

Ghana Center for Democratic Development
Accra, Ghana
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News release

Ghanaian women have less financial decision-making power, lag in political participation, Afrobarometer survey shows

Ghanaian women are twice as likely as men to defer to their spouses in decisions about household finances, according to a recent Afrobarometer survey that also finds persistent gender gaps in education and ownership of key assets.

Apart from voting in general elections, women are less interested in politics and less likely than men to participate in political and civic activities. The survey also shows a widening digital gap between men and women despite an increase in women's regular use of the Internet.

The Ghanaian government has expressed its full commitment to all the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including Goal 5, which calls for ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life. The president was named African Union Gender Champion for his efforts in promoting gender equality. But Ghana ranks among the bottom third of countries (133rd out of 189) in gender equality in the United Nations Development Programme's 2019 Gender Inequality Index.

Key findings

- Men are 10 percentage points more likely than women to say they make decisions themselves about how household money is spent (71% vs. 61%), while women are more than twice as likely as men to defer that decision-making power to their spouses (13% vs. 5%) (Figure 1).
- Women trail men in the ownership of a range of key assets, including a bank account (19-percentage-point difference), motor vehicle (17 points), computer (12 points), and mobile phone (9 points) (Figure 2).
- Men are twice as likely as women to have post-secondary education, whereas women are twice as likely as men to lack formal education (Figure 3).
- Women and men are equally likely to say they voted in the 2016 elections. But women lag behind men in other forms of political and civic engagement, including an 11-percentage-point gap in attendance of community meetings (44% vs. 55%) (Figure 4).
- Since 2005, women have consistently expressed less interest than men in politics, trailing by 11 percentage points in 2019 (Figure 5).
- Since 2008, the digital gap between men and women has consistently widened (from 5 to 17 percentage points), even though women's regular use of the Internet has increased (Figure 6).

