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The Effectiveness of Political Quotas in Representing Rwandan Citizens

Sarah Duncan

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The Effectiveness of Political Quotas in Representing Rwandan Citizens

Sarah Duncan

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Rwanda: Post-Genocide Restoration and Peace-building

Fall 2015

*“It is when it is contended that ‘in a democracy right is what the majority makes it to be’
that democracy degenerates into demagoguery.”*

– Friedrich Hayek (Austrian/British Economist, 1899-1992)

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*For my parents: who have always taught me how to question and never be complacent
with the daily institutions I confront—including educational, religious,
and of course, governmental.*

Abstract:

Political quotas are controversial solutions for addressing the representative problems that arise within democratic institutions. The fundamental reasoning behind a state adopting the usage of political quotas is to promote political empowerment for its citizens. The Constitution of Rwanda ensures that numerically different identity groups have political representation vis-à-vis political quotas. Does this written decree of democratic progress on the macro level extend to effectively elevate the social and political status of individuals within the micro level? The simplified question: are political quotas viable solutions for protecting political representation amongst different sects of a state's population within democratic institutions? Results conclude that in Rwanda, political representation at the macro level does not necessarily transcend to the micro level—which would ultimately establish equality amongst different identity groups. Political representation is, however; and this is the *fundamental benefit* of political quotas, a means through which Rwandan citizenry can enter the political discourse and produce shifts within the legal framework to better advance their social, economic, and political rights.

Useful Abbreviations:

NAR – Never Again Rwanda

NGO – Nongovernmental Organization

NPC – National Paralympics Committee of Rwanda

NUDOR – The National Union of Disability Organizations of Rwanda

RNUD – Rwanda National Union of the Deaf

RUB – Rwandan Union of the Blind

Key Terms—political quota, identity politics, youth population, women’s rights, & disabled community

The following are definitions by which the mentioned words are used by the author.

- *Political quota* is an identification of any *legal requirement* presented to a government, which ensures a minimum representation of a portion within a population—i.e. women, youth, disabled, etc.
- *Identity politics* is used to describe a *philosophical* approach to thinking about political representation whereby different portions of populations seek political representation. Representation is off of a unique identity, which differs from the majority identified with political salience.
- *Youth population*, although defined by the international community and United Nations as being represented by persons ages 15-24,¹ this research followed the Rwandan National Youth Policy, which declares the youth population to be all persons between the ages of 14 and 35.²
- *Women’s rights* was defined via measuring the definition of gender equality at the micro-level. This was done in observing three distinct areas of daily life—economic capability, interpretation of social status, and interpretation of self-political identity.

¹ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *Definition of Youth*, 2007.

² Joseph Habineza, “Introduction,” *The Republic of Rwanda Ministry of Youth, Culture and Sports National Youth Policy*, 2005.

- *Disabled community* was defined following the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities stating:

Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments, which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.³

³ United Nations, "Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities," *Resolution adopted by the General Assembly*, January 24, 2007.

Part I: Introduction and Background

If liberty and equality, as is thought by some, are chiefly to be found in democracy, they will be best attained when all persons alike share in the government to the utmost.

– Aristotle (*Greek Philosopher, 384 BC – 322 BC*)

1.1 Introduction

Following the conclusion of the genocide perpetrated against the Tutsis, the state of Rwanda was that of anarchy. At the time, Rwanda was comprised of a sparse population consisting of refugees and internally displaced citizens. Over fifty percent of the nation was below the international poverty line, the GNP per capita in U.S. dollars hovered around \$210, with 70 percent of the population experiencing property loss and damage. Rwanda's infrastructure was nonexistent. There was no functioning economy—banks had no money, and the yearly harvest did not occur leading to a shortage of profitable crops. The government officials who propagated the genocide fled, leaving behind a state with no governmental authority.⁴ Today, Rwanda's population is comprised of roughly twelve and half million people, with slightly over half of the population being women. The population has an exceptionally large youth demographic with about 42 percent of the nation under the age of fourteen.⁵ Rwanda now has a rapidly growing economy and an established political authority, which claims to champion law and order. Within the global community, Rwanda prides itself on being the most politically progressive state on matters such as gender equality, in that it's legislative body hosts the most female politicians in the world.⁶

⁴ Patricia Marchak, "Rwanda: Democracy After Genocide," In *No Easy Fix: Global Responses to Wars and Crimes Against Humanity*, (Montreal: McGill-Queens University press, 2008) 156-158.

⁵ Central Intelligence Agency, "Africa: Rwanda," *The World Factbook*. Accessed on November 13, 2015, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/rw.html>.

⁶ Inter-Parliamentary Union, "Women in National Parliaments: World Classification," in *Inter-Parliamentary Union*. Accessed on April 20, 2015, <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>.

The juxtaposition between Rwanda immediately after the genocide and Rwanda today encapsulates the definition of progress. To study and understand development in Rwandan government, research must acknowledge the essential social shift that occurred within Rwanda's political framework, which established identity political groups that transcend the historically harmful ethnic factions of Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa—examples being women, youth, and disabled populations. Two political trends are responsible for the reconstruction of Rwandan identity politics. The first is the eradication of ethnic and regional identity within Rwanda, which was legally mandated by the reformed constitution in 2003.⁷ The second is the implementation of political quotas, which demarcated sects of the Rwandan population that needed political representation. The following research focused on the second trend responsible for the restructuring of Rwandan identity politics—political quotas.

According to the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda, the Rwandan government—which was first implemented/elected in 2003—is composed of three different branches: executive, legislative, and judiciary. This study focused on the political quotas implemented within the legislative branch of government. Parameters for political quotas of the legislative branch are as follows: First, the eighty membered Chamber of Deputies, the lower-house of the legislature, must consist of a minimum of twenty-four female politicians, have two youth representatives, and one political representative for the disabled community. Secondly, the twenty-six membered upper-

⁷ The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda. art. 76 & 82.

house legislature, the Senate, is required to have a minimum thirty percent composition of female officials, have one university lecturer from private university, one university lecturer from public university, and four members nominated by the Forum of Political Organizations. This means that these politicians are selected from a collection of Rwanda's political parties, not solely the political party defining the specifically elected politician.⁸

While the Constitution of Rwanda ensures that numerically different identity groups have political representation vis-à-vis political quotas, does this written decree of democratic progress on the macro level extend to effectively elevate the social and political status of individuals within the micro level? To simplify, are political quotas viable solutions for protecting political representation amongst different sects of a state's population within democratic institutions? In studying how Rwandans identify their personal political voice, the objective of the research was to study the overall impact of political quotas within Rwanda's democratic government and create a definitive argument for their usage on a global scale.

1.2 Background & Literature Review

Literature for the research project was gathered on the basis of four main areas of study: critiques on democratic regimes, factual information about political quotas, different views regarding the effectiveness of political quotas, and development of post-genocide Rwandan government. The culmination of these four areas of study enabled a

⁸ The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda. art. 76 & 82.

concentrated focus on governmental representation derived from political quotas, and opened a theoretical discourse for their effectiveness on promoting Rwandan political voices.

Critiques on Democratic Regimes:

A democratic regime is not infallible. Understanding the different critiques on the institution of democracy is essential to the history and development of political quotas. If democratic regimes truly provided all identity groups with political salience, then there would not be an emerging trend of legally ensuring political representation for different demographics. As Charles Tilly describes, political theorists since the time of Aristotle have noted that inequality poses a viable threat to democracy, and has the potential to cripple democratic institutions from within the masses.⁹ For political representation, inequality is described and emerges from categorical differences within a state's given population. Tilly defines "durable categorical inequality" as "organized differences in advantages by gender, race, nationality, ethnicity, religion, community, and similar classification systems."¹⁰ Iris Young applies the principle of categorical inequality to the United States, and concludes that it leads to the oppression of groups, specifically those who are identified as "women, blacks, Native Americans, old people, poor people,

⁹ Charles Tilly, "Inequality, Democratization, and De-Democratization," in *Sociological Theory* 21, no. 1 (March 2003), 37.

¹⁰ Tilly, "Inequality, Democratization, and De-Democratization," in *Sociological Theory*, 37.

disabled people, gay men, and lesbians, Spanish-speaking Americans, young people, and nonprofessional workers.”¹¹ In Jean Jacques Rousseau’s *The Social Contract*, democracy is simplistically defined as the “sum of individual desires.”¹² With institutionalized categorical inequality for mass portions of a given population—as depicted by Young—“individual desires” are not feasibly represented in the modern state. This is the root problem of democratic regimes: the determination of which individual desires are worthy enough to transcend from the social sphere of life into the political arena.

The human need for validation and representation of “individual desire” is the very reason democratic regimes are so popular. As Ian Shapiro and Casiano Hacker-Cordón describes it in *Democracy’s Value*, “people find democracy appealing partly because its universalist ethic holds out the possibility of undoing, or at least mitigating, many of the evils they [citizens] see around them.”¹³ In other words, democracy is viewed as a theoretical device enabling its constituents to claim ownership in, and alter governmental action—via the majority voice. While “majority voice” is the positive aspect of republicanism, it is also the main problem. Shapiro and Hacker-Cordón explain that “majoritarian processes all too easily lend themselves to capture and manipulation by well-organized minorities to advance their particular interests,”¹⁴ and that “majority rule may express the will of the people, but ‘the people’ exist severally as

¹¹ Iris Marion Young, “Polity and Group Difference: A Critique of the Ideal of Universal Citizenship,” in *Ethics* 99, no. 2 (1989), 265.

