL 187).

Appropriate training for the unemployed person with disability

13. (1) Where the name of a person with disability remains on a job search list for more than two years, the Ministry shall take the name of that person off the list, and where applicable

1. give that person appropriate training,

2. Provide that person with necessary working tools

and materials, and

3. Assist that person to access loan capital for that person to start a business

2. A person with disability who sells the tools or materials received under subsection (1) and a person who buys the tools or materials given to a person with disability under subsection (1) commits an offence and each person is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding two hundred and fifty penalty units or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding one year or to both.

Rehabilitation Centres

14. (1) The Ministry shall progressively establish rehabilitation centres in regions and in districts for persons with disability.

2. A rehabilitation centre shall offer guidance, counselling and appropriate training for persons with disability who are unable to enter into the mainstream of social life.

2. A rehabilitation centre shall be provided with the staff and other facilities that are necessary for the performance of its functions.

Community based rehabilitation

15. The Ministry shall ensure that as far as practicable persons with disability, shall be rehabilitated in their communities, to foster their integration.

Education of persons with disability

Education of a child with disability

16. (1) A parent, guardian or custodian of a child with disability of school going age shall enrol the child in a school.

2. A parent, guardian or custodian who contravenes subsection (1) commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding ten penalty units, or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding fourteen days.

Facilities and equipment in educational institutions

17. The Minister of Education shall by Legislative Instrument designate schools or institutions in each region which shall provide the necessary facilities and equipment that will enable persons with disability to fully benefit from the school or institution.

Free education and special schools

18. The Government shall

1. provide free education for a person with disability, and
2. establish special schools for persons with disability who by reason of their disability cannot be enrolled in formal schools.

Appropriate training for basic school graduates

19. Where a person with disability has completed basic education but is unable to pursue further formal education, the Ministry shall provide the person with appropriate training.

Refusal of admission on account of disability

20. (1) A person responsible for admission into a school or other institution of learning shall not refuse to give admission to a person with disability on account of the disability unless the person with disability has been assessed by the Ministry responsible for Education in collaboration with the Ministries responsible for Health and Social Welfare to be a person who clearly requires to be in a special school for children or persons with disability.

2. A person who contravenes Subsection (1) commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding fifty penalty units or imprisonment for a term not exceeding three months or to both.

Special education in technical, vocational and teacher training institutions

21. The Minister of Education shall by Legislative Instrument designate in each region a public technical, vocational and teacher training institutions which shall include in their curricula special education, such as

1. sign language, and
2. Braille writing and reading

Library facilities

22. A public library shall as far as practicable be fitted with facilities that will enable persons with disability to use the library.

Transportation

Integration of needs of persons with disability

23. The Ministries responsible for rail, air, and road transport and where appropriate the Ministry of Local Government shall ensure that the needs of persons with disability are taken into account in the design, construction and operation of the transportation network.

Importation of non-conventional vehicles

24. (1) A person with disability may import a vehicle adapted or modified for use by persons with disability.

2. A person without disability shall not import a vehicle adapted or modified for use by persons with disability except with the express approval of the Minister.

2. A vehicle imported under subsection (1) shall upon the recommendations of the Minister and with approval of the Minister for Finance be exempt from the payment of import duty and any other tax relating to the importation.

2. A vehicle imported under subsection (1) shall not be re-exported.

2. A person who contravenes subsection (4) commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding two hundred and fifty penalty units or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding twelve months or to both.

A person with disability as a pedestrian

25. A motorist shall stop for a person with disability who shows an intention to cross the road either at the pedestrian crossing or at an appropriately designated point for crossing by persons with disability.

Parking places for persons with disability

26. (1) A District Assembly or an operator of a parking lot shall demarcate a special parking place which shall be reserved for the exclusive use of persons with disability.

2. Without limiting Subsection (1), each public place for parking vehicles shall have a clearly demarcated area for the exclusive use of persons with disability.

Parking places for persons with disability

27. A person with hearing disability may own a driving license upon passing a driving test and satisfying conditions prescribed by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority.

Facilities at port terminals

28. (1) The Civil Aviation Authority and any other authority responsible for the management of a port shall provide facilities that will aid the movement of a person with disability at the port.

Reserve seats on vehicles

29. A person responsible for the booking of passengers on a commercial bus shall reserve at least two seats for the persons with disability except that where the bus is full without the reserved seats having been occupied, the driver or the person responsible for putting passengers on the bus may, fill the reserved seats with other passengers.

Contravention of sections 25 and 29.

30. A person who contravenes Sections 25 and 29 commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding fifty penalty units or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding three months or to both.

Health-care and facilities

Medical treatment

31. The Ministry of Health in formulating health policies shall provide for free general and specialist medical care, rehabilitative operation treatment and appropriate assistive devices for persons with total disability.

Training of health professionals

32. The Ministry of Health shall include the study of disability and disability related issues in the curricula of training institutions for health professionals to develop appropriate human resources to provide general and specialised rehabilitation services.

