FACTORS AFFECTING WOMEN LEADERSHIP IN THE PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN MWEA DIVISION, EMBU COUNTY

ELISHOPER N. GIDEON

A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF A MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT, DEPARTMENT OF GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT, SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES, KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
DECLARATION

Declaration by candidate
This research project is my original work and has not been presented for examination in any other university to the best of my knowledge. No part of this project may be reproduced without the prior knowledge of the author and/or Kenyatta University.

Signature________________________ Date ____________________

Elishoper N. Gideon
REG. NO. C50/CE/15218/2008

Declaration by supervisors
This research project has been given for examination with our approval as the University Supervisors.

Signature________________________ Date ____________________

Prof. Elishiba Kimani
Department of Gender and Development
Kenyatta University

Signature________________________ Date ____________________

Dr. Geoffrey Wango
Department of Psychology
University of Nairobi
DEDICATION

To my late parents, Grace and Gideon Kavivya for the support through my education
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The completion of this project is a result of the contribution of the following people who I sincerely appreciate. My supervisors; Prof. Elishiba Kimani and Dr. Geoffrey Wango for their enabling guidance and interest throughout the study. I also express my sincere appreciation to all respondents in Mwea Division in Mbeere South District in Embu County for their time and patience during data collection, for providing me with the information I required. They included the heads of the selected primary schools, teachers and education officers. Mr. Antony D. Bojana deserves gratitude for editing the final work.

I am very grateful to my friends; Engineer Florence Musyoka, Muia, Mutinda and Matheka for their moral support and encouragement. Many thanks to my husband Mr. Muoki, my brothers and sisters for their help and support. I am also grateful to my son, Ian Muoki for his tolerance during my study time. Lastly, I thank the almighty God for His amazing love and good health, without which I would not have completed the study.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION .............................................................................................................. i  
DEDICATION .................................................................................................................. ii  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT ................................................................................................... iii  
TABLE OF CONTENTS ................................................................................................. iv  
LIST OF TABLES ............................................................................................................. vii  
LIST OF FIGURES .......................................................................................................... vii  
ABSTRACT ..................................................................................................................... viii  
OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS ..................................................................... ix  
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS ............................................................................. ix  

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION ................................................................. 1

1.0 Background to the Study ...................................................................................... 1
1.2 Statement of the Problem .................................................................................... 3
1.3. Study Objectives ................................................................................................. 3
1.4 Research Questions ............................................................................................... 4
1.5 Justification and Significance of the Study .......................................................... 4
1.6 Scope of the Study ................................................................................................. 5  

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW .................................................. 6

2.0 Introduction ........................................................................................................... 6
2.1 Perceptions and Attitudes Towards Women Leadership in Society .................. 6
2.2 Policies and Practices in Recruitment, Appointment and Promotion of Women .... 9
2.3 Challenges to Women Leadership in Education .................................................. 11
2.4 Strategies for Enhancing Women’s Participation in Leadership in Public Primary  
  Schools in Kenya ......................................................................................................... 17
2.5 Theoretical Framework ......................................................................................... 22
2.6 Conceptual Framework ......................................................................................... 24

## CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY ................................ 26

3.0 Introduction ........................................................................................................... 26
3.1 Research design ................................................................................................. 26
3.2 Study Area ................................................................. 26
3.3 Study Population ......................................................... 27
3.4 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size .............................. 28
3.5 Data Collection Instruments ........................................... 28
3.6 Reliability and Validity of the Instruments ......................... 29
3.7 Data Collection Procedure ............................................ 29
3.8 Data Analysis ............................................................. 30

CHAPTER FOUR: FACTORS AFFECTING WOMEN LEADERSHIP IN PUBLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN MWEA DIVISION, EMBU COUNTY ............... 31
4.0 Introduction .................................................................. 31
4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents .................... 31
4.2 Perception and Attitudes of Teachers on Female Leadership .... 33
4.3 Policies and Practices that Govern Recruitment, Appointment and Promotion of Primary School Leaders ......................................... 41
4.4 Challenges Facing Women in Holding Leadership Positions .......... 43
4.5 Strategies Suggested by the Respondents to Enhance Women Leadership ................. 45

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS .................................................................. 48
5.0 Introduction .................................................................. 48
5.1 Summary of the Findings ............................................... 48
5.2 Perceptions of the Respondents on Women in Leadership ......... 48
5.3 Policies and Practices that Govern Recruitment, Appointment and Promotion of Primary School Teachers into Leadership Positions ................................................. 49
5.4 Challenges Facing Women’s Quest to Leadership ................. 50
5.5 Strategies for Enhancing Women Participation In Primary School Leadership ........... 50
5.6 Conclusions of the Study ............................................... 51
5.7 Recommendations of the Study ...................................... 52
5.8 Suggestions for Further Study ........................................ 53
REFERENCES ......................................................................... 54
APPENDICES........................................................................................................................................61
APPENDIX 1: INTRODUCTORY LETTER...........................................................................................61
APPENDIX 2: LETTER SEEKING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE MWEA DIVISION OF EMBU COUNTY ..........................................................................................62
APPENDIX 3: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS ..............................................................................63
APPENDIX 4: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR FEMALE HEADTEACHERS …69
APPENDIX 5: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR AREA EDUCATION OFFICERS ........................................70
LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1: Whether women face difficulties..................................................33
Table 4.2: Preferred head teacher of choice ..................................................34
Table 4.3: Women should occupy lower grades than men .............................35
Table 4.4: Women praise for a job well done is of more value than men...........36
Table 4.5: Women not supportive to each other in leadership positions ............37
Table 4.6: Women are as effective as men....................................................37
Table 4.7: Women are as aggressive as men ..................................................38
Table 4.8: Women demonstrate the same professional expertise as men ..........39
Table 4.9: Women cannot be depended on to make business decisions .........40
Table 4.10: Awareness of policies and practices on recruitment ....................42
Table 4.11: Forms of difficulties facing women leaders ..................................43

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 2.1: Conceptual Framework .................................................................25
Fig. 3.1: Map of the study area .................................................................27
ABSTRACT

This study sought to analyze women leaders’ experiences as they try to navigate a balance between their home and work responsibilities. Specifically, this study aimed at:

- Assessing the perceptions and attitudes of teachers towards female leaders;
- Establishing the government policies on gender parity in managerial positions in primary schools in Kenya;
- Evaluating the barriers and hindrances that women encounter in their quest to top leadership positions in primary schools and to suggest possible strategies to enhance women participation in primary school leadership in Kenya.

Available literature suggests that balancing private and public life for working women with families can be taxing, especially for married women. The study used descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised both women and men, who were head teachers; deputy head teachers and teachers in primary schools in Mwea division. A sample of 72 respondents who included; two (2) Area Officers, 10 Head teachers, 10 Deputy Head teachers, 10 senior teachers and forty (40) teaching staff were selected. Data were collected using a questionnaire for males and interviews schedules for women to determine and understand the nature of the challenges experienced by female leaders in education. Data were analyzed descriptively. This study identified some of the gendered social practices that disadvantage women and gave suggestions on how to achieve gender equity in primary school leadership. The study established that women advancement to higher leadership positions in public primary schools was affected by factors such as perception and attitude. It was also noted that women were discriminated upon and could not rise to top leadership positions due to family matters and stereotype among the leadership that was male dominated. The study concluded that if perception and attitude towards women leadership is not changed, there is very little that could be achieved on gender equality.

The study recommends advocacy among men and women to change their attitude and perceptions toward women leadership in public primary schools. It further recommends that the Ministry of Education and other players in primary education should enforce gender parity policies in recruitment, appointment and the promotion of women so that discrimination against women to leadership is eliminated.
OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Feminist perspective**: This term is perceived as that standpoint which maintains that women and men have equal potential to develop themselves in all spheres of life but that the realization of women’s potential is hampered by externally imposed constraints and influence of social institutions and values.

**Leadership**: The term means any person charged with the responsibility of planning, coordinating and directing people, a department or an organization, in this case a primary school.

**Participation**: The term refers to the provision of equal opportunity to women to take part in the leadership and decision-making and leadership of education institutions in Kenya.

**Strategies**: The term refers to ways and means that can be used to improve both quantitative and qualitative participation of women in leadership.
### ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AEO</td>
<td>Area Education Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BPA</td>
<td>Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEDAW</td>
<td>Convention on the Elimination of all forms of discrimination against Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEO</td>
<td>District Education Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labor Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPSS</td>
<td>Statistical Packages for Social Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TSC</td>
<td>Teachers Service Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Education Social and Cultural Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<td>WCW</td>
<td>World Conference on Women</td>
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the Study
Women continue to aspire for leadership positions in education institutions worldwide to provide a gendered perspective on educational change and development. This is evidenced by the principle of equality of men and women which was first recognized in 1945 in the United Nations Charter, and subsequently in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). This was later followed by 4th World Conference on Women (1995) called for governments worldwide to create a gender sensitive education system in order to ensure full and equal participation of women in educational administration and policy and decision-making as well as to narrow the gap between men and women (Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPA), 1995, Chap. IV, Article 82).

Many global conferences, including the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995), the Cairo Conference on Population and Development (1994) and World Summit for Social Development (1995) have recognized that, despite the progress made globally in improving the status of women, gender disparities still exist in regard to participation in executive and electoral political positions. A study conducted by US Bureau of Census, (2001) indicated that, the number of women in paid employment and their rate of participation in the workforce have speedily increased. Women are projected to comprise 48% of the work force by the year 2008 (US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2001).

Despite the extensive effort to increase the number of women in organizational leadership, recent research on the participation rate of women in leadership shows modest results (Nesbit & Seege, 2007). This proves that even though extensive work and study
on women in leadership had been done, women representation in leadership is still marginal. ECOWAS, (2006) observes that women enter the work force in similar number to men, so at the lower entry levels in organizations, there is a strong gender balance. Even though women may enter the workforce with same qualifications as men and in the same number as men, women seem to get lost along the career path. This may be due to a number of reasons.

The presence of women in leadership roles at the primary school level and above provides girls beginning to consider career choices with role models of women decision-makers and leaders. It is also imperative that women be actively involved in leading educational change given the vital role that the education system of a country plays in both national development and the development of a gender equal society. For women to be active participants in the change and development process, they must be present and provided with the necessary skills and understanding needed to participate effectively in education leadership and policy-making at both school and national levels.