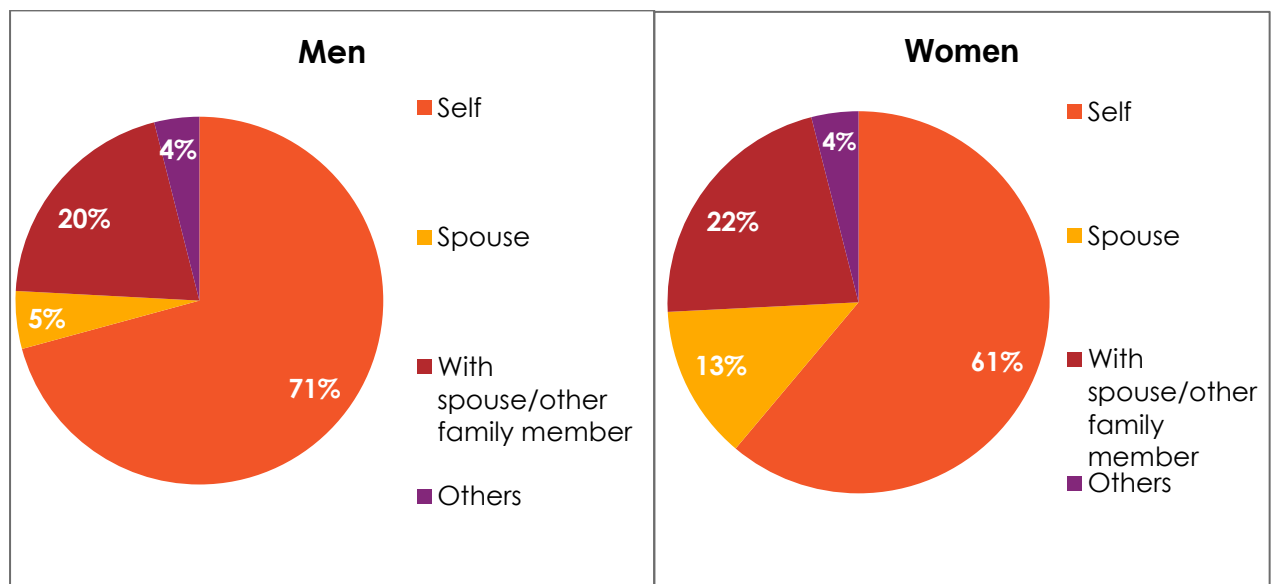
Afrobarometer surveys

Afrobarometer is a pan-African, nonpartisan survey research network that provides reliable data on Africans' experiences and evaluations of quality of life, governance, and democracy. Seven rounds of surveys were completed in up to 38 countries between 1999 and 2018. Round 8 surveys in 2019/2020 are planned in at least 35 countries. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice with nationally representative samples.

The Afrobarometer team in Ghana, led by the Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana), interviewed 2,400 adult Ghanaians between 16 September and 3 October 2019. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/-2 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. Previous surveys were conducted in Ghana in 1999, 2002, 2004, 2008, 2012, 2014, and 2017.

