

# ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PARLIAMENT IN GHANA'S DEMOCRACY



Disclaimer

---

“Even though the European Union funded the Research,  
the findings do not represent the views of the EU”.



## FOREWORD

Several studies have shown that the strength of a national legislature is the institutional key to democratization. After more than 20 years of continued constitutional democracy in Ghana, it is imperative that the effectiveness of such a vital institution underpinning our democracy is assessed from the standpoint of the major stakeholders of democracy: the people. Such an assessment is undertaken with the view to deepening the democratic process and ensuring social and political stability in the country.

This report presents the public's assessment of the Fourth Republican Parliament of Ghana. It is organised into six chapters and specifically:

- Assesses the public's knowledge of the role of Parliament and Parliamentarians;
- Seeks the views of the general public on how well Parliament/Parliamentarians have performed;
- Looks at the criteria the public uses to measure the effectiveness of Parliament's work;
- Presents the public's view on some hindrances to Parliament's work;
- Examines how Parliamentarians can be made more effective; and
- Presents recommendations from the public on possible changes to the current parliamentary system of Ghana to improve its effectiveness.

In sum, the study revealed that;

The public is generally satisfied with the performance of the Fourth Republican Parliament and reposes a lot of confidence in Parliament as a pillar of Ghana's democracy.

Respondents were quite well informed on the roles Parliamentarians play in our democracy. Rather disturbing was the fact that respondents prefer to use the developmental agenda as the

basis for assessing the effectiveness of a Parliamentarian, as against the more traditional roles of the MP.

The public expressed concern about issues such as executive control, administrative corruption, partisanship and gender imbalance which in their view, continue to impede the work of Parliamentarians. Respondents called for the increased participation of women in our Parliament and a reduction in the number of ministerial appointments made from Parliament so as to enhance its effectiveness.

The Commission expresses its gratitude to the European Union who funded this study. We also acknowledge the support of our staff and the respondents and all who contributed to this report.

**CHARLOTTE OSEI (MRS.)**

**CHAIRMAN, NCCE.**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
FOREWORD.....	i
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	v
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	v
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
INTRODUCTION .....	1
CHAPTER TWO.....	8
PUBLIC'S ASSESSMENT OF THE WORK OF PARLIAMENTARIANS .....	8
CHAPTER THREE .....	22
PUBLIC MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS OF PARLIAMENT AND PARLIAMENTARIANS .....	22
CHAPTER FOUR.....	28
HINDRANCES TO PARLIAMENT'S WORK AND EFFECTIVENESS.....	28
CHAPTER FIVE .....	41
SUGGESTIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS TOWARDS MAKING PARLIAMENT MORE EFFECTIVE ...	41
CHAPTER SIX .....	47
CONCLUSION .....	47
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	49
APPENDIX .....	50
A    METHODOLOGY .....	50
B- SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENTS.....	52
C:    SELECTED DISTRICTS.....	54

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This study was conducted by the National Commission for Civic Education in September, 2014 to ascertain the public's assessment of the effectiveness of the Fourth Republican Parliament in Ghana's democracy.

Its specific objectives were to assess the public's knowledge of the role of Parliament, Parliamentarians' performance of their core duties and ascertain the criteria the public uses to measure the effectiveness of Parliament's work. Again the study sought to find out from the public the factors that hinder Parliament's work as well as ascertain how Parliamentarians can be made more effective.

This was a cross sectional study which was conducted as a national sample survey covering 72 districts. The study made use of both primary and secondary data. A combination of random and purposive sampling techniques was used in selecting respondents. In all, a total of 2,910 respondents were interviewed.

The findings of the study show that generally respondents were "fairly satisfied" with the performance of Parliament in terms of her core duties i.e. executive oversight, law making, being the voice of the people and representation. The survey results suggested a large communication gap between members of Parliament and their constituents as majority of the respondents mentioned that their Members of Parliament have never consulted them for their views on any issue. Again, a high number of respondents were of the view that MPs do not pay sufficient attention to Bills brought to Parliament for consideration.

From the study, a high percentage of respondents mentioned that MPs are effective when they undertake developmental projects in their constituencies. Others mentioned regular meetings with constituents, while a small percentage were of the view that appearing on media platforms was a means of measuring a Parliamentarian's effectiveness. Further, on the role members of Parliament play, majority of respondents were of the view that, MPs play the role of making laws, representing the views of their people in Parliament and also serving as liaison between the District Assemblies and the National Parliament.

Respondents were also polled on factors that hinder Parliament's work. Notable among them were executive control, corruption, party loyalty and lack of gender balance. Again, a little over half of the respondents were of the view that the wide gender gap in Parliament has adverse effects on Parliament's performance; citing the lack of opportunities for female members to speak on issues concerning women as key. Political partisanship was also mentioned as a hindrance to the work of Parliament as many believed MPs place party interest ahead of national interest, and also tend to forget the needs of the electorates and focus on their political party agenda.

In making Parliament more effective, respondents made a number of suggestions. Prominent among them were; the call to increase participation of women through a quota system, reduction in the number of ministerial appointments from Parliament and curbing the practice of boycotting parliamentary sittings by MPs. Others also called for media coverage of committee meetings.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background

Traditionally, Parliaments all over the world are seen as having three primary roles: law making, executive oversight and citizenry representation. Despite differences across constitutional systems, legislatures formally consider and approve the laws that make up a country's legal framework. They oversee and scrutinize executive activities, represent all citizens, thereby giving voice to all. They also play a role in the budget process and act as the arena for public debate of national policies and major political issues.

In Ghana, Parliament appoints "standing committees and other committees as may be necessary for the effective discharge of its functions"<sup>1</sup>. These functions include: Law making; Representation; Oversight; Deliberation; Power of Purse; Loan Agreements Approval; Protocols/Treaties and Conventions Ratification; and Information Dissemination. Interactions with Leaders of Parliament revealed that hindrances to the effectiveness of Parliament arise from three main sources namely: Constitutional impediments; statutory impositions; and self-inflicted limitations. Constitutional impediments include the lack of financial autonomy of Parliament; the appointment of Ministers from Parliament; and poor levels of inclusiveness (e.g. low numbers of women and the absence of Persons with Disabilities) in Parliament.

Statutory impositions include the Chairing of Committees by Members in Government; and the sole responsibility of the Speaker to admit questions or motions to the floor of the House. Self-inflicted limitations include Members serving on several committees, thereby making them less effective; lack of offices for Parliamentarians; increasing partisanship at committee meetings; and excessive demands from constituents.

---

<sup>1</sup> 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana Article 103(1)



The electorates are not well served if Parliaments do not carry out these functions effectively. Parliament then becomes less relevant to the public. This phenomenon does not help the practice and sustenance of democracy if its key representative institution is ineffective.

Although 'effectiveness' may not at first sight seem a distinctively democratic value, it becomes so when the functions performed are those necessary to the working of the democratic process. According to Gomez (2008), "a democratic Parliament is one that is representative of the political will and social diversity of the population, and is effective in its legislative, oversight and representational functions, at the sub national, national and international levels". Evidence shows that effective Parliaments are essential for strong and stable democracies (Sen, 2001). More so, the effectiveness with which Parliament carries out its central functions is essential to the quality of democratic life in any given country.

One feature that can contribute to improving Parliament's effectiveness is the regular assessment of their public standing through public opinion surveys. Benchmarks and methods of self-assessment can help build public confidence and strengthen the capacity of Parliaments to manage increasing demands as well as assert greater institutional independence. Such assessment frameworks are designed to identify focus areas for development work by pinpointing areas where a Parliament is not performing aspects of its core functions, understanding the possible underlying causes of these weaknesses, identifying entry points of parliamentary development and devising context-specific parliamentary support programmes.

The Parliament of Ghana has undergone many significant changes over the past two decades. Oquaye (2000:12, quoted in Crawford 2004:7 and cited in Abdul-Gafaru, 2009) observes that Parliament's dissolution "on every military coup (1966, 1972, 1979 and 1981) has checked the systematic development of the institution". Ghana's return to constitutional rule in 1992 did not therefore automatically result in an effective Parliament which will engender or enhance good democratic governance.

The new political environment from 1993 however set the pace for systematic improvement in parliamentary performance. This is good for the health of our democracy. Equally important is the need to check the standing of this august democratic institution among the citizenry so as to further consolidate the democratic achievements of the nation.

### **Research focus**

Assessing the performance and effectiveness of the Parliament of Ghana is, as in many other countries, challenging. This is because no established frameworks exist for performance assessment or collecting data on performance.

The legislature of Ghana appears relatively weak as an arm of government and seemingly struggles to define itself as an independent branch. This is the result of some mutually reinforcing factors. First, the Constitution mandates that the President takes the majority of his Ministers from Parliament (Article 78), and that these Ministers continue to sit as MPs. Second, the legislature remains under-resourced. Parliamentary committees continue to be without permanent meeting rooms and MPs without personal offices. Also, Parliament is yet to gain financial control of its annual budgetary allocation.

Further, reports of committee meetings are not accessible publicly due to the weak resource base of the committees. It is questionable whether the reports that they produce have much influence. Committees also endeavour to reach consensus in their work, but if the issue they are addressing is politically important to the Executive, then debates about the Committee's report become very partisan creating a perception of growing politicization of pertinent issues to the disadvantage of national development.

Parliament's oversight and legislative capacity seems generally weak in some areas. Levels of governmental accountability and transparency are highly inadequate. The salaries and other conditions of service for the president, ministers of state, and Parliamentarians are largely shrouded in secrecy; public office-holder asset disclosure rules are weak, successive governments

have stalled on the passage of a right to information legislation and political patronage remains entrenched.

Gender balance continues to be a critical problem. The Fourth Republican Parliament has been a male-dominant institution with only few (less than 12%) women. More work needs to be done both by Parliament, the government and CSOs to encourage higher numbers of women and Persons With Disabilities in Parliament and political structures at all levels.

Currently, public impression is that ministerial ambition ensures that MPs generally comply with the wishes of the Executive and it impairs their ability to act independently and subject executive activities to the requisite scrutiny. How Parliamentarians negotiate the potentially competing claims of party loyalty and individual conscience is one of the most difficult issues they face as well.

### **Objectives of the study**

The main objective of this study was to assess the performance of the Fourth Republican Parliament in Ghana's democracy.

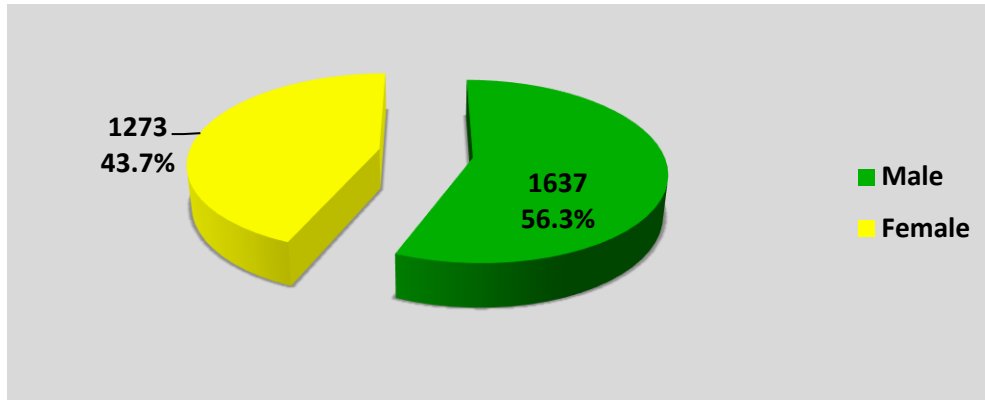
The study sought to achieve its main aim by:

1. Assessing the public's knowledge of the role of Parliament and Parliamentarians;
2. Finding out from the general public how Parliament / Parliamentarians have performed;
3. Ascertaining the criteria the public use to measure the effectiveness of Parliament's work;
4. Elicit possible changes the public would like to recommend in the Parliamentary system of Ghana;
5. Ascertaining how MPs can be made more effective;
6. Finding out from respondents, the factors that in their view hinder Parliament's work.

### **Brief Background of Respondents**

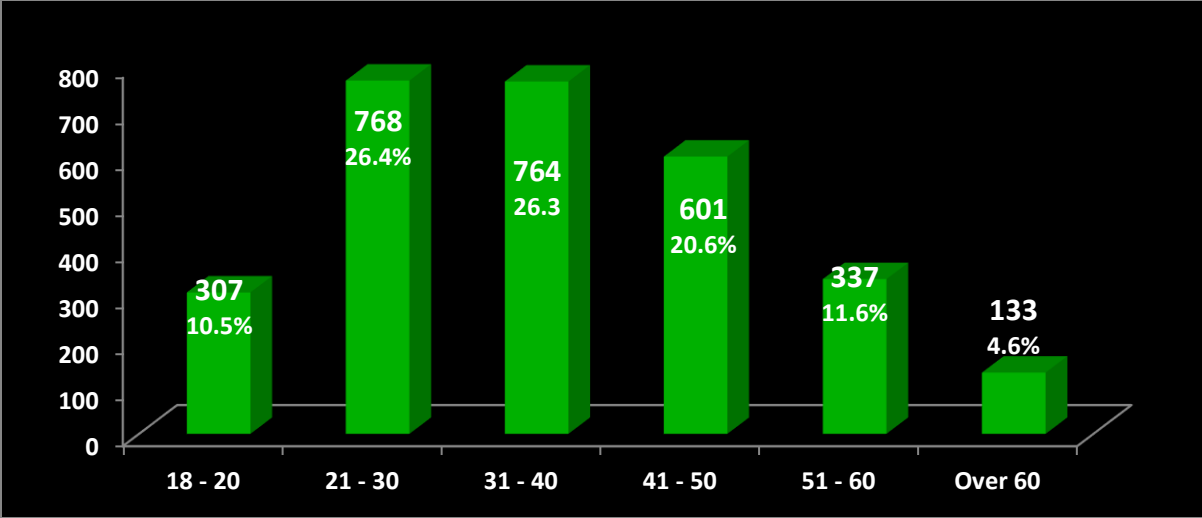
## Sex of Respondents

The data obtained from the field revealed that of the 2,910 respondents interviewed, 1,637 of them were males representing (56.3%) whilst the females were 1,273 representing 43.7%.



## Age of Respondents

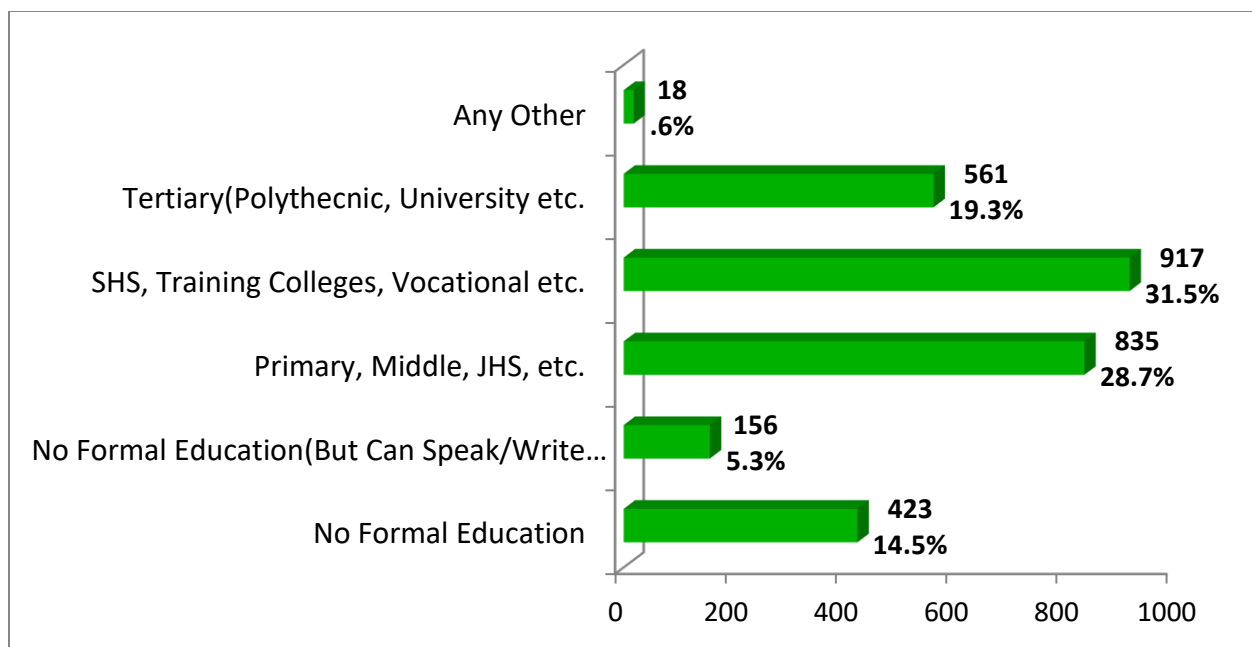
A little over a quarter of the respondents, 768 representing 26.4% were aged between 21 – 30, followed by those aged 31 – 40 who were 764 (26.3%). Respondents aged 41-50 were 601 representing 20.6%, whilst those between the ages of 51-60 were 337 (11.6%). The least number of respondents fell within the age bracket of 18-20 and those Over 60 years representing 307(10.5%) and 133(4.6%) respectively.



**Educational background of respondents**

A look at the Educational Background of the respondents per the data obtained from the field indicates that 917 representing the highest percentage of 31.5% of the respondents have had education up to the Senior High School level, Training Colleges or vocational level, with 835 representing 28.7 % having only basic education. Respondents with tertiary education were 561 representing 19.3%. Eighteen of the respondents had education through the Koranic or Bible school system. The figure below shows the details.

On the other hand, 423, representing 14.5% of the respondents have had no form of Formal Education. The figure below shows the details.



### Responses to Questionnaire Administration

REGION	REGIONS ALLOCATED NUMBER OF QUESTIONNAIRES	RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE (%)
Ashanti	528	528	100%
Brong Ahafo	280	280	100%
Central	280	280	100%
Eastern	396	395	99.75%
Greater Accra	352	352	100%
Northern	352	308	87.5%
Upper East	144	144	100%
Upper West	108	91	84.26%
Volta	280	253	90.36%
Western	280	279	99.64%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3000</b>	<b>2910</b>	<b>97%</b>

## CHAPTER TWO

### PUBLIC'S ASSESSMENT OF THE WORK OF PARLIAMENTARIANS

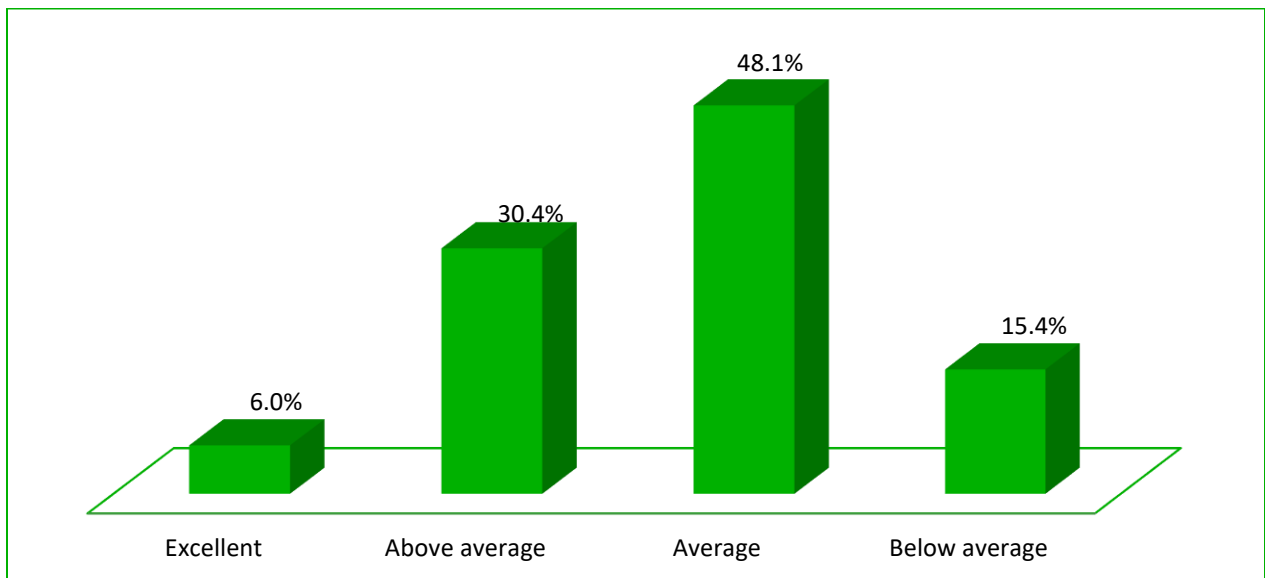
The assessment was done by the respondents using the provisions of the 1992 Republican Constitution of Ghana as the basis of assessment.