Women are recognized in the Kenyan society as procreators of the coming generation as well as producers of goods and services. However, in many Kenyan communities, traditional perceptions of women as inferior to men continue to prevail as many people invoke the preservation of African culture to justify the subordination of women.

Bello (1992) Men have continuously dominated women in the political, religious, economic, academic and domestic spheres. He regarded socio-cultural beliefs as the major barriers in this regard. These beliefs emphasize the superiority of men and the inferiority of women. Another barrier is the institutional framework guiding the gender division of labour, recruitment and upward mobility. Olojede (1990) notes that since men
dominate public decision–making bodies, it is the male values that are reflected in these
decision-making bodies. Available literature shows that women still constitute a
disproportionately small percentage of those participating in public decision-making
Nzomo (1995) and Mullei (1995). Therefore, this study sought to examine the perceived
factors affecting women leadership in primary schools in Mwea Division, Embu County, Kenya.

1.1 Statement of the Problem
Available data indicate that women are inadequately represented in senior leadership
Mbevi (1995), Nzomo (1995) and Mullei (1995) have in recent years documented
women's participation in leadership in the public and private sector in Kenya, such
documentations have little focus on the factors that affect women’s participation in top
leadership in public primary schools, and hence the reason for this study. In the
international scene, data show that women continue to increase their share of managerial
positions, but the rate of progress appears to be slow and uneven. Schien (2007). So far,
little attempt has been done to disaggregate information to avoid wholesale
generalizations, hence the reason for this study to explore the factors affecting women
leadership in primary schools in Mwea Division, Embu County, Kenya.

1.2 Study Objectives
The objectives for the study were to:

i. Investigate the perceptions of teachers towards female leaders in public primary
   schools.

ii. Identify the policies and practices that govern recruitment, appointment and
    promotion of primary school teachers into leadership position.
iii. To establish the challenges that women encounter in their quest to get to leadership positions in public primary schools.

iv. To identify strategies that can be used to enhance women’s participation in primary school leadership.

1.3 Research Questions
The study sought answers to the following questions.

i. What are teachers’ perceptions on female leaders in public primary schools?

ii. What policies and practices govern recruitment, appointment and promotion of primary school teachers into leadership positions in public primary schools?

iii. What challenges do women face in their quest to leadership positions in primary schools?

iv. What strategies can be used to enhance women’s participation in primary school leadership?

1.4 Justification and Significance of the Study
This study aims at determining the factors that affect women’s effective participation in leadership in public primary schools. The suggestions from the study may lead to better attitude by the society towards women leadership in formulation and implementation of affirmative action policies that could enhance women participation in primary school leadership. The study findings could help policy-makers plan better for equity and equality in recruitment, appointment and promotions in public primary schools.

It was envisaged that the study would add new knowledge to the existing literature on women in leadership and provide insight into issues of women at work. It was also expected to enable scholars and policy-makers to design more progressive leadership programmes and policies aimed at ensuring equal participation of men and women in primary school leadership.
The study would also benefit women working in public primary schools by identifying the challenges they face or might face as they sought leadership positions and by suggesting how to overcome them, this would help women to assert themselves at their place of work. The study findings could also help men in the society to see the need to give females space to grow to the highest positions of leadership in public primary schools.

1.5 Scope of the Study
This study sought to examine experiences of women in leadership by studying a section of women population in primary schools in Mwea Division, Embu County, Kenya. The main focus of this study was on the factors affecting women leadership in primary schools in Mwea Division, Embu County, Kenya. The study used 10 primary schools in Mwea Division, Embu County. The limitation is that the study is limited to women leaders and not men. Also the focus is limited to public primary schools only.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction
The literature review for this study is divided into parts. The first part deals with teachers perception and, policies and practices that govern recruitment, appointment and promotion of primary school teachers into leadership position. The second part deals with the challenges facing women in their quest to reach the top of the leadership pyramid. And finally theoretical and conceptual framework.

2.1 Perceptions and Attitudes Towards Women Leadership in Society
Gender roles are connected to a set of stereotypical beliefs that influence every aspect of social life. However, gender roles and stereotypes are subject to change. Women are more encouraged to actively participate in every sector of the society and many new opportunities have opened up to them. Recent research stresses cultural and structural factors as the main underlying reasons explaining the situation of women in leadership (Sanchez, 2010).

Sanchez de Madariaga (2010), views that Social carriers of beliefs and ideologies (school, media, family, friends) tend to employ sex ‘differences’ as an explanation as to why women should prefer a career other than in science, such as in the humanities, as many some researchers have suggested. Where women may have similar career goals as men, there are important structural and institutional differences between countries in the extent to which women may pursue these goals without giving up other goals that they might value, such as motherhood. In many European countries, social and family policies still support the traditional bread-winner model (Sjöberg, 2010). This is apparently the
same situation here in Kenya. The implication is that women have to do more to move out of traditional beliefs and try to embrace equity in all sectors.

Some researches done in the last 30 years show that the way we think about leaders and the way we think about women are very different, a huge obstacle for women to overcome. Sancez de Madariaga (2010) If women demonstrate qualities that are typically associated with being a good leader—such as assertiveness and confidence—they cease to be viewed as ‘good’ women—who we expect to be nurturing and supportive. Our perceptions are important aspects of reality. Although we do see imperfectly, or dimly, we do still see, and what we see is important in our decision-making process (Sjöberg, 2010). The assertions of Sjöberg appear to be the biggest predicament to women leadership. This is because the world over, men (and also women) are controlled in the yester shadows of traditions where the woman’s place was seen as inferior to that of their counterparts.

According to Berthing and Izraeli (1993), probably the single most important hurdle for women in leadership in all industrialized countries is the persistent stereotype that associates leadership with male domain. Hall-Taylor (1997), Martin (1994) take up the notion of women’s possession of soft skills. The term ‘soft skills’ is associated with women’s leadership skill and the term ‘hard skills’ are associated with masculine leadership style. It is critical the way in which women’s skills are regarded as a by-product of antidote to male organizational culture and ‘hard’ skills a concept underpinned by notions essential to differences between men and women. Women have good interpersonal skills but had trouble being assertive and decisive. Those characterized as having a mixture of both; task and person-oriented are termed androgynous (De Matteo,
Women whose style is masculine frequently are disliked by their subordinates and called names such as ‘Dragon lady’ or ‘Bitch’ because they do not display the famine qualities that are expected of women in our society (Rosener, 1990). The observation of these authors seems to cut across all continents and societies. These sentiments depict the ‘place of women’ in the society as traditionally known. However, it is important for all humanity to understand that situations are changing and people should change with time. In some situations, man has always waited for time to change him. The time has come to acknowledge the contribution women can make in our society, and try to tap it.

According to Sanchez (2010), when compared to ideal leaders, women in general were viewed by people working in the Christian organizations as having fewer traits related to ambition, analytical ability, assertiveness, and self-confidence. They were viewed to have more communal traits such as creativity, helpfulness, and kindness. Women were also described as having less relationship-oriented traits like compassion, cooperation, and intuitiveness, and less task-oriented traits like competency, intelligence, and independence. This implies that what the society thinks of women leadership may affect their advancement up the ladder of leadership. It is surprising that many women also uphold the same beliefs thus becoming their own enemies to advancement in leadership.

Women are also rated lower in transformational leadership characteristics such as encouraging, inspiring, and trustworthy. Sanchez 2010 in his study shows that people in these organizations don't think women have what it takes to be a leader—so it might be harder for women to be considered for a promotion. However, once she obtains a leadership position, this study indicates that more than likely, she will be viewed pretty favourably. Words that were thrown out when groups were asked to describe attributes of a male leader were: strong, arrogant, intelligent, ego-driven, bravado, powerful,
dominant, assertive, single tasking, focused, competitive, stubborn, physical, self-righteous and direct. When asked about their perception of female leaders they were described as: multi-tasking, emotional, empathetic, strong, intuitive, compassionate, relationship building, verbal, consensus building, collaborative and gossipy (Sanchez, 2010). The study by Sanchez explains many aspects which act as impediments to women endeavors to leadership positions. The study reflects the real picture of the society today. Although many people are talking about gender equality and equity, very few may be ready to accept and support women leadership. It remains to be seen to what extent women support their folk first, since they form the majority in the society today.

ILO (2004), reiterates a worldwide review of the status of women in leadership and speaks similarly of the barriers created by biased attitudes towards women in leadership. The managerial positions are viewed as ‘male’ in gender types, the characteristics required for success are seen as more commonly held by men than by women. Attitudes fade slowly from peoples’ minds. It requires the effort of all and the willingness by a country’s leadership to change peoples’ attitudes. It may take long, but it can be overcome. People have first to understand that their attitudes are biased, and then be guided on how to change them. This role can easily be played by such studies as this.

2.2 Policies and Practices in Recruitment, Appointment and Promotion of Women
The 5th Millennium Development Goal talks about gender equity and equality in education and training. This goal aims at eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2015. Its main focus is on ensuring girls’ full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality. This goal provides an opportunity to women to acquire education. The provision of commensurate opportunities in the employment sector in education leadership should not be a matter for negotiation. The
number of women leaving educational institutions should be more or less the same as those absorbed in employment and also those promoted to leadership positions in public primary schools.

The constitution of Kenya provides the bill of rights in chapter four. Section 20 (2), states that every person shall enjoy the rights and fundamental freedoms in the bill of rights to the greatest extent consistent with the nature of the right or fundamental freedom. Further, Section 27 (3) states that women and men have the right to equal treatment, including the right to equal opportunities in political, economic, cultural and social spheres. It is expected that this bill of rights applies to all sectors, including the elevation of women headteachers in primary schools. Therefore, there should be no discrimination against any gender whatsoever from any quota, as the constitution is very clear on this. Women leadership in the education sector should not be an exception.

The Government of Kenya is also a signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which was adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly in Geneva. Therefore, the Government is fully in support of equity and equality. Whether women are aware of this remains unclear, as they appear to look at the other side when they are being discriminated upon. Women should be the first people to champion their rights based on this convention, since the Government of Kenya has already shown commitment in supporting their course.

Fagenson, (1990) suggests that women’s experiences may be influenced by a firm’s history and industry policies. This goes to prove that women’s problems may also be due to unfavourable policies that an organization makes or the organization’s failure to make policies that encourage women to move up to managerial positions. Pfeiffer, (1983)
proposes that organizational factors such as growth, technology, personnel policies and practices, and unionization are determinants of organizational demography, including distribution of age, tenure, gender and race.