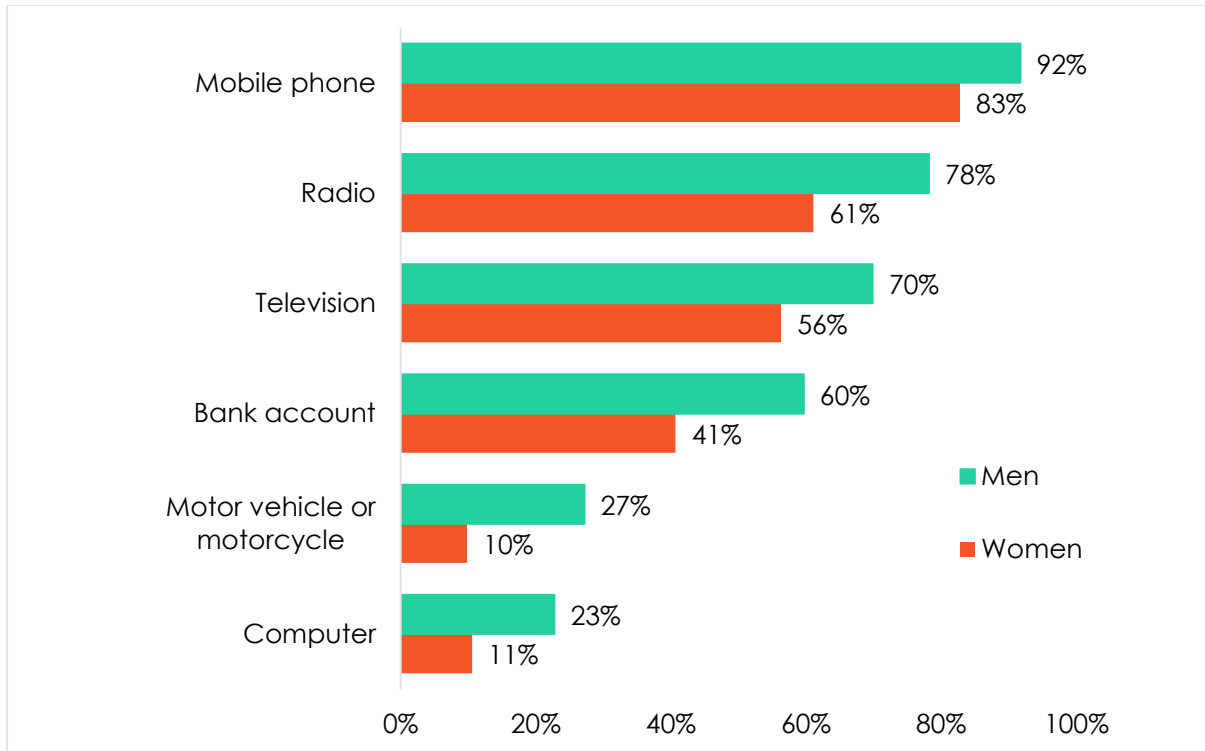
Charts

Figure 1: Deciding how money is used | by gender | Ghana | 2019



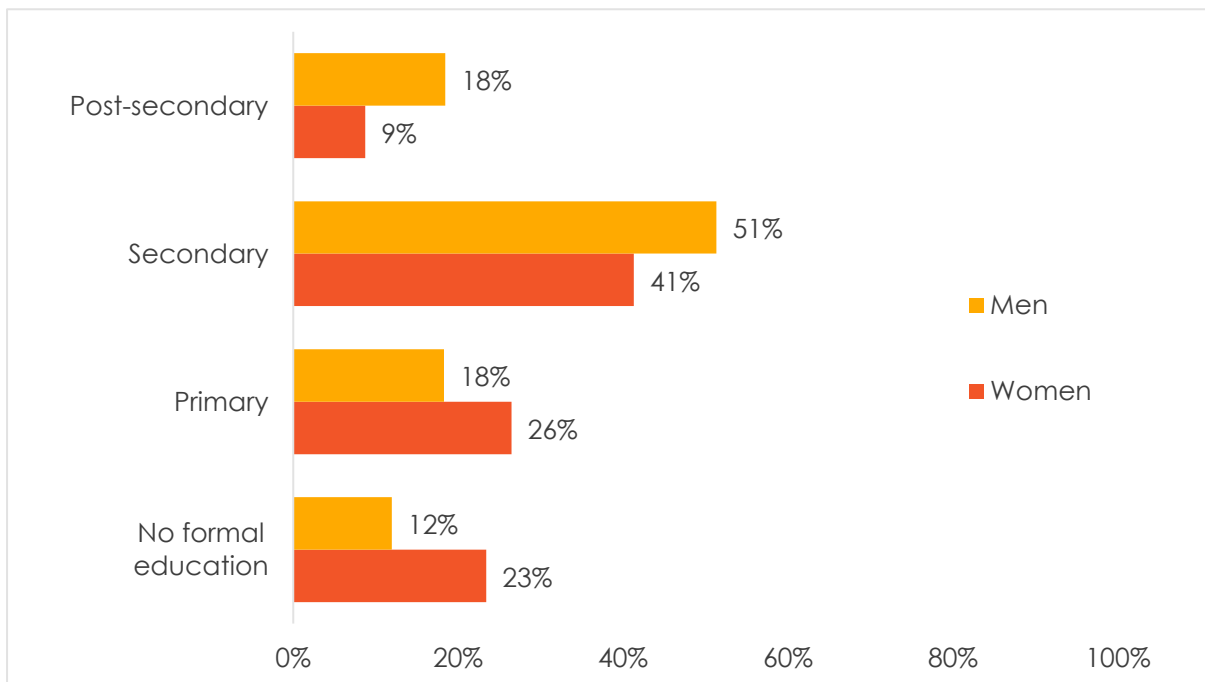
Respondents were asked: *What is the main way that decisions are made about how to use any money that you have or earn, for example from a job, a business, selling things, or other activities?*

