



European Master's Degree in Human Rights and Democratisation

2013/2014

Rwandan Women's Political Participation and Representation after the Genocide: Impact and Concerns.

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Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to explore the impact of the numerical rise of Rwandan women's political participation after the 1994 genocide. I tried to comprehend the factors that facilitate and retrain the entry and effective participation of women in political life of Rwanda.

By examining the experiences of Rwandan women parliamentarians, this thesis hopes to contribute to the academic literature on gender quotas and political representation that has received a considerable attention from feminist scholars. In addition, this thesis explored the extent to which women's numerical increase in representation has been translated into substantive change specifically for women and to the society as a whole. I came up with the conclusion that quota system, coupled with other legislative and structural reforms facilitated women's high representation. The first parliament in 1994 contained 11.4 per cent of seats held by women passing to nearly 64% in 2013 thanks to the introduction of gender policy in 2003.

Taking into account that Rwanda is a post-conflict country, there are still considerable impediments to women's equal and full participation in decision-making positions as well as for the promotion of a transformative potential, which will embrace the whole society.

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