Female leaders believe women and men are seen as equally likely to possess characteristics necessary for managerial success (Schein, 2007). This is an attitude that encourages women to strive for managerial positions. However, if women choose instead to embrace the traditional feminine roles, whilst they are viewed as likeable people, then they may lack the task-oriented trait associated with competence (Rosener, 1990). So, there should be a way in which women can try and satisfy this expectation, because either way, there are problems associated with any one situation. Korabik and Ayman (1990) felt that men and women have a mixture of the so called masculine and feminine characteristics and so to them it is important for men and women to recognize that both sides exist within them, although one side may appear more dominant in a person, it is only because that side is more developed. According to Reavley (1990), there is a reason to believe that the lead manager cannot be characterized as either male or female. Leadership requires a mixture of abilities and skills, some of which are perceived to be feminine and some masculine. This argument is directly telling us that any leader in our present society serves both men and women. This leader must therefore posses the requisite human skills. Women can easily learn whatever human skills are required by the position they intend to hold.

2.3 Challenges to Women Leadership in Education

According to Schein (2007), barriers to women leadership exist globally and the higher the organizational level, the more glaring gender gap. The existence of fewer women in leadership positions in primary schools can be corroborated using this assertion.
However, it is not good to resign to fate and accept the situation as it is but look into the factors affecting women’s rise to leadership positions in primary schools in Kenya.

Researchers have been interested in the past in the different ways gender differences and stereotypes are manifested in education. They have found that girls tend to be more interested in theoretical courses (languages, literature, psychology etc.) while boys are more likely to prefer science and technology courses. Researchers have argued that it is the outcome of popular gender stereotypes that prescribe different behaviours and qualities to men and women (Eccles et al., 1995). Thus, stereotypes are a crucial factor that must be examined in order to reduce these differences in achievement.

According to Timmers et al (2010), there are three perspectives that reflect three sets of factors to explain women’s under-representation at higher job levels: individual, cultural and structural or institutional influences. According to the individual perspective, the focus is on differences between men and women and the stereotypes connected with each role. The policies that are implemented according to the individual perspective relate to training, coaching and mentoring to support women and provide them with the opportunity to improve their skills. The cultural perspective suggests that the organizational context, which includes the organization’s culture, history, ideology, and policies, is connected with the factors leading to women’s limited success in attaining high level positions. It may be hard to change a people’s culture so as to accommodate women in leadership, but it seems to be the most sensible thing to do.

Gender stereotypes are categorical beliefs regarding the traits and behavioural characteristics ascribed to individuals on the basis of their gender. They serve as expectations about the attributes and behaviours of individual group members and are
considered one of the direct antecedents of discrimination at work (Dovidio & Helb, 2005). Typically, women are primarily concerned with the welfare of people, including attributes such as compassionate, kind, sentimental, helpful and generous. Men are thought to be more assertive, dominant and confident, aggressive, ambitious, independent and self-confident. Agentic characteristics have traditionally been aligned with leadership roles (Eagly & Karua, 2002). It may, however, be necessary to blend these characteristics so as to accommodate women in leadership. To stick to traditional perceptions may be detrimental to the attainment of equitability in distribution of resources including leadership.

The structural perspective is related to hierarchical influence on entry and promotion. There are three central variables: the structure of opportunity, the structure of power and the proportional distribution of men and women. Groups, in which men are a majority, lead to treating women as ‘tokens’. Restricted access to information may influence women’s chances for promotion. Intervention policies based on this perspective adapt a recruitment and promotion procedure and try to retain junior talent, if possible in favour of women, like new types of appointments and financial incentives (Timmers et al., 2010). As nations today propagate gender equity and equality, it is necessary to start treating women as equal partners. People should be guided to dispense of the notion that women can only do well in lower cadre positions.

The literature which exists on the subject of women and work identifies two forms of segregation affecting the workforce, horizontal and vertical segregation (Evetts, 1994; Hakim, 1996). Povall’s study (1986) of the finance sectors found clear evidence of vertical segregation. Only a tiny minority of women reached positions of genuine power,
authority and status (Povall, 1986). However, one may wonder how many remain to these positions up to retirement. Similar evidence has been found in leadership in education (Jackson 1990; Tikbrook, 1998). Clearly, a more strategic approach needs to be taken to the promotion of women to senior leadership posts if any major change is to be achieved. Evetts (1994, 1998) states that, in order to really progress within the organizations, it is necessary to obtain posts with leadership responsibilities. Access to these posts is very limited as women are identified by a career route for themselves which is to avoid this conflict, thereby leaving the issue unresolved. This may encourage vertical segregation where men may perpetuate men to succeed them.

Evetts (1998) identified a dual career structure as developing in response to the perceived promotional prospects of women within the engineering organization she studied, which in itself represents an alarming route back towards horizontal segregation. This researcher identified a managerial structure requiring the commitment of long working hours and subordination of personal lives around work. Here, women opt for the professional routes where it is perceived that success should be based on merit and building a reputation. This has the result of streaming women into non-managerial less strategic decision-marking roles of an organization and is a form of horizontal segregation discreetly disguised as a career structure (Ellison, 2006).

A major trade-off between managerial and professional route seems to be working hours. Ellison (2006) continues to say that, if persons, no matter how effective they are, or how strong a reputation they have developed, is not prepared or in a position to work much more than a standard working week, they are perceived by themselves and others as unsuitable for higher managerial positions. Such perceptions need be discarded, if gender
disparity in employment is to be bridged. Women need to be involved in decision-making and execution of all kind of tasks as well as men.

Rudman, Ashmore and Gary (2001) examined the impact of diversity education on stereotypes and prejudices, and found that training can reduce these biases at multiple levels. Diversity education led to a decrease in directly reported, explicit stereotypes, which occur on an unconscious level (Greenwald & Banji, 1995). According to Kawakami and Dovidio (2001), implicit stereotypes are thought to be more stable and enduring association because they have been learned through years of environmental influences. If such association can be unlearned through diversity trainings, and diversity is common in today’s work organizations, then it is possible that gender stereotypes may be changing as a result of direct interventions.

Tabolt (2003) found that female leaders are expected to have well-developed skills. Sex roles stereotyping of managerial work can result in the perception that women are less qualified than men for leadership positions and negatively affect women into such positions (De Matteo, 1994). Sex roles stereotyping of managerial work has for long been an impediment to women advancement and in leadership positions.

Access to educational institutions is rated as a key issue influencing the position of women in educational leadership. In some cases, this is attributed to the dominance of men in powerful positions within the structure of school leadership such as school governing bodies and in district offices, which is usually regarded as detrimental to women’s access and performance in these positions (Grogan, 1996). This male dominance in key leadership positions is linked to the traditional perspective of the position of women in society which had men controlling the highest administrative jobs
in schools. This constantly leads to these male administrators giving positions to those who resemble them in attitude, actions, and appearance (Grogan, 1996). This in essence implies that women are rarely given such positions. Women who aspire to school leadership positions often face barriers of administration in hiring and promotion that often limit their upward movement.

Moorosi (2006), found that some female leaders had experienced blatant discrimination in their earlier attempts to participate in leadership on the grounds that male candidates were sought after. In the same study, many women leaders continued to face obstacles while in leadership positions. This manifested in lack of acceptance and resistance to women leaders’ authority.

Barriers from the home and the way women are perceived, culturally and historically, are also regarded as barriers to women’s advancement. For many organizations including schools, work and home life should be kept separate for women who are in positions of power. This view consequently constitutes a barrier for women teachers whose personal lives are inextricably linked to their working life (Van der Westhuizen, 1991). Discrimination against women leadership is widespread world over, but especially in the developing world, Kenya included. The society has therefore a task ahead; that of fighting this vice.

Women leaders have additional difficulty performing their leadership role because of the conflicting attitudes and the stereotypes regarding what it means to be a woman and what it means to be a manager. Women who are leaders and have children therefore straddle the dual worlds of parenting and working and are usually not successful in balancing the two (Dunlap & Schmuck, 1995). They further remark that, while the world of teaching
more easily accommodates the dual world of many women, the demands of administration still often presume one has a ‘wife’ at home (1995:44).

For some women, moving into leadership brings an additional stress, since they associate leadership work with inflexibility and restrictiveness as compared to what teaching in the classroom offers them in terms of meeting the demands on their time. This is arguably because women’s personal priorities and responsibilities outside their work roles can be seen to vie with professional commitments once they are in leadership, and the balancing of these different roles and responsibilities can be a source of pressure.

2.4 Strategies for Enhancing Women’s Participation in Leadership in Public Primary Schools in Kenya

Various strategies have been formulated to increase the participation of women in education, decision-making and development activities in general. Global strategies are outlined in the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women (1985) prepared during the United Nations Decade for Women in 1985. One of the strategies outlined in the document relevant to this study is that which states that research on the causes of absenteeism and dropout among girls should be intensified. The fourth world conference on women in Beijing reiterated 69% of these strategies. But, strategies proposed at international forums tend to be too general, ignoring the specific obstacles in independent nations. (United Nations 1985).

One instance in this regard is their failure to directly address the formal education system. Intervention strategies commonly suggested include: increasing women’s participation in education at all levels so as to raise the number of women from which able leaders could evolve; formulating equal opportunity policies, changing the environment in which
women work, and the attitudes towards educated women, flexibility in working hours, and reviewing of recruitment and promotion policies in higher education (Poskitt 1998; UNESCO 1994; Dines 1993) and abiding by the constitution of Kenya.

Strategies specific to Kenya are given by Nzomo (1995) who suggests that there is: the urgent need to establish programs combining gender sensitization, legal awareness raising and civic education of both women and men, with a view to eradicating retrogressive socio-cultural attitudes and values, as well as democratizing the Kenyan society. The study underscored the importance of women’s self-empowerment through their own organizations and through more effective networking that cuts across class, political and socio-economic divides.

Providing effective training and support for women aspiring to school headships and removing the barriers women face in developing countries is a challenge that must be met if women are to have a voice in educational development worldwide. It has been argued that women leaders bring distinct personality and motivational strengths to their roles and are more conducive to today’s diverse workplace (Greenberg & Sweeney, 2005). The most compelling reason for more attention to the issues of women in leadership relates to the need to attract talented leadership (Ng & Burke, 2005). Chikarovski (1994) stresses that it is economically disadvantageous for the society to underutilize the talent of almost half of its workforce (women). The loss of women along the career track entails the cost and lost value associated with wasted knowledge, skills, and expertise for the leadership of organizations (Appelbaum, Audit, & Miller, 2003; Moskal, 1997). Women just as men satisfy their higher order needs after their basic needs are met. They should be
encouraged to take up managerial positions in organizations so as to attain their self esteem and actualization.