¹² Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968 [1762]).

¹³ Shapiro, Ian Shapiro & Casiano Hacker-Cordón, “Promises and Disappointments: Reconsidering Democracy’s Value,” in *Democracy’s Value*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) 18.

¹⁴ Shapiro & Hacker-Cordón, “Promises and Disappointments: Reconsidering Democracy’s Value,” in *Democracy’s Value*, 14.

well as collectively and it is in their several existence that majoritarian politics threatens them with domination.”¹⁵ In short, majority politics does not represent, nor promote, the political needs of all persons. Instead it advances the group of individuals best at obtaining representation—which if exceptionally resourceful can be a minority population within a state.

The second main problem with current democratic institutions is that within this specific political framework, modern day majoritarian politics are translated from the social sphere to the political *via* elected officials. Referencing Shapiro and Hacker-Cordón again,

There are good reasons to doubt that majoritarian politics converge on common interests in modern polities, that politicians in any meaningful sense are constrained by elections to represent voters’ interests, or that they even pursue policies—such as egalitarian redistribution—that would benefit an unambiguous majority of the citizenry.¹⁶

For the “majority voice” in politics to truly be represented, within modern democratic institutions there must exist elected officials who solely speak the voice of their majority constituents, and as elaborated on by John S. Dryzek, “there is absolutely no reason for public officials to behave this way.”¹⁷ Thus, there is no physical means in democracy of

¹⁵ Shapiro & Hacker-Cordón, “Promises and Disappointments: Reconsidering Democracy’s Value,” in *Democracy’s Value*, 15.

¹⁶ Shapiro & Hacker-Cordón, “Promises and Disappointments: Reconsidering Democracy’s Value,” in *Democracy’s Value*, 3.

¹⁷ John S. Dryzek, “Political Inclusion and the Dynamics of Democratization,” in *The American Political Science Review* 90, no. 3 (September 1996): 484.

assuring that elected officials and representatives of the “majority voice,” do in fact, convey and promote the needs and desires of the population.

For the sake of constructing this argument, consider the work of Taeku Lee, S. Karthick Ramakrishnan, and Ricardo Ramirez in *Transforming Politics, Transforming America* about United States democracy, and the issues of political representation specific to the immigrant population. Elected officials respond to political participation, but when political discourse is not representative of the immigrant population, political involvement amongst immigrants becomes sparse. The results of little political participation are, “durable disparities in the representation of Latino, Asian, and black immigrants among the ranks of elected and appointed officials, from the national level down to the state and local levels.”¹⁸ In the case of immigrants who live in the United States, the instilled democracy conceived from socially constructed norms of race, gender, and language elect officials who are unable to respond and consider the political, social, and economic needs of immigrants. This is the problem presented to democratic regimes. The interminable need for political representation is the reasoning behind the emergence of political quotas—governance must be malleable to reflect the needs of a changing population.

While contestatory democracy struggles with political discourse between constituents and the formation of a majority voice, and the majority voice and elected officials, Shapiro and Hacker-Cordón concede that in fighting governmental tyranny,

¹⁸ Taeku Lee, S. Karthick Ramakrishnan, and Ricardo Ramirez, “Conclusions”, in *Transforming Politics, Transforming America: The Political and Civic Incorporation of Immigrants in the United States* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006) 269.

republicanism has the potential to be the most successful political institution. “Majority voice,” is communal action. The questions revolving around problems in democratic institutions are never “whether collective action?” but rather “what sort of collective action?”¹⁹ The implementation of political quotas is the potential solution to the question “what sort of collective action?” Democratic theory must acknowledge that democratic institutions have flaws, however, shifting democratic representation to continuously represent different demographics within a population is a potential political *and* social resolution for the representative disparities found within democracy.

Factual Information about Political Quotas:

Similar to democratic institutions, political quotas are not homogenous. In Melanie M. Hughes’s *Intersectionality, Quotas, and Minority Women’s Political Representation Worldwide* political quotas are defined as “laws or policies requiring candidate lists or representative bodies to include women; racial, ethnic, or religious minorities; or members of other target groups.”²⁰ Mona Lena Krook, Joni Lovenduski, and Judith Squires expand on this basic definition of “political quota” and define it to be an existing theoretical variety in that there are four distinct methods to apply political quotas in a governmental framework. These are reserved seating political quotas,

¹⁹ Shapiro & Hacker-Cordón, “Promises and Disappointments: Reconsidering Democracy’s Value,” in *Democracy’s Value*, 15.

²⁰ Melanie M Hughes, “Intersectionality, Quotas, and Minority Women’s Political Representation World Wide,” in *American Political Science Review* 105, no. 3 (August 2011): 604.

compulsory political party quotas, legislative quotas, and informal political quotas.²¹ Reserved seating is when the national legislative bodies establish seats that may only be occupied by those belonging to a particular identity group. Party quotas are when different political parties require a portion of political officials to be composed of an identity group. Legislative quotas entail that a given composition of party lists in electing legislative members be reserved for a particular identity group. Finally, soft quotas are informal quotas that political parties wish to fulfill within elections—better described as desirable political guidelines.²² Frank C. Thames and Margaret S. Williams in “Contagion and the Adoption of National Quotas,” parallel definitions with Krook et al., by defining compulsory party quotas as a “requirement for parties to nominate a certain percentage of female candidates in each election,”²³ while “reserved-seat quotas go beyond regulating the process of candidate selection to reserving a certain portion of legislative seats for female legislators.”²⁴ Thames and Williams also conclude that “reserved-seat quotas go much farther to guarantee the presence of women in the legislature”²⁵ because they physically ensure an existence of a demographics’ representation within the given governmental body.

²¹ Mona Lena Krook, Joni Lovenduski, and Judith Squires, “Gender Quotas and Models of Political Citizenship,” in *British Journal of Political Science* 39, no. 4 (October 2009): 784.

²² Mona Lena Krook, Joni Lovenduski, and Judith Squires, “Gender Quotas and Models of Political Citizenship,” in *British Journal of Political Science* 39, no. 4 (October 2009): 784.

²³ Frank C. Thames and Margaret S. Williams, “Contagion and the Adoption of National Quotas,” In *Contagious Representation: Womens Political Representation in Democracies around the World*, (New York: NYU Press, 2013) 102.

²⁴ Frank C. Thames and Margaret S. Williams, “Contagion and the Adoption of National Quotas,” In *Contagious Representation: Womens Political Representation in Democracies around the World*, 102.

²⁵ Frank C. Thames and Margaret S. Williams, “Contagion and the Adoption of National Quotas,” In *Contagious Representation: Womens Political Representation in Democracies around the World*, 102.

Today, democratic regimes implement political quotas to promote the representation of different “sexes, races, ethnicities, nationalities, religions, castes, languages, ages, disabilities, professions, and locations of residence.”²⁶ Over 100 countries have employed gender quotas, making “gender” the most frequently applied form of political quota in the world. At least 20 countries have implemented minority quotas within their legislative bodies.²⁷ Gender quotas are typically enforced via reserving a proportion of political seats, while other minority quotas tend to have reserved seats within the legislative institution.²⁸ The Rwandan government has reserved seating quotas for women and youth, as well as the minority disabled identity groups within its lower-level legislative body.

Political quotas are not universally applied in the world, nor have they emerged in a single conforming manner. Compulsory political quotas first emerged in Africa and the Middle East during the early 1990s, leading to an immense portion of all existing compulsory political quotas to be located in these regions as of 2006.²⁹ As Thames and Williams demonstrate, compulsory quotas did not begin to emerge in Asia until 1999. They also indicate that political quotas are “fast-track approaches to equity.”³⁰ Therefore, “they are less likely to be adopted in wealthy, institutionalized democracies with strong

²⁶ Melanie M. Hughes, *American Political Science Review*, 605.

²⁷ Melanie M. Hughes, *American Political Science Review*, 605.

²⁸ Mona Lena Krook, Joni Lovenduski, and Judith Squires, “Gender Quotas and Models of Political Citizenship,” in *British Journal of Political Science* 39, no. 4 (October 2009): 784.

²⁹ Frank C. Thames and Margaret S. Williams, “Contagion and the Adoption of National Quotas,” In *Contagious Representation: Womens Political Representation in Democracies around the World*, 109.