Health programmes

33. The Ministry of Health shall include education on disability and disability issues in health care programmes.

Periodic screening of children

34. The Ministry of Health in collaboration with the Ministries responsible for Education and Social Welfare shall provide for the periodic screening of children in order to detect, prevent and manage disability.

Establishment of assessment centres

35. The Ministry of Health in collaboration with District Assemblies and the Ministry responsible for Social Welfare shall establish and operate health assessment and resource centres in each district and provide early diagnostic medical attention to mothers and infants to determine the existence or onset of disability.

Miscellaneous provisions

Incentive for manufacturers of technical aids and appliances

36. A person who manufactures technical aids or appliances in the country for the use of persons with disability shall be given tax exemption that the Minister in consultation with the Minister of Finance may determine in Regulations.

Derogatory Names

37. (1) A person shall not call a person with disability derogatory names because of the disability of the person.

92) A person who contravenes Subsection (1) commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding fifty penalty units or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding three months or to both.

Access to sporting events, festivals and cultural activities

38. The Ministry responsible for Education and Sports, the District Assemblies and the National Commission for Culture shall as far as practicable ensure, through the provision of adequate facilities, programmes and incentives, that persons with disability have access to sports and cultural events.

Participation in national activities

39. A person or institution which organises a national, regional or district activity, shall as far as practicable ensure that facilities are made available for the participation in the activity by persons with disability.

Law enforcement and persons with disability

40. (1) Law enforcement agencies shall take into consideration the disability of a person on arrest, detention, trial or confinement of the person and provide for that person accordingly.

2. Institutions for the training of law enforcement personnel shall have as part of their curricula, the study of disability and disability related issues.

*Establishment and functions of National
Council on Persons with Disability*

Establishment of National Council on Persons with Disability

41. (1) There is established by this Act a body to be known as the National Council on Persons with Disability.
2. The Council is a body corporate with perpetual succession, and a common seal and may sue or be sued in its corporate name.
2. The Council may for the performance of its functions acquire and hold movable or immovable property and may enter into contract or any other transaction.
2. Where there is hindrance to the acquisition of the property, the property may be acquired for the Council under the State Property and Contracts Act 1960 (C.A.6) or the State Lands Act, 1962 (Act 125) and the costs shall be borne by the Council.

Object and functions of the Council

42. (1) The object of the Council is to propose and evolve policies and strategies to enable persons with disability enter and participate in the mainstream of the national development process.
2. To achieve the object, the Council shall
 1. monitor and evaluate disability policies and programmes,
 2. formulate strategies for broad-based inter-sectoral, interdisciplinary involvement and participation in the implementation of the national disability policy,
 3. produce an organizational manual on the operations of the Council and its secretariat,
 4. coordinate disability activities;
 5. advise the Ministry on disability issues and submit to the Minister proposals for appropriate legislation on disability,
 6. mobilise resources for the attainment of its object,
 7. coordinate activities of organisations of persons with disability, and international organizations and non-governmental organisations that deal with disability,
 8. promote studies and research on issues of disability and provide education and information to the public on issues of disability,
 9. maintain a register of,
 - (i) persons with disability, and
 - (ii) institutions, organizations and associations which provide rehabilitation, services or support for persons with disability,

10. play an advocacy role on disability issues at all levels; and
11. perform other functions that are necessary for the attainment of its object.

Governing body of the Council

43. (1) For the performance of the functions of the Council there shall be a Board consisting of
1. the chairperson,
 2. one representative not below the rank of deputy director, of the Ministry of Health,
 3. one representative not below the rank of deputy director, of the Department of Social Welfare,
 4. one representative not below the rank of deputy director, of the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development,
 5. one representative of employers' association
 6. one representative not below the rank of deputy director, of the Ministry of Ministry of Education,
 7. one representative not below the rank of deputy director, of the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment,
 8. three representatives of organizations of persons with disabilities one of whom is a woman, nominated on rotational basis by the organizations,
 9. one representative not below the rank of deputy director, of the Ministry responsible for Women and Children's Affairs, and
 10. two other persons, one of whom is a woman,

(2) The chairperson and other members of the Board shall be appointed by the President in accordance with Article 70 of the Constitution.

Tenure of office of members

44. (1) A member of the Board shall hold office for a period of three years and is eligible for re-appointment but a member shall not hold office for more than two terms in succession.

2. Where a member resigns, dies, is removed from Office or is for a sufficient reason unable to act as a member, the Minister shall notify the President of the vacancy and the President shall acting on the advice of the nominating authority and in consultation with the Council of State appoint another person to old office for the unexpired portion of the member's term of office.

2. A member of the Board may at any time resign from office in writing addressed to the President through the Minister.

2. A member of the Board who is absent from three consecutive meetings of the Board without sufficient reason ceases to be a member of the Council.

2. The President may by letter addressed to a member revoke the appointment of that member.

Meetings of the Board

45. (1) The Board shall meet at least once every three months for the despatch of business at the times and in the places determined by the chairperson.

2. The chairperson shall at the request in writing of at least one-third of the members of the Board convene an extraordinary meeting of the Board at the place and time determined by the chairperson.

2. The quorum at the meeting of the Board is nine members of the Board or a greater number determined by the Board in respect of an important matter.