The assessment is restricted to the Fourth Republican Parliament.

#### GENERAL ASSESSMENT

As depicted in figure 2.1 below, respondents were generally satisfied with the performance of Parliament as 85.0% were positive in their rating of the performance of the Fourth Republican Parliament. This comprised of respondents who rated Parliament's overall performance as "average", "above average" and "excellent". Those who were not satisfied with Parliament's overall performance were 15.4%. They rated Parliament's performance as "below average".

**Fig.2.1: Rating of Parliament's general performance**



Though close, the relative proportions of males (i.e. 86.0%) who were satisfied with Parliament's overall performance was higher than their female (82.8%) counterparts.

The level of satisfaction expressed by respondents across all the levels of education was also high. Respondents with no formal education were however more satisfied with Parliament's performance (86.8%) than the remaining respondents with no formal education but who can read and write (86.5%), primary education (83.9%), secondary education (84.6%), tertiary education (84.3%) and other forms of education (66.6%).

On regional basis, Brong Ahafo and Northern regions ranked highest with 93.2% each of respondents with no formal education of Parliament's general performance as satisfactory. Such other high ratings were observed among respondents in the Upper East (89.6%), Greater Accra (88.1%), Upper West (88.0%), Ashanti (86.0%), Eastern (81.8%) and Western (80.7%) regions. Though high, the Central (78.9%) and Volta (68.0%) regions recorded the least number of respondents with this rating.

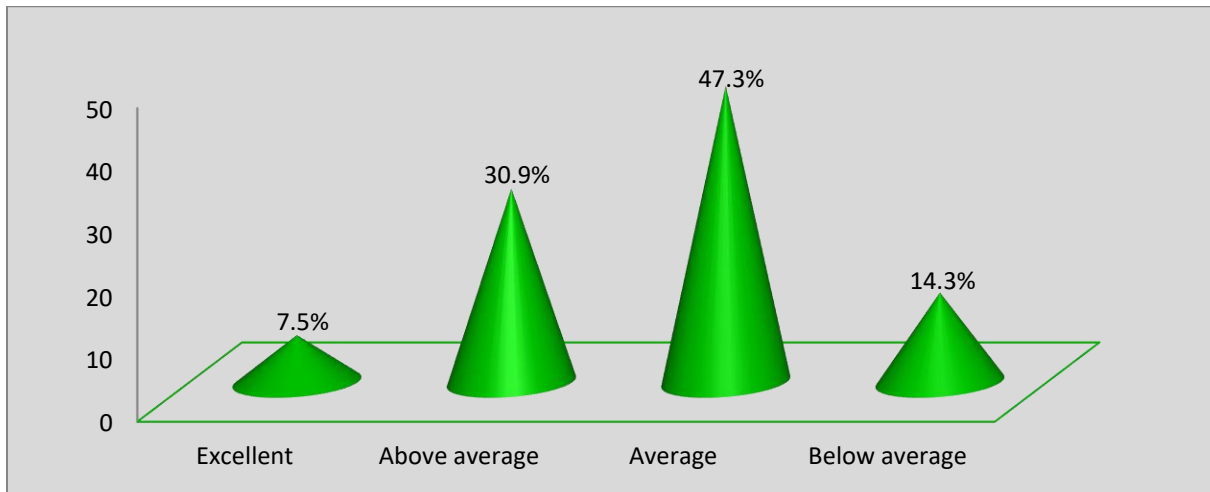
#### **ASSESSMENT OF SPECIFIC FUNCTIONS**

In the light of differences in administrative strengths and weaknesses, interviewees were asked to give a breakdown of the assessment that resulted in their rating of Parliament's performance. Respondents were therefore requested to rate Parliament on its specific functions i.e. representation, legislative, executive oversight and undertaking development projects in their constituencies.

In terms of representation, nearly half of the total respondents (i.e. 47.3%) rated Parliament as performing "averagely". Respondents who rated Parliament's representative function as above average were 30.9% while 7.5% of respondents rated the same function performed by Parliament as excellent. The remaining 14.3% rated Parliament's representative function as below average.



**Fig.2.2: Assessment of the representative role of Parliament**

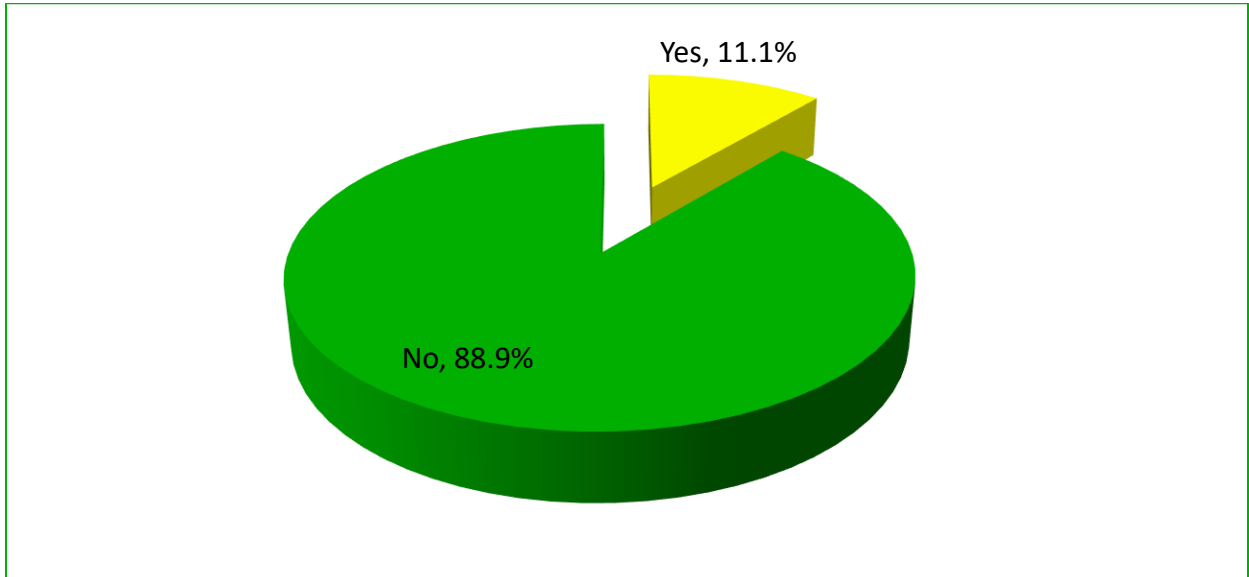


More women (i.e. 48.2%) than men (46.5%) rated the representative function of Parliament as "average".

A look at the regional data of respondents who rated Parliament's representative role as "below average" shows that the central region (i.e. 24.9%) recorded the highest number of such responses. They were followed by the Volta, Upper East and Western regions with 23.3%, 22.9% and 16.8% respectively. The Northern, Brong Ahafo and Upper West regions had relatively low responses in this category (i.e. 5.20%, 3.90% and 3.3% respectively). Ashanti, Eastern and Greater Accra regions also recorded 15.2%, 15.0% and 10.8% respectively of below average response.

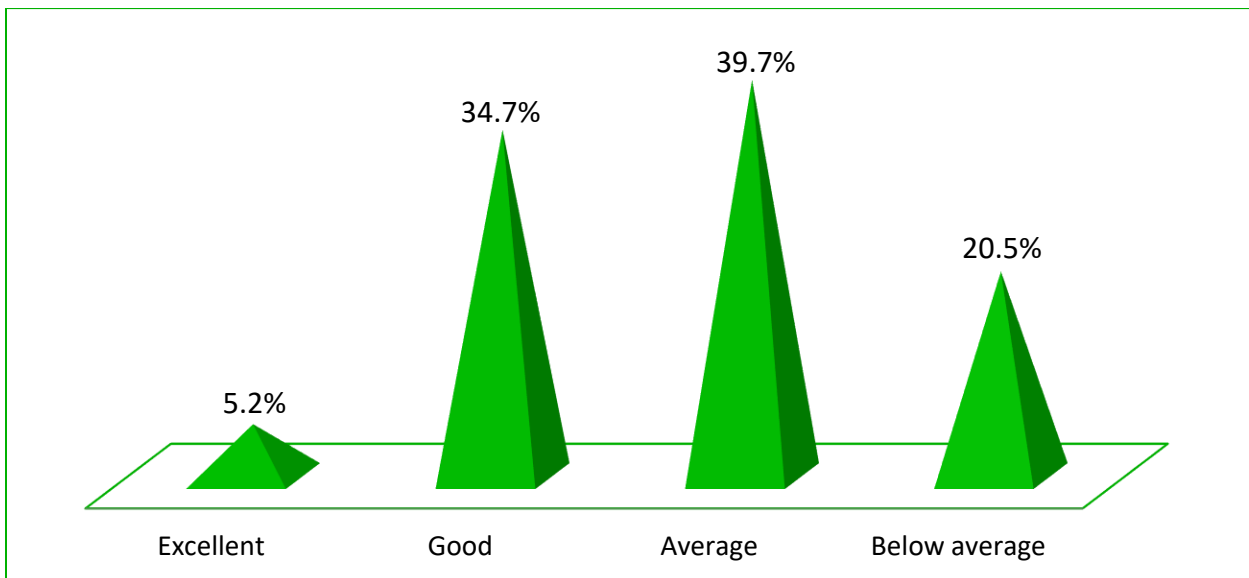
Though Parliament's representative function was rated satisfactorily by majority of respondents, the data suggests a large communication gap between MPs and their constituents. As depicted in figure 2.3, as high as 88.9% of respondents said their MPs have never consulted them for their views on any national or international issue. Only 11.1% said they have been consulted by their MPs.

**Fig.2.3: Whether MPs consult their constituents or not**



In spite of the perceived large communication gap between MPs and their constituents, respondents generally gave a positive assessment of Parliament in representing their views in the house. The figure below gives a representation of the views obtained when respondents were asked to assess Parliament's role as being the voice of the people.

**Fig.2.4: Assessment of MPs as being the voice of their constituents**



Generally, a higher proportion of females (21.7%) rated Parliament as having performed "below average" in their role as being the voice of the people than males (19.5%).

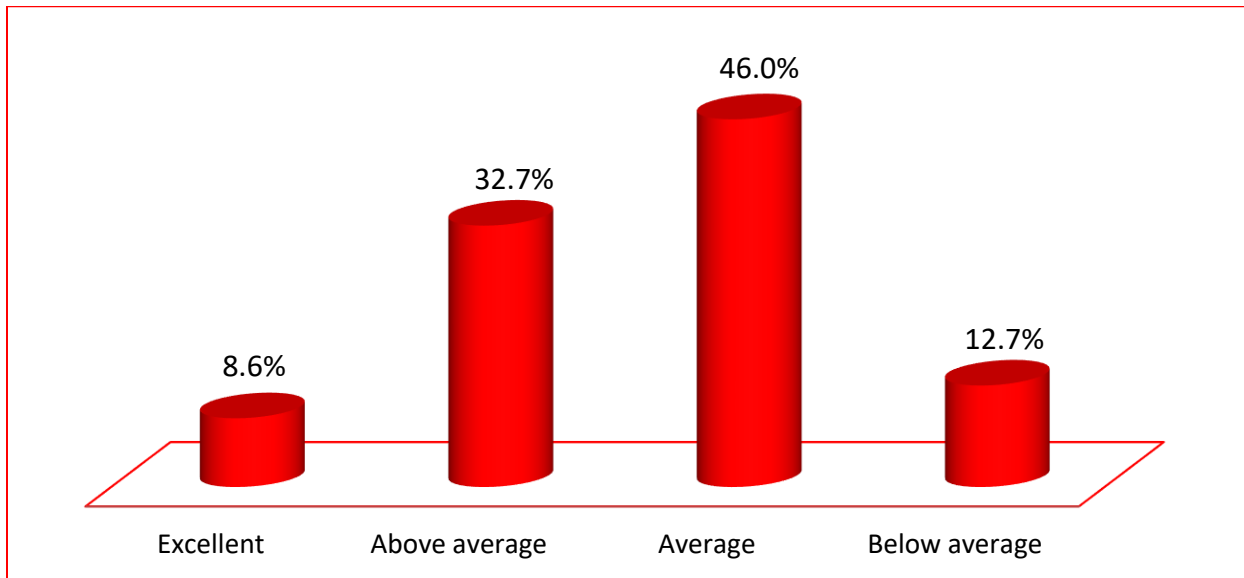
Among respondents who were generally satisfied with Parliament's role as being their voice, the more youthful population (i.e. 18 – 40 years) was dominant. They constituted 62.9% of respondents in this category and comprised of 10.2% of respondents in the 18 – 20 age group, 26.3% of the 21 – 30 age category and 26.4% of the 31 – 40 age group. The rest of the respondents i.e. 37.1% were made of the mature age groups i.e. 41 – 50 (20.9%), 51 – 60 (11.4%) and over 60 (4.8%).

Respondents who had no formal education but can speak and write as well as those with no formal education i.e. 83.4% and 81.1% respectively were more than the educated respondents i.e. Primary education (80.0%), Secondary education (79.2%), Tertiary (77.4%) and Any Other (72.2%).

On regional basis, Brong Ahafo (95.0%) and Northern (90.0%) regions recorded very high percentages of respondents saying MPs have been their voice in Parliament. Greater Accra (86.0%) and Ashanti (82.3%) were next while the Central (77.2%), Western (74.2%), Eastern (73.8%) and Upper West (72.5%) regions followed. Volta (64.5%) and Upper East (62.5%) regions recorded the least percentages.

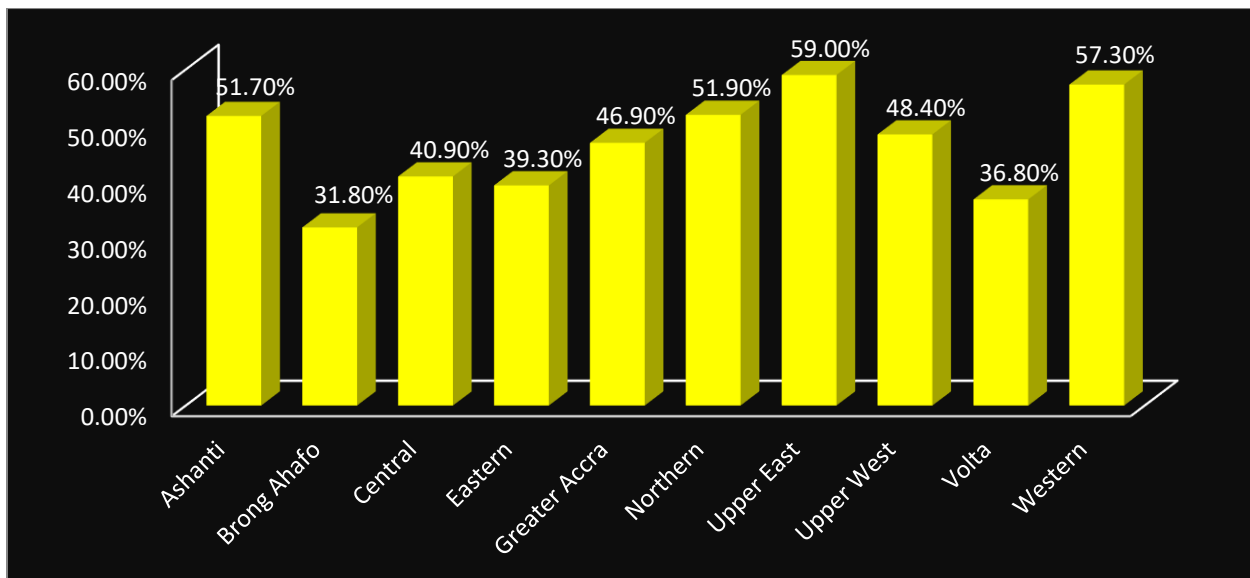
On the law making function of Parliament, Article 93, clause (2), of the 1992 Republican Constitution of Ghana states that the legislative power of Ghana shall be vested in Parliament and exercised in accordance with the Constitution. In line with this provision the study therefore sought the views of the general public on how they will rate Parliament in its law-making function. Of the 2,910 respondents who evaluated Parliament on this all important role, nearly half (46.0%) said Parliament had performed "averagely" while 32.7% rated Parliament's law-making function as "above average". A few others i.e. 8.6% said Parliament had performed "excellently" with 12.7% saying Parliament had performed "below average".

**Fig.2.5: Rating of Parliament's law-making function**



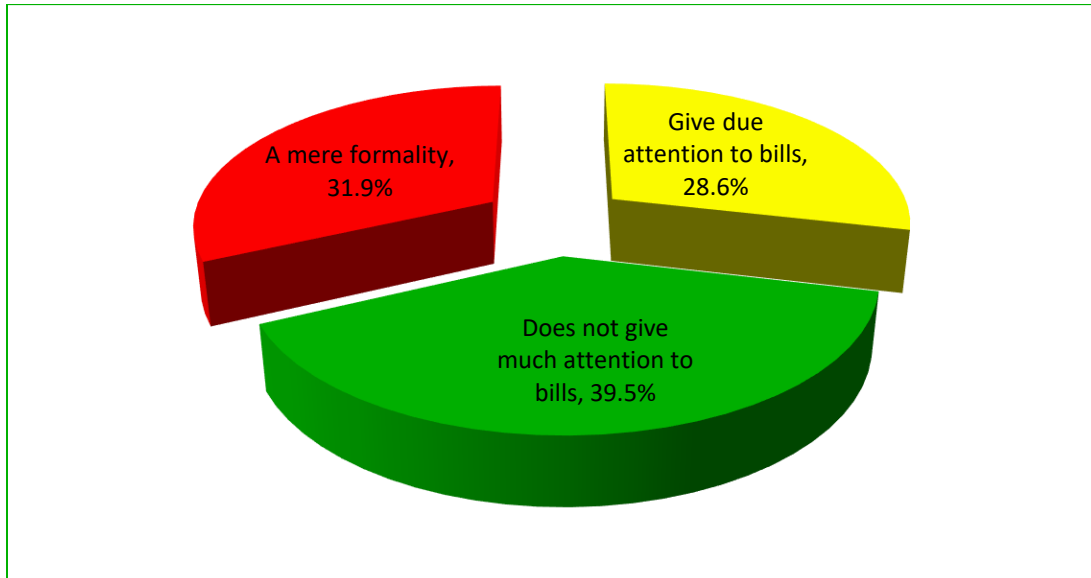
As depicted in figure 2.6, the Upper East region (59.0%) had the highest proportion of response among the "average" rating of the law making role of Parliament. Closely following were the Western (57.3%), Northern (51.9%) and Ashanti (51.7%) regions. The rest of the results are depicted in the figure below.