³⁰ Frank C. Thames and Margaret S. Williams, “Contagion and the Adoption of National Quotas,” In *Contagious Representation: Womens Political Representation in Democracies around the World*, 107.

records of legislative representation than in democracies without these traditions.”³¹ Finally, Thames and Williams do acknowledge that there are some political quotas implemented in older European regimes, however, the vast majority of political quotas are used as sources of development.³² Drude Dahlerup supports the “fast-track” conclusion by emphasizing that reserved seat quotas have been adopted in Rwanda, Uganda, Niger, and Morocco, and that “advocates of national quotas may face fewer obstacles in new democracies [such as the listed countries].”³³ This trend of older democracies being less willing to adopt political quotas is the focal point of democratic critique. As demonstrated by the previously mentioned scholars, democratic institutions do not ensure egalitarian representation. The comparison of constituency political salience in new democratic institutions, such as Rwanda, versus old democratic institutions like the United States promotes a comparative discourse for political—specifically democratic—development.

Different Views Regarding the Success of Political Quotas:

Political quotas are controversial solutions for addressing the representative problems that arise within democratic institutions. The fundamental reasoning behind a state adopting the usage of political quotas is to promote political empowerment for its citizens. The notion of “empowerment” is where the initial debate arises in regards to the success of political quotas. For Srilatha Batliwala, “empowerment is a *socio-political*

³¹ Frank C. Thames and Margaret S. Williams, “Contagion and the Adoption of National Quotas,” In *Contagious Representation: Womens Political Representation in Democracies around the World*, 101.

³² Frank C. Thames and Margaret S. Williams, “Contagion and the Adoption of National Quotas,” In *Contagious Representation: Womens Political Representation in Democracies around the World*, 109.

³³ Dahlerup, Drude. “Increasing Women’s Political Representation: New Trends in Gender Quotas.” In *Women in Parliament: Beyond Numbers. A Revised edition*, ed. Julie Ballington and Azza Karam. Stockholm, Sweden: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2005.

process.”³⁴ Meaning, to truly elevate the status of all citizens within a state, it is the amalgamation of social and political developments that produce the self-identification of value and use for that given state. As explained by Batliwala, this is where the initial problem with political quotas arises – political quotas are strictly *political* solutions and ignore the *social* developmental needs of state. Thus, “empowerment” is never achieved because only the political sphere undergoes developmental change, while the social sphere of a state remains unaltered.³⁵

The contrasting view is derived from the statistical indicator that political quotas successfully increase legislative representation for different demographics of a given population. The purpose of political quotas transforms into the creation of a base line of political development derived from numerical representation. Meaning, by addressing minority representation in the political sphere, inevitably, the social sphere of a state will experience change. The main argument of Anne Phillips’s *Democracy and Difference*, is not that elected representatives [specifically elected female officials] “have a special charge to speak for women and only as women [thus, promoting the social sphere of a state]; it is enough that they simply *are* women.”³⁶ For Phillips, the physical body of a given demographic in the political sphere produces change.

Reinforcing this argument, particularly for quotas pertaining to women’s issues is the undeniable political result that, “national quotas do in fact increase women’s

³⁴Srilatha Batliwala, “Taking the Power out of Empowerment: An experiential Account,” in *Development in Practice* 17, no. 4 (August 2007): 559.

³⁵ Srilatha Batliwala, “Taking the Power out of Empowerment: An experiential Account,” in *Development in Practice* 17, no. 4 (August 2007): 557-563.

³⁶ Phillips, Anne Phillips *Democracy and Difference*, (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993) 96-97.

legislative representation.”³⁷ According to the Inter-parliamentary Union, Burundi’s new constitution with an implemented “30 percent reserved-seat quota for women in parliament”³⁸ increased female representation from 18.4 percent to 30.5 percent between the years 2004 and 2005.³⁹ For Costa Rica, female representation grew of 19.3 percent to 35.1 percent between the years 2001 and 2002 with the mandated compulsory party quota requiring 40 percent of potential positions be female nominees.⁴⁰

The combination of works by Wahidah Zein Br Siregar, Par Zetterber, and Kathleen Knight, Yvonne Galligah, and Una Nic Giolla Choille offer an oppositional view to the statement that political quotas successfully increasing a specified demographics’ representation in government. The debate returns to the notion that “empowerment” is a *social* and *political* process with the case studies of Indonesia, several Latin American countries, and Ireland. All three of these studies show that societal norms influence the potential success of changing the composition of political representation. In Indonesia, despite there being a 30 percent compulsory party quota female candidates experience “limited success” to the government.⁴¹ “In Latin American countries, the presence of quota legislation “appears to not be positively associated with women’s political engagement.” Thus, the use of quotas may not spur women to be more

³⁷ Frank C. Thames and Margaret S. Williams, “Contagion and the Adoption of National Quotas,” In *Contagious Representation: Womens Political Representation in Democracies around the World*, 102.

³⁸ Inter-Parliamentary Union. *Women in National Parliaments Statistical Archive*, 2011. (accessed November 11, 2015). <http://www.ipu.org>.

³⁹ Inter-Parliamentary Union. *Women in Politics: 60 Years in Retrospect*. Geneva, Switzerland: Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2006.

⁴⁰ Inter-Parliamentary Union. *Women in National Parliaments Statistical Archive*, 2011. (accessed November 11, 2015). <http://www.ipu.org>.

⁴¹ Wahidah Zein Br Siregar, “Women and the Failure to Achieve the 30 Per Cent Quota in the 2004-2009 Indonesian Parliaments: The Role of the electoral System,” International Political Science Association World Congress, Fukuoka, Japan. July 9-13. 2006.

political activity.”⁴² Finally, “on the basis of a survey of female Irish legislators, there is significant agreement among respondents that child care is an important obstacle to women’s legislative careers, ‘traditional cultural attitudes’ that prevent women’s equality remain active—particularly because of strong Catholic traditions in Ireland.”⁴³ For these three examples, compulsory political party quotas cannot move women beyond cultural constraints defined by historical gender roles.

Furthermore, as described by Melanie Hughes—who suggests a more positive perspective, particularly towards gender quotas—is that political quotas bring diversity to legislative bodies, and that there is a trend where those elected via political quotas do not as frequently belong to elite social classes.⁴⁴ Krook et al., discusses the challenge that political quotas promote “identity over ideas,” thus, threatening the quality of legislation. In Tania Verge and Maria de la Fuente’s article *Playing With Different Cards: Party Politics, Gender Quotas, and Women’s Empowerment*, although there is a focus on gender quotas, they draw the conclusion that political quotas cannot defeat social constructs of power experienced by female elected officials.⁴⁵ Within all of these areas of study related to political quotas, however, studies are not conducted at the micro level. This was the theoretical gap the following research aspired to answer: do political quotas

⁴² Par Zetterberg, “Do gender Quotas Foster Women’s Political Engagement?” *Political Research Quarterly* 62 (2009): 715-730.

⁴³ Mona Lena Krook, Joni Lovenduski, and Judith Squires. “Gender Quotas and Models of Political Citizenship.” In *British Journal of Political Science* 39, no. 4 (October 2009): 781-803.

⁴⁴ Melanie M Hughes, “Intersectionality, Quotas, and Minority Women’s Political Representation World Wide,” in *American Political Science Review* 105, no. 3 (August 2011): 604.

⁴⁵ Mona Lena Krook, Joni Lovenduski, and Judith Squires, “Gender Quotas and Models of Political Citizenship,” in *British Journal of Political Science* 39, no. 4 (October 2009): 787.

elevate the political, economic, and social status of the constituents they represent rather than focusing on the social status of the elected official?

Development of Post-Genocide Rwanda:

The final area of concentration was the development of the post-genocide Rwandan government. “Rwanda: Democracy After a Genocide,” by Patricia Marchak, depicts the state of Rwanda immediately after the events perpetrated against the Tutsi in 1994. This is crucial for fostering an understanding behind the reasoning why identity groups have political quotas in Rwanda. Rwanda’s recent history of demagoguery for representation, as portrayed by Marchak, led to the construction of a governmental design rooted in the creation and promotion of a national Rwandan population. The government is created on the basis of representation for all—as shown by the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda. Marchak’s work combined with the Constitution and the CIA World Fact Book, elaborate on specificities of Rwandan, history, government, and demographics, which ultimately creates the unique environmental framework for the national adoption of political quotas.

As illustrated by the World Fact Book, Rwanda’s population is unique compared to many other countries around the world in that it has large youth and female populations—groups historically not privy to political representation. Before the genocide, women could not own land, could not work outside of the house, were not legally considered heads of the household (although women were still intrinsic to the familial structure) and were not the main source for domestic economic power.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Patricia Marchak, “Rwanda: Democracy After Genocide,” in *No Easy Fix: Global Responses to Internal Wars and Crimes Against Humanity*, (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2008) 161-64.

Amongst the youth population, roughly 63 percent of the youth (prior 1994) were enrolled in the educational system, yielding a majoritarian adult population that was illiterate.⁴⁷ For the disabled communities, achieving basic human recognition within familial and social structures was a daily challenge—not to mention that those deemed disabled were not permitted to participate within the Rwandan educational structures. This made finding future employment opportunities unobtainable. This was the foundation the government needed to build upon for Rwandan development.