The government’s commitment to Universal Free Primary Education is to provide a fast growing demand for teachers and administrators. In the interest of gender parity and the wellbeing of female students, it is important that the current under-representation of women in primary school leadership be corrected. This requires more knowledge about current perceptions of pupils with regard to school leadership, about the experiences of women who have successfully curved out a career in school leadership, and about the perceptions and needs of teachers unsure of their ability to tread the same path.

Realizing the social order as problematic for women’s advancement in organizational leadership, Kolb and Meyerson (1999) and Ely and Meyerson (2000) analyzed intervention strategies to understand their lack of impact in bringing about the desired effects. According to these authors, interventions informed by the first three approaches leave the gendered social practices intact, resulting in unsustainable progress that only benefits some individuals.

The fourth approach is underpinned by feminist post-structural strands that take a non-traditional route to understanding gender inequalities and do not regard gender as a basis for discrimination. In this sense gender is not seen as an “axis of power” that shapes social structure, identities and knowledge (Kolb & Meyerson, 1999), but it is viewed as a complex set of social relations enacted across a range of social practices that exist both within and outside formal organizations. These social practices range from formal policies and procedures (work rules, labour contracts, managerial activities, job descriptions, etc.) to informal patterns of everyday social interactions within formal
organizations (organizations’ norms about how work is done, relationships required to do the job, distribution of roles and responsibilities, etc.). These social practices, as seen by Ely and Meyerson (2000), tend to reflect and support men’s experiences and life situations by placing higher value on masculine identity. The perceived neutrality of these social practices is what this approach finds problematic since it widens the split in the traditional notions of male and female, masculine and feminine, public and private dichotomies (Reiger, 1993) that are reflected by the daily social practices inherent in all organizations. This neutrality, it is argued, inaccurately shapes the discourses of what constitutes leadership and leadership within all organizations, including schools, and continues to disadvantage women.

Ely and Meyerson (2000) further argue that because the social practices within organizations were designed by and for some privileged men who have always dominated the leadership field, they appear to be neutral and tend to uphold gender as fixed, ranked oppositions. This representation of gender as oppositions originates and preserves male privilege and views ‘leadership’ work as part of the public domain associated with men and thus privileges men and disadvantages women. The approach suggests as an alternative acknowledges the difference in the way women and men are affected by these social practices which are determined by their historical background, race, ethnicity, social class, and other issues of diversity and suggest that these gender boundaries should be blended. This approach therefore, starts with the premise that gender inequality is deeply rooted in the cultural patterns and organizational systems and can only be addressed by a persistent campaign of incremental changes that discover and destroy the deeply embedded roots of discrimination-driven by both women and men together. The target is to benefit both sex groups by creating a world where gender is not an issue. The
intervention here starts with the identification of the problem and the premise that unless these gendered social practices are acknowledged as problems and therefore, disentangled gender inequity is not to be uprooted from the organizations.

The approach acknowledges the differences in experiences shaped by these social practices, and suggests multiple solutions to all gender problems in the leadership of organizations. The criticism levelled against this approach, however, is that although it appears to have the ability to tackle the gender discriminative social practices ignored by other approaches, its limitation is linked to resistance to change and difficulty of sustainability. This is because it makes no attempt to identify the endpoint, but continuously disrupts the social order and revises the structural practices and regards the process of change as both means and end. However, its acknowledgement of gendered social practices within organizations that appear neutral on the surface is useful for understanding the gendered nature of organizations manifested in the practitioners’ experiences and conceptions of leadership while affecting negatively the progression of women in the leadership and leadership of schools as organizations.

Within the framework of the work culture in organizational leadership, Ely and Meyerson (2000) and Rao et al., (1999) identify the private–public dichotomy theme. The problems associated with the private–public dichotomy are understood as problems concerning time and allocation of time between work and family which arguably affect women differently from their male principal counterparts. According to Rapoport et al. (1996, in Ely & Meyerson, 2000), this theme manifests in the image of the ideal worker which is upheld by a variety of gender neutral social practices. It is on the basis of this analysis that the image of the ideal manager suggests commitment as of one who is willing to put family obligations second to work-related obligations, creating an illusionary picture of
the work place as asexual (Ely & Meyerson, 2000). Within this theme, the social practices still appear gender-neutral because everyone appears to be subjected to them, while the reality is that these social practices sabotage women who cannot be available for work all the time.

These social practices are, therefore,gendered in the sense that they tend to affect men and women differently since they bear disproportionate responsibility between home and work, making it difficult for women to strike a balance between the private and public spheres of their lives. The split makes it even more difficult for women leaders who are married and of reproductive age to balance their public and private responsibilities, since they are still expected to play their cultural roles as mothers and wives over and above their commitment to their work as school leaders. This cultural split of responsibilities makes it difficult for women to work and therefore, leads to their being labelled as less task-oriented.

2.5 Theoretical Framework
The study was guided by the Social Feminist Theory which borrows from Karl Marx’s ideas on exploitation, oppression and division of labor. The theory recognizes the pervasive influence of gender divisions on social life and tries to understand women’s oppression and the structures in society that espouse this oppression and subordination. The feminist perspective concludes that women and men have equal potential for individual development. Differences in the realization of that potential, therefore, must result from externally imposed constraints (Nzomo, 1995).

Social feminists advance three broad perspectives in trying to explain the absence of women from senior leadership in the public and private sector. The first perspective is
personal factors which affect women in leadership positions. These factors are psychosocial attributes; personal characteristics, attitudes and behavioural skills. Among personal factors are self-esteem and self-confidence, lack of motivation and ambition to accept challenges, women’s low potential for leadership, less assertiveness, less emotional stability and lack of ability to handle a crisis (Bond, 1996).

On the other hand, personal factors such as; assertiveness, confidence, resourcefulness creativeness, loyalty and trustworthy help women to ascend to senior leadership positions (Singh & Shahabudin, 2000). The structural or institutional factors paradigm advances the view that it is the disadvantageous position of women in the organizational structure which shapes and defines the behavior and positions of women. The underlying premise of this perspective is that men and women are equally capable of and committed to assuming positions of leadership. The problem is vested in the structure. The remedy is a fundamental change to eliminate discrimination in institutional policies and practices.

The last perspective was advanced by Smulders (1998), who explored the cultural factors linking gender factors and organizational structure factors. Her analysis is concerned with the social construction of gender and the assignment of specific roles, responsibilities and expectations to women and men. The gender - based roles, irrelevant to the work place, are carried into the work place and kept in place because the actors involved, both dominant and subordinate, subscribe to social and organization reality (Smulders, 1998). The cultural factors lead to stereotypical views about women’s abilities within the cultural context. The physiological difference theory further affirms the feminist theory by suggesting that women are less inclined to compete for senior leadership positions than their male colleagues.
The second concept is that of barriers to effective promotions. These include; a lonely and a non-supportive working environment treating difference as weaknesses. Exclusion of people from group activities because of their differences is a discouraging factor that exists within the workplace (Davidson & Burke, 1994). Based on cultural beliefs about masculinity and feminism, girls are encouraged to develop their relationship abilities while boys are systematically discouraged from doing so. Consequently, females acquire a sense of themselves in relation to others and empathize as being part of relationships, as well as being able to maintain them (Schneider, 1993). From this perspective women development can be seen as a process with positive attribute. The view that top leadership positions are only suitable for men relegates women to primary roles. The emphasis is placed on women’s role as mothers, caregivers and nurturers. These three broad perspectives guided the present study to explore the perceived factors affecting women leadership in primary schools in Mwea Division, Embu County, Kenya.

2.7 Conceptual Framework of the Study
This study conceptualizes that societal perceptions and attitudes are some of challenges facing women in their quest to progress to leadership in public primary schools. Socio-culturally ascribed roles and supposedly physiological differences may contribute to relegate women to the background, coupled with family obligations such as child bearing, rearing and caring for the family may be other great barriers to women advancement. Physiological differences that men may use against women such as being inferior to men in terms of strength, women considered the weaker vessels so they could not be at certain places at some time could also be detrimental to the advancement of women.

Organizational barriers, which may be used as the norms or policies and practices in the organizations may include failure to recruit, develop and support women for upper level
leadership positions, prejudice against women in performance evaluation and existence of hostile environment. This was noted by researchers such as Ferguson and Jackson (1994) and Snyder, (1998). Organizational barriers are further compounded by lack of effective Government involvement and adequate collection of employment data.

There are variables that may intervene (to the benefit of women leaders). Such variables have to do with affirmative action such as gender responsive policies. If affirmative action and gender responsive policies are strictly adhered to, then more female leaders can be realized in public primary schools. This is further conceptualized in Figure 1.1.

Figure 2.1: Conceptualization of factors affecting women leadership in public primary schools
CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction
This chapter discusses the research design, location of the study, the population of the study, sample and sampling procedure and data collection instruments, as well as data validation. Finally the procedures used for data collection and analysis plan are outlined.

3.1 Research design
The purpose of this study was to unearth the factors affecting women leadership in public primary schools in Mwea Division of Embu County. To achieve the objective of the study, descriptive survey design was used. The descriptive survey design is the best method for this study since it described existing characteristics of a large group of teachers. It helped obtain self reported information about the attitudes, beliefs, opinions, behavior and other characters of the population. Data were collected from members of the population in order to determine the current status of that population with respect to one or more variables. This design was chosen because it can put a problem on the map by showing that it is more widespread than previously thought; Survey-based prevalence data are useful in demonstrating that a problem is distributed in a particular way throughout the population, Reinharz (1992).

3.2 Study Area
This study was carried out in public primary schools in Mwea division, Gachoka Constituency, Embu County, Kenya. The division borders Makima Division to the east and Kirinyaga County to the South West as shown in Fig. 3.1. Mbeere South is cosmopolitan, composed of more than five communities. It is located at the southern part
of Embu County and covers two zones with a total of 28 public primary schools which are evenly distributed over the two zones.