**Fig.2.6: Regional distribution of respondents who rated law-making as "average"**



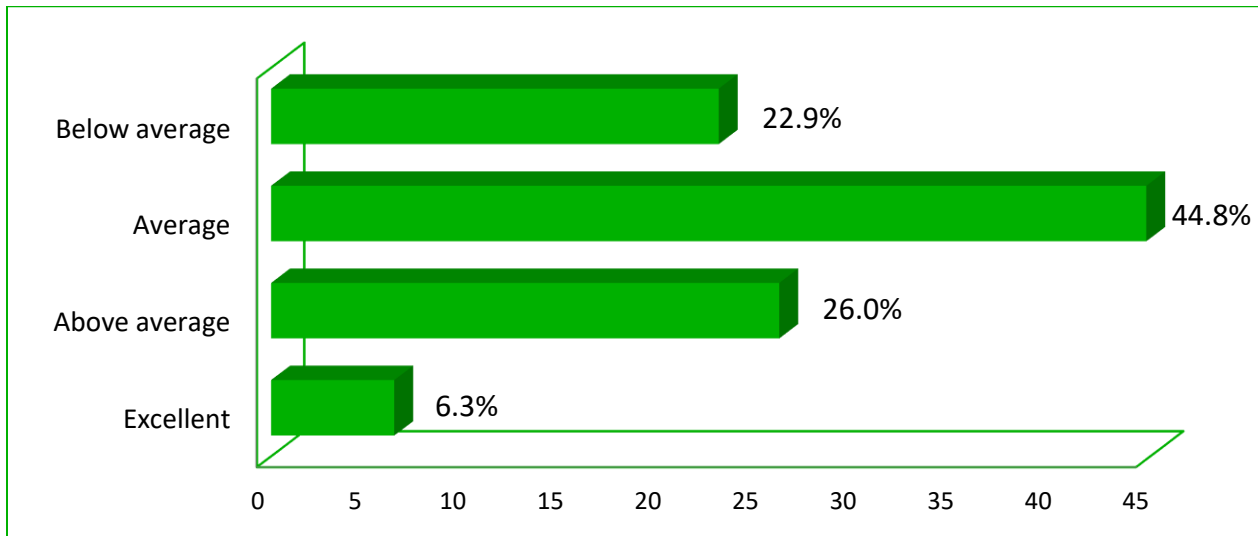
Respondents were asked whether they think Parliament gives bills placed before it the necessary attention. The figure below presents the responses obtained.

**Fig.2.7: Views on whether MPs give bills placed before them the needed attention**



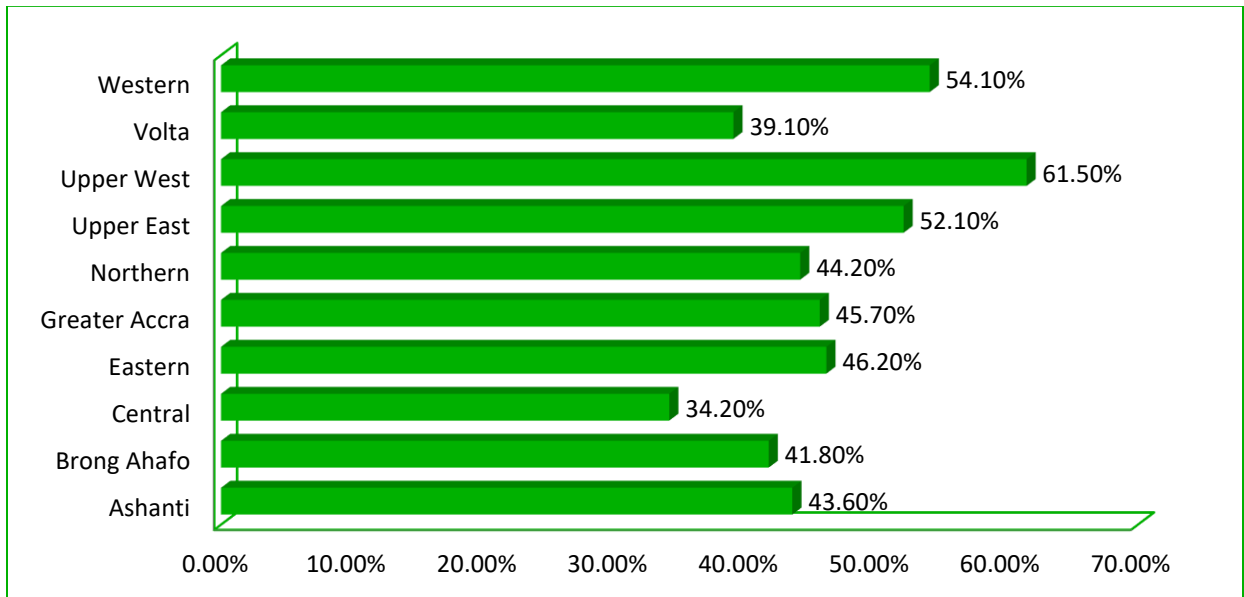
One other important function of Ghana's Parliament is executive oversight. Generally, a large number of the respondents (i.e. 44.8%) rated Parliament's check on the executive as "average". The next highest rating i.e. "above average" was by 26.0% of the respondents while 6.3% were of the view that Parliament's control of the executive is "excellent". A considerable number of respondents i.e. 22.9% said Parliament has performed below average in its oversight of the Executive.

**Fig.2.8: Assessment of Parliament's executive oversight function**



On the regional front, the proportionate percentage of respondents from the Upper West region (61.5%) was highest among those who rated Parliament's executive oversight as "average". Following them were respondents from the Western and Upper East regions with 54.1% and 52.1% respectively. The lowest percentage was recorded in the Central region (i.e. 34.2%). The figure below presents the rest of the data.

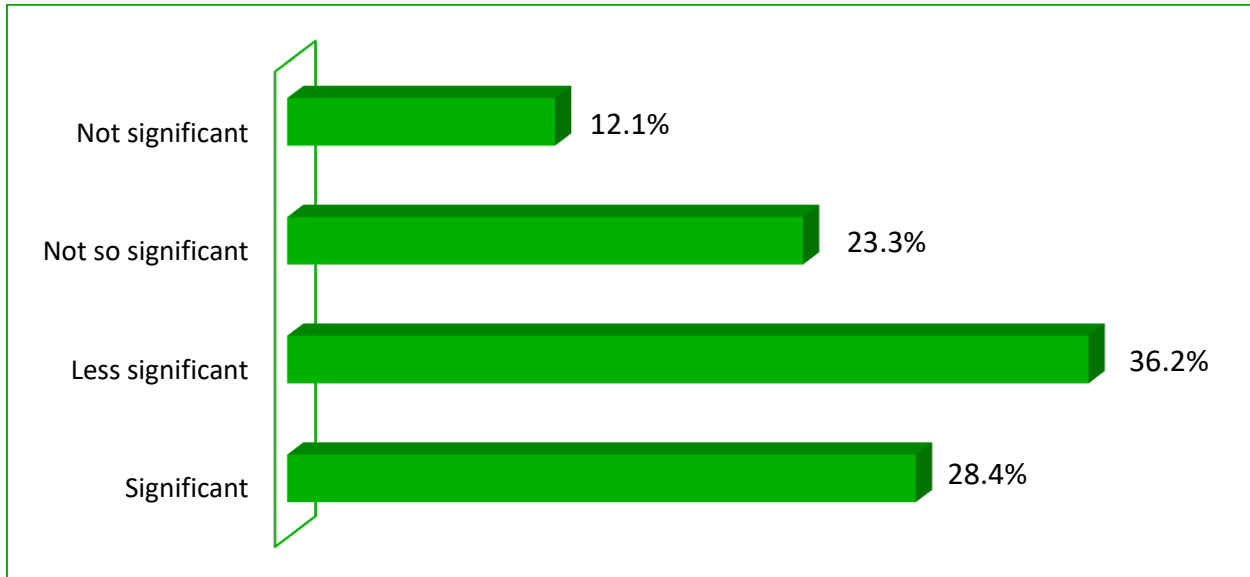
**Fig.2.8: Regional distribution of respondents who rated executive oversight function as "average"**



Ghana's Parliament performs its executive oversight function by vetting government appointees, holding ministers and government appointee's accountable as well as giving approvals and scrutinizing government's financial commitments among others.

The study reveals that in terms of signing loans and other agreements, a large majority of interviewees i.e. 87.9% agreed that Parliament has some level of influence on the process. This included all respondents who said Parliament's influence is "significant", "less significant" and "not so significant". A few other respondents i.e. 12.1% were of the view that Parliament has no influence at all on the signing of loans and other agreements.

**Fig.2.9: Parliament's influence on the signing of loans and agreements**



As high as 91.1% of respondents with tertiary education supported the view that Parliament had some level of influence on signing of loans and other agreements by the state. Again 88.1% of respondents with secondary education, 86.6% of respondents with no formal education but can read and write as well as 85.4% of respondents with primary education all agreed to this assertion. A high percentage (89.1%) of those with no formal education also agreed that Parliament has some level of influence on signing of loans.

The regional breakdown of response on this subject is presented in the figure below

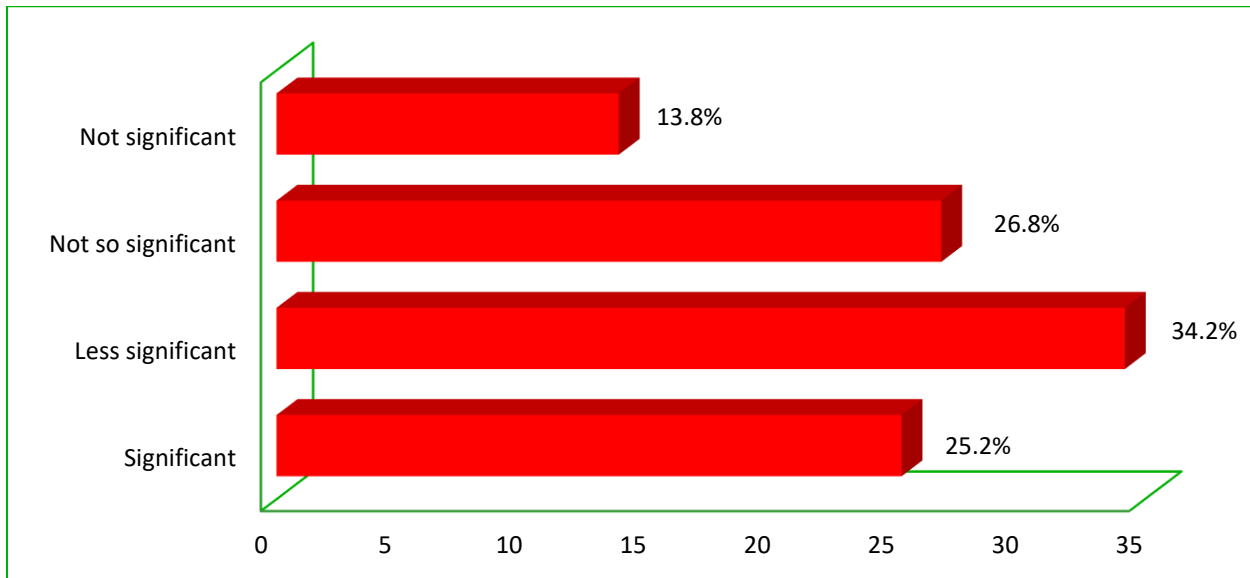


**Fig.2.10: Regional distribution of respondents who said Parliament had some level of influence on the signing of loans and other agreements by the state**



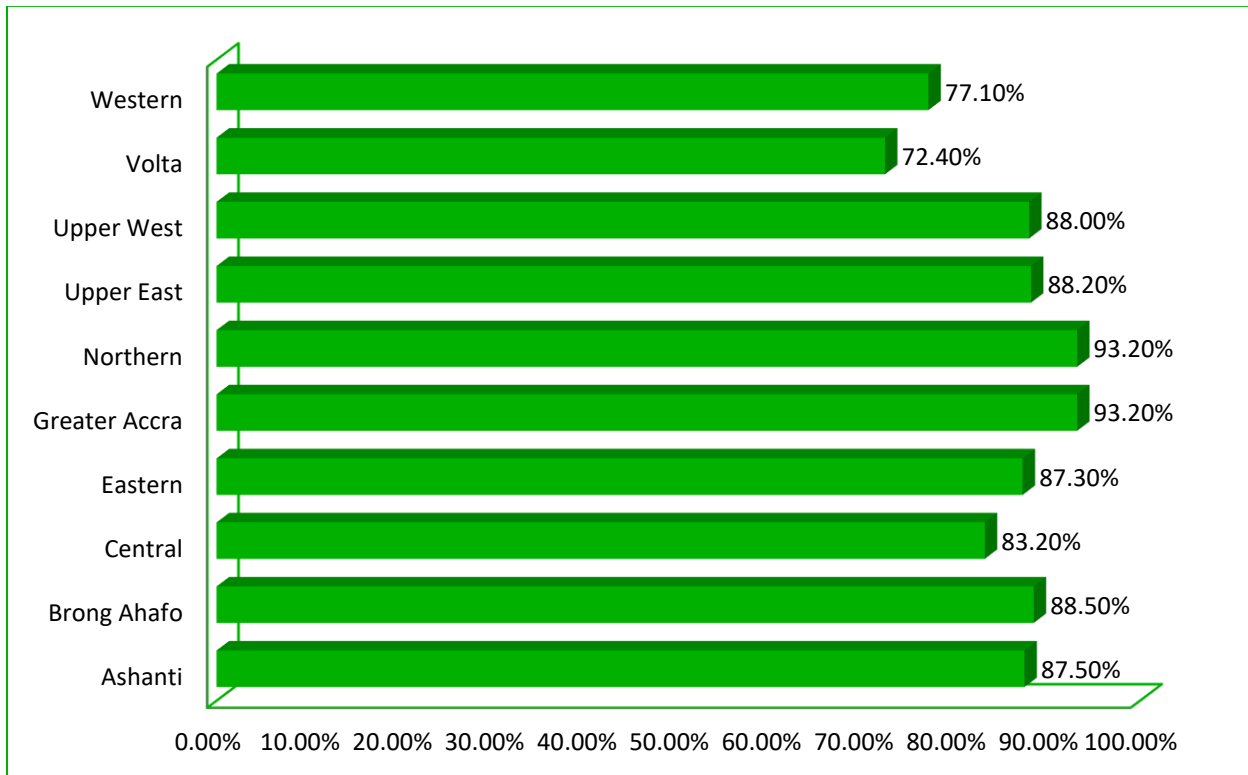
On the issue of state expenditure, the overall assessment as well as a cross tabulation with the educational background of respondents had the same pattern of responses as observed in the signing of loans and other agreements. The results obtained in the general assessment are depicted in the figure below.

**Fig.2.11: Parliament's influence on state expenditure**



The variation in responses between respondents view on Parliament's influence on the signing of loans and other agreements and their influence on state expenditure was in the regional responses. As depicted in the figure below, the Greater Accra and Northern regions had 93.2% respondents within their regions who were of the view that Parliament had some influence on state expenditure. Volta region was lowest with 72.4%. The rest of the data is shown in the figure below.

**Fig.2.12: Regional distribution of respondents who said Parliament has some level of influence on state expenditure**



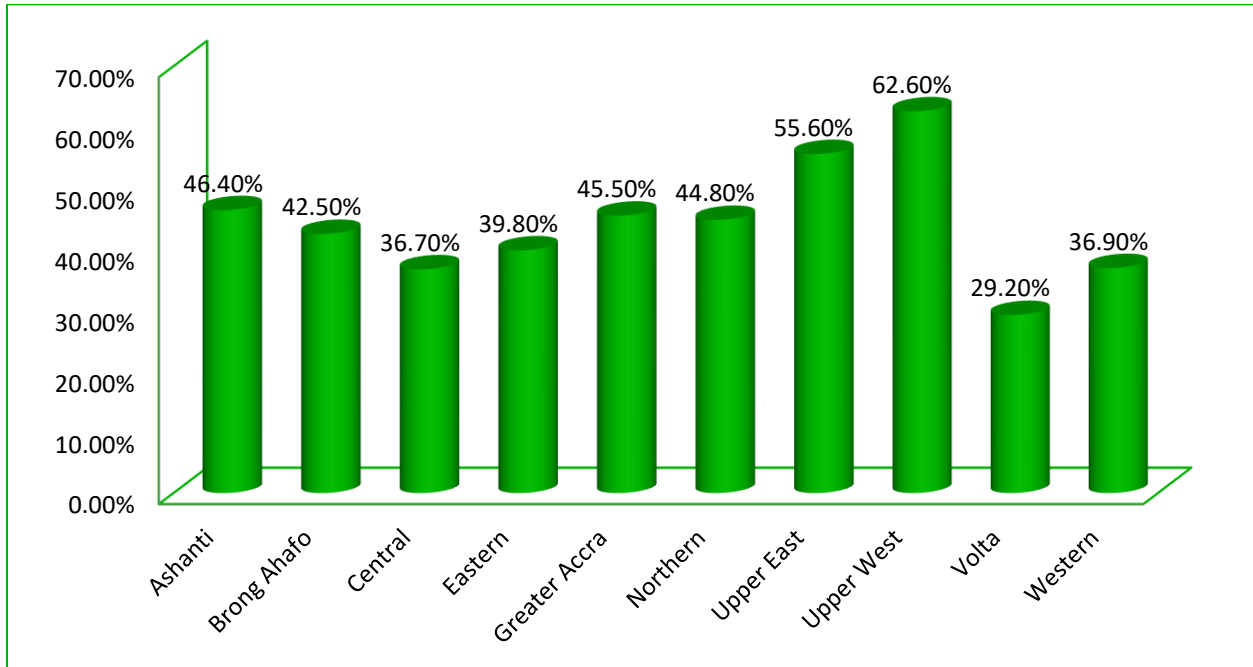
Vetting of government appointees by Parliament was rated as "good" by majority of respondents (i.e. 42.5%) while 34.7% of respondents rated this same function as "average". Only 8.9% of respondents rated the vetting of government appointees by Parliament as "excellent". Those who rated Parliament as having performed below average were 13.9%.

Males (43.0%) were more than females (41.8%) who rated Parliament as "good" in vetting of ministers and other government appointees.

The various age groups responded differently to this question. Whereas majority of respondents in the age groups 18 – 20 (33.2%) and 41 – 50 (33.7%) said vetting of ministers and other government appointees by Parliament is "significant", the majority of respondents in the age groups 21 – 30 (36.2%), 31 – 40 (38.2%), 51 – 60 (36.6%) and those over 60 (37.6%) said it was "less significant".

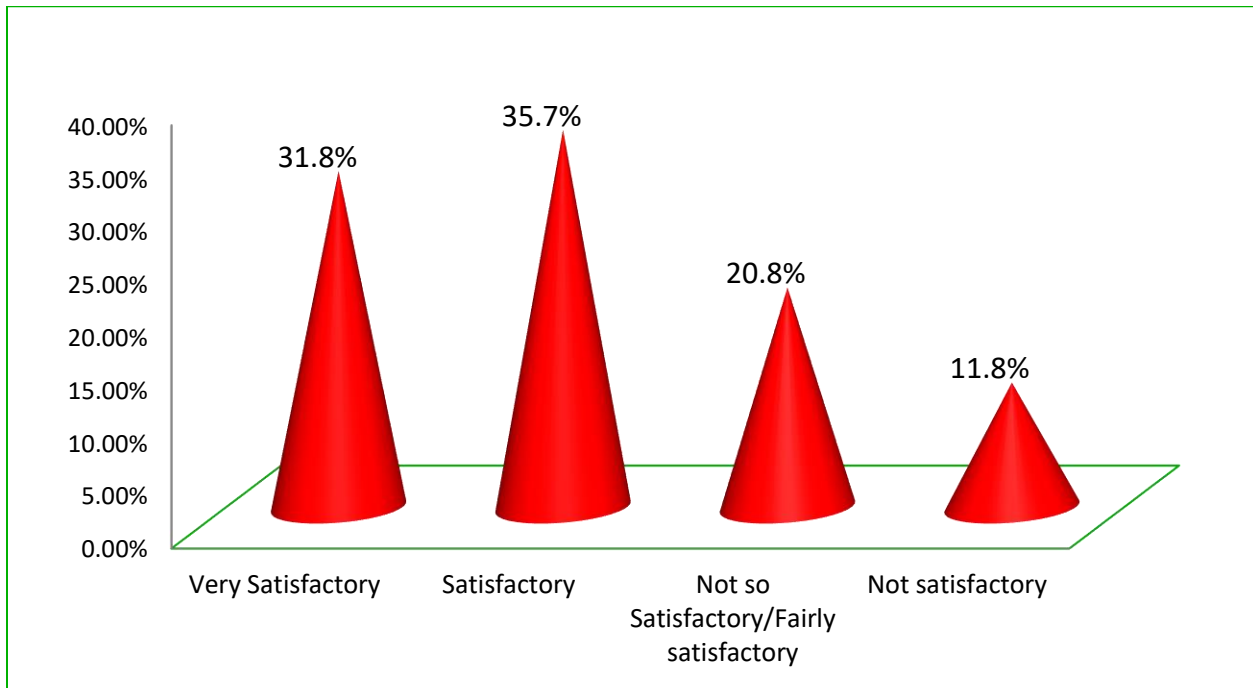
Figure 2.13 depicts the regional responses of interviewees who rated Parliament’s vetting role as "good". The Upper West and Upper East regions recorded favorable responses i.e. 62.6% and 55.6% respectively while the Central and Volta regions also recorded 36.7% and 29.2% each as the lowest positive rating obtained.

