

Male Allyship within the Context of Local Governance: A Case of Wenchi Municipality in Ghana

Abstract

Despite significant efforts in promoting gender equality globally, gender disparities still exist in the political, social, and economic realms of both developed and developing countries. Women are still underrepresented in governance throughout the world. In the Ghanaian context, the beliefs and behaviors of men could be instrumental in facilitating and/or impeding women's active participation in local governance. From a constructivist perspective, this study qualitatively explored men's perspectives on women's involvement in local governance in the Wenchi municipality of Ghana. The study interviewed respondents who are actively engaged in the local governance process in the municipality. The respondents' experiences and thoughts about women's involvement in local governance were analyzed. The study finds that there is a huge disparity in women's participation in local governance in the municipality. It also finds that these disparities are fueled and institutionalized by the existing patriarchal system in Ghana. The study results imply that involving men in the efforts geared toward breaking barriers to women's involvement in local governance and increasing the level of women's participation requires the collective efforts of all stakeholder groups, especially men. The study therefore recommends that conscious efforts be made to integrate women in the local governance system because women have more to offer if given the opportunity.