After the genocide, the development of Rwanda was achieved by embracing two essential conclusions about the composition of the population. First, as stated by Marchak, “due to the genocide and imprisonment policies, there were many more women than men in Rwanda after the genocide.”⁴⁸ The second is that the immensely large youth population was to play a crucial role for the building of Rwanda’s future, this was to be done through developing educational institutions. “Primary school education was viewed by the new government, and possibly the majority of Rwandans, as the key to a peaceful and more prosperous future.”⁴⁹ The two conclusions of acknowledging a majority female presence and educating a majority youth population aligned with an emphasis on human rights led to the current movement to develop representation for women, youth, and disabled populations in Rwanda.

⁴⁷ Patricia Marchak, “Rwanda: Democracy After Genocide,” in *No Easy Fix: Global Responses to Internal Wars and Crimes Against Humanity*, 162.

⁴⁸ Patricia Marchak, “Rwanda: Democracy After Genocide,” in *No Easy Fix: Global Responses to Internal Wars and Crimes Against Humanity*, 163-64.

⁴⁹ Patricia Marchak, “Rwanda: Democracy After Genocide,” in *No Easy Fix: Global Responses to Internal Wars and Crimes Against Humanity*, 162.

1.3 Research Problem

Although numerically Rwanda's Chamber of Deputies follows inclusionary political practices for representing diversity within its population, i.e. women, youth, disabled, etc. does it truly preserve and promote the political demands of these social entities? For example, the previously mentioned statistics on female political representation indicates that Rwandan women are politically equal to men in presence, but are Rwandan women able to identify themselves as being politically, socially, and economically equal in power? These same questions will be studied and applied to the youth and disabled Rwandan populations. Oppositional views towards the usage of political quotas indicates that physically placing women, and other minority identity groups within political institutions does not negate previously instilled socially constructed norms, but rather conceals the problem of "who has political power" with a statistic aimed to indicate equality. Therefore, those charged with representing different identity groups fail to do so, inevitably leaving portions of populations without adequate political representation. As mentioned previously, research for the usage of political quotas does not draw conclusions about individuals at the micro level. The theoretical gap that was researched focused on political salience derived from the implementation of political quotas for constituents, *not* the political salience and numerical presence of elected representatives.

1.4 Research Objectives

1. *General Objective:* determine whether or not Rwandan women, youth, and disabled populations believe that the implemented political quotas effectively represent their political desires.
2. *Specific Objective:* determine if political representation at the macro level transcends to the micro level and promotes political, social, and economic equality amongst different identity groups.
 - a. Specifically, do women, youth, and disabled populations believe the current political climate disestablishes the socially constructed norms of traditional patriarchal power in Rwanda?
3. *Overall Formation of Critique:* If the results indicate a positive view on Rwanda's implementation of political quotas, ideally the broadest objective is to formulate a critique on United States democracy using Rwanda as an example of an effective political framework for establishing political representation.

Part II: Research Methods

The one pervading evil of democracy is the tyranny of the majority, or rather of that party, not always the majority, that succeeds, by force or fraud, in carrying elections.

– *Lord Acton (British Member of Parliament/Historian Politician, 1834-1902)*

2.1 Research Scope

While a large portion of democracies around the world implement legislative or compulsory political party quotas for gender, Rwandan democracy—specifically its legislative body—remains unique because it creates identity political groups for women, youth, disabled, those of public university, and those of private university populations. For this distinct purpose, the scope of the research remained broad in hopes of identifying a *collective* Rwandan opinion on whether or not political quotas promote the political views and adequately represent the listed social entities. Given the brief amount of time allotted to conduct research, however, it was not possible to gather sufficient quantities of data on every identity group within Rwandan legislative politics. Therefore, the scope of the research focused solely on identity groups mandated to exist within the lower house of legislation, the Chamber of Deputies—i.e. women, youth, and disabled persons.

2.2 Research Design

The primary/unique purpose behind this research project was to analyze how Rwandans identify their political voice, and if in fact, the implemented political quotas reflect micro level individuals in macro level governmental institutions. To study this, qualitative research methods were used in the format of personal interviews. As previously mentioned, the scope of the research focused solely on the political quotas instilled within the lower body of legislature. Therefore, individuals being interviewed were a part of three different political identity groups: women, youth, and disabled persons.

In identifying the problem of whether or not political quotas help reverse socially constructed norms of power, the selection of interviewees was imperative to carrying out the study. Those being interviewed were identified as constituents rather than elected officials for several key reasons. The first was that elected officials are less likely to critique the government under which they experience employment. The second was that elected officials have a degree of political salience that constituents do not have because of direct involvement with political processes. The final reason was that the research was attempting to determine whether or not political quotas encourage political discourse between elected government officials and constituents creating a more egalitarian society on the basis of *successful* political representation.

The idea of producing a *Rwandan* opinion on matters of political representation meant conducting research in a non-exclusive manner. Within the categories of women, youth, and disabled it was the purpose of the researcher to include a variety of personal backgrounds. For example, if all individuals interviewed within the disabled identity group have a physical disability, the responses and collected data would not necessarily reflect all other persons with different disabilities. Because of the natural challenge of human diversity, it was imperative that the research—despite the time constraint of one month—included as many individuals as possible.

The process of conducting interviews underwent a consistent pattern of acquiring information on the interviewee's personal background. This was followed by personal reflections of Rwandan governmental representation in general—representation not defined by a specific demographic. The last series of questions revolved around personal

reflections on political representation for the interviewee's individual identity group. Each identity group—women, youth, and disabled—were asked questions from questionnaires specified for their demographic. Questions about personal background and reflections on Rwandan governmental representation in general were uniform between all three identity groups. Research variation occurred in the third category of questions—questions aimed at obtaining opinions in regard to personal identity group representation (for used questionnaires see Appendix A for women's representation, Appendix B for youth representation, and appendix C for disabled representation). All interviews were recorded by the researcher via typed records of interviewees' responses. No audio recorders were used.

Once interviews were completed each discussion was reviewed and summarized by the researcher. This prepared all collected responses to undergo data analysis. Data was collected and analyzed in three distinct manners. First, by observing trends produced from cross-analysis of interviewees within the same demographic. The data collected at this level of analysis enabled results geared towards the specific research objective of determining if political representation at the macro level transcends to the micro level and promotes political, social, and economic equality for different identity groups. Second, the noted trends of each identity group were then compared amongst the other analyzed demographics. This produced results confirming whether or not Rwandan women, youth, and disabled populations—collectively—believe they have political representation and salience because of the implemented political quotas in Rwandan government. Lastly, the general trends were applied to previously existing research. The purpose was to enter

the theoretical discourse on determining if political quotas are viable methods for developing representation in democratic institutions.

2.3 Ethical Considerations

The two main ethical considerations accounted for during data collection—interviews—were interviewee’s confidentiality desires and personal comfort in regards to the interview process. All interviewees were asked if their real name or a pseudonym was preferred for the proceeding write up of the research. Secondly, all interviewees were given specific instructions that if they felt uncomfortable answering any questions they needed to tell the researcher. Expressed discomfort with a particular interview question resulted in the researcher omitting the specific inquiry. The final ethical consideration was that no interviews underwent voice recordings. Discussions were transcribed by the researcher via typing the responses of interviewees. These three considerations fostered an environment, which was the most conducive for promoting an open dialogue on matters pertaining to personal opinion on the Rwandan government.

2.4 Limitations

The predominant limitation was the time constraint to conduct the research project. All interviews and written responses needed to be completed within a four-week period. To collect sufficient quantities of data for viable conclusions, four weeks was simply not enough time. Other limitations confronted during the research project revolved around language barriers and cultural difference. All of the interviews were

conducted in English. When English was not understood questions and answers were repeated using French. Only one interview needed interpretation and this was from English to sign language. The final limitation was rooted in cultural difference. In discussing ideas such as women's rights, equality, and political salience the problem arose on several occasions where personal cultural understandings of these concepts did not necessarily translate to Rwanda's cultural understandings. An example was the usage of "political salience" in interview discussion. The perspective of an individual from the United States did not equate the definition of "political salience" from the Rwandan perspective. This limitation was addressed on an individual level for each interviewee by redefining key concepts in a social context more relevant to Rwanda.

Part III: Research Results

You measure democracy by the freedom it gives its dissidents, not the freedom it gives its assimilated conformists. – Abbie Hoffman (American Political & Social Activist/ Co-founder of the Youth International Party, 1936-1989)

3.1 Results-basic findings

Women's Representation:

Representative Problems

Despite such a strong numerical presence in Rwandan government, the consistent reported problem was rooted in cultural norms, which constrained women's social and economic entitlements. Women in Rwanda, as well as a majority of states around the world, have a historical identity of maintaining the house and fulfilling the obligatory role of caregiver. This stereotype still has a strong influence for employment opportunities, particularly in the private sector of business. As Interview 07 described:

The biggest challenge for women is culture. We are used to making the man head of everything, especially in rural areas. The women are still expected to look after the kids and the household, but when it comes to economic problems those belong to the man. The private sector doesn't employ women often because she can get pregnant, or has children that she needs to take care of.⁵⁰

Ingabire Eugenie, whose profession revolves around strengthening Rwanda's health institutions and encouraging health advocacy, also presented this same inequality rooted in economic empowerment:

Theoretically, women have the same employment opportunities. But when you go in deep you find imbalance between men and women—particularly in the

⁵⁰ Interview 07, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Nyamirambo, Nyarugenge District, Kigali Rwanda, November 10, 2015.

private sector. The thought is tomorrow she will be pregnant, so women lose in the private sector.⁵¹

Although female representation has a strong influence in Rwandan government, the cultural norms of patriarchy are found within the economic sphere of life, making income and employment disparities between the two genders still a prevalent issue in Rwanda.