2. The chairperson shall preside at meetings of the Board and in the absence of the chairperson; a member of the Board elected by the members present from among their number shall preside.

2. Matters before the Board shall be decided by a majority of the members present and voting and in the event of an equality of votes, the person presiding shall have a casting vote.

2. The Board may co-opt any person to act as an adviser at its meetings but a co-opted member shall not vote any matter for decision by the Board.

2. The proceedings of the Board shall not be invalidated by reason of a vacancy among the members or a defect in the appointment or qualification of a member.

2. Subject this Section, the Board shall determine and regulate the procedure for its meeting.

Disclosure of interest by a Board member

46. (1) A member of the Board who has an interest in a matter under consideration by the Board shall disclose in writing the nature of that interest to the Board and is disqualified from participating in the deliberations of the Board in respect of that matter.

2. A member who fails to disclose an interest under (1) ceases to be a member.

Appointment of Committees

47. (1) The Board may for the performance of the functions of the Council appoint committees of the Board comprising members of the Board or non-members or both.

2. A committee entirely of non-members shall not be advisory.

Allowance of members

48. Members of the Board and members of a Committee of the Board shall be paid allowance that the Minister in consultation with the Minister for Finance may determine.

Regional and district offices of the Council

49. (1) The Board may establish regional and district offices of the Council in each regional capital and in the districts.

2. A regional or district office of the council shall be provided with public officers that the President shall appoint in accordance with Article 195 of the Constitution.

2. A regional or district office of the council shall perform the functions of the Council in the region or district.

Register

50. The Board shall maintain a register in which shall be recorded

1. the names, addresses and other personal particulars of persons with disability, and
2. names, addresses of offices and other particulars of institutions, organisations and associations which provide rehabilitation, services or support for persons with disability.

Administrative and financial provisions

Executive Secretary

51. (1) The President shall in accordance with Article 195 of the Constitution appoint an Executive Secretary of the Council.

2. The Executive Secretary shall hold office on the terms and conditions specified in the letter of appointment.

Functions of the Executive Secretary

52. (1) The Executive Secretary is responsible for the day to day administration of the Council and is answerable to the Board in the performance of functions under this Act.

2. The Executive Secretary shall maintain the register referred to in Section 50.

2. The Executive Secretary shall perform any other functions determined by the Board.

2. The Executive Secretary may delegate a function to an officer of the Council but shall not be relieved from the ultimate responsibility for the performance of the delegated function.

Appointment of other staff

53. (1) The Council shall have other officers and staff as may be necessary for the effective performance of its functions.

2. The President shall in accordance with Article 195 of the Constitution appoint other staff of the Council.

2. Other public officers may be transferred or seconded to the Council or may otherwise give assistance to it.

2. The Council may engage the services of advisers on the recommendations of the Board.

Delegation of power of appointment

54. The President may in accordance with Article 195(2) of the Constitution delegate the power of appointment of public officers under this Act.

Funds of the council

55. The funds of the Council include

1. moneys provided by Parliament

2. donations, grants and gifts, and
3. any other moneys that are approved by the Minister responsible for Finance, with the approval of Parliament

Accounts and audit

56. (1) The Board shall keep books of account and proper records in relation to them in a form approved by the Auditor-General.
2. The Board shall submit the accounts of the Council to the Auditor-General for audit within three months after the end of each financial year.
 2. The Auditor-General shall not later than three months after the receipt of the accounts, audit the accounts of the Council and forward a copy of the audit report to the Minister.
 2. The Internal Audit Agency Act, 2003 (Act 658) shall apply to this Act.
 2. The financial year of the Council is the same as the financial year of the government.

Annual report and other reports

57. (1) The Board shall within one month after the receipt of the audit report submit an annual report to the Minister covering the activities and the operations of the Council for the year to which the report relates.
2. The annual report shall include the report of the Auditor-General.
 2. The Minister shall, within one month after the receipt of the annual report submits the report to Parliament with a statement that the Minister considers necessary.
 2. The Board shall also submit to the Minister any other reports which the Minister may require in writing.

Regulations

58. The Minister may, on the advice of the Board, by legislative instrument, make Regulations providing
1. for minimum standard of facilities to be provided and maintained by public bodies or institutions so as to make those bodies or institutions and services provided by those bodies or institutions available to persons with disability, and

2. generally for the effective implementation of the objects of this Act.

Interpretation

59. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires

“Council” means the National Council on Persons with Disability established under Section 41;

“District Assembly” includes Municipal and Metropolitan Assembly;

“Minister” means the Minister responsible for Social Welfare;

“Ministry” means the Ministry responsible for Social Welfare;

“person with disability” means an individual with a physical, mental or sensory impairment including a visual, hearing or speech functional disability which gives rise to physical, cultural or social barriers that substantially limits one more of the major life activities of that individual;

“port” includes airport, seaport, railway station and lake transport terminal; and

“transportation network” includes facilities used for the transport of passengers.

Transitional provisions

60. The owner or occupier of an existing building to which the public has access shall within ten years of the commencement of this Act make that building accessible to and available for use by a person with disability.

Date of *Gazette* notification: 11th August, 2006.