Fig. 3.1: Map showing the location of Mwea Division  
SOURCE: REPUBLIC OF KENYA NATIONAL ROAD NETWORK

3.3 Study Population
The study population was twenty eight (28) public primary schools in Mwea division of Embu County, Kenya. All headteachers, deputy headteachers and senior teaching staff in the primary schools were involved in the study. Education officers were important key informants for the study.
3.4 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size
The study used purposive sampling to select 10 out of the 28 public primary schools in Mwea Division, five of which were headed by male teachers and five others by female teachers. The schools were chosen because they were large enough to provide a more reliable sample for the study. In Karaba zone, the study selected Makawani, Kamweli, Wakalia, Iria Itune and Makutano primary schools while in Ria Kanau zone, Riakanau, Kamwiyendei, ACK Kilia, Koma and Gategi primary schools were selected. These schools had many and more experienced teachers. All the 10 headteachers, 10 deputy headteachers, 10 senior teachers, were selected purposively due to their positions while two (2) Education officers were selected as they were key informants for the study.

The ten public primary schools had a total of 75 teachers, of which fifty per cent, (forty (40) teacher) were sampled for the study. These were distributed evenly such that each school had four respondents, selected through random sampling. The total study sample was therefore 72 participants.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments
Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire, for the teachers and interview schedules for the headteachers and Area Education Officers. A structured questionnaire was used because it was easy to fill, and respondents could provide the information in confidence at their own time. An interview schedule for the head teachers and Education officers was more appropriate because it allows for probing into issues affecting female teachers. Secondary data were generated through records, namely; policy records ministry of education circulars, TSC magazines especially ‘the image’, job application forms and education interview guides.
3.6 Reliability and Validity of the Instruments

A structured questionnaire was piloted at three public primary schools, where those who participated in the pilot study were excluded from the actual data collection. Four questions on perceptions and attitudes of the society on women leadership were picked from the questionnaire, leaving thirty six (36) questions only and no other changes were made on this instrument. This was done for the purpose of testing reliability.

The interview schedule for the head teachers had thirteen questions, while that for the Education Officer had sixteen (16) questions. All these were found to be valid on pilot testing, so no alterations were made.

Cronbach alpha was used to assess the reliability of the research instruments. Cronbach’s alpha proposes a coefficient which theoretically ranges from 0 to 1. If alpha (α) is near 0 then the quantified answers are not reliable, and if α is close to 1 the answers are more reliable. Results of the reliability analysis showed a Cronbach’s α of 0.64 for all the study constructs, implying that the instruments would give reliable results.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

Permission was obtained from the Ministry of Education and National Council for Research and Development to conduct the research in Kenya. Permission from the head teachers of the selected schools was sought to allow the study to be carried out in their institutions. Questionnaires with an introductory letter explaining the study’s goals and guaranteeing confidentiality were self-administered to the head teachers, deputy head teachers and teachers.

Interview dates, time and venue were agreed upon by each interviewee. The interviews were personal and lasted between 30 and 45 minutes. The interviews were conducted
over a three week period in November 2012. A total of 40 questionnaires were circulated to the forty (40) respondents and in total, 37 questionnaires were collected and considered for data analysis. This represented a response rate of about 93%.

3.8 Data Analysis
Collected data were analyzed using version 16 of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics was used to compute means, frequencies and percentages were computed. Data were presented in frequency tables and percentages. Document analysis was done to cross check, supplement and confirm information obtained from the interview schedules and questionnaires.
CHAPTER FOUR
FACTORS AFFECTING WOMEN LEADERSHIP IN PUBLIC PRIMARY
SCHOOLS IN MWEA DIVISION, EMBU COUNTY

4.0 Introduction
This chapter presents the findings and discussions on the factors affecting women leadership in public primary schools in Mwea Division, Embu County. The presentation of the results and discussions is based on the study objectives as in the following subtopics; the perceptions of teachers towards female leaders in public primary schools, the policies and practices that govern recruitment, appointment and promotion of leaders in primary school, the challenges that women encounter in their quest to get to leadership positions in primary schools and strategies that can be used to enhance women’s participation in leadership in primary schools. Also presented are the demographic characteristics of the teachers included in the study as it helps in understanding the attitudes and perceptions of different study targets in terms of the factors affecting women leadership in public primary schools.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents
The demographic characteristics of the respondents discussed were gender, marital status, level of education and experience.

Gender for all the Respondents
Out of the 72 targeted study respondents, three males did not return their questionnaires while two females did participate in the interview, this gave a total of sixty seven (67) respondents. Majority of the respondents 45(67%) were males while 22(33%) were females. This showed gender disparity among teachers in public primary schools. It could
also explain why there existed gender disparity in the leadership of public primary schools in Kenya.

**Marital Status for all the Respondents**
The study sought to establish the marital status of the respondents as it also has an effect on the response in terms of their perception and views on various factors affecting them at their work place. Cross tabulation of gender against marital status and the results indicated that out of the 45 males who participated 41 were married while only 4 were single. Among the 22 females who participated, 20 were married while 2 were single. This revelation could have an implication on why many women turn down promotions if they could be felt as interfering with their marriage or family issues.

**Level of Education for all the Respondents**
The level of education was considered in this study in order to establish the qualification of the teachers in leadership positions in public primary schools. The level of education would also help establish whether the respondents understood the policies and practices that govern recruitment, appointment and promotion of teachers in public primary schools.

The results show that most of the respondents 37(53.7 %) were Diploma holders. Among them 24(53.3%) were males while 13(59.1%) were females. This was followed by a total of 19(28.4%) who were holders of PI certificates. Among the respondents 14(31.1%) were males while the rest 5(22.7%) were females. SI holders were only 3(4.5%) and also most of them were male. A total of 8(11.9%) were holders of bachelors degree. This shows that the respondent’s education level did not differ so much between the male and female teachers in public primary school to qualify as factors hindering the possibility of
women to rise to leadership positions in public primary schools. It also meant that the respondents easily understood the policies and practices that governed recruitment, appointment and promotion of headteachers in public primary schools in Kenya.

**Experience of the Male and Female Respondents**
The experience of the respondents in employment was thought to affect the attitudes and perceptions of individuals. Majority of the respondents 55(82.1%) had worked for more than 10 years. Only 10 (14.9%) had worked for 7-9 years of whom one (2) was a male while the rest (8) were females. Those who had worked for between 4-6 years were 3(4.5%). This shows that based on the years of experience, women were as experienced as men, hence this cannot be said to be a hindrance for women to attain top leadership positions in public primary schools.

**4.2 Perception and Attitudes of Teachers on Female Leadership**
This objective aimed at assessing perception and attitudes of respondents in terms of their choice of leaders and their feelings about female leadership. The respondents were given statements whose responses demonstrated their perceptions and attitudes. The statements were based on perceptions and attitudes in regard to the following:

**Whether Women Faced Difficulties When They Occupy Managerial Positions**
The study sought respondents’ perceptions on women managers, by asking them whether women in leadership positions faced difficulties. The results are shown in table 4.1.

**Table 4.1: Whether women faced difficulties when they occupy managerial positions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Non response</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results in table 4.1 show that women faced difficulties when they occupied managerial positions. This is because 42(62.7%) of the respondents attested to this, among whom 28(41.8%) were males and 16(23.9%) females. On the other hand 14(20.9%) of whom 13 were male while only one was female said that women did not face difficulties when they occupied managerial positions in primary schools. 9(13.4%) did not provide their responses on this question. The perception that women faced difficulties when they occupied managerial positions might have an effect on the women being selected to leadership positions in the public primary schools. These difficulties are the psycho-social factors explained by Sjöberg (2010). Most African communities still support the traditional bread-winner model which required the woman to remain at home and take care of children, and not seek positions in employment which may pose a threat to such a traditional setup. With such attitudes and perceptions in the society, women have a long way to go to attain leadership positions.

Preferred Headteacher by Gender

The study went ahead to ascertain the attitude of respondents concerning their preferred gender in leadership in public primary schools. The responses are presented in table 4.2.

**Table 4.2: Preferred headteacher by gender**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Headteacher</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy headteacher</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior teacher</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area officers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>44</strong></td>
<td><strong>23</strong></td>
<td><strong>67</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Study findings show that majority of the respondents 56(83.6%) preferred a male as the headteacher for their schools. Only 11(16.4%) indicated that they would prefer a female
headteacher. The study findings are in agreement with Sanchez’s findings (2010), that people tended to like male leaders because they were ambitious, assertive and self confident. The findings may be an indication of the level of discrimination against women into leadership positions in public primary schools. The response shows that the attitude of the respondents who are key people in the management of the public primary schools affects the choice of leadership for the public primary schools.

**Whether or not women should occupy lower cadre jobs compared to men**

The study sought the attitudes of respondents by asking them whether women should occupy lower cadre jobs compared to men in the management of public primary schools. The respondents gave their views as presented in table 4.3.

**Table 4.3: Whether women should occupy lower cadre jobs compared to men**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Headteacher</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy headteacher</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Teacher</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area officer</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td><strong>28</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>67</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the results presented, most of the respondents 28 (41.7%) supported the view that women should occupy lower grades than men, while 9 (13.4%) strongly agreed and only 19(28.3%) of the respondents did not support it. This shows that the society’s attitude is that women should remain in lower positions than men in the leadership of public primary schools. This can be related to Sjöberg’s (2010) assertion that the society felt that women were better of engaged in social and family issues. However, if the society were left alone to continue propagating traditional perceptions and attitudes, this would be to women’s disadvantage. The society needs to give women a chance in leadership.
Value for praise to women and men

The respondents were asked to indicate their views on whether women value praise for a job well done more than men. The results were presented in table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Value for praise to women and men

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>not sure</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>strongly agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Headteacher</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy headteacher</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior teacher</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area Ed. officer</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
<td><strong>67</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most of the respondents 26(38.8%) said that women valued praise for their jobs more than men, while 19(28.4%) strongly agreed. Only 10 (14.9%) strongly disagreed with the statement. An equal number of head teachers agreed while the rest disagreed. Most of the senior teachers also agreed and all the area education officers did agree with the statement. This means that women value praise for jobs well done more than men. This could contribute to women’s choice of positions as they would like to do lighter tasks which they could easily accomplish and thus win people’s praise, as indicated by Sanchez (2010), who said that women always want to display social traits such as compassion, kindness and helpfulness. This could influence their quest to leadership.