Figure 2: Asset ownership | by gender | Ghana | 2019



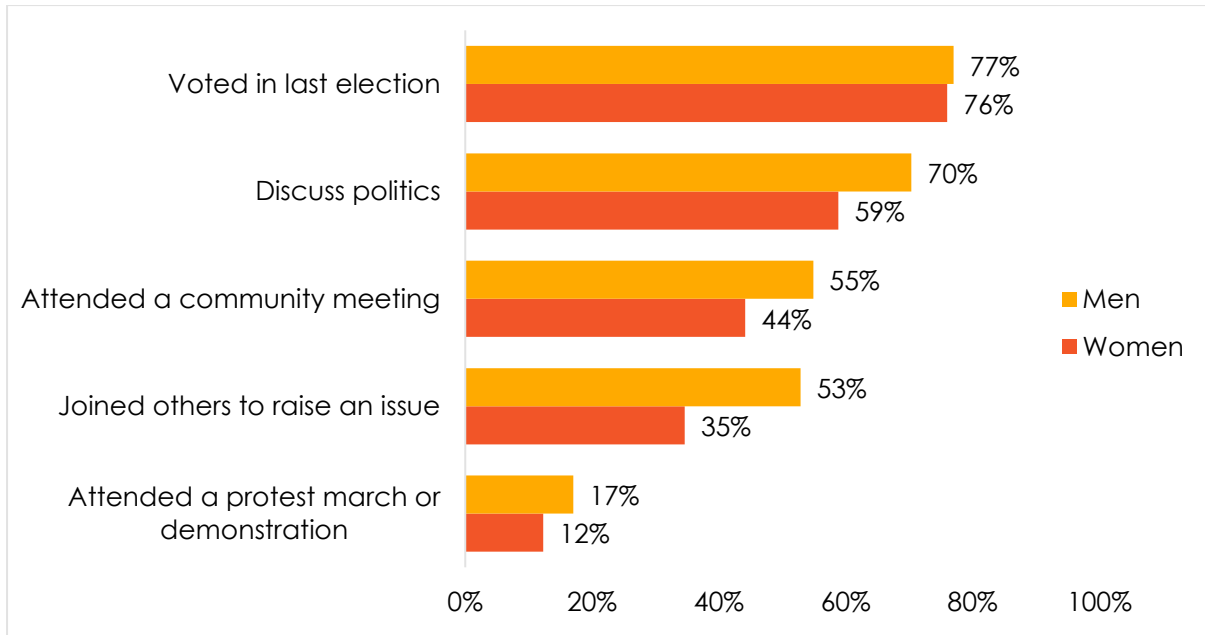
Respondents were asked: Which of these things do you personally own? Does anyone else in your household own one? (% who say they personally own these assets)

Figure 3: Educational levels | by gender | Ghana | 2019



Respondents were asked: What is your highest level of education?

Figure 4: Political participation and civic engagement | by gender | Ghana | 2019



Respondents were asked:

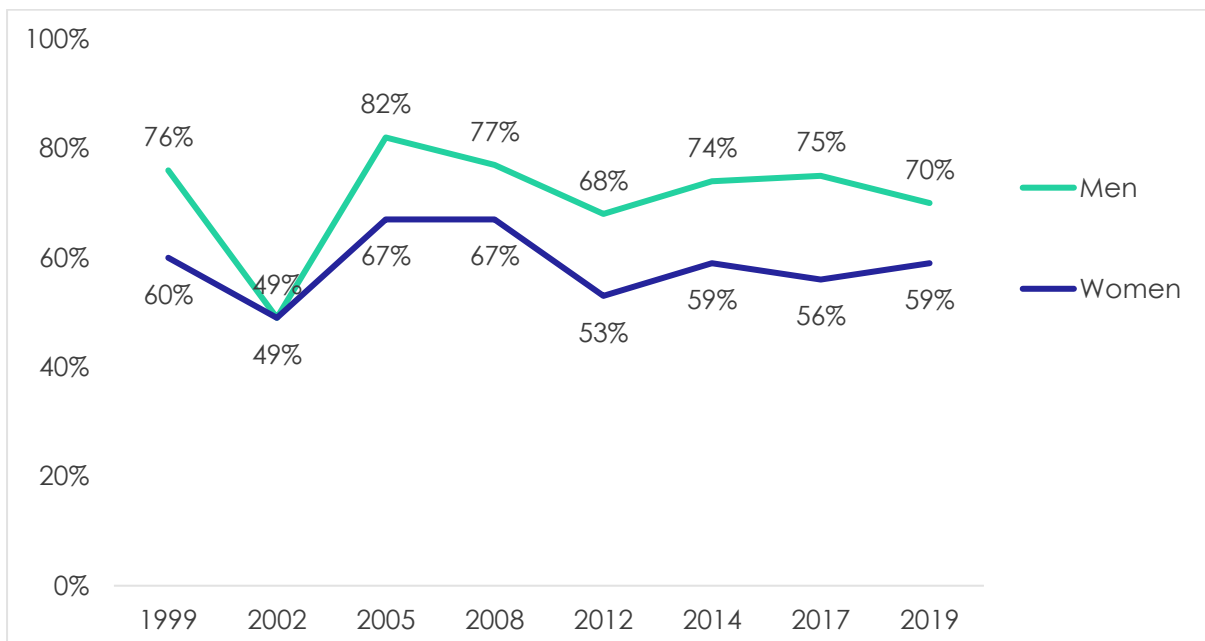
When you get together with your friends or family, would you say you discuss political matters: Frequently? Occasionally? Never? (% who say "frequently" or "occasionally")