**Fig.2.13: Regional responses among interviewees who rated vetting by Parliament as "good"**



After government appointees assume office, it is the duty of Parliament to hold them accountable for their stewardship. Respondents were again asked to assess this function of Parliament. The results obtained are presented in the figure below.

**Fig.2.14: Assessment of Parliament’s role in ensuring accountability of public officials**



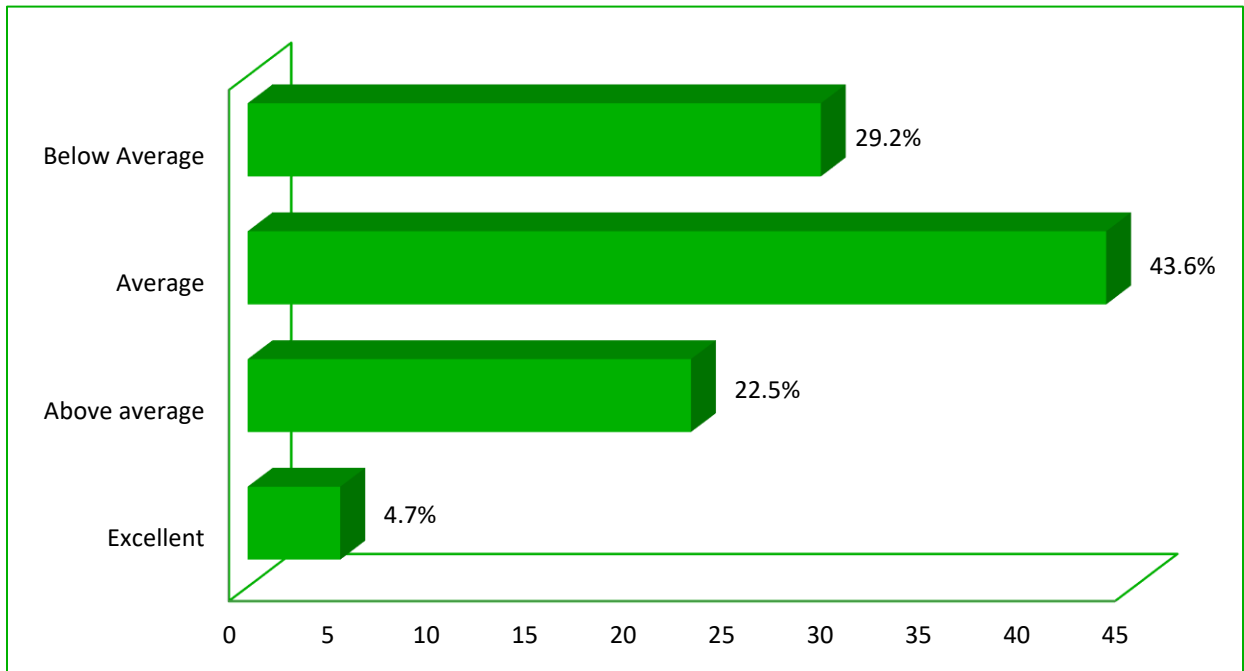
From the responses obtained, majority of respondents agreed that Parliament’s holding of ministers and other government appointee’s accountable is “satisfactory”

Across all the levels of education, the majority of responses obtained were unanimous in their rating. They all rated Parliament’s accountability role as “satisfactory”.

Four regions i.e. Upper West (59.3%), Central (47.3%), Greater Accra (43.2%) and Northern (39.3%) rated Parliament’s accountability role as "very satisfactory" while the six regions i.e. Brong Ahafo (43.9%), Western (40.9%), Volta (38.7%), Eastern (37.6%), Upper East (36.8%) and Ashanti (32.4%) also rated same function as “satisfactory”.

Members of Ghana’s Parliament perform the additional role of carrying out developmental projects in their constituencies. According to 43.6% of respondents, Parliament’s performance in this respect is rated "average". Some 22.5% said Parliamentarians performed "above average" while 4.7% rated Parliamentarians performance in this regard as "excellent". However, quite a large number i.e. 29.2% representing the second highest response group rated Parliamentarian’s development project function as "below average".

**Fig.2.15: Rating Parliamentarians role in carrying out developmental projects**



With a 70.8% positive rating of Parliament’s role in implementing developmental projects, the study analyzed the regional distribution of the responses obtained. It was observed that an absolute majority of respondents in the Northern region (91.7%) agreed with this rating. Respondents in the Greater Accra, Upper West, Brong Ahafo and Western regions who were also of this view constituted 77.6%, 75.8%, 74.3% and 73.5% respectively of the regional responses obtained. Volta region (59.8%) recorded the lowest response in this category with the Central, Upper East, Eastern and Ashanti regions recording 64.4%, 66.7%, 63.5% and 63.0% respectively.

## CHAPTER THREE

### PUBLIC MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS OF PARLIAMENT AND PARLIAMENTARIANS

The study also sought to ascertain the views of respondents in the effectiveness of Parliament as an institution and Members of Parliament and also to identify the criteria used by the public to judge the effectiveness of Parliament and Parliamentarians.

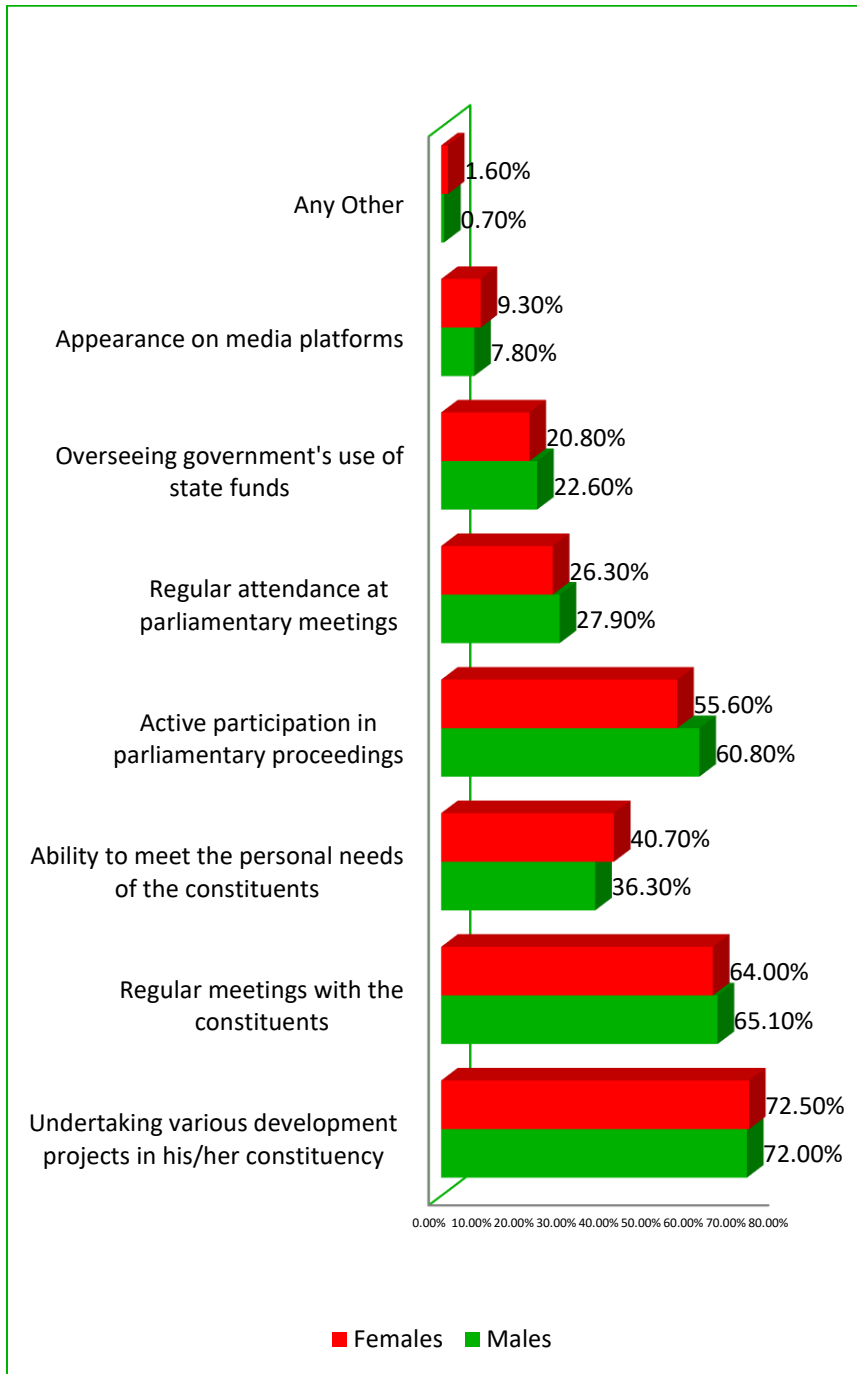
Of the 8226 responses received, 25.5% (representing the largest number of responses) said undertaking development projects in their constituencies makes an MP effective. Closely following this group were 22.8% of respondents who were of the view that regular meetings with constituents makes an MP effective. Taking an active part in parliamentary proceedings was a criteria 14.8% of respondents used to assess the effectiveness of an MP. The rest of the results are depicted in the figure below.

**Table 3.1: Respondents view of what makes an MP effective**

Response	Percentage (%)
<b>Undertaking various developmental projects in his/her constituency</b>	25.5
<b>Regular meetings with the constituents</b>	22.8
<b>Ability to meet the personal needs of the constituents</b>	13.4
<b>Active participation in parliamentary proceedings</b>	18.0
<b>Regular attendance at parliamentary meetings</b>	9.6
<b>Overseeing government's use of state funds</b>	7.7
<b>Appearance on media platforms</b>	3.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>

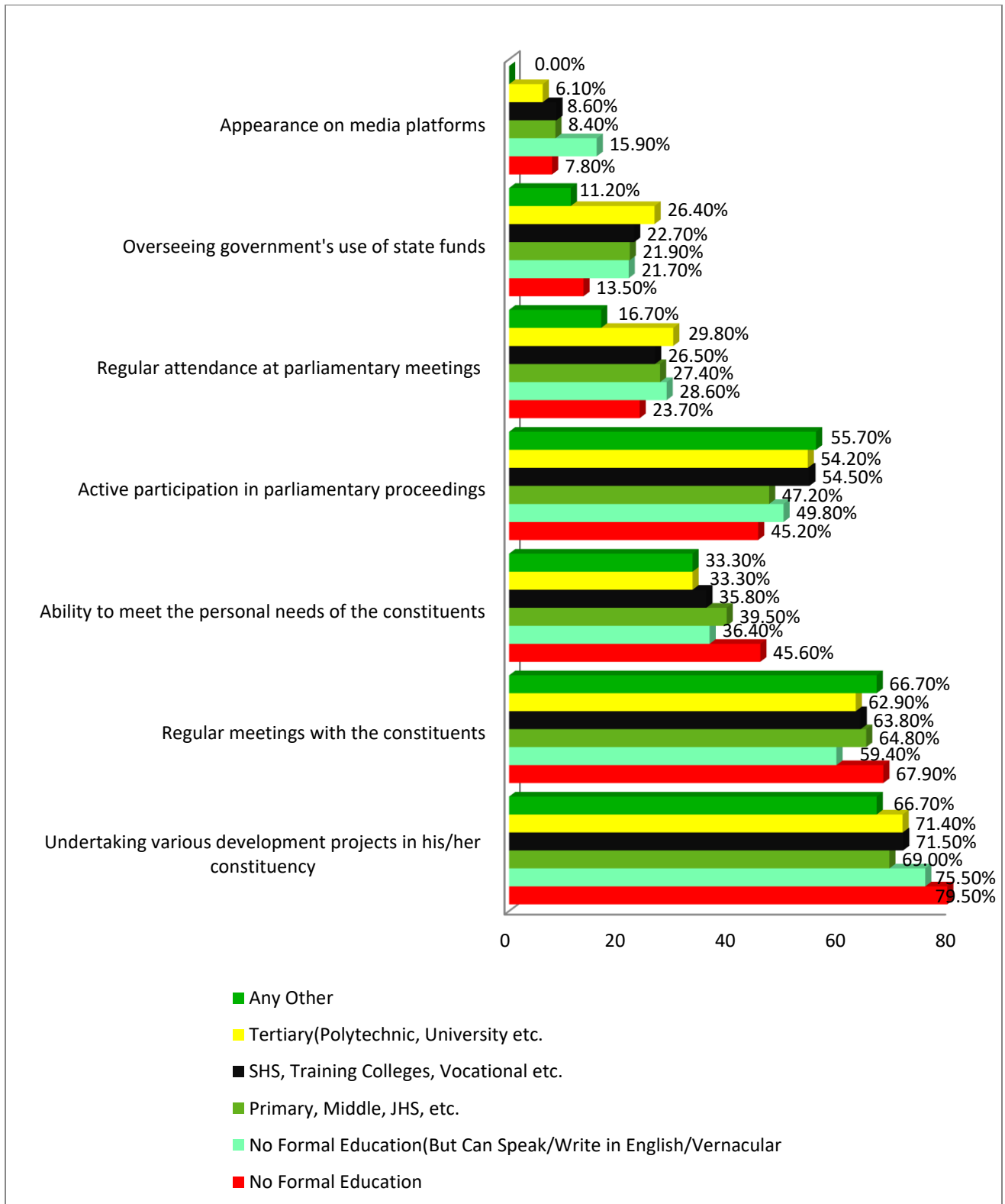
As shown in figures 3.1 and 3.2 below, the pattern of responses did not differ according to the sex and educational background of respondents except for the differences in absolute percentages.

**Fig.3.1: Views of males and females on what makes an MP effective**





**Fig.3.2: Views on what makes an MP effective (educational background of respondents)**



Respondents again gave varied views on the roles they think MPs play in our democracy.

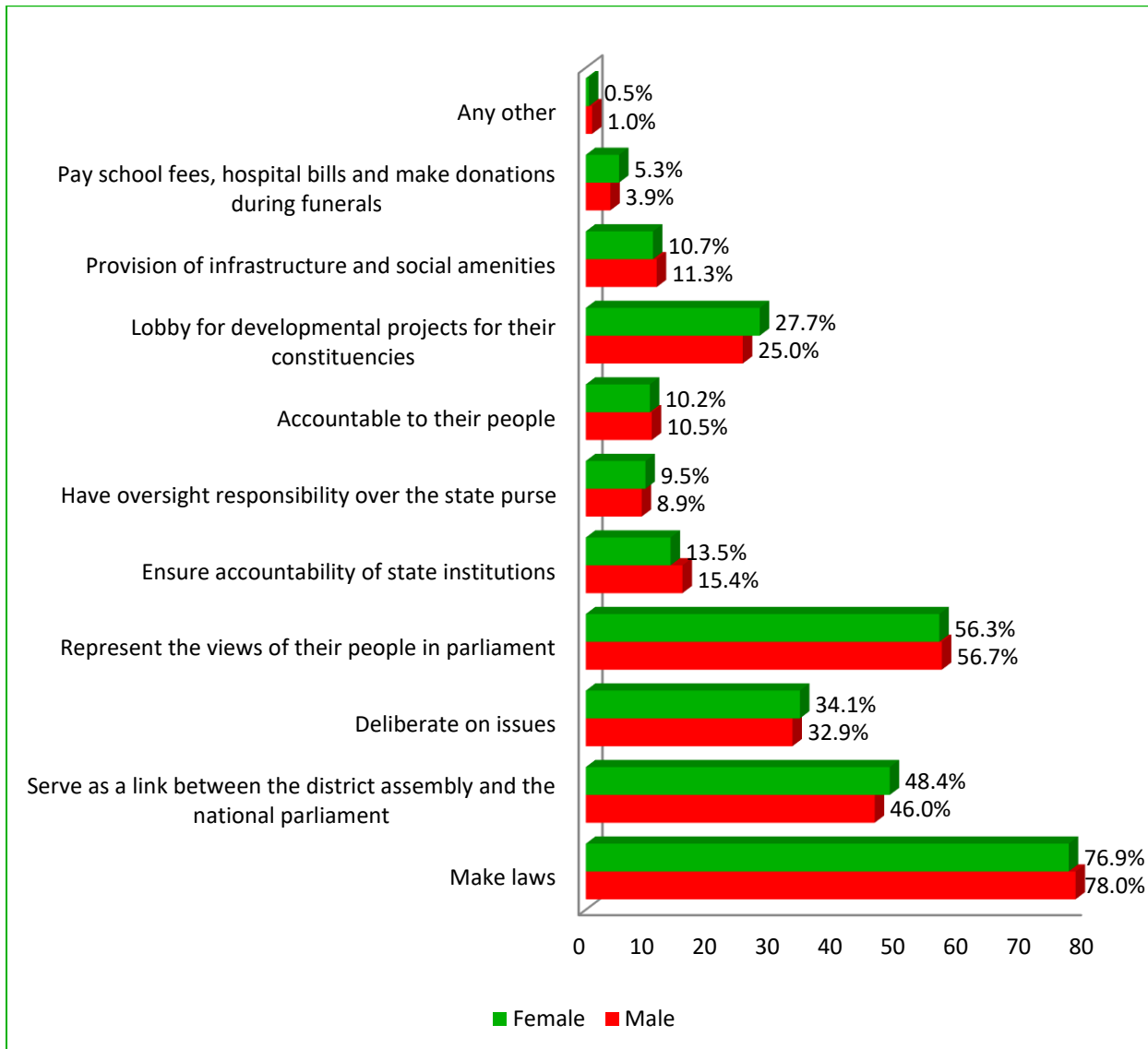
**Table 3.2: Views on the roles MPs play in our democracy**

Role	Percentage (%)
<b>Make laws</b>	77.45
<b>Serve as a link between the District Assembly and the National parliament</b>	47.2
<b>Deliberate on issues</b>	33.5
<b>Represent the views of their people in Parliament</b>	56.5
<b>Ensure accountability of state institutions</b>	14.45
<b>Have oversight responsibility over the state purse</b>	9.2
<b>Are accountable to their people</b>	10.35
<b>Lobby for developmental projects for their constituencies</b>	26.35
<b>Provision of infrastructure and social amenities</b>	11
<b>Pay school fees, hospital bills and make donations during funerals</b>	4.6
<b>Any other</b>	0.75

As seen from the table above, making laws was mentioned by majority of respondents (i.e. 77.45%) as the very role MPs play in our democracy. MPs, according to 56.5% of respondents, represent the views of their people in Parliament, while 47.2% of respondents said MPs serve as a link between the District Assembly and the National Parliament among others.

Here too, the pattern of response obtained from males and females did not vary from the overall responses obtained. The figure 3.3 shows the responses by males and females in this study.