The other challenge that was noted with economically empowering women was the culturally imposed obligatory gender roles found within the private sphere of life. As noted by all three interviewees, female representatives, and female workers in general have to maintain the household and tend to children. Florence Katungane, who is currently a student, observed “some women have many problems at home, particularly mothers, so sometimes they have to stop working in order to take care of their children and house.”⁵² While Rwanda has no legal restrictions for female economic participation and inheritance, the cultural practice of gender roles in the private sphere of life still proves to be a hindrance for female economic empowerment through career advancement.

Cultural problems are not simply traditional patriarchal structures confining women to the house. In Rwanda, an observed reoccurring problem (as conveyed by the interviewees) for women’s equality was a personal unwillingness to obtain social, economic, and political independence. There was no sense of self-confidence and

⁵¹ Ingabire Eugenie, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Gisozi, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 16, 2015.

⁵² Florence Katungane, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Nyamirambo, Nyarugenge District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 11, 2015.

understanding of female capacity from both genders' perspectives before the genocide. Ingabire described how “after the genocide it was a real shock for women, they had to manage the tasks of women and the tasks of men, and on top of that, most women were suffering from trauma because so many had been raped and abused from the genocide.”⁵³ She continued, “a big challenge is self-confidence, women still do not understand that they have this right to contribute to society, and this can hinder development.”⁵⁴ Instilling a sense of self-worth goes beyond placing women within the political framework; it is a continual process of undoing years of societal practices—in other words, political representation appears to be a surface solution to a much deeper problem.

The second main problem emerging from discussions on female political quota usage was the realization that not all women have the same educational background, and therefore, understandings of political representation and entitlement. While this issue was disputed amongst the interviewees it cannot go unnoted that understanding and using political representation has the potential to vary based on regional and academic differences. Ingabire believed that the majority of women know they have representation.⁵⁵ Florence concurred with this opinion but added, “knowing you have representation is rooted in education. It is all about the education.”⁵⁶ This implied that women lacking education might not fully understand the depths and applications of

⁵³ Ingabire Eugenie, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Gisozi, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 16, 2015.

⁵⁴ Ingabire Eugenie, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Gisozi, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 16, 2015.

⁵⁵ Ingabire Eugenie, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Gisozi, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 16, 2015.

⁵⁶ Florence Katungane, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Nyamirambo, Nyarugenge District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 11, 2015.

female representation in Rwandan government. Interview 07 offered a contrasting view derived from her work with women in Rwanda's rural communities:

The majority of women living in rural areas, they don't even know how to read.

They wake up in the morning and go to cultivate and then come back to their household duties. So I don't think they know they have representation.

Sometimes they think those things are for educated women only.⁵⁷

This particular topic is in need of greater research inquiry; however, one must wonder about the success of political quotas at elevating social, economic, and political status if a portion of the population is unaware of existing political representation.

All three of the interviewees presented a strong belief that women are equal to men, however, they all conceded that in Rwanda gender equality is theoretical. Florence stated:

Here in Rwanda, they [women] are not really equal [to men]... somehow we are trying to be equal. We are favoring women because they want to promote trust in women and give us more rights. Most people think that decisions men make have more value. In Rwanda they are trying to undo this, even though we are getting favors [legislative aid] it doesn't mean we are equal.⁵⁸

Ingabire reaffirmed this belief and concluded:

In terms of legal rights women are [equal to men]. But in practice, there is some resistance, from both sides, not just men. Sometimes you find women saying I

⁵⁷ Interview 07, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Nyamirambo, Nyarugenge District, Kigali Rwanda, November 10, 2015.

⁵⁸ Florence Katungane, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Nyamirambo, Nyarugenge District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 11, 2015.

can't leave my husband to do something. There is still a misrepresentation. We need to continue education and motivation.⁵⁹

While political quotas ensure numerical representation, these results indicate that political quotas do not enforce equity.

Representative Success

The most notable positive outcome derived from Rwanda's usage of a gendered political quota was an immense feeling of empowerment derived from governmental acknowledgment. Amongst all three interviewees, comments revolving around self-confidence, pride, and positive influence were used to describe their personal identity in relation to female political representation. For Florence, a young woman at the age of 19;

Having female politicians really is an influence. There is this notion of trusting oneself. If you know someone like you has gone so far, you have to trust in yourself, why can't I do that? You begin to think. It gives us hope and strength just to see and say you can do something like that. It's like a pride. When some people say women have no rights, and that we are not capable of doing anything, we have representatives that are present and show people the opposite... makes me feel empowered.⁶⁰

Ingabire, a woman much older than Florence described a very similar experience of personal empowerment. "Seeing female representation translates to me having political

⁵⁹ Ingabire Eugenie, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Gisozi, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 16, 2015.

⁶⁰ Florence Katungane, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Nyamirambo, Nyarugenge District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 11, 2015.

power because when we see them [female elected officials] we say finally, me too, I think I can help or take on another similar role. So this gives you a kind of strength or a kind of power that you can go and move beyond.”⁶¹ For Interview 07, “having female representation means I have political power. When we are in our country, and when we have leaders that encourage women to be elected for high levels of post, you are motivated to work.”⁶² While political representation confronted challenges in achieving gender equality, the social consequence was one of empowerment.

The second positive result derived from the mandated representation was a shift in political discourse to represent the needs of women. For the three interviewees this social shift within the political sphere was a direct result of having female representation.

Interview 07 stated:

Women influence issues revolving around gender because I think those in parliament, they are first of all women. So the issues of other women may also be those of women in parliament. When you put yourself in the place of another you can speak in her place better than a man. Women elected officials understand the problems of other women more so than men.⁶³

Ingabire added that having female politicians influences the life of women because “you are represented, you know where to go for advocacy.”⁶⁴ In terms of political initiatives,

⁶¹ Ingabire Eugenie, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Gisozi, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 16, 2015.

⁶² Interview 07, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Nyamirambo, Nyarugenge District, Kigali Rwanda, November 10, 2015.

⁶³ Interview 07, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Nyamirambo, Nyarugenge District, Kigali Rwanda, November 10, 2015.

⁶⁴ Ingabire Eugenie, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Gisozi, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 16, 2015.

these women's testaments to successful political promotion are derived from the immense degree of gendered focused development. In Rwandan educational systems, lectures are organized about gender equality. There is an official day for women. Florence stated her personal observations in societal shifts for relationships where women are able express anger and confront their partners.⁶⁵ Starting in 2003, educational initiatives specific for women were passed. New land policies emerged, which enabled women to inherit land. Gender based violence policies were implemented making it legally unacceptable to tolerate abusing women. Finally, there was a mass movement in Rwanda's health institutions to promote healthy family planning initiatives. All of which, were made possible because of female representation.⁶⁶ The immense social, economic, and political development Rwandan women are experiencing translates to a high degree of appreciation towards the government. As concluded best by Florence:

We were totally destroyed after the genocide. I think our country has done amazing work. I can say I am in a country. I have security. Our government has done a really good job. Sometimes we say if we had the resources like Congo... Rwanda would be truly phenomenal under our current government.⁶⁷

Youth Representation:

Representative Problems

⁶⁵ Florence Katungane, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Nyamirambo, Nyarugenge District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 11, 2015.

⁶⁶ Ingabire Eugenie, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Gisozi, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 16, 2015.

⁶⁷ Florence Katungane, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Nyamirambo, Nyarugenge District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 11, 2015.

While the practiced political quota guarantees youth representation a common reported problem was that this representation does not effectively meet the needs of the population. For Eric Mahoro, the program director of the nongovernmental organization Never Again Rwanda (NAR), “the challenge comes to the practice and implementation of policies. I think there is a trend that youth who represent others at those levels [national] do not feel they are a representative of the youth population. They become like any other politician, and their voice becomes not useful for that specific representation.”⁶⁸ The result is representation not aligned with the specific voice of the intended constituency demarcated by Rwanda’s youth political quota. Ramson Kigozi, a young student, proposed that effective representation was not possible because of physical infrastructural and educational problems.

Youth elected officials are there to aid and help us, but it is not enough.

Representation is not efficient, particularly for those who are not educated...

somehow I feel they are ignored. This is any issue, for those with less education there is intimidation. If I fear to speak with you, I don’t express how I truly feel.

Our representatives are there for helping us, but somehow they don’t fulfill their responsibilities because of a lack of means, a lot times these are infrastructure problems. They cannot reach the village people, so they never address the problems for the entire community.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Eric Mahoro, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 10, 2015.

⁶⁹ Ramson Kigozi, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 6, 2015.