Here is a list of actions that people sometimes take as citizens. For each of these, please tell me whether you, personally, have done any of these things during the past year.

- Attended a community meeting?
 - Got together with others to raise an issue?
 - Participated in a demonstration or protest march?
- (% who say at least once or twice)

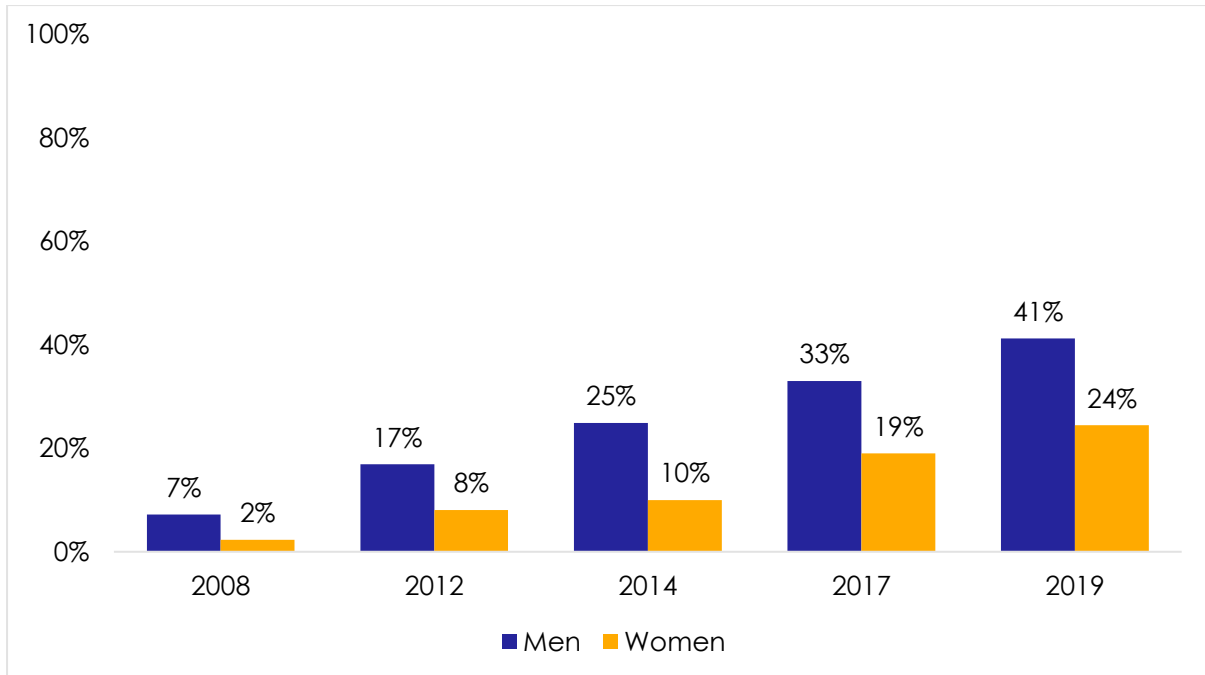
In the last national election held in 2016, did you vote, or not, or were you too young to vote?

Figure 5: Discuss politics | by gender | Ghana | 1999-2019



Respondents were asked: When you get together with your friends or family, would you say you discuss political matters: Frequently? Occasionally? Never? (% who say "frequently" or "occasionally")

Figure 6: Gaps in regular Internet use | by gender | Ghana | 2008-2019



Respondents were asked: How often do you use the Internet? (% who say “a few times a week” or “every day”)

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