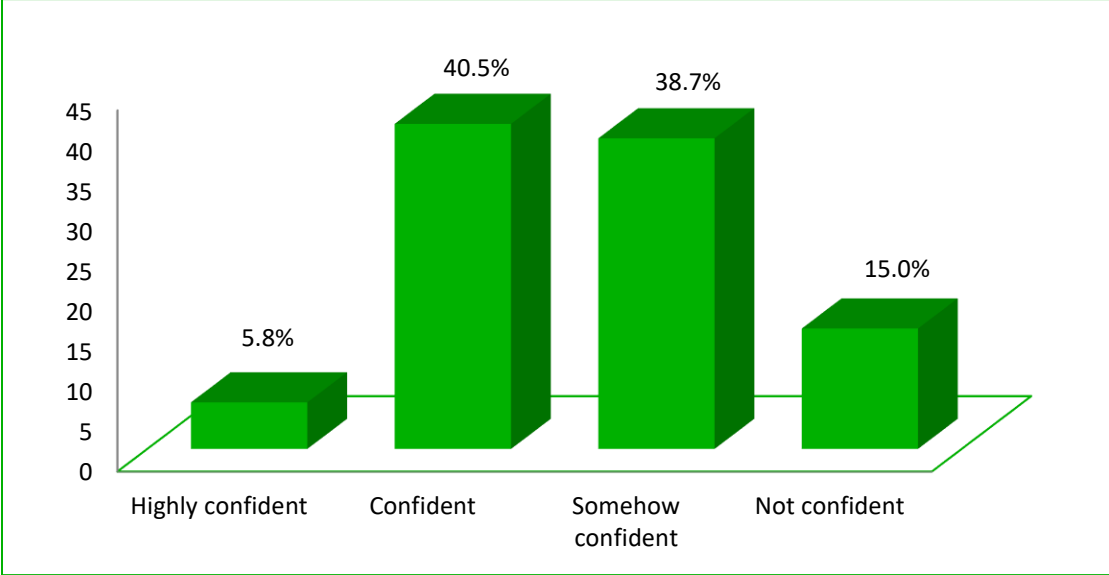
**Fig.3.3: Views of males and females on the roles MPs play in our democracy**



After assessing this important organ of state, respondents were asked about the level of confidence they repose in Parliament to effectively carry out its mandate in our democracy. Though only a few respondents i.e. 5.8% expressed a high level of confidence in the Ghanaian Parliament, the overall results indicate that 85% of respondents repose some level of confidence in Parliament as an essential democratic institution. This group comprises of those who are highly

confident (5.8%), confident (40.5%) and somehow confident (38.7%). 15.0% of respondents had no confidence in Parliament.

**Fig. 3.1: Confidence level of Ghanaians in Parliament**



## CHAPTER FOUR

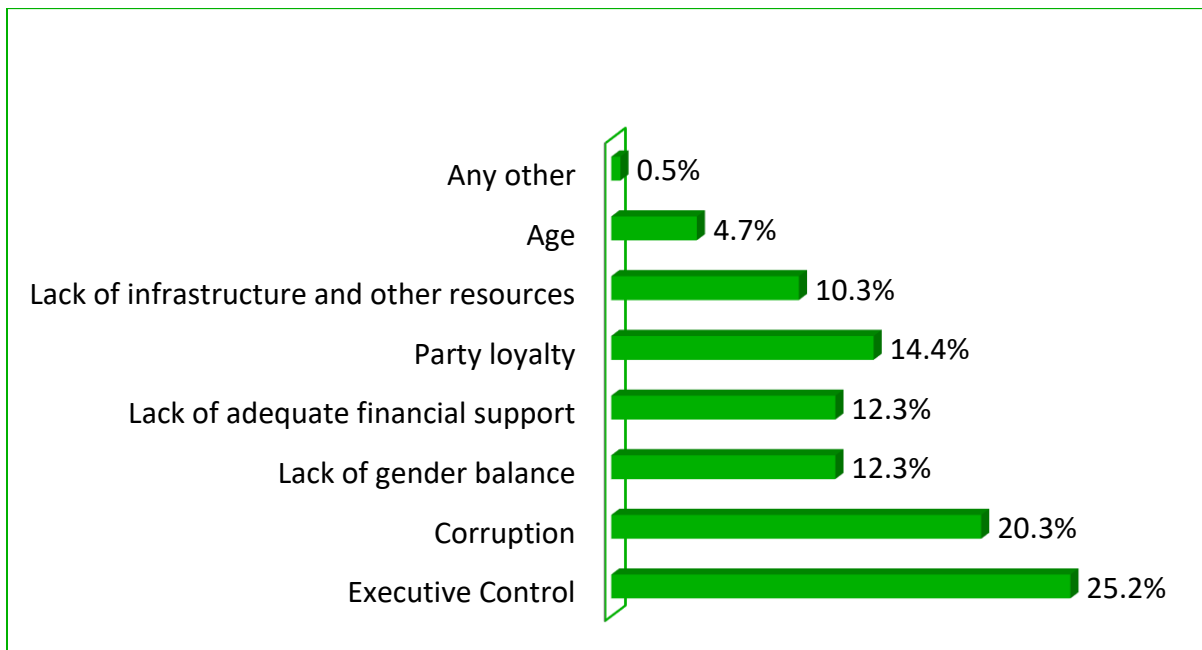
### HINDRANCES TO PARLIAMENT'S WORK AND EFFECTIVENESS

Members of Parliament are faced with several challenges and it is pertinent to find out from respondents what issues or challenges in their views hinder Parliament's work.

This chapter presents views from respondents on the challenges Parliamentarians encounter in performing their duties and work effectively. Issues covered include factors that hinder effective performance of Parliament, the effect of balanced gender representation on Parliament's performance, the effect of political partisanship on the work of Parliamentarians and public perception of corruption among members of Parliament

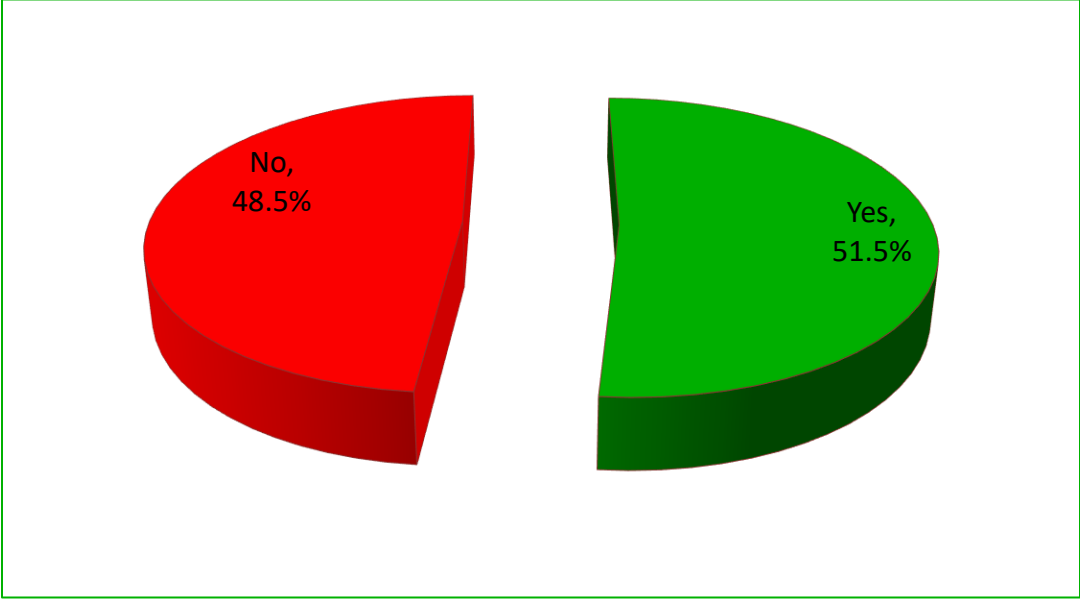
On the issue of factors that hinder the effective performance of Parliament, slightly above one quarter (25.2%) of Respondents cited executive control as the major hindrance; this was followed by corruption and party loyalty which were cited by 20.3% and 14.4% respondents respectively. Figure 4.1 shows the breakdown of the responses obtained from respondents

**Figure 4.1 Factors that hinder the effective performance of Parliament.**



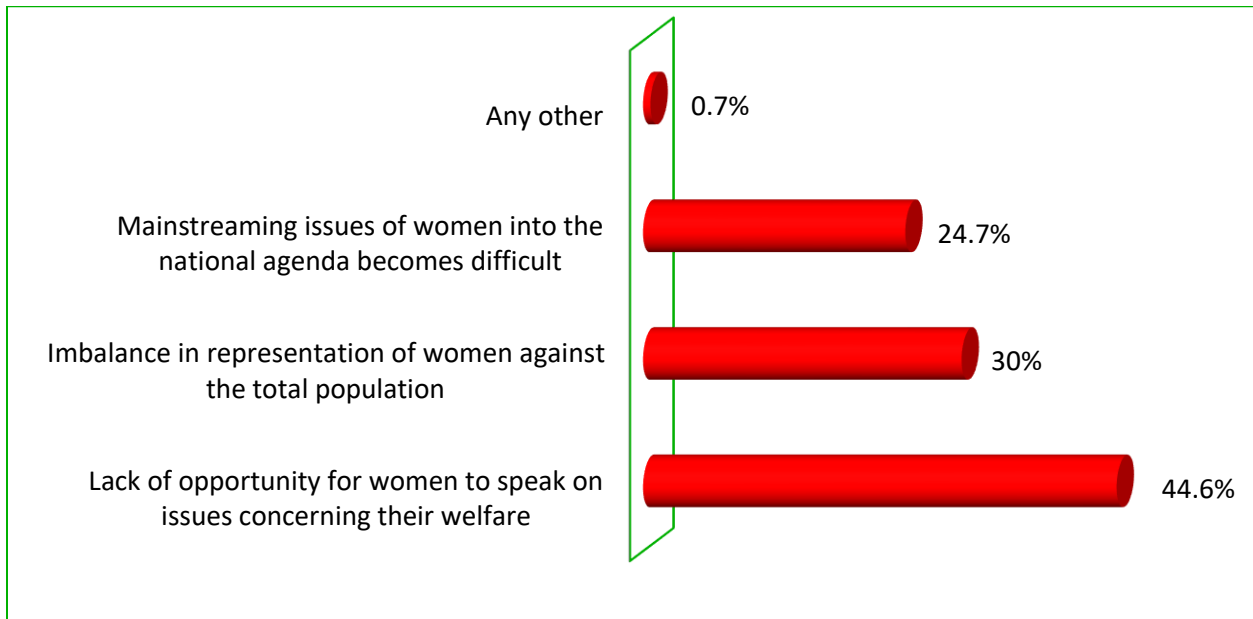
Female representation in the Fourth Republican Parliament has not been very encouraging. Presently there are only 29 women in Parliament out of the 275 members. Subsequently, respondents were asked whether the wide gender gap in Parliament has any effect on Parliament's performance. From the survey, a little over half (51.5%) of the 2,910 respondents, said 'Yes' while 48.5% responded 'No there is no effect'. Of those who responded "Yes" 50.9% were male, whereas 49.1% were female.

**Figure 4.2** Is the wide gender gap having any effect on Parliament's performance?



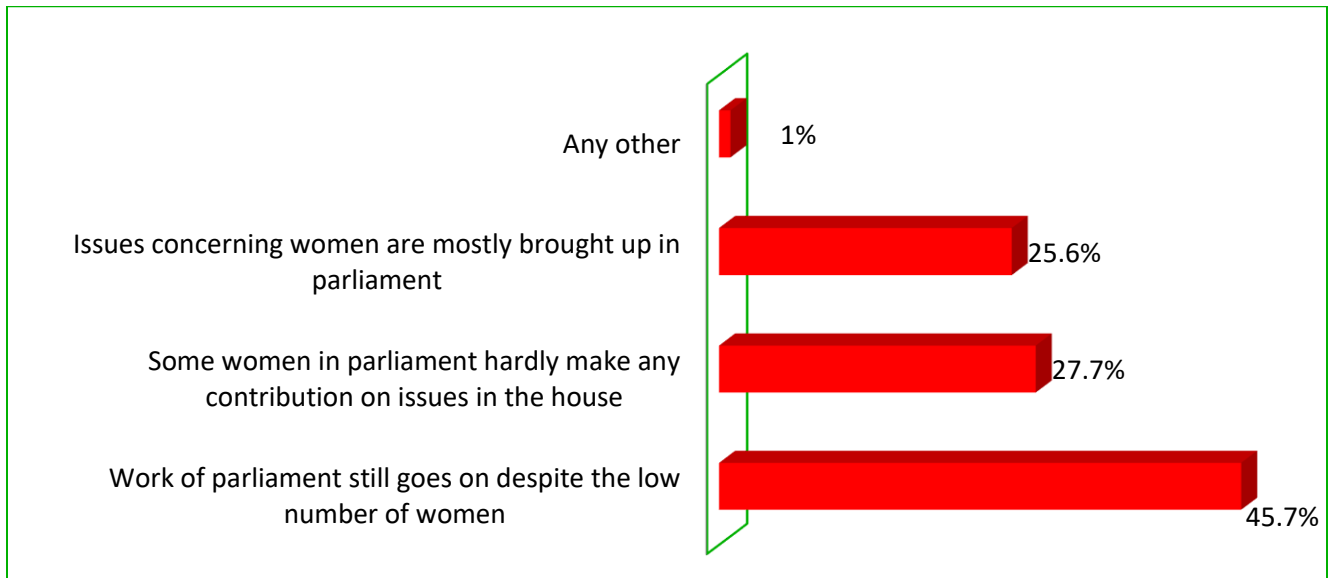
For those who responded "Yes" their major reason was that there is lack of opportunity for women to speak on issues concerning the welfare of women and this was cited by 44.6% of the respondents. Thirty percent (30%) of Respondents were also of the view that there is imbalance in the representation of women in Parliament in the light of the total population of women. Figure 4.3 shows the reasons given by respondents.

**Figure 4.3** Effect of gender gap on Parliament's performance



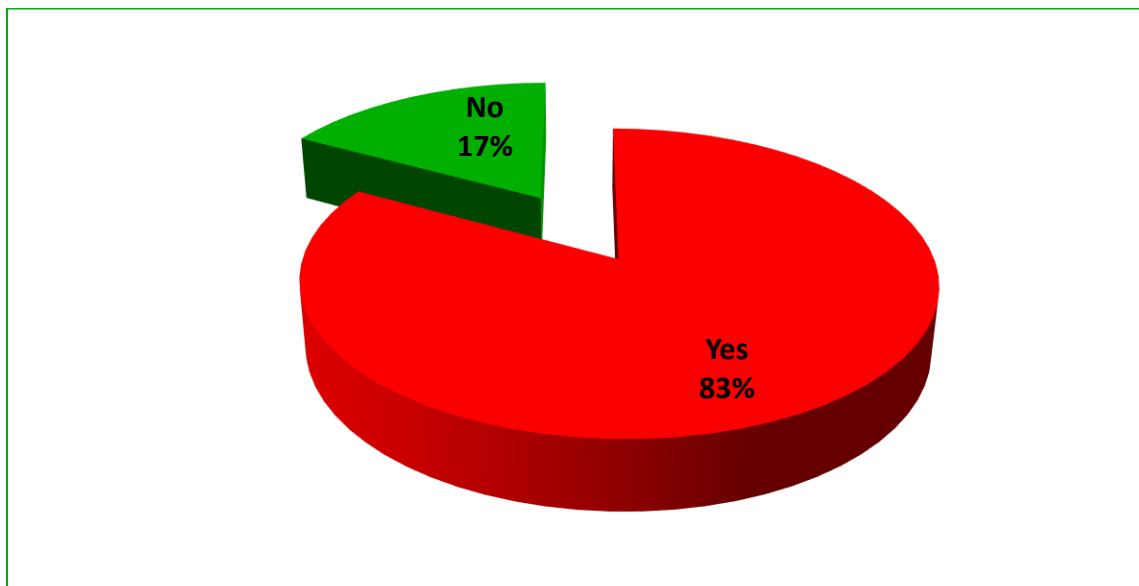
In contrast, of those who said the gender imbalance in Parliament had no effect in Parliament's effectiveness, 45.7% were of the view that the work of Parliament still goes on despite the low number of women. Another 27.7% were also of the view that some women in Parliament hardly make any contribution on issues in Parliament, while 25.6% indicated that issues concerning women are mostly brought up and discussed in Parliament.

**Figure 4.4** No effect of gender gap on Parliament's performance



Again on the issue of political partisanship, when respondents were asked whether they consider political partisanship as a hindrance to the work of Parliament, as high as 83% responded in the affirmative while 17% responded negatively.

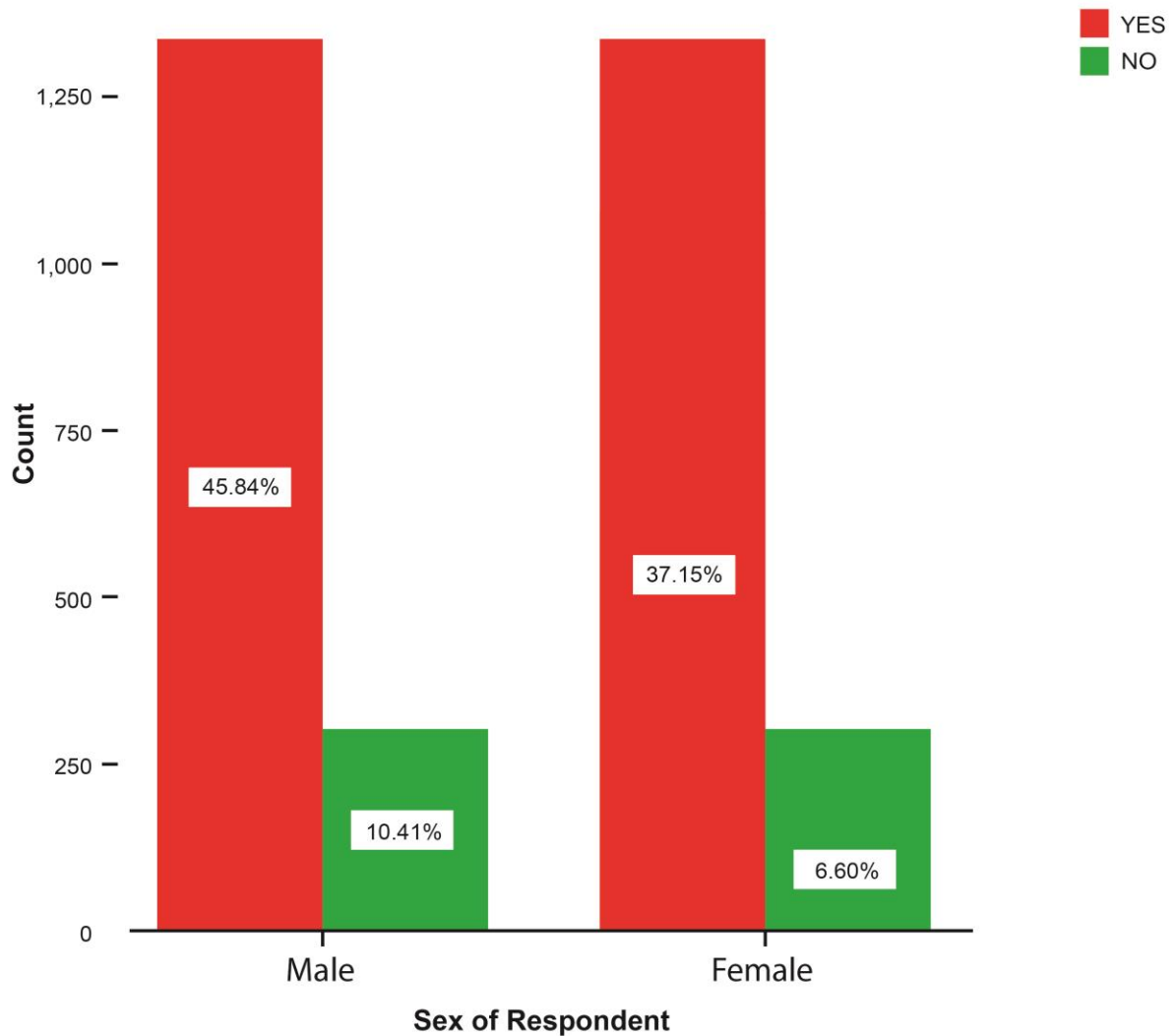
**Figure 4.5** Is political partisanship a hindrance to the work of Parliament?