The direct result of non-effective representation was the reported issue that the political discourse is not reflecting the needs of the youth. “I think there is a large portion of those who are complaining that their representatives are not doing their job, but they don’t know what to do about it,”⁷⁰ stated Eric. It best describes the initial representative problem for Rwanda’s youth population. Yes, there is representation. The youth population acknowledges representation, but the elected youth officials are not changing the current political discourse to benefit the youth population. For Emmanuel Mugema, another young student, this issue of representatives not encouraging a political discourse for the youth population is rooted in the fact that there are only two elected members of parliament. “Those representatives do not reach every head in the country, they only actually represent a very small number.”⁷¹ Eric countered this belief with a personal example from his work with NAR:

I have not heard the voice of the youth, and we [Never Again Rwanda, NGO] visit standing committees every month. They need to do more to understand the youth problems and become more actively involved. So I don’t think it is a number problem, it is an issue of mainstreaming, do those who are there really represent the young people. It is not a number. It is the quality of the representation.⁷²

⁷⁰ Eric Mahoro, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 10, 2015.

⁷¹ Emmanuel Mugema, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 6, 2015.

⁷² Eric Mahoro, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 10, 2015.

Pacifique Hallellua, the community manager at kLab (a tech innovations space, described as the Silicon Valley of Rwanda), offered a neutral perspective between the two, and stated:

The government is concerned about the youth because it notices potential. So far, I only see change in the government body. There is at least someone young so that can bring change, [and that] of course it's [two representatives] too little. It is a fair start, but two seats in number are not enough.⁷³

Pacifique acknowledged that lack of change in actual political discourse for youth issues, but adhered to the belief that by increasing the number of youth delegates the political discourse will inevitably shift to improve representation.

Another disputed area amongst the interviewees was defining the extent to which the Rwandan youth population knows it has representation. For Eric and Emmanuel there was a great deal of confidence in presenting the argument that all Rwandan youth know they have representation. Eric affirmed, "We know we are represented. We are involved in elections and choose those who represent us."⁷⁴ Emmanuel added:

Sincerely speaking 100 percent of the youth know they have representation. We don't need to say it. It is felt. In Rwanda, if you are youth you know where to report in cases of misconduct. We have rights. People know they are equal.⁷⁵

These two interviewees championed a positively informed and unified youth population

⁷³ Pacifique Hallellua, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 4, 2015.

⁷⁴ Eric Mahoro, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 10, 2015.

⁷⁵ Emmanuel Mugema, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 6, 2015.

in regards to knowledge about personal representation. Ramson and Pacifique were much more hesitant about the breadth of which the Rwandan youth know they have political representation. As described by Pacifique, “the majority of youths do not know their rights and do not have a method to obtain information.”⁷⁶ Ramson elaborated on this belief by attributing it to educational and the physical infrastructural problems of Rwanda, which were previously stated.⁷⁷

Representative Success:

For the Rwandan youth interviewees having political representation promoted very positive outlooks for Rwandan government as whole because they believed the Rwandan government acknowledges them as a unique citizenry. As best described by Emmanuel, “having them [youth representatives] is saying you have recognition. Knowing that they [youth representatives] deserve to be there is recognition. It has totally changed our understanding of representation, and I strongly believe that they have done a lot.”⁷⁸ It is this recognition of citizenship that fosters a great pride in the Rwandan government, which in turn produces a sense of responsibility amongst the youth population to work for the development of *their* Rwanda. A reoccurring message amongst the interviewees followed the logic of reciprocity. My government has been ‘good’ to me so in return I will do ‘good’ by my government—particularly when speaking about post genocidal development. Pacifique explained, “My duty as a youth is

⁷⁶ Pacifique Hallellua, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 4, 2015.

⁷⁷ Ramson Kigozi, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 6, 2015.

⁷⁸ Emmanuel Mugema, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 6, 2015.

a challenge. We have to move beyond the mistakes of our elders, it is a blessing in disguise because problems bring opportunities,” and “having so many young people in the government inspires governmental action.”⁷⁹ “I am grateful to be a Rwandan. Governance facilitates me to be proud. If the government wasn’t there I couldn’t afford studying. I am so grateful to be Rwandan,”⁸⁰ said Ramson. Emanuel stated, “The government programs are very good to us. It [government aid] becomes something worth working for.”⁸¹ Amongst all interviewees great pride was taken in the need to develop Rwanda because coinciding with political recognition is the accepted responsibility of promoting Rwandan development.

The other emerging trend was that all interviewees agreed that the mandated political representation generated a sense of political power. As Eric stated:

I think it is the case [that political quotas help promote personal political power]. Political power means you have a say through a vote or discussion. But it is up to us to make it useful. We [youth] are the majority. If we understand what casting a vote means, we have huge potential.⁸²

For Emmanuel, the youth political quota is an indicator of political power. “It shows that the government thinks about me and gives me room. Those representatives of mine, when I see them on TV, I can say ‘oh’ they are representing me. Seeing a representative

⁷⁹ Pacifique Hallellua, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 4, 2015.

⁸⁰ Ramson Kigozi, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 6, 2015.

⁸¹ Emmanuel Mugema, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 6, 2015.

⁸² Eric Mahoro, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 10, 2015.

is better than not having one.”⁸³ Ramson simply stated, “Youth representation helps achieve equality. If I respect the institutions I have political power,”⁸⁴ and Pacifique generalized that youth political quotas “gives much power to young people.”⁸⁵ The overwhelming consensus was an identity group political quota promoted personal identification with political salience within that specific represented demographic. Youth political representation may still be in need of development—particularly for achieving effective representation—however, it must be considered that personal political power is essential to achieving institutional governmental change within democratic regimes.

Disabled Representation:

Representative Problems

The central challenge in producing effective political representation for the disabled community is the apparent assumption within Rwandan government that there exists a unified disabled voice. Evidence from interviews with three prominent members of the disabled community indicated otherwise. Deaf people are a linguistic minority and confront challenges that revolve around language—such as accessing information.⁸⁶ Persons with physical disabilities experience daily commuting problems revolved around basic physical access to different buildings, i.e. the need for more wheelchair ramps.⁸⁷

⁸³ Emmanuel Mugema, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 6, 2015.

⁸⁴ Ramson Kigozi, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 6, 2015.

⁸⁵ Pacifique Hallellua, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 4, 2015.

⁸⁶ Samuel Munana, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Interpreted by Theophile Binama. Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali Rwanda, November 16, 2015.

⁸⁷ Celestin Nzeyimana, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 3, 2015.

Members of the blind community face the daily struggle of claiming ownership to property.⁸⁸ While as a whole, the disabled community faces collective issues in healthcare, the educational system, and acquiring employment; the subcategorical problems are specific towards one's unique disability. One representative for this group cannot successfully represent and speak on behalf of a diverse community of disabled persons.

All three interviewees concluded that one representative is not enough. As indicated by Interview 03, a member of the Rwandan Union of the Blind (RUB), "One is few for representation. One will most likely be a male. And one, will always be someone with a physical disability."⁸⁹ Samuel Munana—the Executive Director for the Rwandan National Union of the Deaf (RNUD)—elaborated on this issue by describing governmental representation from a deaf person's perspective:

Most representatives have a physical disability. They can talk. They can hear. They have access to information. Deaf people don't have easy access to information—we have to have interpreters—making leaders think deaf people cannot communicate.⁹⁰

For persons with different disabilities other than physical, the single elected member of parliament has yet to fully reflect their needs because, thus far, elected officials have only been those with *physical* disabilities.

⁸⁸ Interview 03, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Gisozi, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 5, 2015.

⁸⁹ Interview 03, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Gisozi, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 5, 2015.

⁹⁰ Samuel Munana, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Interpreted by Theophile Binama. Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali Rwanda, November 16, 2015.

The other main problem with a single elected representative is access. In Rwanda, elected parliament officials represent the entirety of the Rwandan population. There are not elected officials based on region.⁹¹ For Munana, while he understood the negative implications of regional division in Rwanda's recent history, he still questioned "how can one person solve all of the problems for people with disabilities when each of the 30 districts have a disabled population?"⁹² Interview 03 paralleled Munana by stating, "It is the challenge to meet with this elected deputy to make change happen. We sometimes manage to get him to show for an event where we present our issues, but this is rare."⁹³ Celestin Nzeyimana, the President of the Paralympic Committee of Rwanda, said, "At this time, we need more representatives, it is not easy to hear one voice... other things take up time and you are in other commissions..."⁹⁴ Between Celestin, Interview 03, and Munana, there was a general consensus that regional representation would provide greater access and more greatly benefit the disabled community. The juxtaposition between knowing the historical implications of regionalism and the need for more effective representation is a theoretical challenge for Rwandan government and was vocalized by all disabled interviewees.

The other strongly stated problem that today's instilled political quotas cannot easily fix are socio-economic gaps derived from historical legal actions against the

⁹¹ The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda. art. 1 & Preamble.

⁹² Samuel Munana, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Interpreted by Theophile Binama. Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali Rwanda, November 16, 2015.

⁹³ Interview 03, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Gisozi, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 5, 2015.