**Women not supportive to each other in leadership positions**

The study sought to establish respondents’ perceptions about women. They were asked whether women were not supportive to each other in leadership positions. It was felt that this might have an effect on their management abilities. The responses are presented in table 4.5.
Table 4.5: Women not supportive to each other in leadership positions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Headteacher</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy headteacher</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior teacher</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area officer</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the results shown in table 4.5, it is clear that the majority of the respondents 47(70.1%) think that women are agreed that women are jealous of each other and this affects their leadership ability in public primary schools. The area education officers disagreed with the statement. Sanchez (2010) in his study indicated that women had less relationship oriented traits. This means that if women have to effectively take up managerial positions in public primary schools, they will have to embrace good human skills and keep aside their personal differences.

Table 4.6: Perceived Effectiveness of Women Leaders as Compared to Men in Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>S/ Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Headteacher</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy headteacher</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior teacher</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area officer</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On whether women are as effective as men, the responses were presented in table 4.6. The results in table 4.6 clearly show that most of the respondents 49(74%) said that women were not as effective as men. Among those who agreed were; all the area education officers, 6 headteachers and 6 senior teachers. This could be attributed to the
fact that teachers were the ones being led and they are in a better position to give their
views on leadership. The International Labor Organization (2004), noted that managerial
positions were viewed as ‘male’ in gender types, the characteristics required for success
were seen as more commonly held by men than by women. This also appears to agree
with the findings of Hall–Taylor (1997) and Martin (1994), who noted that people
thought women leaders possessed soft skills which were not appropriate for top
leadership. This is still a perception among people which needs to be discarded if women
were to advance into leadership positions.

Aggression of Women and Men While in Leadership
The study sought to gather respondents’ perception on aggressiveness, by asking whether
women were as aggressive as men while in leadership. Respondents’ views are shown in
table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Aggression of women and men while in leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>S/Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Headteacher</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy headteacher</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior teacher</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area officer</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td><strong>35</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td><strong>67</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Majority of the respondents 35(52.2 %) said that women were not as aggressive as men.
Only 13 (19.4%) of the respondents said that women were as aggressive as men. All the
Area Education Officers strongly disagreed. Majority of the head teachers (9), deputy
head teachers (6), senior teachers (7), and the teachers (25), said women were not as
aggressive as men. This implies that women were not perceived as being as aggressive as
men to get to higher grades. These findings could have resulted from the fear of being
referred to as ‘Dragon lady’ or ‘Bitch’ because they did not display the famine qualities expected of women in the society (De Matteo, 1994). Women may therefore shy away from high positions so as to remain at the society’s expectations.

**Whether Women Leaders Demonstrate Similar Professional Expertise as Men in Leadership**

On whether women demonstrated the same professional expertise and job know how as men, the results presented in table 4.8 explain the views of the respondents.

**Table 4.8: Whether women leaders demonstrate similar professional expertise as men in leadership**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Headteacher</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy headteacher</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior teacher</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area officers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
<td><strong>67</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results indicate that most of the respondents (43) agreed that women demonstrate the same professional expertise and job know how as men. Only 17 of the respondents disagreed. Therefore, women have the same professional expertise as men. In this case therefore it cannot be claimed that women do not have professional expertise to be leaders. This concurs with Dunlap & Schmuck, (1995), who said that women already had the requisite knowledge, skills and expertise to lead the organizations just as men.

**Dependence on women leaders as compared to men in making decisions**

The study sought to establish respondents’ perception on whether women could be depended on to make business decisions. The results of are shown in table 4.9.
Table 4.9: Dependence on women leaders as compared to men in making decisions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy head teacher</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior teacher</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area officers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>43</strong></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
<td><strong>67</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Majority of the respondents 43(64.2%) said that women can be dependent on to make business decisions and only 24(35.8%) respondents were not sure of the statement. This implies that the respondents were confident that women can make business decisions. This supports Evetts, (1998) who noted that success was based on merit, which most women already had. Ellison, (2006) also support this sentiment by saying that streaming women into non managerial less strategic decision marking roles of an organization is a form of horizontal segregation. It cannot therefore be said that the reason why many women were not in leadership positions in the public institutions is because the society might have felt that they couldn’t make business decisions.

Form the findings based on the first objective on the perceptions and attitudes of teachers and Education Officers; it is quite clear that some prejudice against women’s rise to headship of primary schools still exist. Many people still feel that if women are given opportunities to head primary schools, they would find it difficult to cope with that responsibility. This is however not a proven belief, but just a perception which might arise from the traditional belief that women were weaker than men. This could be an explanation why most of the respondents preferred a male head teacher. The respondents also pointed out that women were better of occupying lower positions than men. It also
came out clearly that women were jealous of one another, a factor that could affect their rise to power, since they may not be ready to support one another and even so, if the appointing authority is headed by a woman.

The respondents noted that women were not as aggressive as men, implying a possibility that whenever an opportunity for headship of a primary school arose, they might never show interest of such positions and may leave them to their male counterparts. Lack of aggressiveness could also have an implication on their actual performance once given the opportunity to lead, and this may influence the appointing authority to think twice before elevating a woman to such a position.

All is not lost, as the study found out that women were just as effective as men in their duties, they demonstrated the same professional expertise as men and can be depended upon to make decisions.

4.3 Policies and Practices that Govern Recruitment, Appointment and Promotion of Primary School Leaders

This objective needed to identify the policies and practices that governed recruitment, appointments and promotion of primary school leaders. This study considered factors such as study respondents’ awareness of government policies and practices on recruitment and whether the policies and practices contributed to the current achievement in recruitment of public primary schools.

Awareness of Government Policies and Practices on Recruitment

Study respondents were asked whether they were aware of government policies and practices on recruitment, appointment and promotion of teachers. The results are presented in table 4.10.
Table 4.10: Awareness of government policies and practices on recruitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Non response</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Headteacher</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy headteacher</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior teacher</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>20</strong></td>
<td><strong>41</strong></td>
<td><strong>67</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results presented in table 4.16 show that majority of the respondents 41 (61.2%) said they were aware of government policies and practices on recruitment, while 20 (29.9%) were not. The respondents identified such government policies as gender equity and equality in education and training, the affirmative action which stipulated the thirty percent (30%) gender rule on all appointments or promotions and the constitution of Kenya, which states that women and men have the right to equal treatment.

It was noted that since majority of the respondents were aware of government policies and practices on recruitment, appointment and promotions this is not an obstacle to women leadership in public institutions. The problem might have been the implementers of the already laid down policies. This is in agreement with the United Nations Decade for Women in 1985 which reiterated that the strategies proposed at international forums were too general, ignoring the specific obstacles in independent nations.

This implies that it is not enough for women in Kenya to say that they understand the policies, but need to move ahead to lobbying for implementation for their benefit. Also Nzomo (1995) suggested that there is the urgent need to establish programs combining gender sensitization, legal awareness raising and civil education of both women and men, with a view to eradicating retrogressive socio-cultural attitudes and values, as well as
democratizing the Kenyan society. Chikarovski (1994) stressed that it was economically disadvantageous for the society to underutilize the talent of almost half of its workforce (women). These sentiments combined imply that there still lay an enormous task ahead in pushing women into leadership positions as indicated by Nzomo in 1995.

4.4 Challenges Facing Women in Holding Leadership Positions

The study tried to find out the challenges that women were facing on their way to higher positions of leadership in public primary schools as shown in table 4.11. The categories considered were discrimination, family and work conflicts, stereotyping and structural factors.

Table 4.11: Forms of difficulties facing women leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Gender discrimination</th>
<th>Family and work conflict</th>
<th>Stereotyping</th>
<th>Structural factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headteacher</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy headteacher</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior teacher</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gender Discrimination

The results on the various forms of difficulties facing women leaders shows that majority of the respondents 56(83.6%) said that gender discrimination was not a major form of difficulty affecting women in leadership, only 11(16.4%) agreed that sexual discrimination was affecting women leaders taking up leadership positions. The findings of the study might have been influenced by the respondents’ gender, since many of them were males, who may not freely admit that women faced gender discrimination. The few respondents who indicated that women faced gender discrimination might have been
pointing at the reality on the ground. However, it is quite clear that women did not face the challenge of gender discrimination as they went up the ladder of leadership.

**Family and Work Conflict**
Concerning family and work conflict, most of the respondents 46(68.7%) indicated that family and work conflict is not a form of discrimination facing women in leadership. Only 21(31.5%) of the respondents indicated that family and work conflict affected women in leadership. This shows that family commitments were not an obstacle to women’s rise to leadership positions.

**Gender Stereotyping**
On stereotyping, it was noted that 45(67.2%) did not find it as a factor of discrimination against women in leadership. The study findings show that among the factors that the respondents were asked to respond to, none of them had a major effect on women leadership. However, the number of respondents that indicated that these factors affected women’s rise to leadership positions could have been correct to some extend as noted by Dovidio & Helb (2005), who said that the difficulties faced by women when they occupy managerial positions include career interruption due to family (child bearing and rearing), stereotyping, societal attitude, gender discrimination, family and work conflict. The study findings could also be a testimony that the society is changing for the better. According to Moorosi, (2006) some female leaders had experienced blatant discrimination in their earlier attempts to participate in leadership on the grounds that male candidates were sought after.

**Structural Factors**
Majority of the respondents 62 (93%) indicated that structural factors were not a challenge to women rising to leadership positions. Only 5(7%) of the respondents
indicated that structural factors were a challenge. This does not support the view of Evetts (1998), who noted that women opted for the professional routes where it was perceived that success would be based on merit and building a reputation. However, the findings seem to support Ellison, (2006), who quipped that women stream into non managerial, less strategic decision marking roles of an organization.

4.5 Strategies Suggested by the Respondents to Enhance Women Leadership
The strategies suggested as being appropriate in enhancing women leadership in public primary schools touched on the need for enforcement of capacity building, mentorship, opportunities to lead and awareness of the need for gender equity.

Enforcement of Government Policies
The government should enforce the policies that are already in place to ensure that women got a fair deal in leadership of primary schools. The respondents indicated that most policies such as the affirmative action, the Constitution of Kenya, and international efforts by United Nations Charter (1945), The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPA), (1995), The Fourth World Conference on Women (1995), the Cairo Conference on Population and Development (1994) and World Summit for Social Development (1995) were in the right direction in improving the status of women. They however indicated that it was necessary for the government of Kenya to narrow the gap further and reduce gender disparities in the leadership of primary schools.