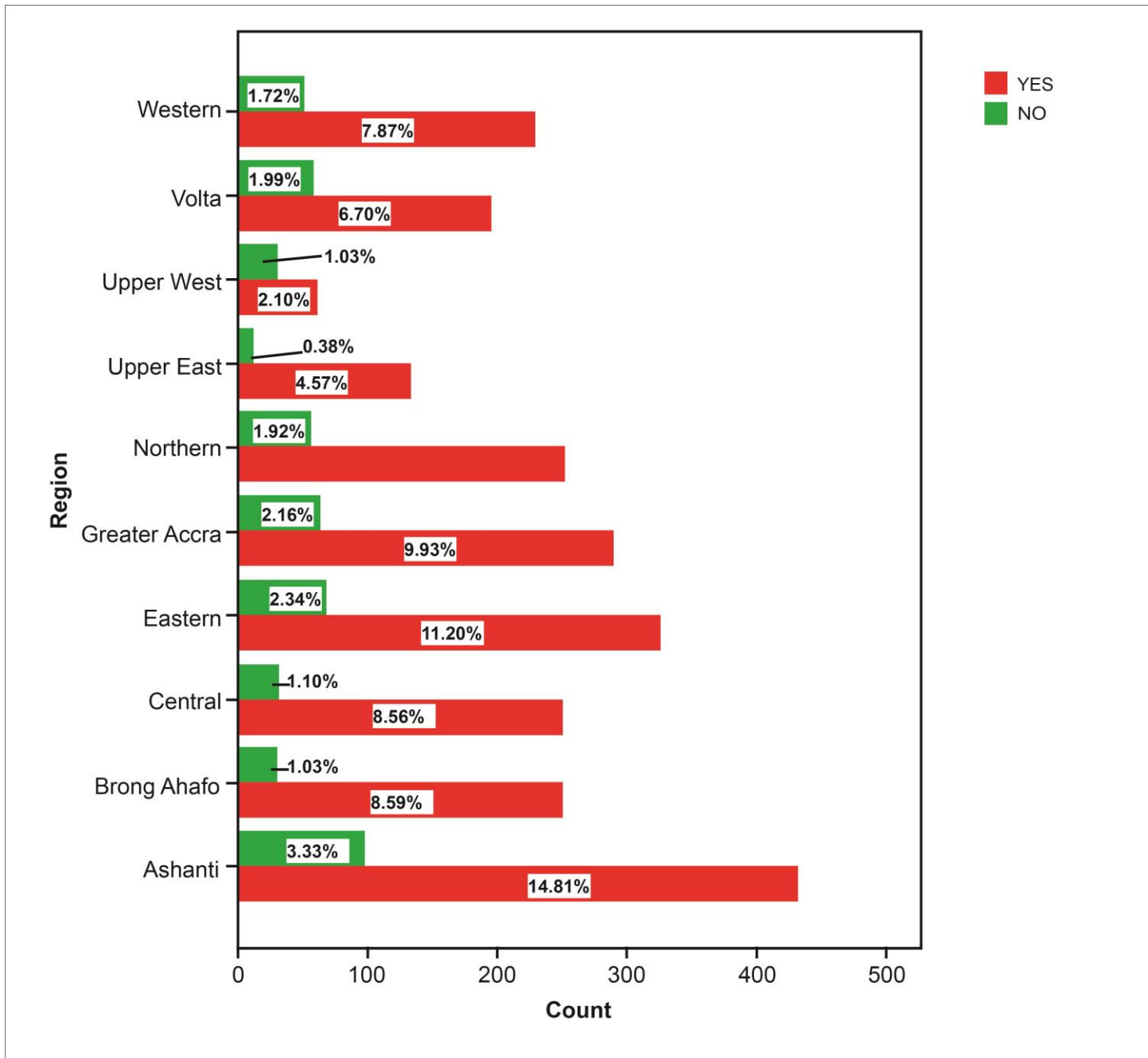
An analysis of the sex distribution of respondents with the response obtained indicated that 45.84% of males and 37.15% of females agree that political partisanship is a hindrance to Parliament's work whereas 10.41% of males and 6.6% of females did not agree.

**Figure 4.6 Is political partisanship a hindrance to the work of Parliament? (Sex distribution)**



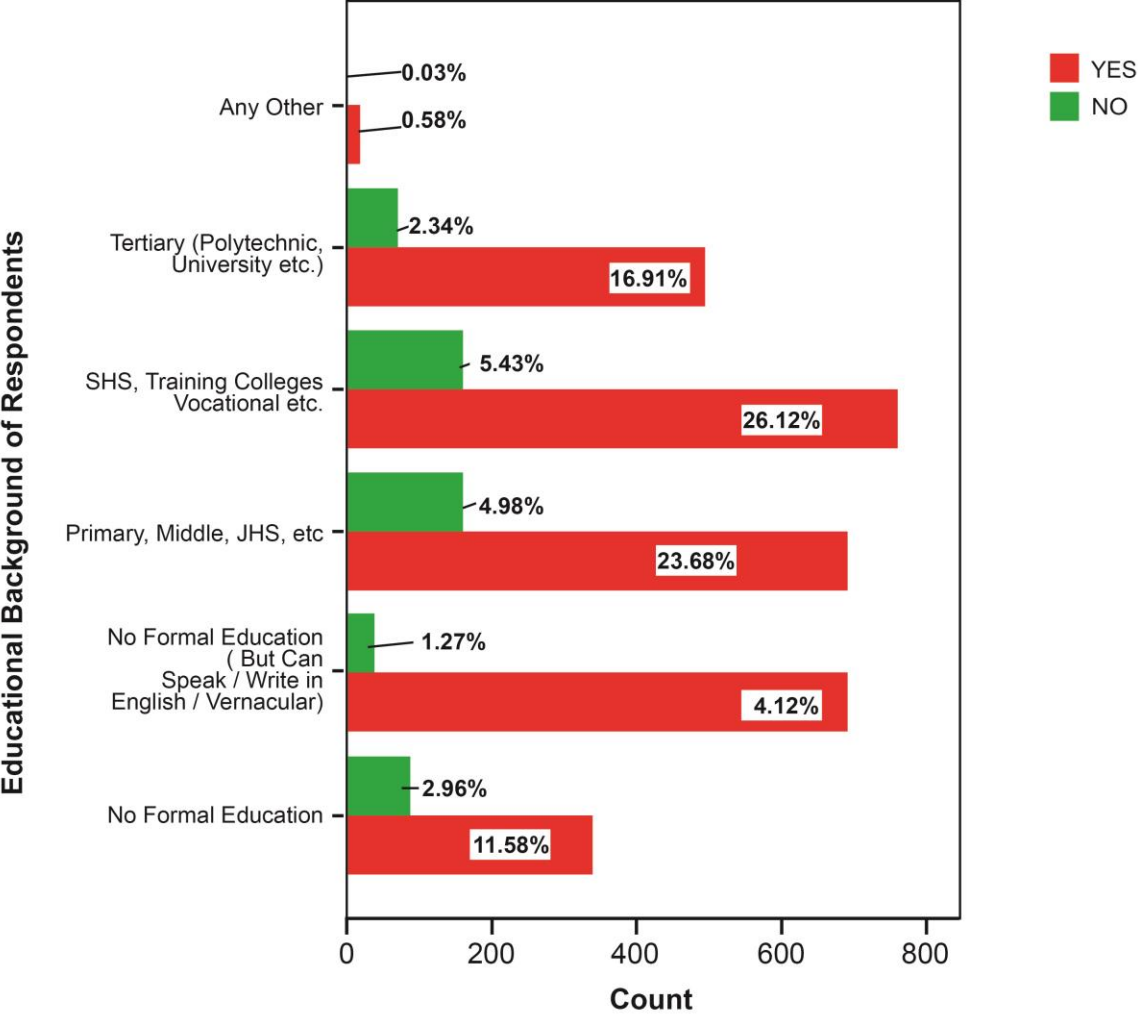
With the regional distribution as depicted in figure 4.7, Ashanti region had the highest proportion (14.8%) of response who answered 'Yes' to the question. Closely following were the Eastern (11.2%), and Greater Accra (9.9%) regions. For those who answered 'No', Ashanti region again had the highest response with 3.3% followed by Eastern and Greater Accra regions with 2.3% and 2.1% respectively. The rest of the results are depicted in the figure below.

**Figure 4.7 Is political partisanship a hindrance to the work of Parliament? (Regional analysis)**



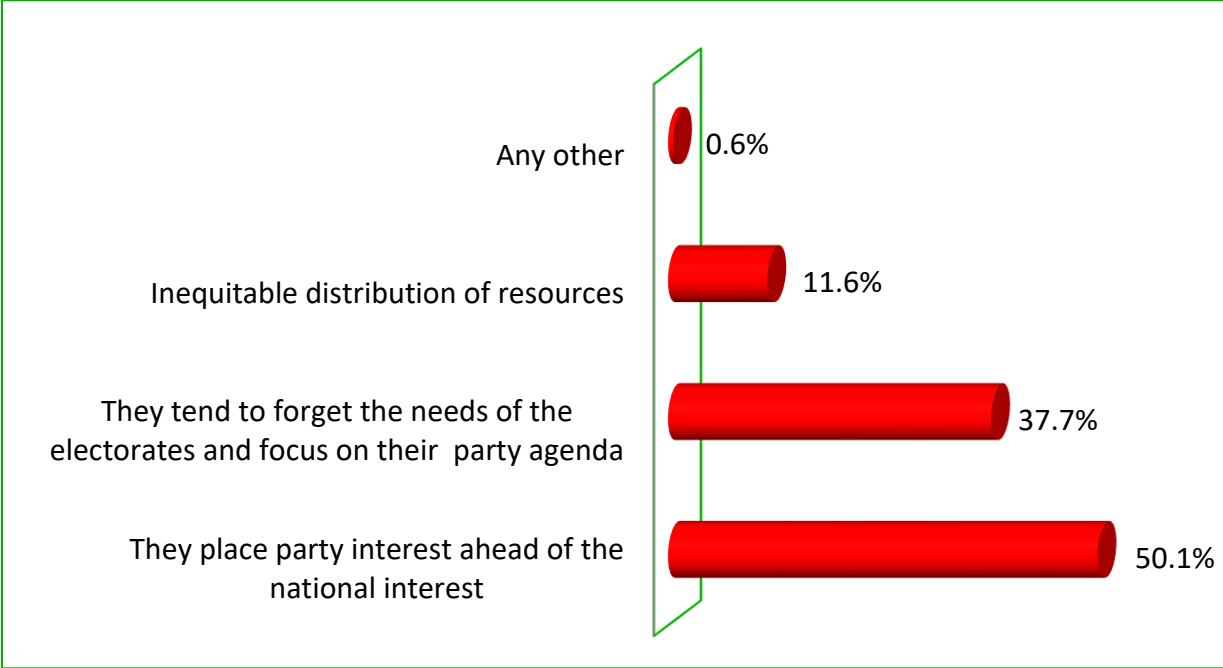
A look at the educational background of respondents on this question also shows that 66.7% of the respondents who had some form of education (comprising of Primary, Secondary and Tertiary) and 15.7% of those who had no formal education (comprising of those with no formal education and those with no formal education but can read or write in English/Vernacular) responded 'Yes' to the question. For those who responded 'No' the highest percentage was those with Secondary education with 5.4% followed by Primary 4.9% and Tertiary 2.3%.

**Figure 4.8 Is political partisanship a hindrance to the work of Parliament? (Educational background of respondents)**

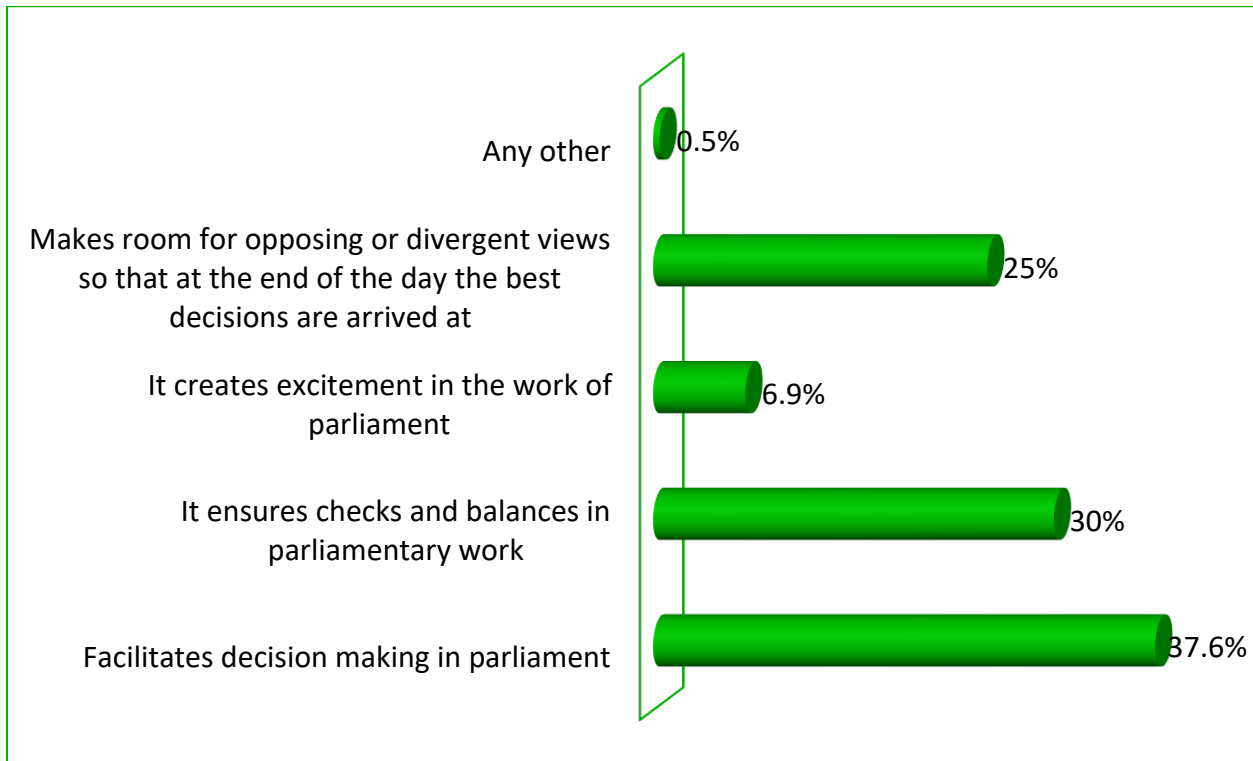


For those who responded in the positive, their reasons were that Parliamentarian's place party interest ahead of national interest (50.1% of the respondents). Some 37.7% said MPs tend to forget the needs of the electorates and focus on their political party agenda while 11.6% also cited inequitable distribution of resources as the reason for their response.

**Figure 4.9 Political Partisanship a hindrance to Parliament's work**



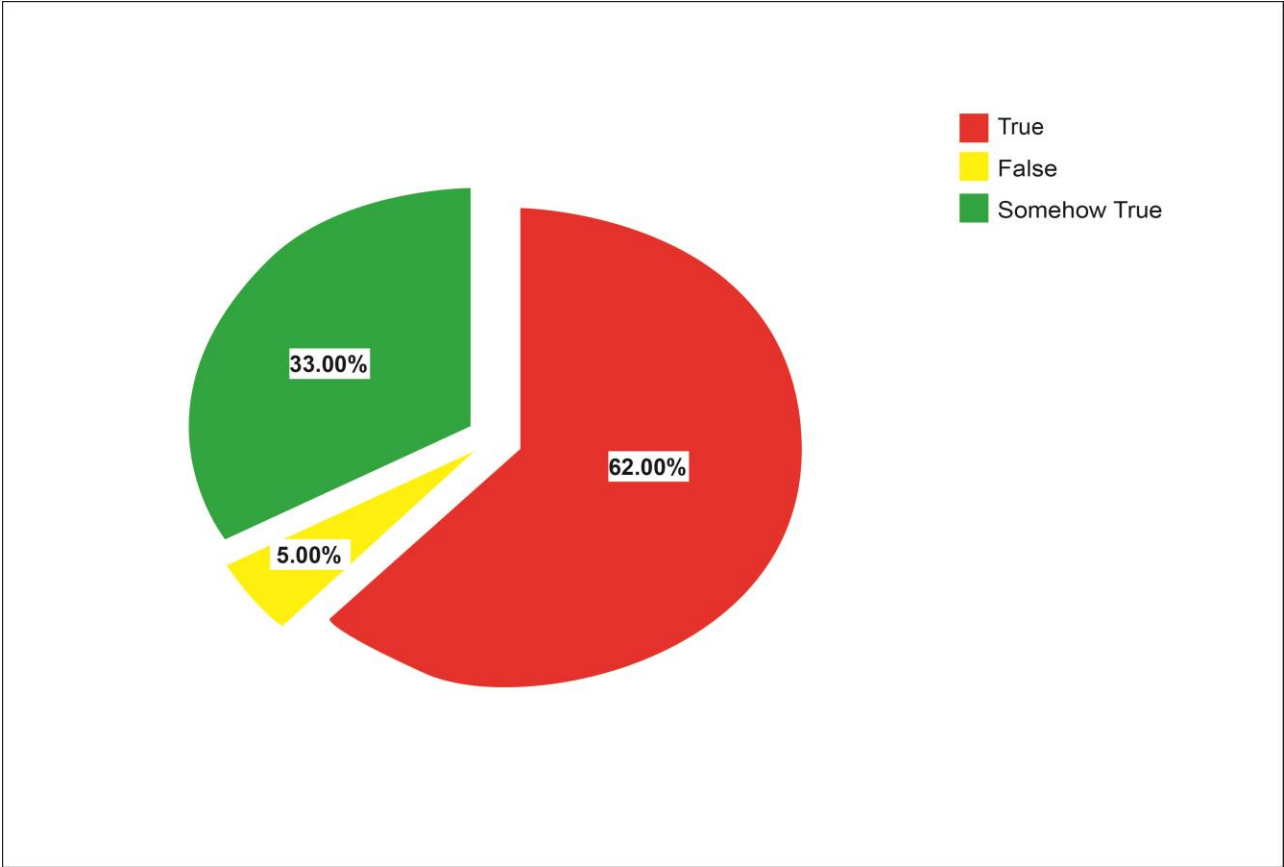
**Figure 4.10 Political Partisanship not a hindrance to Parliament’s work**



For those who did not agree with the assertion that political partisanship is a hindrance to Parliament’s work, a high percentage (37.6%) gave the reason that political partisanship facilitates decision making in Parliament. This was closely followed by 30% of the respondents who said it ensures checks and balance in parliamentary work. 25% believed that political partisanship makes room for opposing or divergent views so that at the end of the day the best decisions are arrived at. While the reason, ‘it creates excitement in the work of Parliament’ was given by 6.9% of the respondents.