⁹⁴ Celestin Nzeyimana, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 3, 2015.

disabled population. Celestin, Interview 03, and Munana, all mentioned the negative repercussions of Rwanda, historically, not enabling disabled persons to pursue educational opportunities. The result was a group of individuals with no qualifications to obtain employment. No employment translates to no source for personal economic empowerment. The culmination of no economic empowerment with a negative social stigma against disabled persons created the current situation of poverty for persons within the disabled community. For Celestin, he observed that the “Lacking educational qualifications produces individuals with limited economic resources. I work sports, how can you do a sport if you don’t have food or water? A very large portion of homeless people have disabilities.”⁹⁵ Interview 03 explained that, “Familial and communal acceptance of blind people was rare, so most blind people became beggars—genocide did not help the situation with relatives being dead in jail, or having fled to another country.”⁹⁶ Munana continued, “Employment is a huge challenge—particularly access... Education is also a big problem for deaf individuals... Classrooms do not have interpreters making learning very challenging.”⁹⁷ Although today, the government of Rwanda complies with the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, and promotes the education as well as entitlement to employment opportunity, the disabled population is a product of past legalities. Meaning, it is comprised of many individuals who are uneducated, and as

⁹⁵ Celestin Nzeyimana, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 3, 2015.

⁹⁶ Interview 03, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Gisozi, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 5, 2015.

⁹⁷ Samuel Munana, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Interpreted by Theophile Binama. Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali Rwanda, November 16, 2015.

Celestin concluded, “even with education it is still challenging to get employment opportunities.”⁹⁸ Basic identity group representation for the disabled population does not transcend to immediate economic opportunity, but it does enable, as described by Interview 03, “tiny opening to get thoughts to parliament.”⁹⁹

There was controversy as to the degree of knowledge for representation of the disabled community. Celestin and Munana concluded that in more remote areas of Rwanda, where access to education and national government agencies are more challenging to secure, disabled persons would be less likely to know, let alone use a political representative of the disabled community. “Knowing about having representation depends on your category of person. Some don’t know they are represented, some know. If you are in a remote area, disabled persons don’t know about representation. These are problems,”¹⁰⁰ explained Celestin. Interview 03, countered this viewpoint by championing the fact that RUB has reached all but four of the districts in Rwanda, and believed that the Rwandan blind population knows it is entitled to representation. “They [the blind community] know their rights. They get education. They can own and manage property. They have every right to generate income on their private property. There are blind people doing well in Rwanda.”¹⁰¹ To truly understand

⁹⁸ Celestin Nzeyimana, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 3, 2015.

⁹⁹ Interview 03, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Gisozi, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 5, 2015.

¹⁰⁰ Celestin Nzeyimana, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 3, 2015.

¹⁰¹ Interview 03, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Gisozi, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 5, 2015.

the extent of the disabled community's understanding of political representation, further research must be conducted.

Representative Success

The most uniformed positive response towards having mandated disabled representation was the feeling that the Rwandan government recognized them as citizens with political needs and rights. Munana had a positive outlook on Rwandan government for including disabled persons, "It's a start. There is an evolving understanding of disabled persons."¹⁰² Celestin claimed that "having representation shows the government recognizes disability, and has the general goodwill of serving disability."¹⁰³ The notion of defusing the misunderstandings presented to the disabled community was a point of interest because of the strong—fairly recent—historical tendency for the Rwandan "abled" community to not promote human rights for the disabled population. Basic governmental representation, thus, transforms to protecting and elevating the social status of disabled persons because it diminishes previously accepted social norms in Rwanda.

The general understanding that the Rwandan government acknowledges the disabled community translated to another consistent result amongst the interviewees. Political representation for disabled persons shifted the Rwandan political discourse towards inclusionary practices via acknowledging specific concerns of the disabled community. Munana explained, "Disabled elected officials influence the life of disabled

¹⁰² Samuel Munana, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Interpreted by Theophile Binama. Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali Rwanda, November 16, 2015.

¹⁰³ Celestin Nzeyimana, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 3, 2015.

constituents because they make it easier to understand what people need.”¹⁰⁴ For Interview 03, “the disabled elected official encouraged governmental action on behalf of the disabled community. What he says in parliament comes from us.”¹⁰⁵ The immediate evidence is the emergence of national protocols with the direct objective of aiding the lives of disabled individuals. Deaf people now have an interpreter when watching the national news.¹⁰⁶ There are two schools that teach Braille and the National Rwandan Library offers books in Braille.¹⁰⁷ In 2010, there was the emergence of civil society specific for those with disabilities.¹⁰⁸

The actions taken by the Rwandan government translated to a general optimistic view of the Rwandan government. “Rwanda is quick to listen to its citizens. Having a mandated disabled presence is acknowledgement and I view our government in a very positive way,”¹⁰⁹ said Interview 03. Amongst all interviewees this optimism was aligned with the general consensus that the government works for the people. Interview 03 summarized:

It is a fair statement to say that if citizens want something then it can be done, because of the feeling of togetherness the government can get citizens to do what

¹⁰⁴ Samuel Munana, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Interpreted by Theophile Binama. Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali Rwanda, November 16, 2015.

¹⁰⁵ Interview 03, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Gisozi, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 5, 2015.

¹⁰⁶ Samuel Munana, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Interpreted by Theophile Binama. Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali Rwanda, November 16, 2015.

¹⁰⁷ Interview 03, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Gisozi, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 5, 2015.

¹⁰⁸ Celestin Nzeyimana, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 3, 2015.

¹⁰⁹ Interview 03, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Gisozi, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 5, 2015.

it needs much easier. The government officials respond to the citizens, and that encourages citizens to respond to the government.¹¹⁰

This reciprocity in turn produced an overwhelming conclusion that the interviewees believe they have political obligations to the state, and therefore, political salience. As best explained by Celestin, “I have political power. People with disabilities have political power. We are all Rwandans.”¹¹¹

3.2 Discussion

Within the micro level of everyday life, achieving social, economic, and political equality for women, youth, and disabled demographics proves to remain a challenge despite enhanced political participation in Rwanda. Political representation does not secure individual salience within a given society. Women are confined by historical gender roles in the economic sector, and for those working, they are still expected to perform projected gender norms within the private sphere of life. This means maintaining the house, fulfilling the role of caregiver, and managing their personal career. For the youth population, there appears to exist a representative void, where effective representation of the population is nonexistent despite large numbers of “youth” representatives. The disabled population is the least effectively represented in Rwanda’s political arena because there is not an existing unified disabled population. The array of needs varies for each specific disabled community. For political representation there

¹¹⁰ Interview 03, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Gisozi, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 5, 2015.

¹¹¹ Celestin Nzeyimana, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Remera, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 3, 2015.

emerges a hierarchy for which those with physical disabilities tend to represent the entire community, leaving members with alternative disabled identities—such as those who are deaf and blind—excluded from parliamentary participation.

In Rwanda, political representation at the macro level does not effectively transcend to the micro level, which would ultimately establish equality amongst different identity groups. Political representation is, however, and this is the *fundamental benefit* of political quotas; a means through which Rwandan citizenry can enter the political discourse and produce shifts within the legal framework to better advance their social, economic, and political rights. The identity groups of women, youth, and disabled persons have all undergone immense social development, and this can be attributed to improved political representation, which inevitably produced a political consciousness for these demographics. Political quotas are not easy-fix solutions to structural inequality. As proven to be evident in Rwanda, there are political devices, and if implemented properly, political quotas produce an environment in which change can emerge within traditional social, economic, and political hegemonies.

Lastly, the overwhelming conclusion amongst all three demographics was a shared appreciation for the Rwandan government because they felt that the inclusionary practices of representation recognized their rights and capacities as citizens. There was a unified knowledge amongst the interviewees that they had political representation, and that they *all* believed political representation translated to a personal political voice. While problems regarding effective representation in the youth demographic were revealed, there still existed a vocalized trust in the Rwandan government that if

representation were needed, an individual's political desires would be addressed. The immense degree of positivity and motivation to work for one's government found in the Rwandan populace, makes it possible to conclude that identity groups' political desires are generally represented. The implementation of political quotas in Rwanda effectively increases the diversity of representation for its citizenry. In doing so, Rwandan citizens experience political empowerment. Thus, the political quotas—although do not impact micro level structural inequality as stated previously—successfully provide outlets for citizens to voice their political needs.

The consistent discrepancy amongst all interviewees within the different identity groups was whether or not *all* members of their demographic know they have political representation specific to a personal identity. The debate was the same; some believed everyone knew their rights to political representation, and others indicated education and regional residency to be key factors in fostering knowledge on political representation. It is a start towards social development to conclude that the Rwandan political quotas help effectively represent the political desires of different demographics. If there is not a national knowledge on one's political representative rights, however, then the political quotas encourage a technocratic hierarchy, whereby those with an education about personal political rights have a greater access to political salience. Meaning, only those privy to information regarding political representation will be able influence Rwanda's political discourse. This was a topic that cannot be fully answered given the limitation of time to conduct the research project.

A quote from Interview 03 also emphasized an area that needs further research, “One is few for representation. One will most likely be a male...”¹¹² Although Interview 03 discussed limited representation for the disabled community; it raises a noteworthy question in regards to intersectionality and political representation. What is like to be a disabled woman, a disabled youth, a female youth in Rwanda, etc.? Thus, Interview 03’s statement stressed another theoretical gap in studying political quotas specific to Rwanda.