Capacity Building
It was suggested that women should be encouraged to train and acquire the necessary skills so as to fit into leadership positions. The government has already made an effort to provide equal education opportunities through Free Primary Education initiative. The respondents further indicated that the government should make a deliberate move to
focus on the girl child’s training and encouragement. Headteachers of primary schools should also be encouraged to mentor and train female teachers in readiness to take up headship of primary schools. This can perfectly be done if the education officers ensured that every male head teacher is deputized by a female, and every female head teacher is deputized by a male. This will be appropriate for succession planning.

**Mentorship**

Respondents also said that women should be given the opportunity to perform higher position duties during the absence of their bosses as a way of mentoring them. This would help provide them with the necessary skills to handle those positions once promoted. This would also be an opportunity to prove to the society that women were as capable as men in leadership of primary schools.

**Opportunities to Lead**

It was also noted that there is need for women to be given support regarding leadership capabilities from all people involved in the education sector. The Education Officers indicated that women rarely got the support they needed whenever they ascended to leadership positions. The same was articulated by female respondents. The education sector should, therefore, move a step further and offer the necessary support to women as they promoted them to leadership positions.

The respondents also indicated that women should be given space to lead without being looked upon as incapable or less aggressive by the males. Thus the society should stop comparing men’s performance with women’s, and instead allow them to prove their worth in leadership. It is quite probable that the society sticks to the traditional belief that women are weaker and their roles are social.
The respondents indicated that in most cases, men rarely gave women opportunities to lead, as male administrators gave positions to those who resembled them in attitude, actions, and appearance. This is in support of Grogan, (1996), who noted that men would appoint only men to leadership positions and leave women, because they perceived them to be different from them. This implies that women are rarely given such positions. Leaving them out is a kind of discrimination which needs to be discarded at all costs.

**Awareness on the Need for Gender Equity**

The respondents suggested that policy makers should move a step further than just putting it down on paper, and sensitize the society on the need for equity and equality in the leadership of primary schools. An elaborate effort should be made to ensure that women were recruited, appointed and promoted to leadership positions in primary schools in Kenya. The affirmative action or the thirty percent rule as stipulated in the Constitution of Kenya may sometimes be misinterpreted to mean that women should only form thirty percent (30%) of new employees and the same percentage of those promoted. Policy-makers therefore, need to move a step further as to reinforce the policies as stipulated. Education institutions should be made to provide data regularly to prove that they are adhering to laid down policies and those contravening should be made accountable.
CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction
This chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

5.1 Summary of the Findings
For this study, a total of 67 respondents participated in the study of which 10 were head teachers, 10 deputy headteachers, 10 senior teachers, 2 area officers and 35 teachers. Majority of the respondents 33(49.3 %) were in the age bracket of 45-55 years and they were all married. Most of the respondents were either PI teachers or diploma holders. They had been employed for more than 10 years and therefore, they had experience and understood matters of leadership in their various schools.

5.2 Perceptions of the Respondents on Women in Leadership
The study sought to establish the perception of the respondents on women leadership in public primary schools. The results established that all the respondents indicated that women face difficulties when they occupy leadership positions and this had an effect on the leadership of women in the public primary schools. Among the factors that were perceived to affect women leadership in public primary schools.

Among the factors considered sexual discrimination was perceived not to have any effect on women leadership, most of the respondents perceived family and work conflict and stereotyping as key factors affecting women leadership. Similar findings were noted in a study by Sanchez de Madariaga, (2010) which stressed cultural and structural factors as the main underlying reasons explaining the situation of women in leadership. Many researchers have argued that it is the outcome of popular gender stereotypes that
prescribe different behaviors and qualities to men and women (Eccles et al, 1995, Timmers et al, 2010) similar findings were noted in studies conducted by Tabolt, (2003) and De Matteo, (1994), In both studies it was noted that female leaders are expected to have well developed people skills. Sex roles stereotyping of managerial work can result in the perception that women are less qualified than men for leadership positions and negatively affect women into such positions.

On whether women show same aggressiveness and drive to get ahead the study noted that majority of the respondents disagreed with the statement a fact that is similar to the findings of Berthing and Izraeli (1993) probably the single most important hurdle for women in leadership in all industrialized countries is the persistent stereotype that associates leadership with being male. ILO, (2004) iterates a worldwide review of the status of women in leadership and speaks similarly of the barriers created by biased attitudes towards women

5.3 Policies and Practices that Govern Recruitment, Appointment and Promotion of Primary School Teachers into Leadership Positions
The study sought to establish whether there were policies in place guiding recruitment, selection and placement of different gender in the available positions including the leadership positions. The study established that majority of the respondents were aware that there were policies guiding recruitment, appointment and promotion of employees. They were however not very sure on whether the policies favored women to leadership positions. This means that policies and practices governing recruitment, appointment and promotion were not very clear about the position of women.

Women who aspire to school leadership positions often face barriers of administration in hiring and promotion that often limit their upward movement. From the findings of the
study it is confirmed that policies on recruitment, appointment and promotions have an effect on the women leadership in public primary schools.

5.4 Challenges Facing Women’s Quest to Leadership
The study established that there were various challenges facing women in their quest for leadership positions. These factors include gender discrimination, family and work conflict, gender stereotyping and structural factors. Majority said that women cannot handle continuous hard work like men. The respondents indicated that women can’t work under stress and this could be affecting women appointment to leadership in primary schools.

5.5 Strategies for Enhancing Women Participation In Primary School Leadership
The study revealed that various strategies could be used to enhance women participation in primary school leadership. Among the strategies that were noted by the respondents were enforcement of policies, capacity building, mentorship, opportunities to lead and awareness on the need for gender equity. Some women-specific interventions, which on paper sound appropriate, have been proved to marginalize women further. It was noted that it was easier to neglect such programmes, when they are tackled separately from mainstream plans and activities. The gender centers and institutions should be mainstreamed into university plans and activities, in order to have greater impact.

Equal opportunity policies should be developed and mechanisms for implementation, monitoring and evaluation established. Structures have to be put in place to support long-term achievements. Ministry of education should allocate resources to this effort. Efforts should be made to provide gender disaggregated data for planning, implementation and evaluation of Ministry of Education programmes.
Women should be involved in management. They should be given authority to perform to higher position duties during the absence of their bosses. This is because managers are influenced by the society around them, existing ideologies, customs and practices; hence the predominance of male policy makers slows down the pace of change.

Gender awareness should be increased. This should be developed at the work place through meetings, workshops and seminars for decision makers. All women must be involved in devising solutions, by providing their own views, to ensure that there are workable solutions. This may involve undertaking gender sensitization and social mobilization in support of the concerns of women. It is often assumed that by appointing one woman on a panel, gender issues will be addressed automatically and solved.

Preventing behavior that is discriminatory and offensive is also another strategy. This can be done by adopting, as official policy, a statement that explicitly condemns acts or threats based on gender; making effective provision for teaching staff to report violations; and create awareness about the policy among teachers.

5.6 Conclusions of the Study
This study concluded that although the government has been conducting campaigns for gender equality more specifically on awareness of injustices committed against women in society in general and in the education sector in particular. Without commitment and good will from the Teachers’ Service Commission, managers and Central Government, it may not be easy to realize the good intentions spelt out in international conventions such as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the constitution of Kenya. The study concluded that if perception and attitude toward women leadership is not changed, there is very little that could be achieved on gender equality.
5.7 Recommendations of the Study

The study came up with the following recommendations

- The respondents felt that the Government of Kenya should use appropriate forums to advise men to support and encourage their spouses to participate in education leadership. It should also review school policies, practices and procedures that hinder or discourage women from participating in educational leadership. The one third policies that require that one third of leadership positions in education are held by women should also be properly implemented. This will increase the participation of women in leadership in schools. They felt that the government should work with the church and together ensure that members of the society are enlightened and encouraged through sensitization programme to discard traditional beliefs that women are inferior to men and that domestic work and taking care of children are women roles. The government should finally make provision for political goodwill for female leadership in education as stated in the constitution of Kenya.

- That the Ministry of Education should introduce incentives like recognition certificates for women who participate in education leadership. The Ministry should also promote more female teachers who will act as role models and mentors for other women in the realm of academia. There is also need to increase women representation in educational leadership in all districts in the country. Women should be encouraged to accept positions of leadership whenever appointed.
• Teachers Service Commission should provide an affirmative action policy to create more vacancies for the female teachers to be recruited into management positions whenever advertised.

• Members of the local community should be made to understand that women are as competent as men in leadership of primary schools. The Boards of Management and Parent Teacher Associations should encourage citizens to appreciate and support women appointed to leadership positions in education whenever an opportunity arises.

• Non Governmental organizations should try and scale up their campaign on gender especially gender equity and policy formulation on female leadership.

5.8 Suggestions for Further Study

While the study investigated the factors affecting women leadership in public primary schools in Mwea Division; Embu County, future research may focus on a comparative study of women leadership in public primary schools and public secondary schools. A further research could also consider factors that need to be managed in order to improve the position of women in leadership in primary schools.
REFERENCES


Hanekom, L. (2001). *An exploratory study undertaken to establish whether women's under representation in principal posts at primary schools of the
Western Cape Education Department in the Wynberg region is influenced by organizational barriers which exist within the school environment. Med dissertation. University of Cape Town.


Kenya National Roads Authority, (2013). Map of Mwea Division, Embu County. REPUBLIC OF KENYA NATIONAL ROAD NETWORK


APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: INTRODUCTORY LETTER

Elishoper N. Gideon
Kenyatta University
Nairobi
The Head teacher ……………….. ……………….. ………………..

Dear Madam,

I am currently enrolled for a degree in Master of Arts in Gender and Development at the Kenyatta University in the field of Leadership. I am researching on the “FACTORS AFFECTING WOMEN LEADERSHIP IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN MWEA DIVISION, EMBU COUNTY. This study was significance for all persons who are involved in current trends in educational reform and administration. You are one of the respondents identified to participate in this research project. There are no risks for participation and there is no compensation. The study is completely confidential. Your school will remain anonymous in the study. The purpose of this letter is to formally request your permission to conduct this research at your school. Your participation will be mostly appreciated.
P.O. Box 5  
Karaba,  

26th October, 2012.  
The District Education Officer  
Mbeere South District  
Dear Sir,  

RE: PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH IN THE DISTRICT  

I am would like to request your permission to carry out a research project on ‘The Factors affecting women leadership in Public Primary Schools in Mwea Division, Embu County. The research is part of my Master of Arts degree in Gender and Development at Kenyatta University, under the supervision of Professor Elishiba Kimani and Geaffery Wango.  