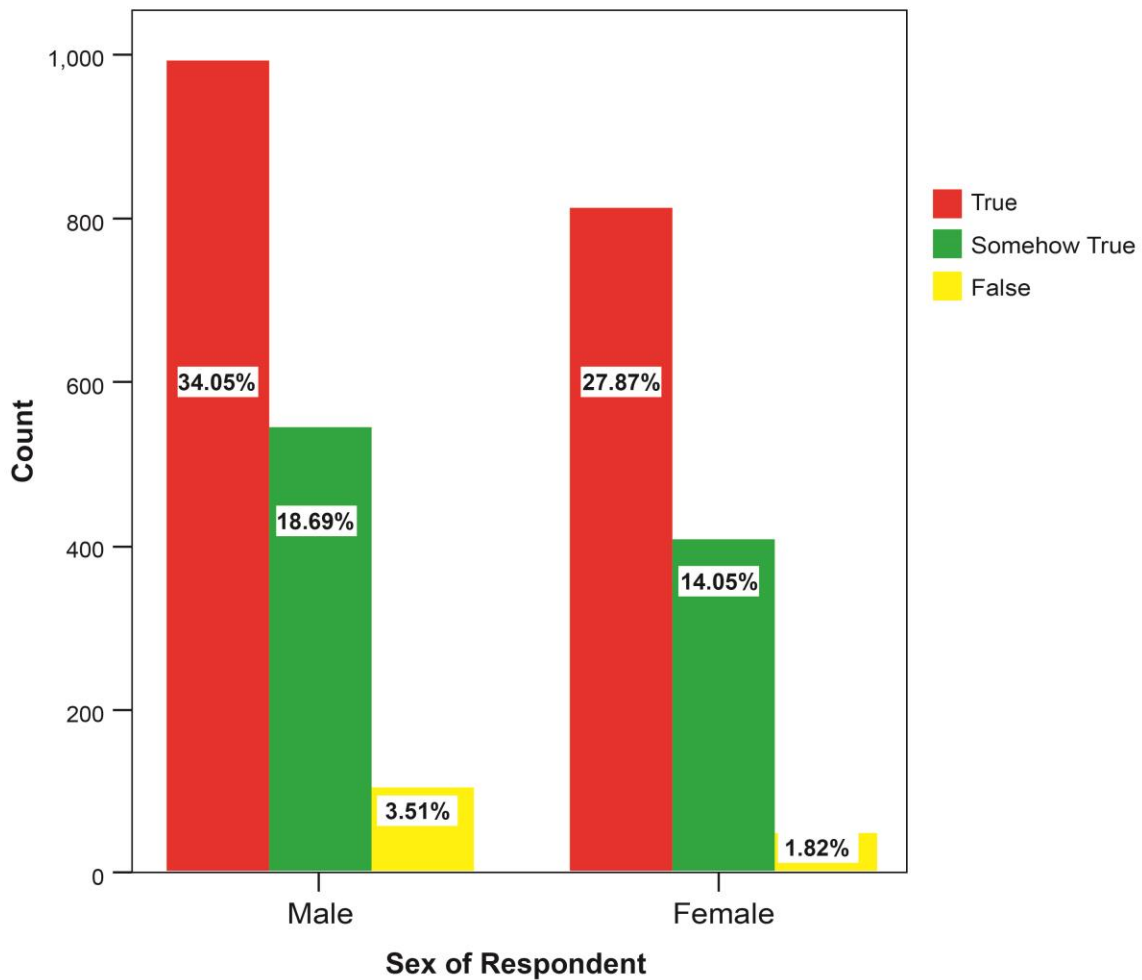
On the issue of perceived corruption among MPs, a significant number (94.6%) of the respondents were of the view that MPs use their positions to accrue wealth for themselves, while just a few 5.3% felt otherwise.

**Figure 4.11** MPs use their position to accrue wealth for themselves



An analysis of this notion according to the sex of respondents shows that 52.74% of males and 41.92% of females agree that MPs use their position to accrue wealth for themselves as compared to 3.51% of males and 1.82% of females who did not agree with the notion. Figure 4.12 below shows the details.

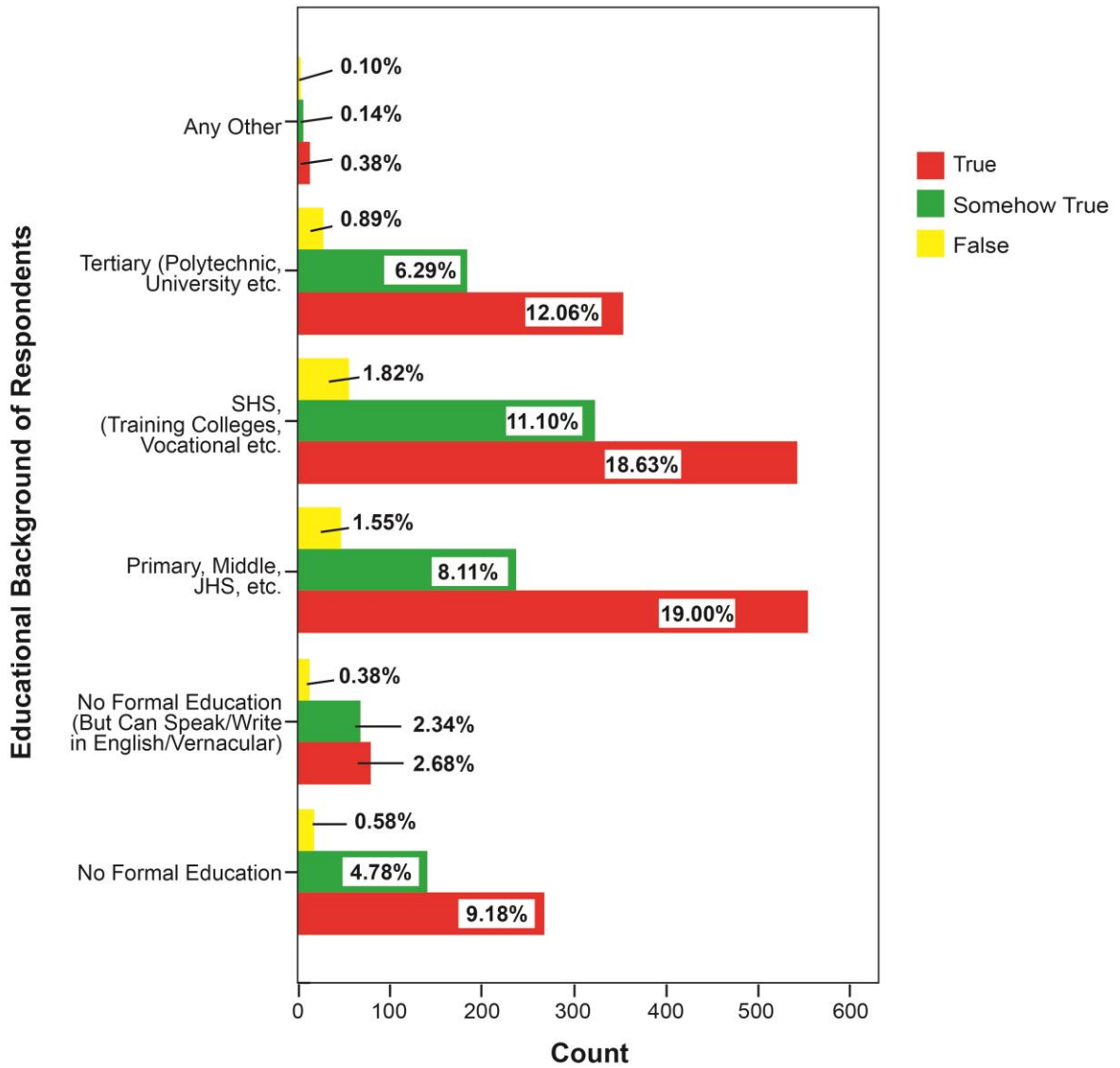
**Figure 4.12 MPs use their position to accrue wealth for themselves (Sex distribution)**



Respondents within all the educational brackets (tertiary, secondary, primary) agreed with the notion with respondents with Secondary education recording the highest percentage with 29.7%, followed by those with Primary education (27.1%) and Tertiary education (18.3%). In contrast, most of the respondents who did not agree with the notion had Secondary and Primary education (1.8% and 1.5% respectively). The educational breakdown of respondents on this subject is presented in figure 4.13 below.



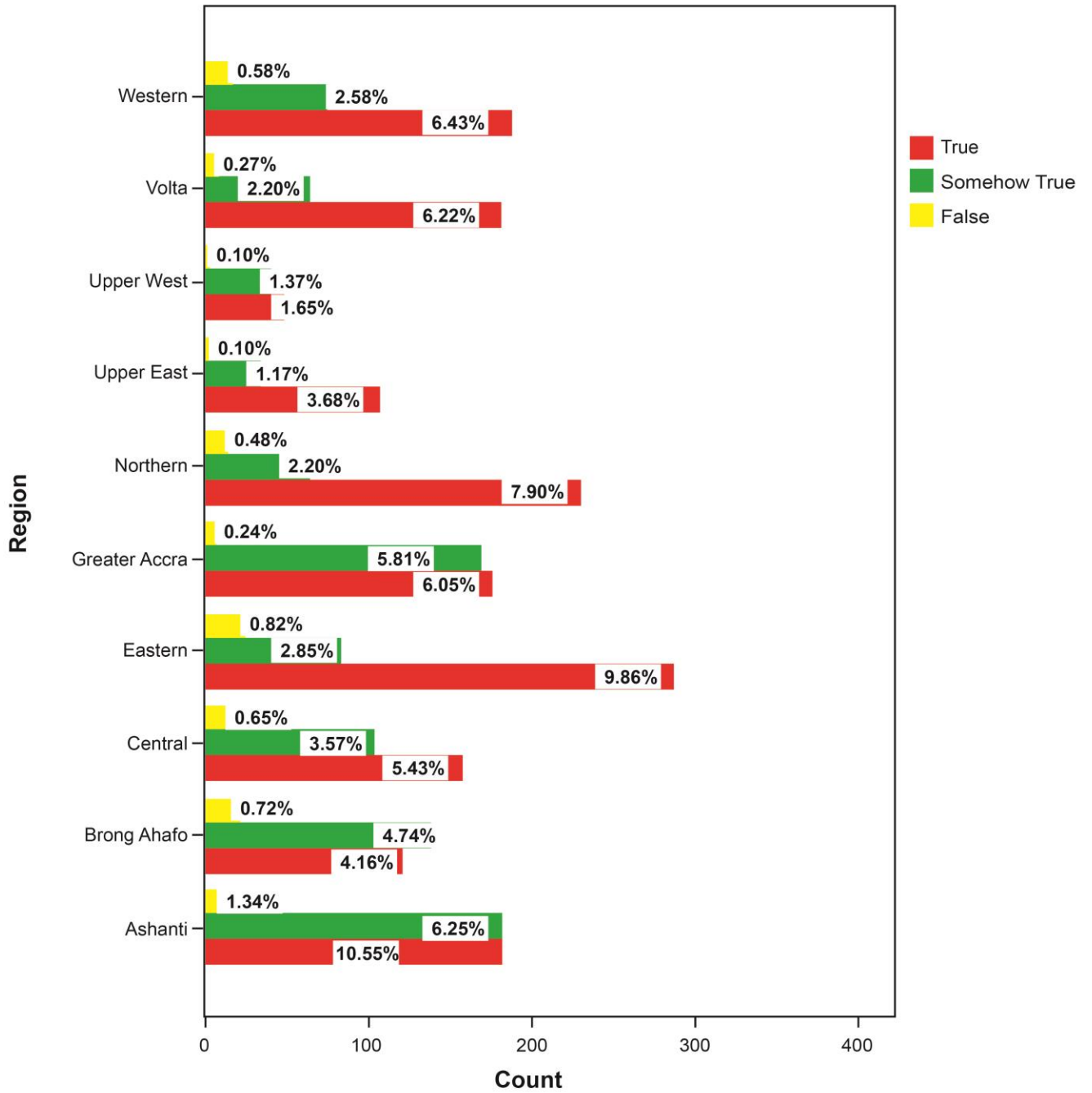
**Figure 4.13 MPs use their position to accrue wealth for themselves (Educational distribution)**



On regional basis, Ashanti (10.5%), Eastern (9.8%) and Northern (7.9%) regions recorded high percentages of respondents who responded 'True' to the notion that MPs use their position to accrue wealth for themselves. On the other hand, all the regions recorded low percentages of respondents who disagreed with the notion with Ashanti, Eastern and Brong Ahafo regions recording the highest percentages (1.3%, 0.8% and 0.7% respectively).

Figure 4.14 shows the details.

Figure 4.14 MPs use their position to accrue wealth for themselves (Regional responses)



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUGGESTIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS TOWARDS MAKING PARLIAMENT MORE EFFECTIVE

Legislature is very essential in the nation's multi-party democracy, and serious efforts must be made to ensure the effective functioning of the legislature as an essential Arm of Government.

This chapter presents suggestions made by Respondents towards making Parliament more effective as well as suggestions on how constituents can make their MPs more effective.

**Table 5.1 How constituents can make MPs more effective**

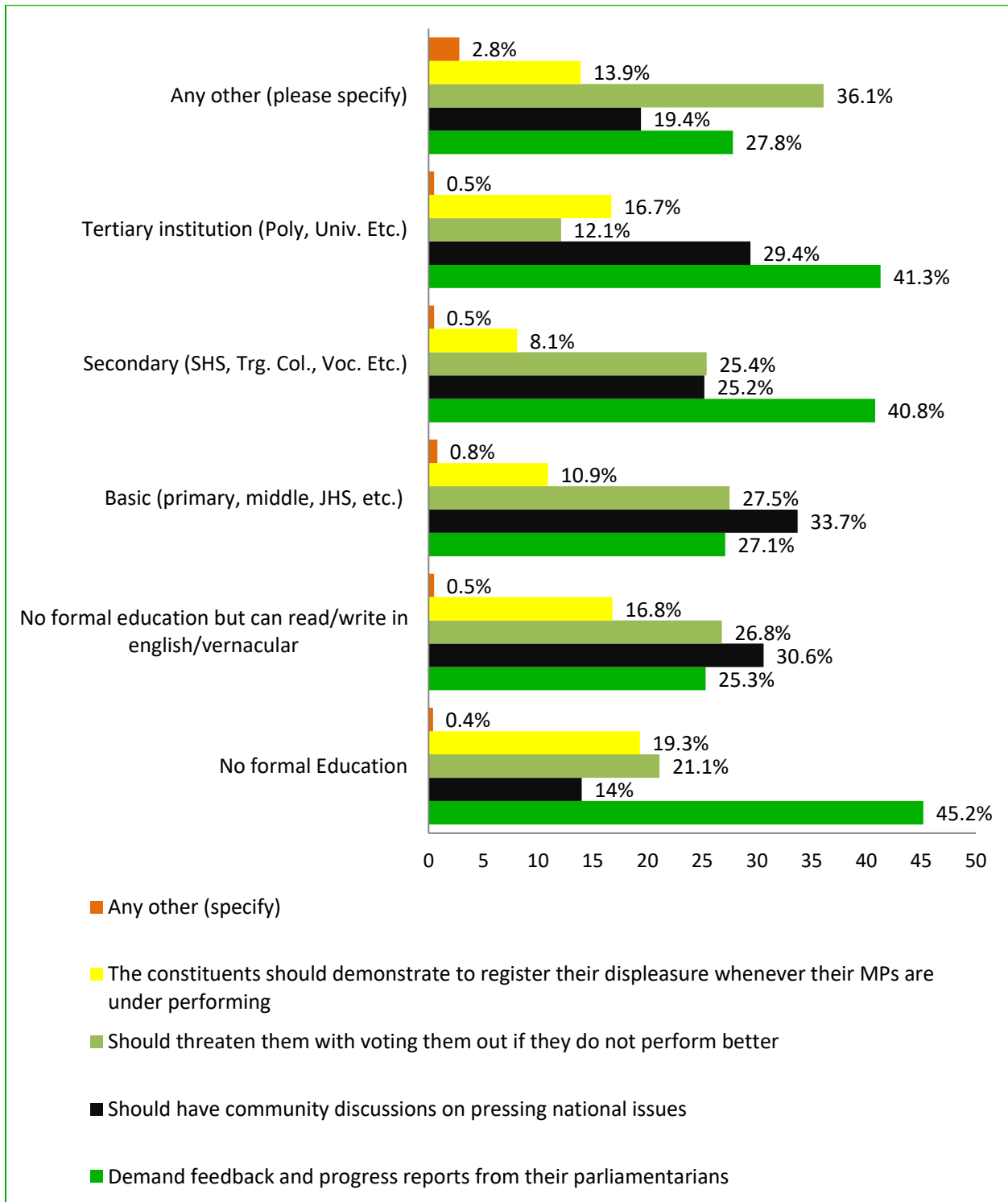
Responses	Percent(%)
<b>They should demand feedback and progress reports from their Parliamentarians</b>	38.2
<b>Should have community discussions on pressing national issues</b>	24.3
<b>Should threaten them with voting them out if they do not perform better</b>	20.1
<b>Should demonstrate to register their displeasure whenever their MPs are under performing</b>	16.4
<b>Any other</b>	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 5.1 shows suggestions by respondents on how constituents can make their MPs more effective. Notable among the suggestions was that people should demand feedback and progress reports from their Parliamentarians (38.2%). Following this was 24.3% of the respondents who suggested that MPs should have community discussions on pressing national issues.

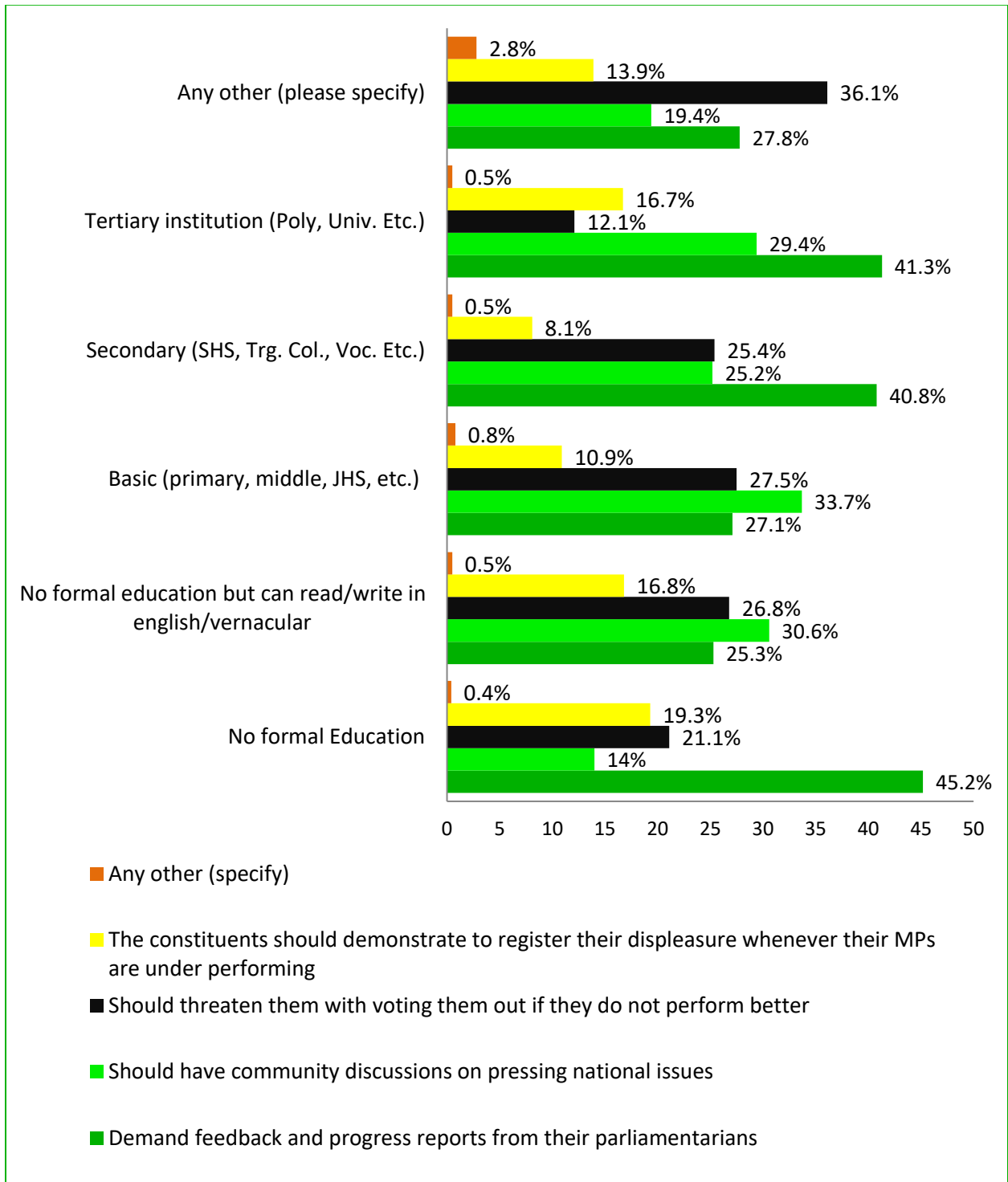
A breakdown of the regions and the suggestions given by respondents shows that, 'Demanding feedback and progress reports from Parliamentarians' recorded a high percentage across all the regions with the highest coming from the Central region (50.9%), Volta region (45.5%) and Northern region (44.6%). The suggestion, 'there should be community discussions on pressing national issues' was also the view of 44.5% of respondents from the Ashanti region.