3.3 Conclusion

While all three identity groups had specific representative problems—women and cultural norms, youth and effective youth leadership, a non-unified disabled political identity group—in regards to having political representation, the consistent underlying conclusion was immense support for the Rwandan government because it acknowledged these demographics’ existence as human beings. Political salience is fundamental for protecting one’s identity as a citizen, and ensuring political representation is an initial step towards promoting individual political power. Yes, political quotas produce a numerical statistic that implies a degree of equality, which is not entirely reflective of Rwanda’s current society (i.e. women and economic opportunities within the private sector of business, etc.); however, political quotas ultimately recognize its citizens.

If the purpose of a democratic regime is a government of the people, by the people, and for the people, then shouldn’t a government physically acknowledge its people? Rwandan development is a direct product of reciprocity, whereby the state

¹¹² Interview 03, Interview by Sarah Duncan, Personal, Gisozi, Gasabo District, Kigali, Rwanda, November 5, 2015.

recognizes its citizens, and therefore, its citizenry recognizes the state. For development to continue on a global scale, governmental institutions must self-examine the internal plight of its citizenry. In conclusion, consider the United States as an example of an old democratic regime. It prides itself as the global champion of democracy and continuously validates a constitution constructed in the late 1700s. In the United States, can the oppressed demographics, as defined by Iris Young, “women, blacks, Native Americans, old people, poor people, disabled people, gay men, and lesbians, Spanish-speaking Americans, young people, and nonprofessional workers,”¹¹³ identify the United States government’s recognition of their individual identity and capacity as a human being? Rwandan political representation is still in need of development, but its contestatory democracy in association with the adoption of political quotas produces an environment where social, economic, and political needs of different demographics *can* emerge in the government’s political discourse. Therefore, while political quotas do not produce immediate change in the social sphere of life, they successfully—in Rwanda—create a malleable political sphere on the premise of a demographics recognition, and thus, political voice.

¹¹³ Iris Marion Young, “Polity and Group Difference: A Critique of the Ideal of Universal Citizenship,” in *Ethics* 99, no. 2 (1989), 265.

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Appendix A: Sample Interview Questions for Women Informants

QUESTIONS REVOLVING AROUND PERSONAL BACKGROUND:

1. Is it okay if I use your real name, or would you prefer a code name?
2. Tell me about your work for (fill in appropriate organization)
3. Can you give me some information about your academic background?

QUESTIONS ABOUT REPRESENTATION IN RWANDAN GOVERNMENT:

1. What do you think is the role of the parliament, especially the chamber of deputies in the Rwandan political life?
2. What do you think about the election process in Rwanda (especially for parliamentarians)?
3. Do you regularly participate into elections of parliamentarians? (Explain more the reasons behind your answer)
4. To which extent do you think the parliament represents the Rwandan population?
5. What do you believe is the role of elected officials?
 - a. Do you think officials in Rwanda are able to achieve what they are elected for?
6. What do you think being a Rwandan citizen means?

WOMEN AND POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

1. Do you believe women are equal to men, why or why not?
2. What do you think the daily challenges for women are in Rwanda?
3. Do you think men and women in Rwanda have the same job opportunities?
4. What is your opinion on the shortening of maternity leave? (Remember this was highly pushed by female politicians)... this isn't exactly pro-women, yet it was pushed by women...

5. Do you think female politicians influence the lives of females who are not politicians?
6. If you had the chance to choose an elected official to address a problem you were experiencing living in Rwanda, what gender do you turn to? Explain choice.
 - a. Do you think women elected officials are representatives for you because you are a woman?
 - b. *In other words—whom do you turn to for help when involving the government?*
7. Women make up a little over half of the entire Rwandan population—a majority. What do you think of having 30% of legislative seats (a minority in the legislative body)—too few, too much, just right?
8. What are the positives and negatives of having female elected officials?
9. Do you think the majority of women know they have representation?
10. Does having female representation translate to you having political power?
11. What is equality to you? Are female politicians a contributor to your personal definition of gender equality?
12. Has having a mandated female presence in the Chamber of Deputies changed your opinion on Rwandan government in any way?
13. Have you noticed a difference that having female political representation influences issues revolving around age in Rwanda—this could be any issue, education, health, etc.—Positives and Negatives.

Appendix B: Sample Interview Questions for Youth Informants

QUESTIONS REVOLVING AROUND PERSONAL BACKGROUND:

4. Is it okay if I use your real name, or would you prefer a code name?
5. Tell me about your work for (fill in appropriate organization)
6. Can you give me some information about your academic background?

QUESTIONS ABOUT REPRESENTATION IN RWANDAN GOVERNMENT:

1. What do you think is the role of the parliament, especially the chamber of deputies in the Rwandan political life?
2. What do you think about the election process in Rwanda (especially for parliamentarians)?
3. Do you regularly participate into elections of parliamentarians? (Explain more the reasons behind your answer)
4. To which extent do you think the parliament represents the Rwandan population?
7. What do you believe is the role of elected officials?
 - a. Do you think officials in Rwanda are able to achieve what they are elected for?
8. What do you think being a Rwandan citizen means?

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUTH REPRESENTATION

1. Do you believe youth are equal to non-youth populations, why or why not? (Make sure to define non-youth populations for interviewee)
 - a. *What is your opinion of older generations in Rwanda?*
2. What is your opinion on youth and developing Rwanda? Working in government? Promoting reconciliation after conflict? Promoting economic development? Promoting a Rwandan nationality?
3. Do you think young politicians influence the life of young individuals who are not politicians?
4. If you had the chance to choose an elected official to address a problem you were experiencing living in Rwanda, do you ask your youth representative or another elected official? Explain choice.
 - a. *In other words—who do you turn to for help when involving the government?*

5. Has having a mandated youth presence in the Chamber of Deputies changed your opinion on Rwandan government in any way?
6. Rwandan youth are a majority within the Rwandan population. That being said, the government only mandates two parliament seats to be reserved for youth
7. What are the positives and negatives of having youth elected officials?
8. Have you noticed a difference that having youth political representation influences issues revolving around age in Rwanda—this could be any issue, education, health, etc.—Positives and Negatives.
9. What is equality to you? Are youth politicians a contributor to your personal definition of equality?
10. Does having a youth representative translate to you having political power?
 - a. *Do you think you have political power, a political voice in Rwandan government?*
11. Does the Majority of Rwandan Youth know they have representation?

Appendix C: Sample Interview Questions for Disabled Community

QUESTIONS REVOLVING AROUND PERSONAL BACKGROUND:

7. Is it okay if I use your real name, or would you prefer a code name?
8. Tell me about your work for (fill in appropriate organization)
9. Can you give me some information about your academic background?

QUESTIONS ABOUT REPRESENTATION IN RWANDAN GOVERNMENT:

1. What do you think is the role of the parliament, especially the chamber of deputies in the Rwandan political life?
2. What do you think about the election process in Rwanda (especially for parliamentarians)?
3. Do you regularly participate into elections of parliamentarians? (Explain more the reasons behind your answer)
4. To which extent do you think the parliament represents the Rwandan population?
9. What do you believe is the role of elected officials?
 - a. Do you think officials in Rwanda are able to achieve what they are elected for?
10. What do you think being a Rwandan citizen means?

QUESTIONS ABOUT REPRESENTATION FOR THE DISABLED COMMUNITY:

1. Tell me about the daily problems the disabled community faces—specifically for those with (identify specific disability of interviewee) disabilities.
2. Is there a unified disabled community in Rwanda—or is there a difference based on disability?
 - a. If there is not a unified disabled community, what does that mean for political representation—particularly the governmental mandate requiring 1 representative for the disabled community in the Chamber of Deputies?
3. Do you believe disabled individuals are equal to abled individuals in Rwanda, why or why not?
4. How are employment opportunities in Rwanda—specifically for those with (identify specific disability of interviewee)?
5. What is your opinion on how Rwandan government addresses problems of the disabled community?

- a. What about problems specific to those with (identify specific disability of interviewee)?
6. Do you think having disabled elected official influences the life of other disabled Rwandan citizens?
7. If you had the chance to choose an elected official to address a problem you were experiencing living in Rwanda, do you ask the mandated disabled elected official? Why or why not?
 - a. In other words whom do you turn to for help in government? Who do you see as a political ally for the disabled community within parliament?
8. Has having a mandated disabled persons presence in the Chamber of Deputies changed your opinion on Rwandan government in any way?
9. Do you feel disabled elected officials encourage governmental action that benefits the disabled community as a whole?
 - a. What about issues specific to those with (identify specific disability of interviewee)?
10. What is your opinion as a constituent—do elected officials influence Rwandan government for the people they represent?
12. The disabled community is a minority; the mandated single seat in the Chamber of Deputies is also a minority. What are your feelings concerning the mandated number of political seats belonging to disabled persons—is it too much, too few, just right?
11. To what extent do you believe the disabled community is informed on having political representation?
12. What is equality to you?
 - a. Are disabled politicians a contributor to your personal definition of equality?