The research aims to explore the female teachers’ views and perceptions about their experiences in their current leadership positions in primary schools. It will involve interviews with fifteen female primary school head teachers working in public schools.  

It is hoped that the findings of this research will shed light on the representation of women in primary school leadership in the district, on women’s perceptions of leadership and also on suggestions of strategies that can be employed to improve women’s participation in leadership.
APPENDIX 3: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

SECTION A: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

Please tick as appropriate

1. In which age group do you fall?
   - 28-35 □ 36-44 □
   - 45-55 □ 53-60 □

2. Marital Status.
   - Single □ Married □ Divorced □
   Others (Please specify) ____________________

3. What level of education did you attain?
   - PI Certificate □ Diploma □ SI □ Bachelor □ Masters Degree □
   Others (Please specify) ____________________

4. What is your gender? Male [ ] female [ ]

5. How long have you been in employment?
   ……………………………………………………………………………………………

6. What is your status in employment?
   - Head teacher □ Deputy Head teacher □ Head of a Subject □
   - Senior Teacher □
   Others (please specify)______________________________

7. How would you rate your position in the organization?
   - Managerial staff □ Non managerial staff □ A teacher □
   Others (Please specify) _________________

8. Do women face difficulties when they occupy managerial positions?
   - Yes □ No □
If yes, which type of the following difficulties do they face?

- Sexual Discrimination  ☐
- Family and work conflict  ☐
- Stereotyping  ☐
- Glass ceiling  ☐
- All the above  ☐

9. Do women encounter issues of sexual harassment at the workplace?

- Yes  ☐
- No  ☐

If yes, in what forms do they appear

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

 SECTION B: PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES OF TEACHERS TOWARDS FEMALE LEADERS

Please tick the most appropriate answer

10. If you were asked to choose between two qualified individuals, whom would you prefer to be your head teacher

- Man  ☐
- Women  ☐
- Not sure  ☐

Please state reasons

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Please tick as appropriate the extent to which you agree or disagree to the following statements. Using appropriate scale from 1= strongly agree; 2= agree; 3=neither agree nor disagree 4= Disagree 5= strongly disagree

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<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
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<th>4</th>
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<th>1</th>
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<tr>
<td>11  Women mostly occupy lower occupation grades than men.</td>
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<td>12  Women praise for a job well done is of more value than men’s.</td>
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<td>13  Women are said to be their own enemies and are jealous of each other.</td>
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<td>14  Women’s praise for a job well done is of more value.</td>
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<td>15  Women demonstrate the same leadership style as men do</td>
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<td>16  Women show the same aggressiveness and drive to get ahead in their careers that</td>
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<td>17  Manager’s gender is important in determining how much one enjoys his/her work</td>
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<tr>
<td>18  Personal appearance and attractiveness of a female manager affect ones acceptance of her leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>19  Women demonstrate the same professional expertise and job know how as men do.</td>
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SECTION C: THE POLICIES AND PRACTICES THAT GOVERN RECRUITMENT APPOINTMENT AND PROMOTION OF PRIMARY SCHOOL LEADERS

20. Is there Government policies and practices that govern recruitment, appointment and promotion of primary school leaders in Kenya?

   Yes [ ]    No [ ]

If yes which are these policies?

   ____________________________

21. How have these policies and practices contributed to the current achievements in recruitment, appointment and promotion of primary school leaders in Kenya?

   ____________________________

65
SECTION D: BARRIERS AND HINDRANCES THAT WOMEN ENCOUNTER IN THEIR QUEST TO GET TO TOP LEADERSHIP POSITIONS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KENYA

Please tick as appropriate and give the answer to appropriate questions in the space provided where necessary

22. Do women face difficulties when they occupy managerial positions?

Yes ☐ No ☐

23. If yes, what type of difficulties do they face?

Sexual Discrimination ☐ Family and work conflict ☐ Stereotyping ☐
Glass ceiling ☐ Sexual Harassment ☐ All the above ☐

24. Do women encounter issues of sexual harassment at the work place?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, in what cause do they appear?

_______________________________________________________________

25. To your understanding, which of the following constitutes gender stereotyping?

Women cannot be dependent on to make objective business decisions. ☐
Women are not committed to their jobs ☐
Women are not as capable as men. ☐
Women cannot work under stress. ☐
Women cannot handle continuous hard work. ☐

PLEASE TICK AS APPROPRIATE FOR QUESTION 26 AND 27 USING RANGES FROM 1= SMALLEST UP TO 5= HIGHEST

26. Are there any incidences or issues of sexual harassment at your work place?

None at all ☐ Very Seldom ☐ Seldom ☐

When demanding favors ☐ Very much ☐
27. Issues of work and family conflict emerge or surface when
I find it difficult to juggle between my work and family roles  
I feel guilty for not spending enough time with my family  
I have made a lot of sacrifices (e.g. Social family) in my career advancement.  
My family responsibilities usually prevent me from responding to urgent work duties.  
All the above  

28. In your opinion what are the major barriers and hindrances facing women in leadership.
________________________________________________________________________

29. Whose criticism would make you more be anxious about your leadership?
A. Women  
B. Men  
C. Both  
D. None  

SECTION E: POSSIBLE STRATEGIES THAT CAN BE USED TO ENHANCE WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN PRIMARY SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IN KENYA.

Please tick as appropriate and give the answer to appropriate questions in the space provided where necessary

30. Which of the following is the most important mentor support all women in leadership should have?
Someone to turn to when counselling is needed  
When there is someone to guide me in my work for more confidence in myself  
Someone to provide me with opportunities to demonstrate my talents and abilities  
Someone to show me how to achieve a better balance between my work and personal commitments  
All the above  

31. What actions of men do you perceive as responsible for preventing women from moving up in managerial positions?  

They do not provide me with opportunities to upgrade personal and managerial skills. ☐

They do not give me extra responsibilities to learn position duties. ☐

They do not offer me clear job description of higher position that helps in moving up. ☐

They do not give me essential authority to perform higher position duties during the absence of my boss. ☐

“Being a female” is a barrier in itself which prevent me from moving up to a higher position. ☐

32. How favorably would you rate women against men on characteristics associated with successful leaders?
   Less favorable ☐   Favorable ☐   More favorable ☐
   Very favorable ☐
   Neither favorable nor unfavorable ☐

33. In your opinion what are the major challenges facing women in leadership?
   ___________________________________________________________

22. In your opinion what are the major possible strategies that can be used to enhance women’s participation in primary school leadership.
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________

23. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about women and leadership in public primary schools?

Thank you for your cooperation
APPENDIX 4: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR FEMALE HEAD TEACHERS

SECTION ONE: PREPARATION FOR LEADERSHIP

1) How long had you taught, since leaving college, before you became a head teacher?
2) For how long have you been a head teacher in your current school?
3) What factors motivated you to become a school head teacher?
4) What reaction did you get from other people (family, colleagues), when you showed interest in leadership.
5) What was the selection process like?
6) What preparation (in terms of training, mentoring) did you receive to prepare you for leadership?

SECTION TWO: WORK EXPERIENCE

7) Please share briefly your experiences as a female leader in your work:
   a) With the learners
   b) With the teachers
   c) With parents, and other stake-holders.
8) Please share some of the major challenges in the course of your work:
   a) Personal challenges
   b) Administrative challenges
9) What are your future aspirations in leadership?

SECTION THREE: CONCERNS

10) What, in your opinion, is the perception of the society towards female head teachers?
11) What would you say are the stumbling blocks that hinder women from participating in primary school leadership in rural schools?
12) What would improve women’s participation in primary school leadership?
13) Is there anything else you would like to add?
APPENDIX 5: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR AREA EDUCATION OFFICERS

1. Are there any actions addressing gender roles and combating stereotypes in education, provided for in your zone?

If YES, which are they?

2. Are there schools which welcome female or male students exclusively in your zone?

If YES, what is their percentage of the total amount of schools in the zone?

3. As far as you are informed, are there an equal number of women and men in your primary schools in your area?

YES ☐  NO ☐

4. Are gender issues mainstreamed in the work of your national Ministry of Education?

YES ☐  NO ☐  I do not know ☐

5. Is there national policy on the promotion of gender equality in the education sector in your country?

If YES, please indicate its designation, the year it has been adopted and whether it is part of the overall national gender equality policy:

6. Are there any affirmative actions aimed at promoting women in decision-making in the education sector provided for in your country?

If YES, which of the following provisions have been implemented in your country?

Please Tick the appropriate

- Introduction of quotas for the filling of some positions within the school hierarchy
- Introduction of quotas for the filling of some positions within the Ministry of Education
• Activities to promote women presence at decision-making positions in the Ministry of Education

• Activities to promote equal participation of women and men at the hierarchy positions in the education sector

• Activities to promote women representation when decisions are taken in schools

• Activities to promote women representation when decisions are taken in the Ministry of Education

7. Are there any actions aimed at tackling the gender pay gap provided for in your national policy on gender equality in education?

If YES, which of the following provisions have been implemented in your country? Please Tick the appropriate

• Activities to promote gender neutral pay system in the education sector

• Activities to promote a transparent pay system in the education sector

• Activities to promote gender equality in employment in both private and public education sector

• Raising-awareness on labour market needs and career opportunities for both genders in schools

• Activities to promote the participation of boys and girls in school and extra-curricular activities not traditionally associated with their gender

• Teacher training on how to make both genders feel confident in choosing a non-traditional school and university subject for their gender

• Career counseling in schools, which is not oriented towards traditional gender career choices and stereotypes
8. Please describe any other national policies good practices not included in the list, which you consider efficient in your zone?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

9. Please describe a national policy practice which you have considered to have a negative impact on gender equality in education in your zone?

________________________________________________________________________

10. Is there any recruitment strategy applied to the education sector in your country? If YES, are there any specific provisions aimed at ensuring the presence of the under-represented gender in the sector (i.e. quota targets, recruitments campaigns, deployment strategies, incentives, etc.? Please describe the provisions of the strategy:

________________________________________________________________________

11. What is the basis for a salary increase, a promotion or any other career development for women teachers in your zone?

Competence based □  Performance assessment □

External evaluation □

Age □

If other, please explain: ____________________________________________

12. Would you accept and encourage more women to be in leadership?

________________________________________________________________________

13. How can this be achieved? ___________________________

14. In your opinion what are some of the challenges of women in leadership?

________________________________________________________________________

15. In your opinion what factors can contribute to their success?

________________________________________________________________________

THANK YOU