Again an analysis of the educational background of the responses by respondents shows that the suggestion 'Demanding feedback and progress reports from Parliamentarians' obtained a high percentage across all the levels of education, with the highest (45.2%) from those with no formal education, tertiary education (41.3%) and secondary education (40.8%).

**Figure 5.1 How constituents can make MPs more effective (Regional distribution)**



**Figure 5.2 How constituents can make MPs more effective (Educational background of respondents)**



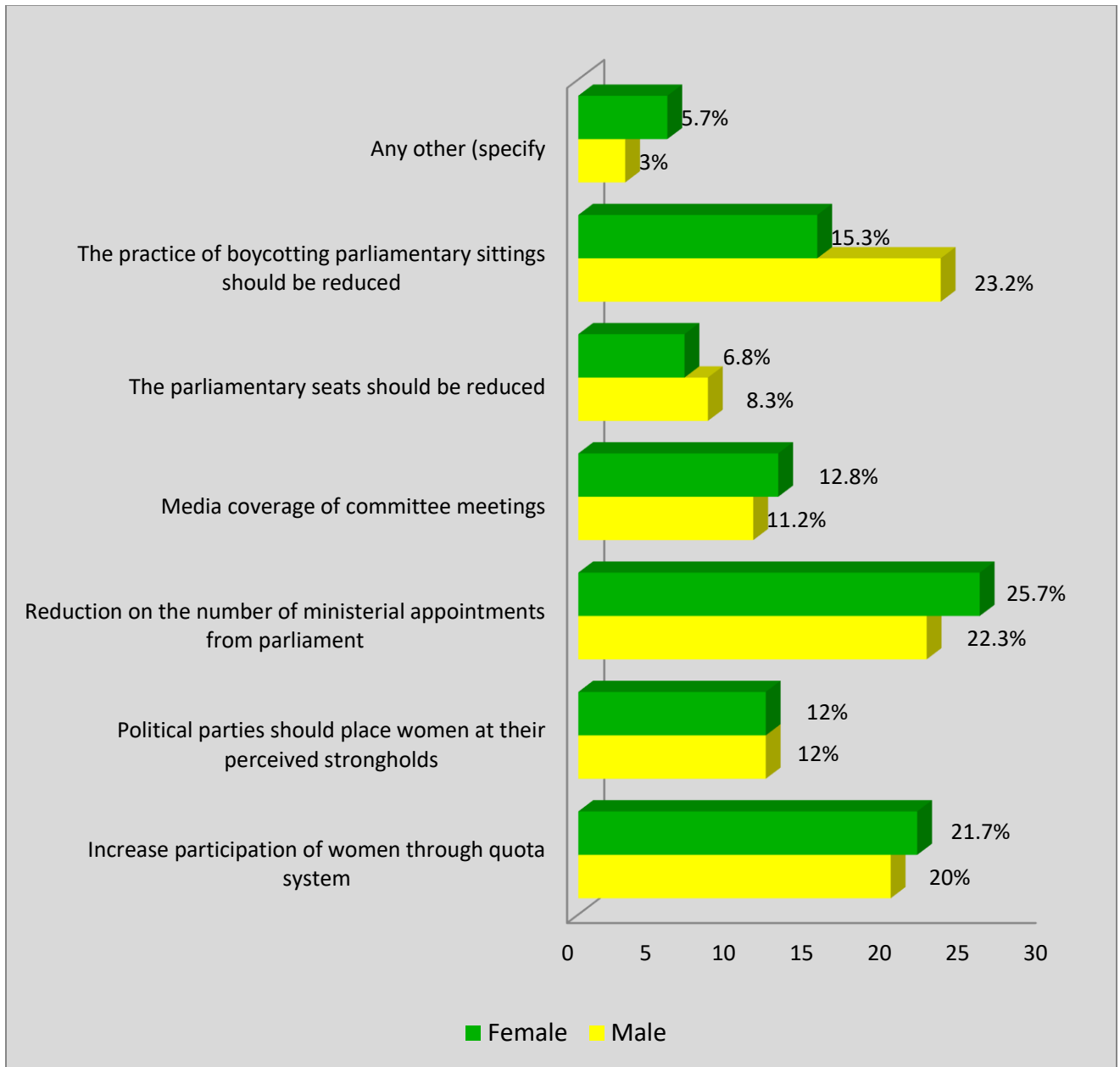
**Table 5.2 Suggestions towards making parliament more effective**

Responses	Percent (%)
Increase participation of women through quota system	20
Reduce the number of ministerial appointments from Parliament	20
The practice of boycotting Parliament sittings should be reduced	18.5
The parliamentary seats should be reduced	15.5
Political parties should place women at their perceived strongholds	12.7
Media coverage of committee meetings	10.4
Any other	2.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

As highlighted in table 5.2 above, the responses “increasing participation of women through the quota system” and “reducing the number of ministerial appointments from Parliament” were top of the various suggestions made by 20% of the respondents. Others also suggested that the practice of boycotting parliamentary sittings should be reduced (18.5%) and that there should be media coverage of committee meetings (10.4%).

An analysis of the suggestions according to the sex of the respondents shows that the suggestion ‘increase participation of women through quota system’ was mentioned more by females (21.7%) as compared to males (20%). Similarly, the suggestion ‘reducing the number of ministerial appointments from Parliament’ was also mentioned more by females (25.7%) than males (22.3%). The rest of the data is presented in figure 5.3 below.

**Figure 5.3 Views of males and females on suggestions towards making Parliament more effective.**





## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION

Ghana's Parliament has continued to contribute to democratic governance in Ghana since 1993 without any disruption. This marks a departure from the years of military interventions and political instability (1966-81) when at best, Parliament would sit for only two and half years before a coup d'état put an unexpected end to its existence. Within the new political environment has also come the need for higher levels of effectiveness in Parliament's performance.

Parliament is a representative institution and the hub of democratic governance. It has the responsibility to foster public awareness of the basic doctrines of democracy. Parliament is known for her basic function of making laws; however a number of functions are incidental to the performance of this function. Among others, the main functions performed by Parliament include; Legislative, oversight of the executive, representational and deliberative functions.

A Member of Parliament is therefore a representative of all his constituents regardless of their party affiliations and as a duty he/she must find time to interact with the constituents at regular intervals. There is the need for MPs to relate more harmoniously with their constituents thus interacting more with their people on national issues as consensus building is a necessary tool to bring about development in any multi-party democratic state.

Respondents also acknowledged the wide gender gap in Parliament as a major obstacle to Parliament's work. This in their view limits women's contributions to the growth and development of the country. There is therefore the need to put in place concrete measures to support women and ensure increased participation in the political processes at all levels. Parliament should also be made to ensure that gender equality in policy-making becomes a focal issue in parliamentary discussions.

Another obstacle mentioned by respondents is the political partisanship among MPs. From the study, respondents believe MPs place party interest ahead of national interest in performing their work.

This study is expected to inform the NCCE's public education on the roles and functions of MPs so as to enable Ghanaians understand the functions and work of Parliament. It will also help educate the citizenry to co-operate with Parliament and work towards consolidating democracy and the entrenchment of the democratic culture in Ghana.

Leadership and MPs government organizations and agencies, Civil Society Organizations and the citizenry are also expected to find these findings useful in many ways.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

**Abdul-Gafaru, Abdulai.** (2009). Political Context Study – Ghana. Human Rights, Power and Civic Action Research Project, Universities of Oslo, Leeds and Ghana.

**Duties of an MP.** (2014, October,24). Parliament.gh.com. Accessed October 24, 2014, from <http://www.parliament.gh.com/content/286/41>.

**Fish, Steven M.** (2006). *Stronger Legislatures, Stronger Democracies*, Journal of Democracy Volume 17, Number 1.

Gomez, R. (2008). *Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures: Application of the CPA Benchmarks to the Sri Lanka Parliament*, Washington DC, WBI.

National Commission for Civic Education Act, 1993. Act 452 of the Parliament of the Republic of Ghana.

**Republic of Ghana Constitution, 1992.**

Sen, A. (2001), 'Democracy As a Universal Value' in Diamond, L & Plattner, M (eds), *The Global Divergence of Democracies* (Baltimore, Jon Hopkins University Press).

**Tsekpo, Anthony and Hudson, Alan.** (2009). Parliamentary Strengthening and the Paris Principles Ghana Case Study.

## APPENDIX

### A METHODOLOGY

This was a cross sectional study conducted as a national sample survey. It made use of primary data from the field as well as secondary data. The study collected both qualitative and quantitative data.

A sample size of three thousand was decided upon based on financial, time and other resource constraints. A confidence level of 95% and a confidence interval of two (2) applied. A combination of random and purposive sampling techniques was employed in the study. It is worthy to note that of the three thousand, two thousand nine hundred and ten responses were obtained with a short fall of eighty seven arising out of some technical challenges encountered on the field.

The study was conducted in all the ten (10) regions of the country. In all, Seventy two (72) districts were covered. Two hundred and sixteen (216) districts made up the sampling frame out of which Seventy two (72) were included in the sample for this research.

The number of districts per region was selected based on the region's proportionate share of the national population from the results of the 2010 population and housing census. Regions with 10 percent and above of the national population had 44 questionnaires per district. Regions with less than 10 percent of the population but greater than 5 percent had 40 questionnaires per district while regions with 5 percent or less of the national population had 36 questionnaires per district.

Based on the above-mentioned distribution pattern, selected districts in Greater Accra, Ashanti, Eastern, Northern each received 44 questionnaires. Selected districts in Western, Brong Ahafo, Central and Volta regions received 40 questionnaires each while selected districts in the Upper West and Upper East regions each had 36 questionnaires per district.

Within a region however, selection of individual districts sampled were based on the purposive and random sampling techniques. Attempts were made to get a fair representation of both rural and urban areas. All regional capitals were purposively sampled while rural districts were randomly selected for the study. The Upper East Regional capital was purposively replaced with Bongo.

The unit of analysis was the individual respondent with the household serving as the primary sampling unit. A semi-structured questionnaire was used to elicit the information from the respondents.

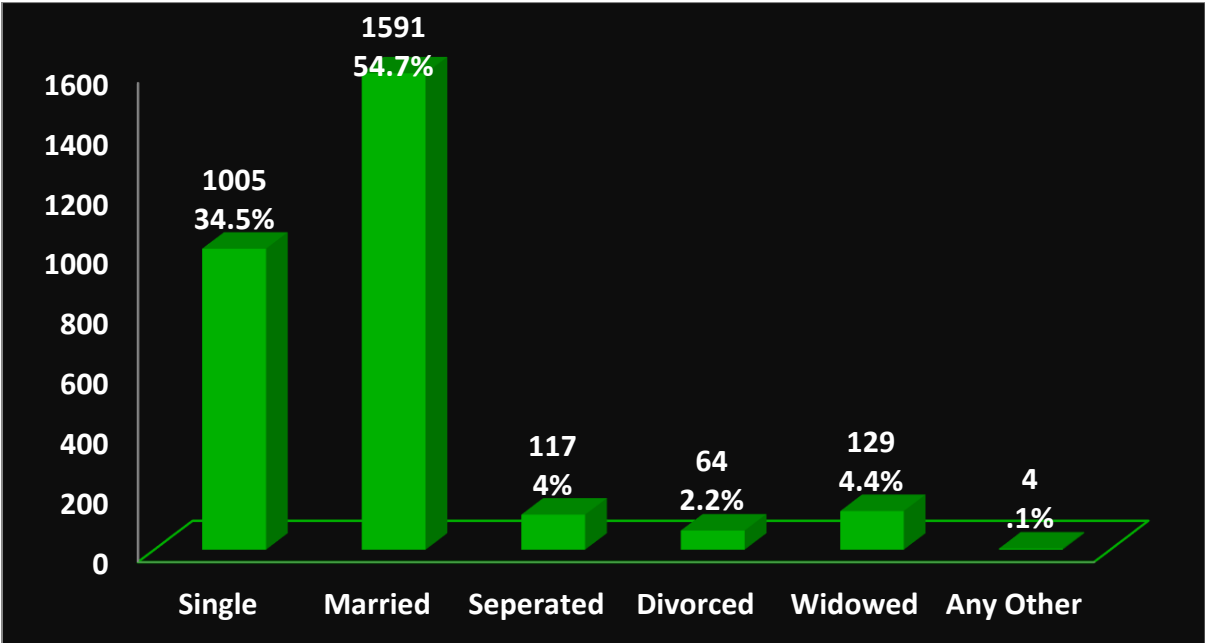
A pre-testing exercise was carried out on a sample of respondents in some selected districts to ensure that the questions were duly cleared of ambiguities and other forms of mistakes.

Research assistants drawn from the Commission's workforce were trained in the use of a mobile telephony system to collect the primary data.

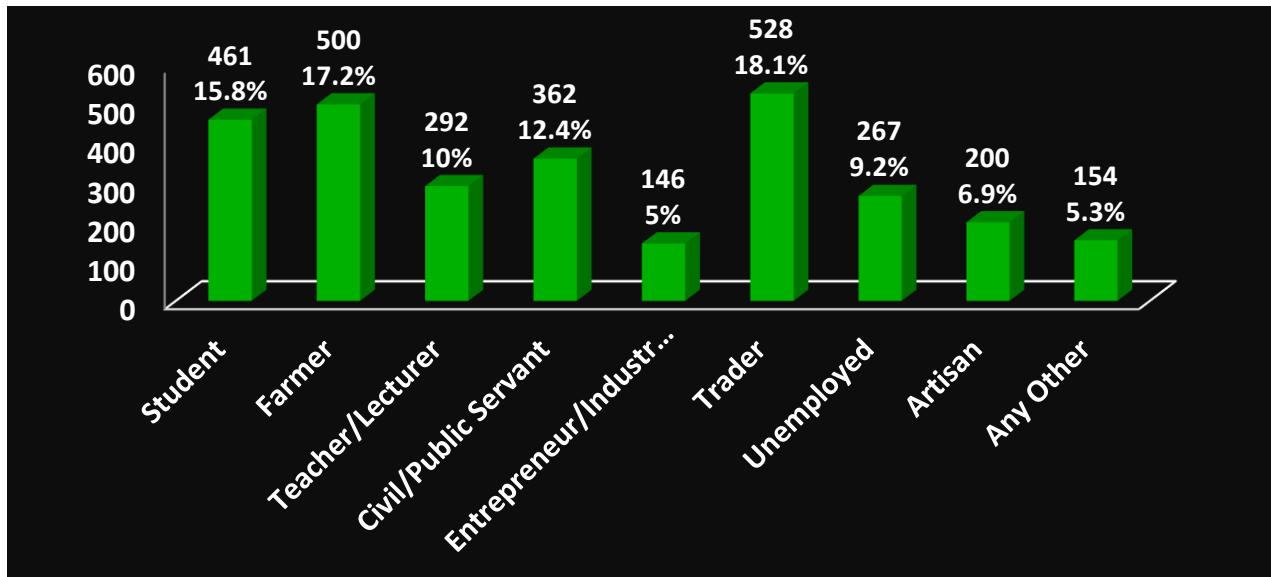
The data was edited and analyzed at the Research department of the Commission using a combination of data analysis tools and software.

**B- SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENTS**

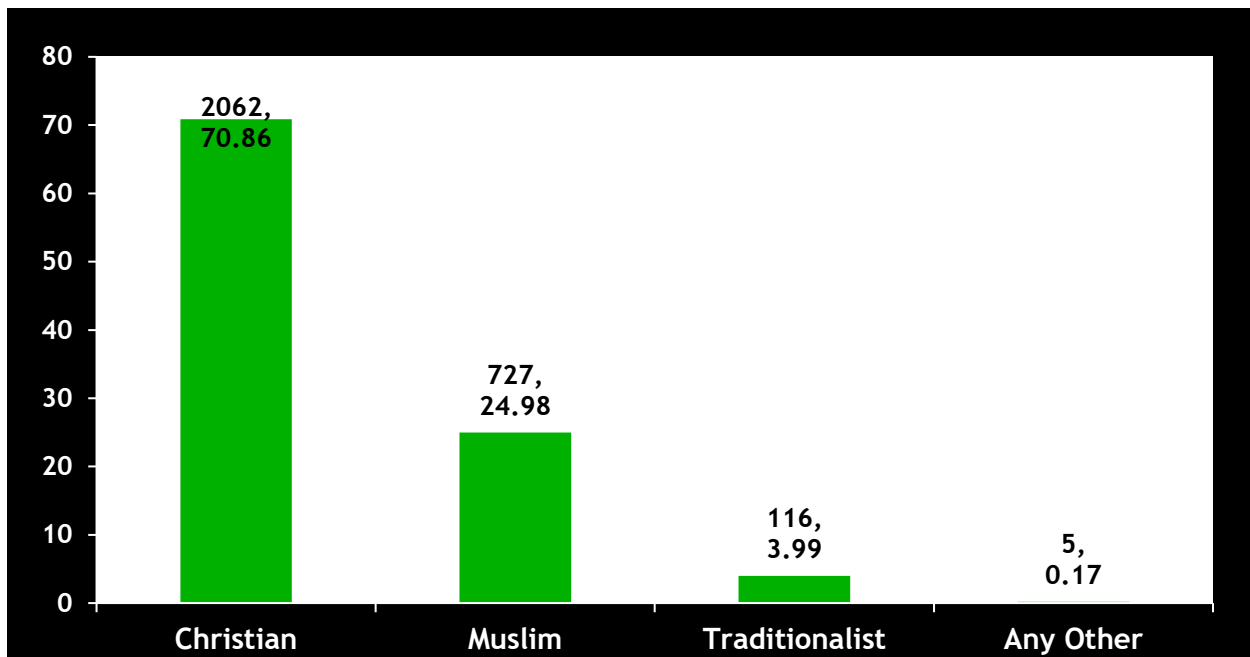
**Marital status of respondents**



### Occupational background of respondents



### Religious affiliation of respondents



## C: SELECTED DISTRICTS

1. Ahafo Ano North
2. Ahafo Ano South
3. Amansie Central
4. Asante Akim North
5. Asante Akim South
6. Atwima Nwabiagya
7. Bosomtwe
8. Kumasi Metropolitan
9. Kumawu
10. Kwabre East
11. Obuasi
12. Sekyere East
13. Asunafo South
14. Asutifi South
15. Dormaa East
16. Jaman North
17. Nkoranza South
18. Pru
19. Sunyani Municipal
20. Abura/Asebu/Kwamankese
21. Agona West
22. Ajumako/Enyan/Essiam
23. Cape Coast Metropolitan
24. Effutu Municipal
25. Ekumfi
26. Twifo/Heman/Lower/Denkyir  
a
27. Akwapim South
28. Atiwa
29. Birim Central
30. Kwaebibirem
31. Lower Manya Krobo
32. New Juaben
33. Suhum/Kraboia/Coaltar
34. Upper West Akim
35. West Akim
36. Accra Metropolitan
37. Ashaiman
38. Ga South
39. Kpone Katamanso
40. La Dade-Kotopon
41. Ledzokuku-Krowor
42. Shai-Osu Doku
43. Tema Metropolitan
44. Central Gonja
45. Chereponi
46. East Mamprusi
47. Gushiegu
48. Kumbungu
49. Sawla-Tuna-Kalba
50. Tamale Metropolitan
51. Zabzugu
52. Bawku Municipal
53. Bongo
54. Builsa South
55. Kassena Nankana East
56. Jirapa
57. Sissala West
58. Wa Municipal
59. Adaklu
60. Biakoye
61. Central Tongu
62. Ho Municipal
63. Ketu North
64. Kpando Municipal
65. Krachi Nchumuru
66. Bibiani/Anhwiaso/Bekwai
67. Juaboso
68. Mpohor
69. Prestea-Huni Valley



70. Sekondi Takoradi

Metropolitan

71. Tarkwa-Nsuaem Municipal

72. Wassa Amenfi East

